

THE CITY OF DURHAM TRUST

Web site: <https://durhamcity.org/>

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29 January 2026

Emma Price
Durham County Council
Planning Department
PO Box 274
Stanley
County Durham
DH8 1HG

Dear Ms Price,

DM/25/03454/PN56 - First Floor, 58 - 62 North Road, Durham, DH1 4SQ

Prior approval for change of use and internal alterations of part of the first floor from class E to two 1-bed apartments (class C3)

The City of Durham Trust has reviewed this application and wishes to object on the basis that the proposed residential flats do not comply with Policies 29 and 31 of the County Durham Plan.

The proposal is for a change of use to create two new single storey, 1-bed, two-person residential flats: Flat 1 with an area of 48m² and Flat 2 with an area of 58m². The Nationally Described Space Standard (NDSS) requires a minimum gross internal area of 50m² for such properties, so it is immediately evident that Flat 1 fails to comply with this requirement. Additionally, however, that part of the Flat 1 double bedroom which meets the NDSS minimum width requirement of 2.75m measures only 10.7m² in area, thereby failing to provide the stipulated minimum of 11.5m². The NDSS also specifies that each flat must have at least 1.5m² of built in storage, and it appears from the plans that none is provided.

National legislation requires habitable rooms to have an area of clear glazing equivalent in total to at least 1/10th of the floor area of the room. Deducting 2.75m² and 4.5m² for the shower rooms results in habitable room areas of 45.25m² and 53.5m² in Flats 1 and 2 respectively. Measuring the elevational drawing with the IDOX tool shows that the total glazed area to each flat is only 3.5m², meaning that both flats fail to comply. In addition, habitable rooms are required to have ventilation direct to open air with openings equivalent to at least 1/20th of the total floor area of the room. The measured opening area for each flat is 2.4m², meaning that Flat 2 fails to provide the necessary ventilation.

Policy 29 of the CDP requires all new residential development to comply with the NDSS, to provide high standards of amenity, and to consider the health impacts and the needs of future users. Paragraph 5.303 specifically requires that “*A high quality built environment should consider the amenity of both existing and future residents and consideration should be given to matters of privacy, outlook, natural lighting, ventilation, as well as local climatic conditions.*”

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Policy 31, meanwhile, requires that "*Development will be permitted where it can be demonstrated that there will be no unacceptable impact, either individually or cumulatively, on health, living or working conditions. The proposal will also need to demonstrate that future occupiers of the proposed development will have acceptable living and/or working conditions.*"

It is clear from our findings above that the proposals do not comply with either Policy, and as a result the Trust asks that this application be refused.

Yours sincerely,

JOHN LOWE

Chair, City of Durham Trust
chair@durhamcity.org

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