

From: Barry Gower  
Sent: 14 February 2020 20:58  
To: Spatial Policy  
Subject: Comments on Durham City Neighbourhood Plan

The Durham City Access For All Group commented on several aspects of a previous version of the Durham City Neighbourhood Plan. At a recent meeting of the Group, it was pleased to note that most of its comments have been incorporated into the current version. The Group has expressed its appreciation for the extensive work undertaken by the team producing the Plan. The Group's further comments are:

1. Contrary to the impression given in the Plan, there are significant parts of the paving in North Road which are in a poor condition, and which create unnecessary difficulties for wheelchair users, especially those using the bus station. The Group understands that further improvements to the pavements will be made when the bus station is renovated.
2. There does not appear to be any mention in the Plan of the important detailed recommendations resulting from an access audit currently being undertaken by DCC of the City's streets and pavements. When completed this audit will provide valuable information which all future developments and renovations in the City will need to take into account.
3. In its comments on the previous version of the Neighbourhood Plan, the Access Group drew attention to the importance of consulting all those who live and/or work in the City, and who face mobility challenges arising from sensory or physical impairments. Those who do not face those challenges — or who do not yet face them — are often unaware of the steps that could and should be taken, often at little or no cost if incorporated into plans at an early stage, to reduce their impact. The Access Group is sometimes consulted, but more often it is simply informed after decisions have been taken when it can do no more than protest at the ill-considered consequences of those decisions. There is no mention in the Neighbourhood Plan of the advantages of consulting those with information and experience which should be taken into account when plans are developed.

B S Gower, Secretary, Durham City Access For All Group.