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## **The Society's response to proposals for a residential scheme at 7 Redcross Street - 19/01543/F**

### **Summary**

The Society welcomes the planning gain from the demolition of the existing building whilst retaining and extending the listed Georgian facade and adding a forecourt and railings. However, the impact of the shadow of the 9-storey building on St. Matthias Park and its dominance of the Georgian facade in Redcross Street would be an equal planning loss.

### **The proposal**

Land & buildings (the Developer) proposes to demolish 7 Redcross Street in Old Market but retain and refurbish the listed façade and erect a new part 4 part-9 storey building to accommodate 64, 1 and 2-bedroom flats, with associated public realm improvement to Redcross Street frontage.

### **The site**

7 Redcross Street retains 5 bays of a truncated grade II listed facade of an ashlar faced Georgian terrace whose 11-bays once spanned the width of the site. The surviving remnant of the terrace is embedded in a crude unsympathetic 1970 red spar faced concrete panel building.

### **Change of use**

Loss of employment floorspace within the city centre must be considered in line with Policy BCAP7. The Developer must demonstrate that the proposal meets the policy test that the loss of employment space would not harm the economy and employment opportunities in the local area. If the developer satisfies the policy test the Society supports the change to residential use.

### **Demolition**

The Society would welcome the demolition of the red spar panel building which is a negative feature in the Old Market Conservation Area.

### **Site heritage**

The Society supports the proposal to restore the surviving façade repaired and conserved with appropriate materials. We support the construction on each side of the restored façade a contemporary recreation of a Georgian terrace with a new forecourt and railings. This part of the proposal would be a substantial planning gain and considerably enhance the conservation area.

### **The new building**

Unfortunately, the Society is unable to support the mass and height of the proposed new building whose impact on the sustainability of St. Matthias Park is critical to this proposal. The Design and Access Statement contains a chapter about the mitigation of shadowing on Market House but is reticent about the impact on St. Matthias Park. St. Matthias Park is an important formal public park in a highly built up area that is currently enjoying social and economic regeneration. There are many mature trees in the park, a nine-storey building would shadow the southern extension of the park after mid-day throughout the year. The shadow would be so long and deep that it could threaten the health of the mature trees and lower vegetation. The new building would be constructed almost on the eastern boundary of the site with minimal separation from the park. St. Matthias House to the north may be sufficiently distant for it to stand beyond the shadow of the proposed building.

The Design and Access Statement says that the proposed building would 'mediate the step change' between the height of Marketgate House and the domestic scale of the buildings to the south of Redcross Street. This statement would be correct if the proposed nine-storey building were lower than the 8-floor east block of Marketgate House. The height of the 9-storey building could have a significant implication for the future development in the Old Market Conservation Area; it would introduce close-by large scale development. Subject to the objection to height and mass, the Society supports the design approach to the architecture of the proposed building.

The Society believes that the constraint of the park must inhibit any construction much above the height of the current building. Subject to the principal objection the Society assumes that the Council will apply the Policies which DM29 (Design of new buildings)- requires in relation to, among other things:

- Internal space standards
- Maximum sunlight of internal spaces
- No north facing single aspect homes
- No long artificially lit corridors
- Adequate, user-friendly outdoor amenity space and private amenity space.