

THE CITY OF DURHAM TRUST

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

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

21 October 2026

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

Dear Ms. Price,

DM/26/02516/FPA - 9 Newcastle Terrace, Framwellgate Moor, Durham, DH1 5EG

Use of property as a 5-bedroom House in Multiple Occupation (Use Class C4)

The Trust objects to this application based on failure to comply with the requirements of Policies 16, 29 and 31 of the County Durham Plan.

Firstly, Policy 16 requires that the provision of cycle and car parking has regard to the Parking and Accessibility SPD. This in turn requires cycle storage to be “enclosed, secure and covered” and approximately 2m x 2m in size, but it appears from the submitted site plan that only two open-air spaces are to be provided.

Secondly, and critically, Policy 29 requires all development proposals to achieve well designed buildings and provide high standards of amenity, while Policy 31 requires proposals to demonstrate that future occupiers of the proposed development will have acceptable living and/or working conditions.

The proposed floor plans show the ground floor bedroom opening directly into the kitchen, a situation at odds with the usual advice from the Environmental Health team that “*Occupants escaping from all habitable rooms to a place of safety must be able to do so without the use of a key and without accessing any other room*”. Certainly, a suitable escape window may be provided to the room as an acceptable alternative means of escape, but there is no indication in the proposals that this will be the case. Equally concerning is the fact that there is no fire door to the loft bedroom situated on the second floor giving rise to a risk of fire spreading unchecked from the first floor into the bedroom. It is concerning to note that the Housing Multiple Occupation Team response has not specifically addressed these issues. Accordingly, the Trust considers that the application as presented must be considered unsafe and posing an unacceptable risk to the health and wellbeing of the property’s occupants – thereby failing to provide the well-designed facilities and acceptable living conditions demanded by Policies 29 and 31.

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Furthermore, it is noted that all bedrooms have en-suite facilities, but no separate WC is available for visitors to the property. This contravenes statutory guidance regarding the use of shared toilets (which must be directly accessible from a common hallway or landing rather than through another private room) and further suggests that the proposals are badly designed and therefore non-compliant with Policy 29. It is again concerning to note that the HMO response has not addressed this point, since fundamental alterations to the layout of the property would be required to make it compliant with HMO legislation.

Finally, no sectional information is provided in relation to the attic bedroom to allow checking of its compliance with required usable area and minimum heights. Without this additional information it is not possible to confirm that this bedroom provides the necessary high standard of amenity and acceptable living conditions required by Policies 29 and 31.

Given its apparent failures to comply with Policies 16, 29 and 31 of the CDP, the Trust requests that this application be refused.

Yours sincerely,

Allan Gemmill

Chair, City of Durham Trust

trust@durhamcity.org

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