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12<sup>th</sup> September 2017

### **McArthur's Warehouse Gas Ferry Road – 17/03139/F**

On the 5<sup>th</sup> July 2017, the Society responded to this planning application. This supplementary response follows the substantial number of additional documents filed to support the application after the 26<sup>th</sup> July.

The Society welcomes the development of this site, which lies on a strategic east-west route through the harbourside and occupies a prominent position on Gas Ferry Lane and the approach to the SS Great Britain. The development will bring welcome activity to the surrounding area, and will upgrade the Harbourside Promenade past Rolt's Boathouse.

The Applicant's purpose in filing further documents is to answer the objections raised by Historic England in the heritage advice letter dated the 6<sup>th</sup> July. Following that letter there have been revisions to the design such as the deletion of the projecting balconies on Block A. However, most of the further information justifies the unaltered heights of Blocks A & B.

The Society regrets that the Applicant has rejected Historic England advice that, *"Seven stories would extrude a building mass which would impact upon the backdrop and legibility of the SS Great Britain."* Historic England's advice was unambiguous, *"Buildings A and B should be reduced by one storey each so that their massing is more aligned to the ambient built environment of the immediate area."*

On the 21<sup>st</sup> December 2016, the Bristol Urban Design Forum gave similar advice. The Panel said, *"In considering the scale of the new buildings, the Panel's view is that the eaves height of the original building and of the adjacent Great Western House represents an appropriate benchmark. While we would not preclude some variation in height to mark the junction at the south-east corner, we were not convinced by the apparently arbitrary increase in height to seven storeys, which we believe would draw undue emphasis to the development and, crucially, detract from the SS Great Britain, a major heritage asset."*

The Society is aware that the Council has also shared the concerns of Historic England, the BUDF and the Society about the heights of Blocks A & B. The Society specifically draws to the planning officer's attention the supplementary document – PROPOSED ELEVATION – WEST – which strikingly illustrates the disparity of height between Blocks A & B, the Linden Homes development and Great Western House. The height disparity will be clear from ground level views from all sides. The new buildings will dominate the surrounding

buildings, which form the backdrop to the SS Great Britain, which is so important to the local economy.

**Conclusion**

Historic England's carefully reasoned description, set out in the advice letter of the 6<sup>th</sup> July under the heading 'Proposed re-development of the site', of the impact of Blocks A & B on Nationally recognised heritage assets from Spike Island and the south of the New Cut and from the north side of the Harbour remains valid.

The Society joins Historic England as an objector to the scheme in its current form.