

# THE CITY OF DURHAM TRUST

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

c/o Blackett, Hart & Pratt, LLP  
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Durham, DH1 1TH

22nd April 2026

Lisa Morina,  
Durham County Council Planning Development  
PO BOX 274  
Stanley  
County Durham  
DH8 1HG

Dear Ms Morina,

**DM/26/00766/LB 6 - 7 Market Place Durham DH1 3HL**

*Listed building consent for the change of use of the upper floors, including internal alterations and roof extension, to create three apartments (House in Multiple Occupation - Use Class C4).*

**And**

**DM/26/00765/FPA** *Change of use of the upper floors, including internal alterations and roof extension, to create three apartments (Use Class C4).*

The Trust objects to these applications on the grounds of design inappropriateness and negative impact on the host building.

**Context**

The building dates from 1887 with a 1924 extension. It is a landmark building in the centre of Durham and a key feature of the Market Place. It also has group value together with the other Market Place Victorian bank buildings. It is well detailed in a Gothic style with a stone frontage and rear in brick with stone window and quoin detailing. The rear is well designed, but the slate roof and upper level have been marred by a flat roofed brick extension and a lift shaft. This building otherwise contributes positively to the roofscape of the city centre. Durham city centre buildings have often suffered both from poor changes and unsatisfactory upkeep of the rear elevations and areas.

**Proposal**

The specific element that concerns the Trust is the proposal to further extend the upper flat roofed extension and to render it. This will cumulatively and negatively impact on both the rear elevation and the roofscape. The rendering is an inappropriate materials choice for this listed building. It is both discordant and will lose historic fabric. The Trust considers that the roofscape and original rear treatments play a role in the significance of the building. In harming that and failing to enhance the building the proposal fails against County Durham Plan Policies 29 and 44 and the Durham City Neighbourhood Plan Policies S1 and H2.

The Trust does not consider that the harm from the extension is overridden by public benefit. It otherwise does not object to the conversion of the building into apartments and considers that this can be achieved without the discordant roof extension. It also notes that the rear courtyard requires maintenance and improvement. The Trust supports the City of

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Durham Parish objection and the conclusions of the review by the Durham County Council Design and Conservation Section.

The Trust objects to this application for the reasons above (policy failures are indicated in the appendix below).

Yours sincerely

John Lowe,  
Chair, City of Durham Trust

**Celebrating, Protecting and Enhancing the City of Durham**

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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

The proposal fails to:

- b. Respect for the historic form, setting, fabric, materials, detailing, and, any other aspects including curtilage, which contribute to the significance of the building or structure.
- c. The retention of the character and special interest of buildings when considering alternative viable uses.

##### 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:

- c) Harmonising with its context in terms of scale.
- d) Conserve the significance of the setting, character, local distinctiveness, and the contribution made to the sense of place by Our Neighbourhood's 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) sustain and enhance the historic and architectural qualities of buildings
- e) avoiding harm to an element of an asset which makes a positive contribution to its individual significance
- j) Having detailing appropriate to context, and setting.
- k) Using high quality design sympathetic to the character and context of the local area and its significance and distinctiveness.
- l) avoiding adding to the cumulative impact of development schemes which dominate either by their massing or uniform design.

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