

**Application no. 21/00288/F Site address:Ferro Wapping Wharf Bristol BS1 6GW
Written Public Forum Statement of: Trevor Gray. Owner/Occupier of Ferro**

Thank you for taking the time to read this statement, I realise the depth of material you need to read so I will keep it brief.

I am a carpenter and have been a boat dwelling resident and part of the community on Wapping Wharf since 2011. Before moving on Ferro in late 2019 I lived on a small lifeboat next to the Fairbairn steam crane with my partner and son.

When the previous resident of Ferro passed away in 2015 I took ownership. The prospect of traditional house ownership becoming increasingly difficult for our growing family Ferro represented the dream of creating an eco friendly home. The aim to repurpose an old barge with historic connections (as featured on Know Your Place) and build a Passiv-Haus style low energy family home using timber frame that was both an asset for us and the city. Ferro is now that and utilises many sustainable products as listed within the DAS.

In April 2019, after years of planning and agreement with the harbour authority the dream turned reality and work commenced. The works considered for retrospective planning permission took place on the mooring, in plain sight, with daily Harbour Authority contact for 18 months. To finance final works we agreed the sale of our former boat home in January 2020. Nearing completion July 2020 the council unexpectedly demanded works stop, raising legal & planning objections.

It remains a grey area to the requirement of planning. Currently Wapping Wharf and Welsh back are the only areas with planning permission for residential use of boats. The Officer appears to make the case that Wapping wharf is heritage and leisure in use despite it being formally recognised as residential use in planning terms as per the 2003 CLEUD that covers it. Despite other boats undergoing similar works and being of the same permanence no other non commercial vessel in either area has ever required individual planning permission for external alterations or appearance. Guidance within mooring licences dictates the Harbour Authority decides major external alterations.

Upon the council raising any issue I immediately sought to remedy the matter but I genuinely do not know if planning permission is required and therefore cannot concur it's requirement. Ultimately it's not my decision. On a personal level it feels that agreeing and allowing works to Ferro near completion and then requesting planning consent retrospectively appears unjust.

I am not trying to bypass any requirement but feel clear policy and planning control on houseboats would ensure the awful situation we find ourselves not occur again. There is currently no available published policy or guidance on whether planning permission for alterations to Ferro be required. Legal advice sought by Officers states planning permission is required but does not add detail so I ask that the committee clarify what advice Officers followed.

The officers views on the design appear subjective and conflict with the Character appraisal which recognises utilitarian form in the floating harbour. I believe that Ferro adds to the diverse, vibrant and eclectic nature that is Bristol. Would granting this planning application for a houseboat design used widely worldwide, harm the heritage or add to its diversity, creativity and charm.

In the middle of a housing crisis we have a harbour that is a wonderful asset that can complement housing needs, like many cities wouldn't it be great if we really used it. More importantly in the dawn of a climate crisis are we to deny a low carbon home welcomed by a large majority on the basis of an subjective viewpoint.

Thank you for your time. I ask the committee members to help address the lack of policy and ensure that no other family go through the stress mine is enduring. Please fully consider the retrospective nature of this application and grant permission.

Denying this application at best removes an eco friendly sustainable self build and makes a family homeless.

