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Parkview Office Campus Whitchurch Lane - 18/06156/PREAPP - redevelopment to provide a mixed-use development comprising 218 residential units and 253 m2 of retail/commercial space.

The development

The site is at the NW corner of the existing Parkview office campus site on Whitchurch Lane in Bristol on part of the current car parking area of this site. The site is bounded by Hawkfield Way and Petherton Road to the NW and W, existing industrial buildings to the SW, open greenfield land to the SE (on the other side of which lies the Bridge Learning Campus, formerly Hartcliffe College) and the existing unused Parkview offices (formerly Somerfield HQ) to the NE. The Parkview offices are currently being partially demolished and altered for residential accommodation, we believe under application 18/02208/COU.

Summary

The Society supports this development proposal but makes a number of points. The Society supports the Council's affordable housing policy and welcomes the magnitude of the contribution to this important policy. As this is a pre-application we reserve our position on a number of matters for later decision.

Uses

The Society supports residential development in this area. A leisure centre, a hospital, schools, colleges and shops lie close by. There are several other residential development schemes in progress or planned for the Hartcliffe area. The Metrobus route runs close by.

The scheme proposes 7 buildings with retail/community space in one building (#4). Residential accommodation would be provided by a mixture of 1, 2 and 3-bedroom flats with 32% being "affordable".

Mass height and design

Of the 7 proposed buildings, one is 4 stories in height, two are 5 stories and four are 6 stories in height. The highest buildings would be taller than surrounding existing buildings, although we understand that the current Parkview office refurbishment adds height to that building. Buildings of 6 stories would not be out of place here in our view. We support the

proposed orientation of the buildings with the four blocks closest to Parkview being parallel with the edge of that building.

Materials

The Society notes the initial block shapes and facade ideas with interest and cautious support, but reserves its position on the use of materials, cladding, colours and other aspects of appearance. The Society does not support timber cladding.

Access and the streetscape

The Society's principal concerns are the public realm, traffic around the site and the amount of car parking. There is very little area dedicated to public realm according to the Site Plan (p.15), although the amount of space earmarked for play areas is welcome. We note that virtually the whole site would be surrounded by residents' car parking space.

We are concerned at the area given over to car parking and the amount of hard landscaping this will require. Given the anticipated population in this development, it seems a lost opportunity that so much potential amenity space will be sterilised by car parking.

There are two aspects to this:

1 The number of parking spaces

The Transport scoping study says "it is proposed that the development provides 246 spaces, which is a reasonable parking provision between 178 (based on Car Ownership statistics) and 275 (based on maximum local parking standards) car parking spaces." We question whether the provision should lean towards the maximum, given that the Metrobus route is close and the rapid development of new housing in the surrounding area will support an expansion of the public transport service.

2 The layout of parking spaces

We see the argument for putting the car parking around the perimeter of the site in order to provide play and other public space around the housing. However, an unbroken wall of car parking spaces is not an ideal solution. One suggestion would be to concentrate the car parking into one or two areas, rather than surrounding the whole development with a ring of parking places.

The proposed improvements to the site's permeability are welcome and will be a planning gain.