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The Society's statement in response to Harbour Hotels' proposal to convert 53-55 Corn Street Bristol BS1 - 14/06271/PREAPP to hotel use

6<sup>th</sup> October 2015

The Society is grateful to Harbour Hotels (HH) and to Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios for making available for comment the Stakeholder Briefing Report on the proposal for Nos. 49-51 & 53-55 Corn Street. Earlier this year, the Society supported the proposal to convert the former Grade II listed HSBC bank, 49-51 Corn Street to hotel use. The current proposal is to increase the scope of the project to combine the adjacent property, the Grade II\* listed building, the former Lloyds Bank at 53-55 Corn Street, into a single hotel. The Society will submit this response to the Council as part of the consultation process.

### **Change of use**

It is sad to see Bristol's rich heritage of Corn Street banks abandoned by their former owners. Unfortunately, this extravagant listed building has no place in the world of online banking; it is an extraordinary legacy. Subject to HH producing evidence to satisfy the Council that the current use is no longer viable, the public must support a change of use that will secure this unoccupied building's return to economic use and its future maintenance.

### **Design**

The Society notes that no external alterations are planned that would have a significant impact on the public realm. The Council will no doubt rely on the advice of its conservation officers in respect of the impact of the proposed internal alterations on the surviving fabric.

### **Other matters**

Although the Society supports the development, there are wider issues. The Stakeholder Briefing states, *"Due to the site's location in the heart of the city centre, it enjoys significant opportunity to be accessed solely by public transport"*. This statement reflects the aspiration in the Public Realm and Movement Strategy for Corn Street, which states, *"There is scope for removal of traffic and the creation of a new animated street."* There is potential conflict between the policy aspiration and the one way access to the site from Corn Street for vehicles. The development of a hotel will compromise any attempt to pedestrianise the Corn Street, fully. The Society suggests that the Council and HH consider how to resolve this potential conflict. A Corn Street shared space scheme that gives pedestrians priority, could be a solution. The same problem and opportunity occurs in Small Street along which taxis, hotel deliveries and waste collection vehicles would exit. The Society assumes that HH will

file with its planning application a traffic management statement. Apart from hotel deliveries and waste collection, other relevant issues are guest drop-off, pick-up, and any provision of guest parking in nearby public car parks. The Society assumes that the scheme will provide adequate internal waste storage facilities to enable HH to comply with the Council's Old City emerging policy requirement for the removal of all waste bins from the public realm.