

City of Durham Parish Council
c/o 5 Alexandra Close
Ponteland
NE20 OBS

20 March 2019

Ms Sue Hyde
Durham County Council
Planning Department
Central/East Room 4/86-102
County Hall
Durham City
DH1 5UL

Dear Ms Hyde,

DM/19/00649/FPA: Change of use from a C4 house in multiple occupation to a 7 bedroom HIMO with a wrap round extension and internal alterations to existing dwelling at 51 Whinney Hill Durham DH1 3BD

I am writing on behalf of the City of Durham Parish Council to object to the above application for an extension to form a 7 bedroom House in Multiple Occupation at 51 Whinney Hill, Durham City.

The City of Durham Parish Council Planning Committee discussed this application at its meeting on 15 March 2019. The Committee noted that it was very similar to application number DM/18/03552/FPA with minor design modifications and resolved to object on the following grounds.

The County Council's Interim Policy on Student Accommodation states that:

"In order to promote the creation of sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities and maintain an appropriate housing mix, applications for new build Houses in Multiple Occupation (both C4 and sui generis), extensions that result in additional bed-spaces [...] will not be permitted if more than 10% of the total number of properties within 100 metres of the application site are already in use as HMOs or student accommodation exempt from council tax charges."

Within 100 metres of 51, Whinney Hill the percentage of student lets is over 50%, well over the threshold beyond which extensions to HMOs resulting in an additional bed-space are unacceptable.

The Parish Council is aware that the Pre-Submission Draft County Durham Plan Policy on Student Accommodation abandons the reference to extensions to existing HMOs. This is regarded as retrograde, as the impact of additional people causing noise and disturbance is the same whether they are in a new HMO or an extension to an HMO.

The preceding application was withdrawn following publication of the Planning Officer's report to Committee. The Planning Officer's conclusions in that report were that *"the change to a sui generis use class with seven or more occupants in the dwelling within this cul de sac location would have a detrimental impact on residential amenity from noise and disturbance from additional comings and goings at unsocial hours, and disturbance through the party wall to the adjoining C3 dwelling. For these reasons officers consider the application is not acceptable and is contrary to Policy H9 and H13 of the City of Durham Local Plan 2004"*.

The Parish Council fully supports the officer's conclusions and grounds for recommending refusal.

The Parish Council also notes that there have still been no pre-application discussions with a County Council Planning Officer. This raises again concern over matters such as arrangements for storage of waste bins, impact on the Conservation Area, and car parking.

For all these reasons the City of Durham Parish Council Planning Committee asks the County Council to refuse this application.

Should you be minded to approve this application, we would wish this application to be called to Committee so that we can put our case to Councillors.

Yours sincerely,

Adam Shanley
Clerk to the City of Durham Parish Council