



**CITY OF DURHAM
PARISH COUNCIL**

Learning from the past.
Building for the future.

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11 December 2019

Dear Ms Jennings,

DM/19/03508/FPA | Change of use from existing six bedroom HMO (C4) to eight bedroom HMO (sui generis) including dormer loft conversion and other associated internal alterations | 18 The Avenue Durham DH1 4ED

This planning application was considered by the Parish Planning Committee at its meeting on 6 December 2019 and it was resolved to object to it for the reasons set out below.

The purpose of the Interim Policy on Student Accommodation is twofold, and both are designed to ensure mixed, balanced and sustainable communities as required by the NPPF. The first is to avoid the loss of family homes to student HMOs, and recent appeal decisions have focussed on this aspect and overlooked the second objective, which is to ensure a balance between the permanent and student residents of the City. While the change here is just two extra students, the cumulative effect of a series of incremental changes like this is to change the balance of the City for the worse, and we urge you to refuse for this reason.

While there is a high concentration of student houses in Hawthorn Terrace at the back of this property, on The Avenue itself there is a run of houses from 14 to 21 inclusive all owner-occupier. On the opposite side of the street are the backs of the gardens in The Peth rather than houses.

Looking at the plans, bedroom 1 in the basement has a claimed area of 6.65m² which is only 0.14m² above the statutory minimum. This needs to be carefully checked as measured using the online tool the area appears to be 6.52m². The line indicating the extent of the headroom below 1500mm appears to underestimate the width of the stairs and this accounts for the difference in measurements.

We also object to the proposal to install uPVC windows as these are not suitable in a conservation area.

Yours sincerely,

Adam Shanley
Clerk to the City of Durham Parish Council