

# THE CITY OF DURHAM TRUST

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Web site: <http://www.DurhamCity.org>

c/o Blakett, Hart & Pratt, LLP  
Aire House  
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Belmont  
Durham, DH1 1TH

30th June 2025

Emma Price,  
Durham County Council Planning Development  
PO BOX 274  
Stanley  
County Durham  
DH8 1HG

Dear Ms Price,

**DM/25/01503/VOC Leazes Cottage Leazes Place Durham DH1 1RE**

*Variation of condition 2 (approved plans) pursuant to planning permission DM/21/04095/LB to allow the use of flat capping.*

The Trust objects to this application on the grounds of poor design inappropriate to the setting of a listed building and negative impact on the conservation area.

**Context**

The terraces on either side of Leazes Place have a consistent style of a very low plinth or base for tall railings. This complements the cobbled road surface to create a particularly attractive and important character area and view within the Conservation Area. Leazes Cottage is the former coachman's house serving the Leazes House and is Grade 2 listed for individual interest and group interest with the remains of the stables and coach house. Having been separated from Leazes House, the driveway has been replaced by surfacing for the former stable complex and its conversions. There are sections of the former stone capping from the driveway walls and a gatepost on site. It is important that any alterations around Leazes Cottage respect as far as possible the building, the stables complex and their context. The 2021 approved application drawings showing the proposals for the walls and railings dealt with the change in level and delimiting of the Cottage external area. The sections of original wall capping should be reused, and the Trust understands that there may be sufficient on site to cap all of the new wall.

**Proposal**

The application is disingenuous in its description. The proposals show what has been built in contravention of the approved drawings. It is a part retrospective application. The retaining wall is higher and capped with the flat capping in the application description. The new wall that has been built is double the approved height and instead should be at the same height as the adjoining wall that it should match. Neither the new height nor capping is suitable. The capping fails to match the low bases and tall railings of the terraces and of the former driveway entrance to Leazes House. The wall clashes with the existing low wall and the style of the Leazes Place railings where the railing is the dominant element and the base minimal. Whilst a detail, it is important because it forms the setting of the house and former stables complex. The changes fail to add positively to the street scene and the conservation area and cause negative impact.

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For the reasons above the Trust objects to this application (policy failures are indicated in the appendix below). The walling should be rebuilt to the original approved height. The remaining original capping from the Leazes House driveway should not be scrapped; they should be retained and, if possible, reused.

Yours sincerely

John Lowe,  
Chair, City of Durham Trust

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## **Appendix – Planning Policies**

The Trust considers that the proposals fail against the following planning policies:

### **County Durham Plan**

#### **Policy 29 Sustainable Design**

- a. The proposals fail to contribute positively to an area's heritage significance and townscape.

#### **Policy 44 Historic Environment**

##### **Listed Buildings**

- b. The proposals fail to respect the historic form, setting, fabric, materials, detailing of their context.

##### **Conservation Areas**

- f. The proposals fail to demonstrate understanding of the significance, character, appearance and setting of the conservation area and how this has informed proposals to achieve high quality sustainable development, which is respectful of historic interest, local distinctiveness and the conservation or enhancement heritage assets.
- h. The proposals fail to show respect for, and reinforcement of, the established, positive characteristics of the area in terms of appropriate design (including, features, materials, and detailing).

### **Durham City Neighbourhood Plan**

#### **Policy S1: Sustainable Development Requirements of all Development and Redevelopment Sites Including all New Building, Renovations and Extensions**

The proposals fail because they do not:

- d) Conserve the significance of the setting, character, local distinctiveness, and the contribution made to the sense of place by Our Neighbourhood's designated and non-designated heritage assets.

#### **Policy H2: The Conservation Areas, Durham City Conservation Area**

The proposals negatively affect the Durham City Conservation Area by not taking into account, and meeting, the following requirements:

- a) sustaining and enhancing the historic and architectural qualities of buildings, and
- j) Having detailing appropriate to context, and setting; and
- k) Using high quality design sympathetic to the character and context of the local area and its significance and distinctiveness.