

Durham County Council
Planning Development
County Hall
Durham
DH1 5UL

City of Durham Parish Council
c/o Room 103
Floor 1
County Hall
Durham
DH1 5UF
23 September 2018

Dear Ms Eden,

DM/18/02614/FPA | Proposed Durham Distillery The Riverwalk Millburngate Durham DH1 4SL

I write to raise concerns about the above application, which I hope can be addressed. If that is not possible we wish to call this application to Committee.

Our primary concern is on the grounds of safety. Ethanol vapour is highly flammable and is one of the main fire and explosion hazards at distilleries. Ethanol can be released from leaks in tanks, casks, transfer pumps, pipes and flexible hoses. I am sure that the applicants are well aware of this, since they currently operate from a trading estate in Langley Park, but I find nothing in the application to show how these are being addressed.

The distillery will be below shops and, on upper floors, student accommodation. The risks are self-evident. Distilling is an industrial process and Saved Policy Q7 applies. Its justification states that “it is important that new industrial and business areas are laid out and designed to a standard appropriate for their designation **as well as taking account of the safety and amenity of those working and visiting the area and those living nearby.**” (My emphasis) Further documentation is needed to show how the risks not just to those in the premises, but shopping and living in other parts of the Riverwalk, are being eliminated. Without these the requirements of Saved Policy Q7 cannot be met.

The other aspect we wish to comment on is the flood risk. I have read the Flood Risk Assessment and this appears to be unaware of actual flooding that has occurred at this site, for example on 17 July 2009. The photograph on the next page is taken from YouTube <https://youtu.be/NQ46bSI70HY> and shows the Phase 2 Loading Bay, which is where this development is proposed. We would suggest that the Assessment underestimates the risk.

We hope these issues can be addressed because we would like to see this business established in Durham City, but not at the risk to public safety.

Yours faithfully,

ROGER CORNWELL

Chair, Planning Committee

