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The Society's response to the revised proposals to redevelop The Old Brewery site, Southville - 17/02172/PREAPP

6th October 2017

Introduction

The Society supports the development of this site and is pleased to see that the latest plans have considered many of the points raised by the Society in its earlier response (May 2017).

We are particularly pleased that it has proved possible to assemble a larger site which has made it possible to design a more coherent scheme. The expansion of the site has created the opportunity to generate a different approach that has, for example, delivered more dual aspect flats and eliminated access corridors on the upper floors that lack daylight or natural ventilation.

Retention of historic buildings

We welcome plans to retain several historic (although not Listed) buildings towards the front of the site. This will make a significant contribution to creating a positive sense of place. In general, we consider that this retention of heritage assets supplemented with some new buildings designed in to carefully blend in will contribute significantly to the ultimate success of the "Old Brewery" as the name of the overall development.

Employment

We also welcome the mix of proposed activities on the site, retaining an element of employment in addition to the proposed residential component.

Residential proposals

The configuration of the proposed housing elements is much improved from the initial draft plans. The location and general scale of the two blocks are appropriate and the use of brick is welcomed as being a common material in the neighbourhood. However, we are concerned that there is some creep in height occurring between presentations. We have been shown eight floors and in others nine and these will exceed average heights across the district. It will be important that the detailed design of the blocks is carried out to a high standard – at

present we are not able to assess any of the detail. We hope that the final form of the design will avoid the monolithic appearance of many taller frame and panel buildings.

We consider that more detailed studies will be needed to fully understand the effects of shadowing on existing and neighbouring residential properties [e.g. Frayne Road, Coronation Road and North Street] and to properly assess the visual impact of the two residential towers, which now seem to be visible from Clifton as well as North Street. We look forward to being consulted on these.

Residential mix

In our previous response the Society urged the provision of a greater mix of property sizes and tenures on site. However, we were informed at our recent meeting that a 30% proportion of affordable housing will be provided and we would welcome and support that level of provision.

Potential impact of historic mining works

In the past this area of Bristol has been actively mined and we would appreciate assurance that historic mine workings have been properly assessed and investigated.

Materials

While brick is certainly widespread as a building material in the locality the current proposals appear to ignore local pennant stone and "bath stone" which both surround the site. In contrast the use of zinc is proposed which is more "Harbour" than Bedminster / Southville in character. We would welcome a further assessment of the proposed materials.