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City of Durham Parish Council
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8 October 2018

Dear Mr Jones,

Application DM/18/02632/AD:

Erection of non illuminated fascia sign, Rushford Court, North Road, Durham City DH1 4RY

I write in my capacity as Chair of the City of Durham Parish Council's Planning Committee which, at its meeting on Friday 5 October 2018, resolved to object to the above proposal. The Planning Committee considers that the proposed signage serves no useful purpose, is too large, and would set a bad precedent.

Purpose

A clear sign somewhere giving the name of the property would be appropriate, particularly for new students and their parents. The proposed sign is merely the name and logo of the development/management company which has many such buildings across the country, including two others in Durham City. It is a permanent advertisement for the company and, as such, falls to be considered under City of Durham Development Plan 2004 Saved Policy Q17:

Policy Q17

Advertisement consent will only be granted for hoardings and large advertising panels when they are not located:

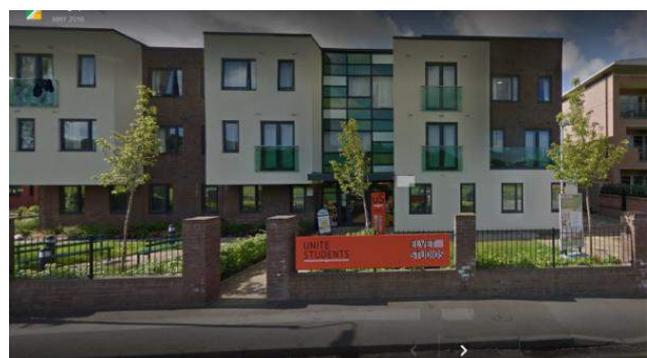
1. Within or on the edge of the open countryside;
2. Within conservation areas;
3. In the vicinity of listed buildings;
4. In predominantly residential areas or near housing;
5. On blank walls adjacent to, or sites clearly visible from, the main radial routes into the city and rail corridors;
6. On a site where the advertising would be detrimental to visual amenity or have an adverse effect on highway safety.

The proposal site lies within the Conservation Area (point 2 above) and is on a blank wall adjacent to and clearly visible from the East Coast Main Line railway viaduct (point 5 above), and therefore should be refused under both terms of Saved Policy Q17.

Size

Even if the proposed signage served a useful purpose of identifying the name of the building, the scale of the logo and of the lettering is excessive. Key buildings that need to be found by people

new to the area, such as the Colleges of the University, or the University Hospital of North Durham, or County Hall, have signs with lettering that is up to 0.2 metres high. The proposed signage includes lettering that is over 1.2 metres tall and this is grossly excessive. Indeed, the established size of signs for this company's PBSAs in Durham, including Rushford Court itself, is absolutely acceptable (except that the blue-grey colour is more appropriate than the earlier orange colour) and is all that is needed for the legitimate purpose of identifying the property, see below.



Precedent

There are other PBSAs under construction and probably more to follow. It would be a major retrograde step if the advertising signage proposed in this application were to lead to similar sized company name signage being proposed and approved elsewhere in the City.

Conclusion

The City of Durham Parish Council Planning Committee recommends that application DM/18/02632/AD be refused as being a large advertising panel located in the Durham City Conservation Area and on a blank wall adjacent to and clearly visible from a main radial route within the City and rail corridor, contrary to parts 2 and 5 of City of Durham Development Plan 2004 Saved Policy Q17.

Yours sincerely

Roger Cornwell

Chair, City of Durham Parish Council