

STATEMENT C26 – Cllr Jon Wellington

This development and the Bedminster Green site are situated in the neighbouring ward of Southville, but the residential area most affected by this application is in Windmill Hill ward, which I represent.

My concerns centre on height, which remains unacceptable to residents of nearby Windmill Hill, design, which has problems as outlined in the report and in statements by local planning groups, and the lack of affordable housing in this development.

The affordable housing element means that it is impossible for a ward councillor to support this. New developments in Bedminster need to have options for lower income people to move in, or else we are creating apartments for one type of group only. This does not encourage our stated aims to have mixed communities. I see the viability report but I cannot accept that we must allow developers to be able to override or in this case, completely negate local policies because they are not making enough profit. I appreciate the developers are not charities but they should be willing to work as partners with the city and to recognise that they have a duty to the city and the community to provide affordable units.

Other concerns around light and overshadowing of neighbouring properties, and the narrow alleyways need to be tested by members of the committee.

The most contentious elements of these applications have always been height and while we have seen a reduction, the fourteen storey tower on Dalby Avenue remains an issue. Rather than 'stepping up' or being in the centre, it will be a presence on the pavement, presenting a looming presence and dominating the areas around here. I think this needs to be reconsidered in the context of surrounding properties.

Overall there are good elements to this but again, I urge committee members to consider the massive change to the area this will bring. The precedent set by previous planning decisions on Bedminster Green mean that the community will have to accept high density development which will change the nature of the area forever. If this is the case, the least we can do is use what tools we have to ensure developers provide an affordable element to fit with our priorities, and to ensure the design complements the area and is sympathetic to its surroundings. I don't think it matches this ambition so I would urge you to reject this application.

Cllr Jon Wellington (Windmill Hill ward)

3rd March 2021