

COMMITTEE REPORT

APPLICATION DETAILS

APPLICATION No:	DM/19/03753/FPA
FULL APPLICATION DESCRIPTION:	Change of use from 4 no. C3 residential buildings to 4 no. B1 office buildings
NAME OF APPLICANT:	Durham University
ADDRESS:	1-4 Green Lane, Durham, DH1 3JU
ELECTORAL DIVISION:	Elvet and Gilesgate
CASE OFFICER:	Jennifer Jennings Planning Officer 03000 261057 Jennifer.jennings@durham.gov.uk

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE AND PROPOSALS

The Site

1. The application site forms part of the Durham University estate and consists of a terrace of 4 Victorian properties located some 500 metres to the east of Durham City Centre. It is accessed from Green Lane which is a no through road providing access to various University premises, offices and recreational grounds, including Durham Rowing Club, Cricket Club and Rugby Club. The properties have largely retained their original appearance, with a red brick and slate roof finish and timber sash windows. The properties each have a small enclosed front garden area and rear yard/garden area, with the western most end terrace benefiting from a grassed and tree / shrub planted side garden.
2. The properties overlook a cricket playing ground to the north and are surrounded by office buildings to the east and south, with an apartment block to the west. The properties are not listed but they are located within a designated Conservation area and Area of High Landscape Value.

The Proposal

3. The application seeks full planning permission for the change of use of the properties from 4 residential dwellings to 4 office buildings for use by Durham University. The proposal seeks to convert the nine bedrooms and five reception rooms (total number across the four dwellings) into office space, whilst also refurbishing the existing kitchens and bathrooms to provide welfare facilities for the new occupants. In total 14 individual office rooms would be created for use by Durham University staff.
4. No external works are proposed to undertake the change of use although existing timber sash windows would be repaired using timber splice and resin repair method. The remaining works would be internal including addition of some partition walls with other works to lighting and floor coverings to suit office use.

5. The application is being reported to Planning Committee at the request of the local ward member, on behalf of a local resident's group. The concerns raised related to the loss of housing in the city centre, the impact on heritage associated with the dwellings and increase in parking and traffic.

PLANNING HISTORY

6. No records of planning history exist for this site.

PLANNING POLICY

NATIONAL POLICY

7. A revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in July 2018 (with updates since). The overriding message continues to be that new development that is sustainable should go ahead without delay. It defines the role of planning in achieving sustainable development under three overarching objectives – economic, social and environmental, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways.
8. In accordance with Paragraph 213 of the National Planning Policy Framework, existing policies should not be considered out-of-date simply because they were adopted or made prior to the publication of this Framework. Due weight should be given to them, according to their degree of consistency with the Framework (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given). The relevance of this issue is discussed, where appropriate, in the assessment section of the report. The following elements of the NPPF are considered relevant to this proposal.
9. *NPPF Part 2 - Achieving Sustainable Development.* The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and therefore at the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. It defines the role of planning in achieving sustainable development under three overarching objectives - economic, social and environmental, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways. The application of the presumption in favour of sustainable development for plan-making and decision-taking is outlined.
10. *NPPF Part 4 - Decision-making.* Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. They should use the full range of planning tools available, including brownfield registers and permission in principle, and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.
11. *NPPF Part 6 –Building a strong, competitive economy.* The Government is committed to securing economic growth in order to create jobs and prosperity, building on the country's inherent strengths, and to meeting the twin challenges of global competition and a low carbon future.
12. *NPPF Part 7 Ensuring the Vitality of Town Centres -* Planning policies should be positive, promote competitive town centre environments and set out policies for the management and growth of centres over the plan period.

13. *NPPF Part 9 – Promoting sustainable transport.* Encouragement should be given to solutions which support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and reduce congestion. Developments that generate significant movement should be located where the need to travel will be minimised and the use of sustainable transport modes maximised.
14. *NPPF Part 11 – Making effective use of land.* Planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions. Strategic policies should set out a clear strategy for accommodating objectively assessed needs, in a way that makes as much use as possible of previously-developed or 'brownfield' land.
15. *NPPF Part 12 – Achieving well-designed places* The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment, with good design a key aspect of sustainable development, indivisible from good planning.
16. *NPPF Part 14 – Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change* - The planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change. It should help to: shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure.
17. *NPPF Part 16 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment.* Heritage assets range from sites and buildings of local historic value to those of the highest significance, such as World Heritage Sites which are internationally recognised to be of Outstanding Universal Value. These assets are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework>

18. The Government has consolidated a number of planning practice guidance notes, circulars and other guidance documents into a single Planning Practice Guidance Suite. This document provides planning guidance on a wide range of matters. Of particular relevance to this application is the practice guidance with regards to; air quality; historic environment; design process and tools; determining a planning application; flood risk; health and well-being; land stability; housing and economic development needs assessments; housing and economic land availability assessment; light pollution; natural environment; noise; open space, sports and recreation facilities, public rights of way and local green space; planning obligations; travel plans, transport assessments and statements; use of planning conditions and; water supply, wastewater and water quality.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>

LOCAL PLAN POLICY:

City of Durham Local Plan (2004)

19. *Policy E6 Durham City Centre Conservation Area* – states that the special character, appearance and setting of the Durham (City Centre) Conservation Area will be preserved or enhanced as required by section 72 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The policy specifically requires proposals to use high quality design and materials which are sympathetic to the traditional character of the conservation area.
20. *Policy E22 – Conservation Areas* – seeks to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of conservation areas, by not permitting development which would detract from its setting, while ensuring that proposals are sensitive in terms of scale, design and materials reflective of existing architectural details.
21. *Policy EMP11 – Employment within settlement boundaries but outside designated sites* – will be permitted so long as it does not have significant adverse impact on the amenity of neighbouring occupiers in terms of noise, dust and general disturbance; adversely affect the character and appearance of the area; result in an increase in traffic generation to the detriment of local amenity and highway safety.
22. *Policy EMP12 – General Locational Criteria* – New office development or change of use of an existing building to offices will be permitted within, or adjacent to the city centre and within district and local centres.
23. *Policy T1 – Traffic Generation – General* – states that development proposals which would result in a level of traffic generation detrimental to highway safety should not be granted planning permission.
24. *Policy T5 – Public Transport* – The council will encourage improvements to assist public transport services including the provision of suitable facilities and ensuring new development can be conveniently and efficiently served by public transport.
25. *Policy T10 – Parking* – States that vehicle parking should be limited in amount, so as to promote sustainable transport choices and reduce the land-take of development.
26. *Policy T21 – Walking* – states that existing footpaths and public rights of way should be protected.
27. *Policies Q1 and Q2 - General Principles Designing for People and Accessibility* – states that the layout and design of all new development should take into account the requirements of all users.
28. *Policy Q7 - Layout and Design – Industrial and Business Development* – the siting design and external appearance of all new industrial and business development will be required to be of a standard appropriate to the designated area within which it is located.

EMERGING PLAN:

The County Durham Plan

29. The County Durham Plan (CDP) which in time will replace the existing saved Local Plans in County Durham commenced its Examination in Public (EiP) in Winter 2019. The programmed hearing sessions subsequently closed on 6th February 2020, and the Inspector's issued his post hearing advice on 20th February 2020. An amended CDP has been prepared to take account of the specific instructions from the Inspector, and all the minor/main modifications which the Council proposed following the hearing sessions and in response to the action points issued by the Inspector. Consultation on the CDP (Main Modifications) commenced on Tuesday 26th May and will last until 21st July 2020 (an eight-week period).

All comments that are received during this consultation period will be sent to the Inspector to inform his final report. Paragraph 48 of the NPPF states that decision-takers may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to: the stage of the emerging plan; the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies; and, the degree of consistency of the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the NPPF. Although the CDP is now at an advanced stage of preparation, it is considered that it should not be afforded any weight in the decision-making process until the Inspector's final report has been received.

CONSULTATION AND PUBLICITY RESPONSES

STATUTORY RESPONSES:

30. *Highway Authority* – The details contained within the Design and Access Statement sets out that employees will be issued with permits to park within Durham University car parks. In view of this concerns regarding the effect on parking amenity of existing users is removed. There are no objections to the development from highway perspective.

INTERNAL CONSULTEE RESPONSES:

31. *Design and Conservation* – No objections are raised on heritage or design grounds, due to no external alterations being proposed. As such the historic character and appearance of the individual properties, terrace and by default, the surrounding conservation area would be unchanged, thus preserved. The properties are not listed, therefore internal works cannot be controlled.
32. *Environment, Health and Consumer Protection (Nuisance Action Team)* – The development is considered to fall outside the scope of the TANS and no concerns or comments are raised in relation to the development.

PUBLIC RESPONSES:

33. The application has been advertised by way of a press and site notice and individual notification letters to neighbouring residents. 4 letters of objection have been received.
34. The main concerns are summarised as:
- Proposal will remove four traditional family homes from dwindling housing stock within this part of city
 - Properties have historic links and only remaining part of the station that existed here as part of local railway heritage and should be preserved
 - Note that buildings in poor condition, with timber windows left to rot and original features removed
 - Better to refurbish as homes rather than offices and provide accommodation for university staff which is lacking in area. This would be a sustainable location for such staff being so close to university buildings.
 - Parking a huge problem in area. Conversion to offices will make this worse. Also route to the offices would be via residential streets causing traffic congestion.
 - Travel plans are aspirational and can't make people walk or cycle and therefore can't prevent congestion or parking issues.
 - Design and access statement is misleading stating sufficient parking available as it does not take into account displacement of parking resulting from 14 new offices
 - Parking congestion and pollution are real issues within Durham City and this will add to this problem along with other big university developments

- Note that at time of building Palatinate building it was deemed this would meet all of the administrative needs yet more office buildings required.
- The University's aspirations are not being met as loss of housing negatively impacting on ability to have mixed and balanced communities. Not fostering good relationships with local community.

The above is not intended to repeat every point made and represents a summary of the comments received on this application. The full written text is available for inspection on the application file which can be viewed at: <https://publicaccess.durham.gov.uk/online-applications/simpleSearchResults.do?action=firstPage>

APPLICANTS STATEMENT:

35. We (The University) has found there is no demand for renting the properties in their current condition and is not viable for Durham University to Invest in properties for rental to staff. Conversion to office use restores the buildings, bringing them back into beneficial use. It is anticipated that this will be a short term proposal until there is a proposed bespoke office accommodation for the Faculty of Arts and Humanities. Works have also been designed to facilitate conversion back to residential in the future.
36. Having this facility in the area will bring 14 staff members from Durham University, which will benefit local businesses that offer food and drink to the day trade, such as Durham City Rugby Club and the Dun Cow.
37. In regards to the parking situation 442 parking spaces are accessed via Green Lane, assuming all 14 staff drive to work an extra 14x2 vehicle movements will be negligible. DU control 202 of the Green Lane spaces and these car parks are currently operating under capacity, there is therefore sufficient space to accommodate the extra vehicles, as part of the proposal. Our objective is to discourage car usage amongst staff not to facilitate it, which is why we are not adding to our overall car parking capacity within the Estates Masterplan. Our Sustainable Travel Plan is designed to influence travel behaviour and achieve a shift towards increased use of sustainable transport (walking, cycling and public transport) for both staff and students. The Travel Plan includes the following initiatives to promote sustainable travel for staff and students:
38. Unlimited daily travel for £1 or £5 a week (for 7 days) with Arriva for students in the wider Arriva Durham District Zone. Students can also travel between Durham and Newcastle for £1 a day. Access to the Pink Bus service which runs past University buildings.
39. Provision of cycle facilities at colleges and across the University Estate, including a large provision of cycle spaces in secure bike shelters on Lower Mountjoy, a central hub of the University.
40. Durham University are also constructing a cycle and pedestrian 'Super Route', a key part of our Estate Masterplan, which will run for one mile from A167 by Mount Oswald to the Bill Bryson Library totally separated from road traffic. This links key areas of the University, reducing the need for car journeys, and benefitting staff, students and the public.
41. These offices are for academics in the Faculty of Arts & Humanities. In the recent QS World University Rankings the Faculty of Arts and Humanities came 39th in the world and in A&H subject areas Theology and Religion came fourth, Classics and Ancient History, English Studies and History are in the world top 50, with Philosophy and Modern Languages and Cultures in the top 100.

42. The University want to build a new home for Arts & Humanities and that is currently included within Estates Masterplan. Until then we need to utilise existing space to allow for the recruitment and retention of World Class academics & researchers.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS AND ASSESSMENT

43. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 sets out that regard is to be given to the development plan and decisions should be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In accordance with advice within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the policies contained therein are material considerations that should be taken into account in decision making. Other material considerations include representations received. In this context, it is considered that the main planning issues in this instance relate to: the principle of the development, impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area, residential amenity and highway safety and access.

The Principle of the Development

44. Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The NPPF is a material planning consideration. The City of Durham Local Plan (Local Plan) remains the statutory development plan and the starting point for determining applications as set out at Paragraph 12 of the NPPF.
45. The Local Plan was adopted in 2004, however, NPPF Paragraph 213 advises that Local Plan policies should not be considered out-of-date simply because they were adopted prior to the publication of the NPPF. Paragraph 213 also sets out that due weight should be given to existing policies, according to their degree of consistency with this Framework (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given).
46. Relevant local plan policies in relation to this proposal are policies EMP11 for employment within settlement boundaries but outside designated sites and EMP12 for general office development. Policy EMP11 confirms that business uses within settlement boundaries, but outside industrial estates, will only be permitted if they would not adversely affect: amenity, in terms of noise, dust and disturbance; character and appearance of the area; and traffic. This policy is considered to be both consistent with the NPPF and not out of date. Policy EMP12 states that office development is permissible within or adjacent to city centre, district and local centres. This policy is considered to partially comply with the NPPF on the basis that whilst it follows the sequential approach, it does not provide details on the requirement for an impact test for large scale office developments. In this case the proposals would not be considered to constitute large scale office development and would not be subject to an impact test. Policy EMP12 is therefore considered applicable and relevant to the consideration of these proposals in terms of the principle of the location. On this basis it is not necessary to invoke paragraph 11 of the NPPF.
47. The site is located within the settlement boundary of Durham City. Although a city centre location it is not within the defined main town centre deemed appropriate for town centre uses, such as retail and leisure as well as office use. In this regard the site would be deemed an edge of centre location in accordance with the NPPF, which defines, for the purposes of office development, an edge of centre site as a location outside the town centre but within 500 metres of a public transport interchange, such as bus stops. The application site falls within this definition.

48. NPPF policy at paragraphs 86 and 87 states that preference should be given to town centre locations for town centre uses before edge of centre sites. In the absence of a suitable town centre site, edge of centre locations can be deemed appropriate if they are accessible and well connected to the town centre. For reference this application was submitted alongside a separate planning application, now approved, for the conversion of second floor living accommodation space to office space on Saddler Street, within the town centre. As such, the University has made suitable use of a town centre site for required office accommodation. However it is noted that the vast majority of Durham University estate is not located within the town centre, and it is recognised that there will be a requirement for office accommodation to be adjacent to these other sites. The current application site, whilst not located within the town centre, is well related to a range of adjacent key University premises including its medical and occupational health facilities and storage sites, student colleges including Parsons Field and St Cuthbert's Society, as well as numerous departments along Old Elvet. The site would be considered suitable for the purposes of access to nearby University facilities, whilst also being well related to the town centre which is just over 500 metres away. The site can also be readily accessed by various means of transport other than private car. The provision of offices on this site is therefore considered to accord with policy EMP12 and NPPF policy in this regard.
49. Objections were raised against the proposals due to the loss of city centre housing, with comments stating that the dwellings should be kept in C3 use to deal with the shortage of family properties in the city. These objections are noted, and it is agreed that the dwellings do provide an ideal sustainable location for housing, however, the immediate environs do not easily lend themselves as an ideal place for a family home. Whilst the terrace itself has a strong residential character and enjoys open aspect along its frontage to the north, this contrasts significantly with its immediate surrounds. Office buildings are located directly east and south of the terrace, overlooking the small rear gardens and impacting on outlook and general amenities for any occupiers of the terrace on this side. Immediately west of the terrace lies the main car park access road for the office building to the rear and south of the terrace as well as a sports and social club, and this leads to the main parking areas, some of which abut the rear boundary of the application site. Further residential uses exist west of the car park access road in the form of two 3 and 4 storey apartment blocks, one of which caters specifically for students. There is an undoubted mix of uses in this particular area, but a noted emphasis on offices and sport club buildings, particularly adjacent to the terrace. It would be difficult to insist on retention of the C3 use given the site characteristics, and conversion to office use is not unreasonable in this case. In addition there are no specific policies that restrict loss of housing, in this regard, and therefore the proposed change of use to office accommodation needs to be assessed on its specific merits and location and impacts on the area, rather than on the basis of alternative uses.
50. The objections also state disappointment at the conversion of the dwellings given that at the time of developing the large-scale Palatinate Building on Stockton Road it was intended by the University that these buildings would address all of its office requirements. It is accepted with any business that different needs emerge over time and it is not unreasonable for the University to seek out further office accommodation. The application must be determined on its own merits, regardless of what previous intentions the University may have had with regards office accommodation. In light of the various issues discussed above, it is clear that the proposed change of use of the dwelling houses can be suitably accommodated in this location, given the close ties with nearby University facilities, the close proximity to the town centre and the adjacent office uses and wider character of the area.

51. In consideration of the above, the development to convert the terrace to office accommodation is considered policy compliant at both a local and national level. Subject to other considerations below, the principle of the development is considered acceptable.

Impact on character and appearance of the Conservation Area

52. Local authorities have a duty to preserve or enhance the Conservation Area as set out in section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. This requires Local Planning Authorities in the exercise of their planning function with respect to any buildings or other land in Conservation Areas to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.
53. In line with the legislative background, Part 16 of the NPPF relating to conserving and enhancing the historic environment is of direct relevance to this proposal and this states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance. In line with this, local plan policy E6 requires that materials should be the same as or sympathetic to the traditional materials of the historic city or an individual street. Policy E22 is also considered to be consistent with the NPPF and further states that development should not be permitted where it would detract from the character or appearance of the conservation area or its setting and all development proposals should be sensitive in terms of design and materials.
54. Design and Conservation were consulted for their views on the proposals. They confirmed the terrace of Victorian railway cottages dates from c.1898 and is rare within the city as it was built as part of the Durham Station-Elvet part of the Durham, Elvet & Murton branch line, with many of the buildings associated with the station demolished in the 1960s. They note that the terrace contributes positively to the surrounding conservation area and in this respect the proposed change of use to secure their use/occupation, along with associated fabric restoration works would be beneficial moving forwards. The internal works cannot be controlled as the properties forming the terrace are not listed, but it is positive that the intention is to alter the internal arrangement in a minimalistic manner, overall conserving the historic building plan form. As no external physical alterations are proposed there would be no impact on the external character and appearance of the terrace as a non-designated heritage asset, or on the character and appearance of the surrounding conservation area as a designated heritage asset. Based on the above, the proposals would have a neutral impact and would therefore be considered acceptable from a heritage standpoint.
55. Whilst concern has been raised that the properties are the last remaining evidence of the local railway heritage at this part of Durham City, and that they should be preserved in their original use as dwellings, the proposed new use of the building does not involve any external changes thereby retaining the appearance and character of the terrace. Design and Conservation do not object to the proposals, identifying the proposed use as a positive way to keep the buildings in beneficial use and ensure their upkeep. The proposed repair works to existing timber windows is also welcomed and would positively contribute to the character of the conservation area.
56. The proposal is therefore considered acceptable in respect of policies E6, E22 and EMP11 of the Local Plan and complies with section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 in that it will preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Residential Amenity

57. EMP11 of the Local Plan states that planning permission for new business premises outside designated sites will be granted so long as they would not have significant adverse impacts on the amenity of neighbouring occupiers in terms of noise, dust and general disturbance. NPPF policy also reflects these requirements in paragraphs 127f) and 180.
58. The nearest residential properties are the student apartment block at Gosling Park located 42 metres to the west of the Terrace, whilst River Court apartments are further west again, 82 metres from the Terrace and benefits from its own parking area within the grounds. With the distances involved both residential blocks are quite removed from activities at this site. Given the extent of existing offices and club houses along this lane, it is not anticipated that the comings and goings of office workers to the building would create any significant or noticeable effect on these residents. The proposed use as office accommodation is also not expected to raise significant issues of noise, and given its location within an established business area, it is not anticipated that neighbouring uses would be negatively impacted by the proposed use. Environmental Health were consulted for their views and raised no objections in this regard. The proposals accord with Policy EMP11.

Highway Safety and Access

59. Policy T1 of the Local Plan states that the Council will not grant planning permission for development that would generate a level of traffic that would be detrimental to highway safety and / or have a significant effect on the amenity of occupiers of neighbouring property. Policy EMP11 similarly requires development to not result in traffic generation to the detriment of local amenity and highway safety. Other relevant Local Plan policies include T5 which seeks to ensure new development can be conveniently and efficiently serviced by public transport, T10 which seeks to limit parking to encourage sustainable transport choices and T21 to safeguard the needs of walkers. These are consistent with NPPF policy which also seeks to ensure that a safe and suitable access can be achieved and appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes can be taken up, given the type of development and its location.
60. The applicant has submitted details on parking arrangements for proposed staff at the premises, including provision of a parking permit for staff to use at existing staff car parks across University sites, as illustrated on a plan. A Travel Plan was also submitted indicating the University's arrangements to encourage staff to make use of alternative means of transport to access sites. Highways section assessed the details and were satisfied that employees would have permit access to University car parks, removing concerns regarding the effect on parking amenity of existing users. Compliance with the Travel Plan can be made the subject of control through a condition.
61. Although objection and concerns were raised with regards the increased pressure for parking and potential for congestion through creation of 14 new offices at the site, it is considered that the site's sustainable location along with ready access to numerous footpaths, cycle ways, as well as bus routes within 500 metres of the site, will provide for a viable choice to allow occupiers to make use of alternative means of travel to the site. Given the relatively small scale of the development, it is not considered that a refusal on highways grounds could be substantiated.
62. Overall, the highways impacts of the proposed development are considered to be acceptable in accordance with Local Plan Policy T1, T10 and T21 as well as Part 9 of the NPPF.

CONCLUSION

63. Overall, the proposed change of use of the terraced properties to office accommodation is considered acceptable, due to being suitably located, close to University buildings, the town centre and readily accessible by sustainable transport modes. The proposals would not require external alterations ensuring the historic character or appearance of the terrace is retained, thus preserving the character and appearance of the surrounding conservation area. The continued use of the building would also ensure its upkeep and maintenance. There are no concerns regarding impact on amenities of neighbouring occupiers. The proposals are deemed to accord with relevant Local Plan policies E6, E22, EMP11, EMP12, T1, T10 and T21 and the NPPF.
64. The proposal has generated public interest with four letters of objection received. The objections and concerns raised have been taken into account and addressed within the report. On balance the concerns raised were not felt to be of sufficient weight to justify refusal of this application.

RECOMMENDATION

That the application be APPROVED, subject to the following conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: Required to be imposed pursuant to Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development hereby approved shall be carried out in strict accordance with the following approved plans:

Plan	Drawing No.	Date Received
Existing parking locations	DU-AH-GL-013	08/01/20
Figure 1 - map showing the location of the property	DU-AH-GL-014	08/01/20
Existing & proposed ground & first floor layout plans 1	DU-AH-GL-001 (Rev A)	29/11/19
Existing & proposed ground & first floor layout plans 2	DU-AH-GL-002 (Rev A)	29/11/19
Existing & proposed ground & first floor layout plans 3	DU-AH-GL-003 (Rev A)	29/11/19
Existing & proposed ground & first floor layout plans 4	DU-AH-GL-004 (Rev A)	29/11/19

Reason: To define the consent and ensure that a satisfactory form of development is obtained in accordance with Policies E6, E22 and EMP11 of the City of Durham Local Plan and Parts 12 and 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

3. The development hereby approved shall operate in accordance with the details in the Travel Plan forming Appendix B of the submitted Design and Access Statement dated 7 January 2020.

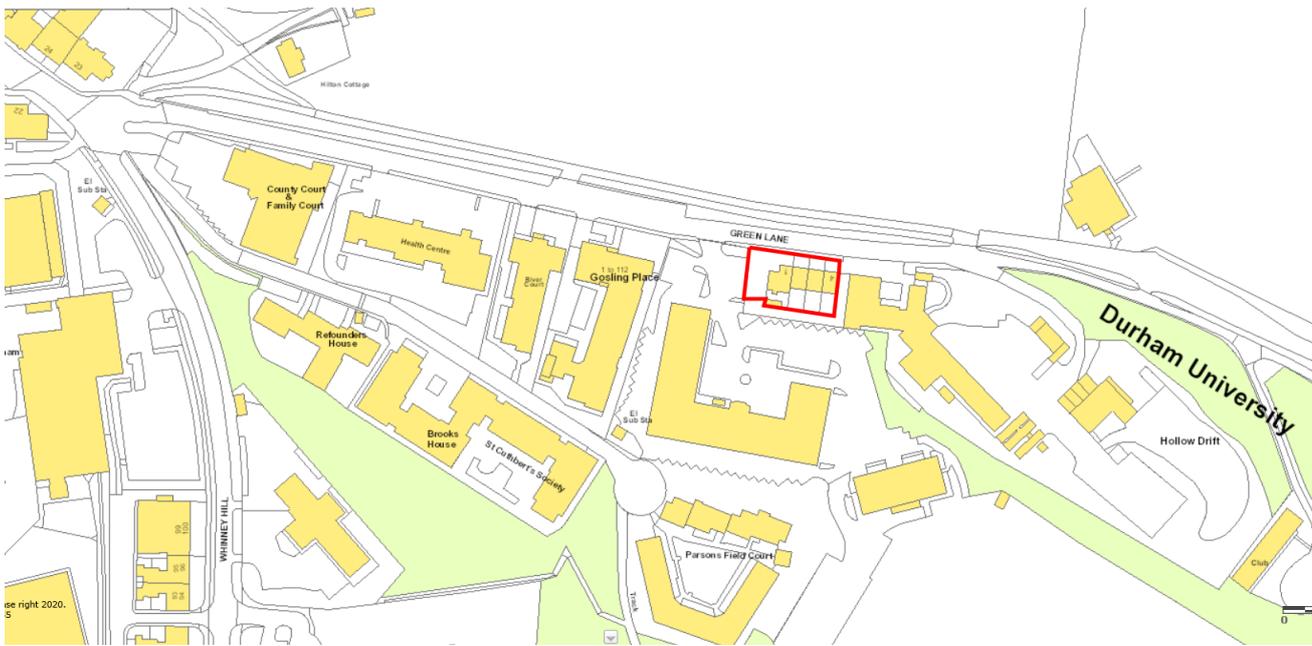
Reason: In the interests of highway safety and in accordance with Local Plan Policy T1, T10 and T21 and Part 9 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

STATEMENT OF PROACTIVE ENGAGEMENT

In accordance with Article 35(2) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015, the Local Planning Authority has, without prejudice to a fair and objective assessment of the proposals, issues raised and representations received, sought to work with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner with the objective of delivering high quality sustainable development to improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area in accordance with the NPPF.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Submitted application form, plans supporting documents and subsequent information provided by the applicant.
- The National Planning Policy Framework (2019)
- National Planning Practice Guidance notes.
- City of Durham Local Plan
- Statutory, internal and public consultation response




Planning Services

Change of use from 4 no. C3 residential buildings to
 4 no. B1 office buildings
 Durham University
 1-4 Green Lane
 Durham
 DH1 3JU
 Ref: DM/19/03753/FPA

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Comments

Date 21 July 2020

Scale Not to Scale