



an independent force for a better Bristol

21st December 2019

The Society's response to planning application - 19/05746/M - for approval of reserved matters following outline planning permission - 17/06459/P - for a new University Campus

Summary

The Society :

- Supports the design of the two buildings and their setting in the landscape.
- Suggests that wider traffic and transport proposals need more consideration.
- Suggests that the University and Council plan for pedestrian bridges and the integration of the Campus landscape with river and canal banks to create an integrated landscape with paths on both sides of the river.

The new academic buildings

The Society supports the philosophy behind the design of the two buildings and the design itself. However, we are not convinced by the extent of the proposed areas of mirror glass. Large areas of reflective glass on these long elevations could appear dominant. Should mirror glass be used as an accent that could separate/highlight the changes of colour/texture of the glass screen?

The context of the new buildings

We are concerned about the setting of the buildings within their context. There are several planning applications by others dependent to this development whose height and mass exceeds the guidance of the Enterprise Zone Spatial Framework (the Framework). In addition to the University's student accommodation on Temple Island, a tall building is planned along the east bank of the River Avon, another at 10, Feeder Road and there is more active developer interest nearby. There is no updated overall vision and spatial strategy for the area. It is virtually impossible to visualise how the buildings will appear in the context of the area after redevelopment.

Traffic congestion

How will the surrounding road network cope with steadily increasing number of railway users, the influx of staff and students at the new University Campus, the inflow of employees and residents to the new commercial and residential sites in the Silverthorne Lane Character Area, and the arrival of new employees and residents at the Temple island

site? The local road system is above capacity many times of day. Although the University plans to minimise vehicle access to the new Campus, it must nevertheless produce additional traffic, including buses, that will incrementally increase traffic density. We recognise that the section 106 contributions to a residents parking scheme for Totterdown and The Dings, the construction of a right-hand bus turn in Avon Street beyond railway bridge, and a walking and cycling route along Feeder Road to Marsh Lane would provide some mitigation and reduce a proportion of the potential increase in traffic conflict.

The River Avon as a barrier

How will the area cope with the high volumes of people arriving to/from the new east entrance to the station? The Framework proposes two new pedestrian bridges over the River Avon, the Silverthorne Bridge close to the current Kawasaki Garage and the Lock Bridge over the former lock gate at the junction of the Harbour and the Feeder Canal. The Society does not understand why neither of these bridges has been funded. Apart from the Campus on the River Avon's west bank there is active developer interest on the east bank between the railway bridge and the Feeder Canal junction. We understand that the University has an interest in much of the former gas works site between Avon Street, Gas Lane and Silverthorne Lane. There is more developer activity in Freestone Road, Kingsland Road and Silverthorne Lane. The unfunded pedestrian bridges would help to spread the pedestrian flows to/from the station east entrance.

The Cattle Market Campus entrance

The bus turning circle necessitates a mass of road space which dominates the entrance to the Campus site, and detracts from the public realm opportunities for the entrance to the site. The area at the exit from the site on to the pavement by the roundabout will see a conflict between vehicles/buses and cycle and pedestrian movements. The entrance roundabout creates bands of pedestrian, cycle, and motor vehicle priority. There will be a heavy pedestrian flow to and from the south. Routing a cycle lane in an area of pedestrian priority is not an optimal solution.

There needs to be wider consultation on the designs for access to the site by various modes, and the impact on the public realm at the entrance to the campus site. The St. Philips Masterplan project recently held a consultation event at which draft proposals for access to Temple Meads station were shown, but there was little shown about access to the east station entrance. The Society welcomes the submissions of the Bristol Cycling Campaign and of the Bristol Walking Alliance upon the probable pedestrian desire lines, the site of pedestrian crossings and the separation of cycle ways from pedestrians and vehicles, where possible. The Groups' submissions about the exit from the walkway/cycleway from Temple Meads at Totterdown basin will be just as valuable.

Cycle Parking

We understand that Network Rail have a project to remove bike parking from the station platform and provide necessary large-scale cycle parking outside the station. To avoid parked bikes littering the public realm, we support the provision of large numbers of cycle stands. To avoid cyclists riding through the campus site up to the station entrance, the cycle stands should be close to the campus entrance, as is proposed. There will potentially be large numbers of people arriving on bikes heading for the station and students arriving at the campus: is there enough cycle parking provision on-site? The Campus will be car-free.

Coordination with Network Rail is critical as is the avoidance of conflict with pedestrians on the cycle route that leads to the cycle racks.