

# THE CITY OF DURHAM TRUST

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c/o Blackett, Hart & Pratt, LLP  
Aire House  
Mandale Business Park  
Belmont  
Durham, DH1 1TH

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

23rd February 2026

Ms Amy Beveridge  
Durham County Council  
Planning Department  
PO Box 274  
Stanley  
County Durham  
DH8 1HG

Dear Ms Beveridge,

**DM/25/03614/FPA 11 Mowbray Street Durham DH1 4BH**

*Recover roof and install 2 velux windows. Replace windows and external doors.*

The Trust objects to the decrease in ceiling height in the first floor front bedroom and uPVC windows and door replacements based on their negative impact on the building, the street, and the Conservation Area. There would be a failure to protect and enhance the house, terrace, and their character. It also has concern about the proposed roof works. It supports the objection dated 9<sup>th</sup> February submitted by the City of Durham Parish Council in all respects including attic room amenity and impacts of an additional student rented bedroom.

**Context**

Mowbray Street is important because of its terraces. This street and adjacent Flass Street makes a positive contribution to the Conservation Area. There are some minor variations in terrace groups. No 11 is one of a group of 6 that have upper oriel windows that are attractively detailed.

The building and street are covered by an article 4 Direction, the intention of which was to assist in preventing the loss and unsuitable replacement of key building features. The principle supported by the Trust is that replacements should be with traditional timber windows with slimline heritage double glazing panes. Mowbray Street has suffered considerably from loss of original doors and windows, and this includes No. 11.

**Proposal**

The proposal is to replace the existing very inappropriate front windows and what is possibly the original front door. Both the uPVC replacement windows and composite door proposed will be unsuitable for this otherwise well detailed building. uPVC windows are thicker in their framing and are often fitted too flush with the facade, losing the inset and appear visually very different. This will impact negatively on the street and conservation area. Replacements should be in traditional timber to the original design. This the type of change that the Article 4 Direction was put in place to stop.

The creation of the attic room requires very substantial work including reducing the ceiling height of the first floor bedrooms to create headspace. The Trust is concerned that this creates an incongruous slope that is very visible from ground level in the upper part of the oriel bay. This substantially reduces the quality of the oriel – a particu-

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lar Durham vernacular feature. The Trust sees no justification for these extensive alterations given that they create a substandard room when Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS) are applied as they should be in this case. The attic room fails to provide sufficient headroom. Additionally, there is no public benefit: another student bedspace can only increase the area's problems with over intensive student use. There are therefore amenity issues caused by the proposal. In support of this the Trust refers to the appeal for 14 Mowbray Street (Ref: APP/X1355/W/22/3309512 Para. 8). In respect of Policy 16 of the County Durham Plan the Inspector concluded that: *'However, Policy 16 is an important tool in the Council's efforts to prevent further concentration and maintain community cohesion in particular areas. The cumulative effects from even small proposals, would if often repeated undermine the Council's overall policy on student accommodation. Even though there is an existing imbalance, the proposal would increase student population in the area and thus run contrary to the aims of seeking to create mixed and balanced communities and community cohesion.'*

The Trust is also concerned about roof works for the attic improvements. Reroofing inevitably leads to loss of original slates for reuse. Only recycled natural slate should be used to match the originals.

The Trust therefore objects to the proposals as submitted for the reasons above (policy failures are indicated in the appendix below):

Yours sincerely,

**John Lowe**

Chair, City of Durham Trust

[chair@durhamcity.org](mailto:chair@durhamcity.org)

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## **Appendix – Planning Policies**

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

### **County Durham Plan**

#### **Policy 16 Durham University Development, Purpose Built Student Accommodation and Houses in Multiple Occupation**

##### **3. Houses in Multiple Occupation**

In all cases applications for new build Houses in Multiple Occupation, change of use to Houses in Multiple Occupation or a proposal to extend an existing House in Multiple Occupation to accommodate additional bed space(s) will only be permitted where:

f. the design of the building or any extension would be appropriate in terms of the property itself and the character of the area. *(The property alteration and window proposals are not appropriate for the building, street or conservation area)*

New build Houses in Multiple Occupation, extensions that result in specified or potential additional bedspaces or a change of use to a House in Multiple Occupation would not be resisted in the following circumstance:

h. where an area already has a concentration in excess of 90% of council tax exempt properties (Class N), that this is having an unreasonable impact on current occupiers and that the conversion of remaining C3 dwellings will not cause further detrimental harm to the residential amenity of surrounding occupants. *(The additional bedroom will increase student density already harming the amenity of the area)*

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

The development proposals fail to achieve a well designed building and places, and:

a. Fail to contribute positively to an area's character, identity, heritage significance, townscape and, helping to create and reinforce locally distinctive and sustainable communities.

e. Fail to provide high standards of amenity and privacy, and minimise the impact of development upon the occupants of existing adjacent and nearby properties; and

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

The proposals fail to:

f. Demonstrate of understanding of the significance and character and appearance of the conservation area and how this has informed proposals to achieve high quality sustainable development, which is respectful of local distinctiveness and the conservation or enhancement of the (unlisted) asset.

h. Respect, and reinforce the established, positive characteristics of the area in terms of appropriate design (including, features, materials, and detailing).

### **City of Durham Neighbourhood Plan**

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

##### **Conservation, preservation, and enhancement of Our Neighbourhood by:**

The proposals fail to:

c) Harmonise with its context in terms of materials,

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

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

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The proposals fail to:

- a) Sustain and enhance the historic and architectural qualities of a buildings,
- b) Sustain and enhance a continuous frontage,
- e) Avoid harm to an element of an asset which makes a positive contribution to its individual significance and that of the surrounding area.
- j) Have materials and detailing appropriate to the vernacular and context.
- k) Use high quality design sympathetic to the character and context of the local area and its significance and distinctiveness.

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