

STATEMENT NUMBER C1

Application no. 21/00288/F Site address: Ferro Wapping Wharf Bristol BS1

6GW Proposal: Removal of former steel and wood construction providing additional residential accommodation above the deck level of the existing concrete barge

Written Public Forum Statement of: Paul Ville, local resident Merchants Row

I have registered to speak at the meeting in support of the planning application (by the deadline of 2pm, 9th August), and submitted the following accompanying written statement (by the deadline of noon, 10th August).

As a Bristol resident I am proud of Bristol City Council's culture of active consultation and listening to residents on a wide range of issues, not least on planning matters. I am pleased to have been consulted on the application from the outset and to have the opportunity to comment on it now

I have lived on the dockside, opposite the barge known as Ferro since September 2007. My house is probably the closest neighbouring property. I have also been an active recreational user of the docks since 1999, as a walker and cyclist and on the water as a regular rower. I am therefore very familiar with Ferro and the harbour context and feel well qualified to comment on the proposal.

I strongly support the application for the following reasons:

- The Officer's report provides a long and detailed reason why planning approval for this single and relatively modest home should be rejected on heritage and aesthetic grounds. However, while this may be well-meaning, I think the report is inaccurate, and misleading and that to reject the application on these grounds would be unfair.

This isn't an application to graft a new and incongruous extension onto a listed building or a proposal to create a structure which is out of kilter with the local environment. If it were I wouldn't be supporting it.

The dockside is an eclectic fusion of old and new buildings and other structures both on and off the water. This actually makes the docks a vibrant place rather than one mired in a pastiche of the past. Ferro is a small but important self-build project which fits well within the dockside, and adds value.

- Aesthetically the self-build/conversion is a significant improvement on what was there before for many years. Before the project started, we and fellow local residents had a view over what looked like a derelict barge, comprising the original structure but with an open upper deck used as a dumping ground for discarded building materials and other rubbish. The family home now being created by our neighbours has transformed its structure and significantly improved our outlook. We are confident that the local environment will be improved even further if they are permitted to finish it.

- The proposal adds value by providing a much-needed new low-cost home for a young family and valued members of our community for their own occupation. It demonstrates the creativity and other benefits of self-build and self-help. It also repurposes an old barge long associated with Bristol docks.
- So for these reasons I support the proposal. In fact we felt so strongly about it that we set up a petition – and over 2,400 people agreed with us. It actually went global, but setting aside those from overseas, there are a lot of local people who support the houseboat project. The many people who have written directly to the Council also demonstrate that there is overwhelming local support for the proposal, much of which is from immediate neighbours, and there is little or no opposition.
- I am confident that the Council will listen to what we, the local community, is saying on this issue.

Paul Ville

8.8.21

