

Durham County Council  
Planning Development  
Central/East Room 4/86-102  
County Hall  
Durham  
DH1 5UL

City of Durham Council  
c/o Room 103  
Floor 1  
County Hall  
Durham  
DH1 5UF

8 July 2018

Dear Ms Hyde,

DM/18/01270/FPA: 22 Mitchell Street Durham DH1 4DQ

I write on behalf of the City of Durham Council to object to the proposal for a change of use of a dwelling (Class C3) to small House in Multiple Occupation (Class C4) and a two storey and single storey rear extension.

The submitted Design and Access and Heritage Statement asserts that the percentage of student properties lies within the accepted range of over-concentration to invoke the exception clause in the Interim Policy. This is not correct: there is no defined percentage figure above which another HMO is allowable by the Interim Policy. The best indication so far is that the County Council refused a change of use from C3 to C4 at 6 Waddington Street where the percentage on their reckoning was 68% and the Council argued that this meant that the area was not saturated enough to qualify for the exception clause in the Interim Policy.

The applicant poses two alternatives: renting to students as an HMO and selling as a family home. He has not considered a third alternative: renting to a couple or a family, whose occupancy of the property would fall within use class C3.

Paragraph 11.4 suggests that families living in the property would "likely feel isolated, insecure and vulnerable" in University vacations. This is conjecture, offered without evidence. This author is aware of two families, one in East Atherton Street, the other in John Street, who quite clearly do not find this an issue and who have no intention of moving out. For reasons of data protection I will not name them here, but their identities can be disclosed privately.

The same statement confuses matters with references to post-codes. The Interim Policy is a straightforward 100 metres radius from the application site. In the clear terms of the Interim Policy, this application is for an HMO where the percentage of HMO properties in the 100 metre radius is well over the threshold of 10%. We do not accept the Interim Policy's exception clause that allows an area to be written off. The application should be refused.

Yours sincerely,

ROGER CORNWELL

Chair, Planning Committee