STATEMENT A3 – Gary Topp

Dear Councillors

I am writing to support the proposal for the Arc at We The Curious.

The Arc can be an important next step in ensuring that the harbourside places creativity and innovation at the heart of its community and visitor economy offer and extends the long term process of renewal and change that Arnolfini helped to catalyse in the 1970's.

The role of culture and creativity in Bristol, and the wider city region, will be central in its future economic success and a flagship innovation, such as the Arc, located in collaboration with We The Curious, will add further to the already successful cluster of cultural institutions that characterise the Harbourside.

The Arc has every potential to encourage more visitors and more communities to experience the harbourside as a place of learning, enjoyment and public shared space and build a city centre environment that is inclusive, ambitious and welcoming to all.

The Arc also adds to the remarkable engineering creativity of the city region and local environment already celebrated through existing structures such as SS Great Britain, the historic cranes and the contemporary architecture of Pero's bridge. The physical form of the Arc, its high visibility and its technology led innovation, can all further amplify the existing urban form and history of the harbourside.

I believe there have been discussions with the Council about where else Arc might be located in Bristol…but why would not put it in Millennium Square? It is the perfect location, at the heart of our city.

The past 13 months have been extremely difficult and the city is just starting its slow recovery from the pandemic.

Arc is perfectly timed, not just because of the significant income and wide interest it would generate, but because it is also a wonderful metaphor as the city recovers and we build on our exceptional cultural and creative assets to drive necessary economic and social change at this important time.

Thank you.

Gary Topp

Executive director

Arnolfini