



an independent force for a better Bristol

The Society's statement in response to pre-application presentation to redevelop the site ND7 Temple Quay North Avon Street - No: 14/00514/PREAPP

12th May 2014

The Society is grateful to Square Bay for the invitation to their presentation and for the opportunity to comment. The Society supports the development. It offers its comments constructively.

Proposed uses

The Society welcomes development that attracts a residential population to the centre of the city. The Society supports the proposal to develop residential accommodation on the upper floors of this development in the transitional zone.

The Society is cautious about any proposal to designate a single retail use class to any development outside a primary retail area. The Society expects that online shopping will continue to attract business away from traditional shops. Except for Harratz Place, there is a striking lack of retail or leisure offer in the area. Local residents' associations have told the Society that they would welcome a multiple convenience retailer. The Residents' Parking Scheme should permit the service of a convenience store. Some alternative thought to internet-driven-deliveries may also be required given the number of proposed homes. The Society supports the developer's proposal that the uses of the ground floor should be as flexible as possible. This area is undergoing a large population inflow. There is a dearth of public amenities. For example, there must be provision for doctors' and dental surgeries, crèches and nurseries and, for apartment living residents, opportunities to exercise. This development could accommodate any of these uses, which the Society regards as business uses. The only criterion to apply to the use of the ground floor is whether a use would promote an active frontage. The current lack of footfall in the daytime is striking. The area is also dead in the evening after the adjacent offices empty. There is some scope to make the ground floor a local destination for neighbours in normal waking hours therefore.

Height and mass

The proposed height and mass is appropriate for a city centre area. The Society is pleased that the Square Bay has not proposed a perimeter building to the back of the pavement. The offset-H block makes good use of available sunlight.

Design and materials

The Society has an open mind about the design. Whilst it does not criticise the proposed design it would also support something more architecturally innovative. There are no examples of outstanding architecture in the area. The same remark applies to the choice of materials. The Society regrets that the design adds nothing interesting to the skyline. The Society welcomes the roof garden in principle but more detail is required if this area is to be more than a wind swept platform of most days. There appears to be an opportunity to install a solar array.

Accommodation mix

Although the Society shares the Council's concerns about the aspect, density and sustainability of the residential accommodation, its primary interest lies in the public realm. The society has criticised other developments over single aspect flats with long artificially lit corridors.

The Public realm

The Society appreciates the effort to create some open space to soften the immediate, universally hard landscape. The Society would cautiously support a proposal to develop plots ND6 and ND7 cooperatively given that current thinking for ND6 was not on display here. The proposal of developing the two sites together and closing New Kingsley Road between Avon Street and Old Bread Street offers a lot of potential. The Society would not welcome the development of the two sites as a single block. The road closure could create a badly needed pocket park without inconvenience to road users. The alternative roads could adequately accommodate the diverted traffic. Avon Street, now flanked by large orthogonal buildings, has become a narrow depressing canyon for pedestrians.

The Society does not believe that the public either appreciates or notices the plan to create radiating views from the south of the canal towards the north due to One-Glass-Place. The high level bridge compromises the intended original sight line cut through the Burgess Salmon Building. The public is left to wonder at the reason for the cut through a building. The mass of building that rises above the canal creates the over riding visual impact from the south.