

155 - 165 WEST STREET BEDMINSTER BRISTOL BS3 3PN

Planning application ref. 22/00805/F to be considered at Development Control Committee A on Wednesday 21st December 2022

COMMITTEE STATEMENT B5

November Committee Meeting

Concerns were raised at the previous committee regarding the location of the development in terms of its distance from the city centre and from university campuses.

Current planning policy, namely DM2, supports the delivery of student development outside the city centre where it accords with the residential amenity and concentration criteria set out in the policy. It has been demonstrated to the satisfaction of your planning officers that the proposal does indeed accord with these criteria.

The proposed development has also been assessed against the concentration criteria of the draft Purpose Built Student Accommodation and Shared Living SPD (November 2021) and is found to be acceptable - i.e. it would result in a density of less than 10 student bedspaces per hectare.

In terms of travel distance to university and college campuses, it is evident that most can be reached in less than 20 minutes by bike and bus. In particular:

- UWE Bower Ashton (9 min cycle)
- Boomsatsuma (9 mins cycle, 12 mins bus)
- University of Law (9min cycle, 13 mins bus)
- UOB Temple Quarter (11 min cycle, 21 mins bus)
- City of Bristol College (11 min cycle, 17 mins bus)
- BIMM (13 min cycle, 16 min bus)
- UOB Woodland Road (18 min cycle, 24 mins bus).

In terms of sustainability, the site is a short walk from various shops, amenities, public transport links (including Parson Street train station and bus stops including the MetroBus), bars and restaurants on West Street, East Street and North Street. Students will not need to rely on the private car.

Benefits of the Development

It is considered that the development will deliver the following benefits:

- Significant improvement to the street scene in terms of design and quality of built form.
- Increased footfall and spending to benefit local businesses.
- Meeting student demand in the most appropriate manner, namely through purpose built and professionally managed accommodation, with no loss of family housing. The proposal also accords with policy DM2 and the Council's emerging *Purpose-built Student Accommodation and Shared Living Supplementary Planning Document*.
- Biodiversity enhancement through new garden area and green wall.
- Incorporation of energy efficiency measures and renewables (Air Source Heat Pumps) to deliver a total saving on residual CO2 emissions of 68.6%, which is considerable.

- A flexible office unit and student management office at ground floor level will increase activity and surveillance to West Street.

Consultation Responses

Some of the key concerns raised by neighbours are addressed below:

Student demand – the submitted Student Market report by Carter Jonas indicates that there is a significant undersupply of purpose-built student accommodation in the city - even with the pipeline of forthcoming student development taken into account - and that the proposed site represents an appealing and sustainable location for students to live.

Location – as mentioned above, the site is highly sustainable and has excellent bus and cycle links to Bristol's Colleges and Universities.

Parking – a car club space will be provided by the developer for use by students and all local residents. In addition, parking surveys - carried out to the satisfaction of Transport Development Management - indicate that the surrounding roads are not overstressed.

Noise & disturbance – the scheme includes a variety of measures to minimise the risk of disturbance. It is a purpose-built student development with a highly insulated building envelope and self-contained refuse and cycle store. It will operate in accordance with a robust Premises Management Plan that will be implemented by a professional management company. The development includes a management office onsite that will be manned by a member of staff, and the communal areas will be monitored by CCTV.

It is recognised that student development can be controversial, but in this instance the developer and the Council's planning department have worked hard to find a suitable solution for the site. There is undeniably a high demand for student bedspaces in the city and it is considered preferable for this to be satisfied through purpose-built and managed accommodation, rather than converted family houses run as unmanaged HMOs.