

Bristol City Council
Minutes of the Development Control A
Committee Meeting
6th March 2024 at 6.00 pm



Members Present:

Councillors: Richard Eddy (Chair), Amal Ali (for Farah Hussain), John Geater, Fi Hance, Tom Hathway, Philippa Hulme, Chris Jackson, Paula O'Rourke and Andrew Varney.

Officers in Attendance:

Jonathan Dymond (Deputy Head of Planning, Development Management), Presenting Officers (Development Management), Pip Howson (Transport Development Manager) and Norman Cornthwaite (Democratic Services)

1 Welcome, Introduction and Safety Information

Councillor Eddy welcomed everyone to the meeting and issued the safety information.

2. Announcements

The Deputy Head of Planning, Development Management made two announcements.

- (i) On 19th December 2023 the Secretary of State made an announcement relating to the reporting of Appeals lodged against Planning Committee decisions where the final decision is the same as the Officer recommendation, as it is considered that the overturning of the Officer recommendation should be rare and infrequent.
- (ii) The Secretary of State has announced that due to the time taken by BCC to decide on some planning applications, from 9.00 am this day (6th March 2024) until revocation, in certain circumstances developers may apply to the Planning Inspectorate rather than BCC for planning approval. As a result of this announcement an Action Plan will be prepared by the Service and in the meantime work will continue in clearing the backlog of applications.

3. Apologies for Absence



Apologies were received from Cllr Farah Hussain, substitutes Amal Ali.

4. Declarations of Interest

The following was received:

Cllr Eddy – Agenda Item No. 10a, he attends St James Priory.

5. Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 24th January 2024

Resolved - that the Minutes be confirmed as a correct record of the Meeting.

6. Action Sheet

Noted.

7. Appeals

The Deputy Head of Planning, Development Management introduced the report.

8. Enforcement

The Deputy Head of Planning, Development Management introduced the report.

9. Planning Enforcement Position Briefing Note

Councillor Eddy advised that if any Members have questions relating to this item, these questions should be sent to the Deputy Head of Planning, Development Management and copied to the Democratic Services Officer. All answers will then be circulated to all Members of the Committee.

10. Public Forum

Members of the Committee received Public Forum Statements in advance of the meeting.

The Statements were heard before the application they related to and were taken fully into consideration by the Committee prior to reaching a decision.

11. 23/02827/F - Premier Inn The Haymarket Bristol BS1 3LR

The Presenting Officer introduced the report, summarised it for everyone and gave a presentation.



The application is for the demolition and redevelopment to provide co-living units (sui generis) and student accommodation (sui generis), associated amenity spaces, ground floor uses (Class E), access, servicing, landscaping, public realm, and associated works. (Major).

The following answers were provided to questions:

- There has been a lot of discussions with the applicants including with the Regeneration Team and taking into account the Central Area Plan, resulting in improvements to the Bus Station access; there is a lot a support for the scheme
- The applicant has had discussions with the Health Trust and there no issues in relation to the BRI Helipad
- The St James Priory Project's objections have been taken account of are included in the report
- If the application was to be refused on the grounds of concentration, it would have to be demonstrated that the development would cause harm by for instance noise or amenity; there would have to be a different view taken on concentration in this type of area as opposed to a residential area
- In relation to the amount of student accommodation, the emerging Local Plan is considering this but at present there is not enough information available to come to a conclusion on the amount of student accommodation required and its relationship to the housing targets; there will be a commercial limit but at the moment there is still a lot of demand for student accommodation
- The Officer recommendation has been very carefully considered and Members need to be mindful of this if they are minded to go against the recommendation; the report sets out the issues relating to the application; Members have to come to a conclusion based on planning issues
- Although the lifespan of buildings is not specified, Planning Guidance suggests that commercial buildings last about 60 years and residential buildings about 100 years
- This application is the first large scale co-living scheme in the city
- There is no policy on this type of accommodation as it is a new concept; if this application is approved it may encourage other developers to apply for similar schemes
- There may be times during the year outside term times when the student accommodation will not be occupied, but the building is designed flexibly so it may be possible to use the accommodation for other purposes when not in use by the students
- If Historic England considered that the development would cause substantial harm they would have made it as a specific objection; the test for substantial harm is quite a high threshold
- In relation to the adjacent Debenham's site, this application has to be treated as a stand alone application which is to be determined before the application for the Debenham's site is determined
- Whilst under normal circumstances views would not be given much weight, but as this is in a conservation area and the impact assessment takes account of them some weight can be given to them
- The Amendment Sheet notes that safety issues within the area have been raised, but it is considered that these concerns can be overcome, the scheme will provide a higher level of surveillance in the area and provide a feeling of safety for pedestrians



- There is no affordable housing policy in relation to co-living; this application has been treated in the same way as a built for rent scheme meaning that 20% of the accommodation has to be at affordable rent level linked to the local housing allowance
- There is no established standards to co-living units; the Housing Team have considered the application and feel that the development would be beneficial
- There is no policy on the limit of the height of buildings; it is established that this is an area where tall buildings will be built as there is one there at the moment
- The site is a complicated area; there is no policy concerning assessing the embodied carbon; the applicant has demonstrated that the scheme is more sustainable than retro-fitting the existing building; the applicant has stated that they regard the building as a commercial building although BCC may not agree with that, although there is no adopted guidance concerning which standards should be used; the building is 50 years old and could be retro-fitted to last another 30 years; the guidance states that the hydrocarbon should be assessed for 60 years; the applicant has submitted an upwind assessment which is considered to be robust
- HSE Approval is a two stage process which is not completed until after planning approval has been granted; different standards are being applied to the co-living accommodation and the student accommodation

Debate

- The application provides heritage protection; Bristol has to be a living, working city; different standards are used now in comparison to when the building was constructed; the uses are for student accommodation and co-living which is a new concept and may encourage community feeling; it is appropriate to replace one high rise building with another one
- The main arrival points in Bristol – the Bus Station and Temple Meads Station are not good; this development will improve the area around the Bus Station; the scheme will also help improve the housing targets; the City Centre is an appropriate place for student accommodation; there are concerns about the height of the student block and the impact it will have
- It is a good scheme which will benefit the area which is in need of redevelopment; concerns about the height and the light, but the benefits outweigh the concerns; safety will be improved
- It is finely balanced as there is harm to the heritage; however the Bus Station area is in need of improvement; will help address the housing crisis
- Support the redevelopment of the site and support the demolition of the present building; there are concerns that it only superficially helps with the housing shortage; 28 storeys is too high and the building is a poor design
- Concerns about the height of the building and the number of students in one area; concerns about loss of heritage and loss of views

Cllr Eddy moved the Officer recommendation to Grant the application along with the requested delegation to Officers.

Cllr Jackson seconded this motion.



On being put to the Vote it was

Resolved – (Voting 6 for Cllrs Ali, Eddy, Geater, Hulme, Jackson and Varney; 3 against Cllrs Hance, Hathway and O'Rourke) that the application be Granted subject to a Planning Agreement and that the requested delegation to Officers be approved.

12. 23/01407/F - NCP Rupert Street City Centre Bristol BS1 2PY

The Presenting Officer introduced the report, summarised it for everyone and gave a presentation.

The application is for the demolition of the existing multi-storey car park/retail units and site clearance to allow redevelopment of site to accommodate a new mixed-use development comprising flexible retail/commercial floorspace (Use Class E) and/or community floorspace (Use Class F2(b)), public car park accessed from Rupert St, purpose-built shared living (co-living) accommodation (sui generis) and purpose-built student accommodation (sui generis) with associated amenity space, cycle parking, refuse storage, landscaping / public realm enhancements and new vehicular access arrangements, including provision of service road between Rupert Street and Lewins Mead (Major).

The following answers were provided to questions:

- The affordable housing will involve BCC in the management of them and there will be 50 co-living units with occupants paying 20% of market rent
- There are a growing number of students in Bristol, well beyond the numbers anticipated by Bristol University when the Supplementary Planning Guidance was prepared in 2006.

Debate

- This is a positive scheme replacing an old car park with co-living including affordable housing, student accommodation and a smaller but modern car park; there are concerns but these minimal in comparison to the benefits of the scheme which is located in a very sustainable position
- The benefits of the scheme outweigh the negatives of it
- Concerns about some of the people who may move into the co-living units but the development is a very good design, the height and the massing blend in with the local area
- This development will transform the site
- The design and public art are very attractive
- The design suits the site; care has been taken with the design and the public art

Cllr Eddy moved the Officer Recommendation to Grant the application including delegated authority to prepare planning conditions and finalise the S106 agreement.



Cllr Varney seconded this motion.

On being put to the Vote it was

Resolved – (Voting 9 for, 0 against) that the application be Granted subject to a Planning Agreement including delegated authority to prepare planning conditions and finalise the S106 agreement.

The Meeting ended at 8.20 pm.

The next Meeting of the Committee is on Wednesday 24th April 2024 at 2.00 pm.

Chair _____

