



an independent force for a better Bristol

The Society's statement in response to the July 2017 amendments to 16/06594/P – application for consent to the proposed demolition and mixed-use redevelopment of land at and adjoining Callowhill Court, Broadmead, Bristol. The proposed development is for a mix of retail, commercial, leisure and hospitality uses along with hotel and residential accommodation.

15th August 2017

Summary

In its response of the 3rd February 2017, the Society supported the proposed scheme. The Society supports the scheme except for inclusion of a new 520-place multi-storey car park.

The multi-storey car park

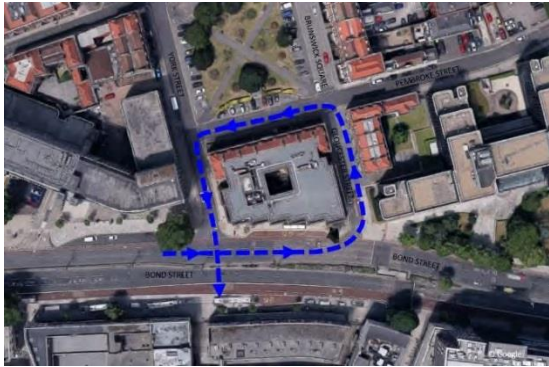
It is unnecessary for the Society to recite National and local planning policy to reduce private car use in towns and to improve air quality in city centres. The city centre's air quality continues to deteriorate. The emerging Clean Air Zone Policy should also be a material consideration in this application. The strategic questions appear to be whether a new city centre, 520-bay, short-stay car park is acceptable having regard to the position of the car park in the hierarchy of vehicular routes and the desirability of reducing car use in favour of more sustainable modes of transport. The Society strongly supports the objections made in 'Living Heart's' earlier response to this application.

If the Council is satisfied that the Bristol Alliance cannot support the volume of retail and leisure expansion without more car parking the alternative is to expand one of the existing multi-storey car parks. When considering additional car parking, the Society suggests that the Council should review the car parking provision for the whole Shopping Quarter. The omission of the car park would give the opportunity to increase the residential content of the scheme and to create a more human and inclusive external elevation to Bond Street.

The proposed access from the eastbound carriageway of Bond Street (north)

If, contrary to the adopted planning advice, the Council permits the multi-storey car park the Society objects to the proposed new access. Customers would approach the car park via Gloucester Street, Brunswick Square and York Street, and a straight-ahead southbound

movement across a two-stage signal controlled junction with Bond Street (north) (the access loop). The proposed new access would cause substantial harm to Gloucester Street, Brunswick Square and York Street in the Portland and the Brunswick Square Conservation Area.



The Bond Street light control would cause cars to back up in the access loop. Following generations of neglect the conservation area has become a City Design Team area of success. Recently, the area has received a large influx of new residents. The area is now popular with families, students, local workers and visitors. Small children now play in Brunswick Square,

Brunswick Cemetery Gardens and Portland Square. A sense of community has begun to develop. The area is extensively used by pedestrians. It is not acceptable to increase the traffic noise and pollution which would substantially harm the lives of the residents of the large block of Gloucester Street flats. This is a narrow setted street, the homes are built at the back of the pavement. There is conflict between this traffic engineer's solution and the ambition of the City Design Team to enhance this formerly neglected but now rapidly evolving historic conservation area. The City Design Team is in the process of delivering a safe, welcoming and inclusive mixed residential area that is a credit to the city. This proposal would be retrograde step, it would be a return to the earlier age of car dominated highway planning. The proposal must be reconsidered. This development should provide planning gain money to improve Brunswick Square, not kill it with cars.

A cycle route is shown on a diagonal through Brunswick Square is another engineering solution that fails to recognise the significance of a planned urban space. The route indicated should be around the square, which is too small a public space to be able to absorb a cycle route.

The alternative option

The Society is conscious of the need to minimise traffic queues on Bond Street. The alternative approach to the access loop would be for west bound cars in Bond Street (north) to enter and exit the car park directly. East bound cars in Bond Street (north) could be directed to Newfoundland Circus to right turn and approach the car park in the west bound lane. The post-submission traffic modelling Transport Assessment contains the traffic flow data to model the impact of east bound cars on Newfoundland Circus traffic. It is reasonable to suppose that most customers would approach the car park from the west bound carriageway and that access to the car park would be spread throughout the day. The inclusion of leisure and hospitality use also suggests a spread of use outside the times of peak traffic flow.

The advantage of the alternative scheme would be that west bound cars would not enter the St James Barton roundabout before returning to the Brunswick Square access loop. The disadvantage would be the interruption of the bus lane by entering and exiting cars. The Society notes that commercial vehicles that will service the scheme will cross the bus lanes to access the service entrance.

Conclusion

Both the options are sub-optimal. To determine this application the Council must apply the balance that Part 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework describes. If the Council is to achieve the Core Strategy's spatial vision to deliver "*A prosperous, cohesive and sustainable city made up of thriving neighbourhoods with a high quality of life*", the highway engineering solution is outweighed by the harm that access loop would cause to the non-car users, pedestrians and residents near Brunswick Square.

Other matters - The Horsefair service access

The Society supports the new access link from the westbound carriageway of Bond Street (north) leading to a basement below the development with an exit route westbound along The Horsefair. If further discussions succeed the Society also supports the proposal to allow large HGVs to deliver to the large stores at the west end of The Horsefair.

The strategic re-routing of all bus services away from The Horsefair and Penn Street

The Society welcomes the conclusion that there are no transport related reasons why bus services cannot be rerouted to enable Union Street (north), The Horsefair (east) and Penn Street to become virtually free of traffic.