

THE CITY OF DURHAM TRUST

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

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

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

21 October 2026

Dear Ms Price,

DM/26/02351/FPA: Akarsu Turkish Restaurant & Grill, 21 Silver Street, Durham, DH1 3RB

10 no. new full height guillotine window installations with lower-level plant window boxes.

The Trust objects to the enlarged window openings and installation of guillotine windows and flower boxes. This is based on grounds of design inappropriateness in this location and negative impact on a scheduled monument, the Conservation Area, and a key view of the World Heritage Site (Castle).

Context

The host building occupies a prominent position in relation to Framwellgate Bridge and the view towards the Castle and Riverbanks. Its treatment is of importance for these and the Conservation Area. Light spill from the building is a detracting factor in relation to nighttime views of the Castle and its lighting.

The building is a large, plain modern introduction and detracts from the view of the Castle. Its prominence has been made worse by the painting of the upper brick section over the lower stone walling. The lower section has additional impact owing to the extended glass conservatory. The external areas have recently been cleared of regenerating vegetation and replaced by an intrusive wooden decking terrace. The point made by the Trust is that the building, originally plain, has been made more discordant by a variety of negative changes.

The existing windows are aluminium but at least have the advantage of being of a traditional sash design. At night, their internal lighting shows strongly from the bridge in the foreground of the views to the Castle as shown in the 2013 photograph below.



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Proposal

The enlargement of the window space and the use of contemporary three pane guillotine windows are not a positive introduction to this building given its relationship to the World Heritage Site and historic Framwellgate Bridge. These changes will disrupt the plain frontage making it overcomplex and thus draw unnecessary attention to it. The window pattern diverges substantially from what should be expected in the Conservation Area. The extra window area will introduce an increased amount of light spill, and the windows' brightness will intrude significantly into the night view.

The submission is poor, failing to clarify what is being proposed. The drawing presented also indicates protective railings in front of the windows, presumably for safety given that the guillotine windows will typically be able to open from the ground up as one of their options. These will further complicate the façade. The window boxes are yet another unnecessary addition to the façade. The full effect will be to overcomplicate the otherwise relatively plain frontage and draw greater attention to it, emphasising how discordant it is within its context.

The proposals fail to contribute positively to the area's character, identity and heritage significance (a requirement of County Durham Plan Policy 29) and do not demonstrate understanding of the significance, character, appearance and setting of the conservation area (Policy 44). They also fail to meet the requirements of CDP Policy 45 and Durham City Neighbourhood Plan policies S1, H1 and H2.

The Trust therefore objects to this application based on its negative impact.

Planning policy failures are indicated in the Appendix below.

Yours sincerely,

Allan Gemmill

Chair, City of Durham Trust

trust@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 29 - Sustainable Design

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

Policy 44 - Historic Environment

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).

Policy 45 - Durham Castle and Cathedral World Heritage Site

The Durham Castle and Cathedral World Heritage Site is a designated asset of the highest significance. Development within or affecting the World Heritage Site and its setting are required to but do not:

- a. sustain and enhance the significance of the designated asset;
- c. protect and enhance the Outstanding Universal Value, the immediate and wider setting and important views across, out of, and into the site.

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 H1 - Protection and Enhancement of the World Heritage Site

These development proposals are within the DCNP Neighbourhood and do not sustain, conserve and enhance the setting of the World Heritage Site by:

- e) carrying out an assessment of how the development will affect the setting of the World Heritage Site, including views to and from the World Heritage Site; and
- f) protecting important views.

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:

- g) Protecting important views of the Durham City Conservation Area from viewpoints within and outside the Conservation Area
- 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.

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