



an independent force for a better Bristol

April 2021

## **The Society's response to 20/01655/F - Old Rail Depot, Clangage Road**

### Summary

These are the Society's comments on the revised planning application submitted in March 2021. The Society commented on the previous proposal. We continue to support the development in principle but consider that the quality of the layout and building design needs to be much improved. The current design will create a depressing environment for future residents.

### The changes in the revised application

The main changes include the reduction in height of Block D (now 5 storeys) and the division of Block E into two buildings of between 3 and 5 storeys.

### BCS comments

#### 1) Building heights

We welcome the reduction in height and footprint of the northern buildings and we no longer object to the height of the proposed scheme.

#### 2) Layout

The diversion of the access road improves the large central space. However, the replacement of town houses by blocks, and the completely rectilinear arrangement would seem to give an austere feel to the space. The grid iron layout appears alien in this location. Although the layout is very constrained by the shape and access of the site, but is it not possible to design in more curvature and variety to both public space and the buildings?

#### 3) Design.

This is a key gateway location which is semi rural in character and transitional between the City and the countryside. We continue to consider that the current design of the blocks to be bland and inappropriate in such a location. In particular, we consider the design of the residential blocks to be uninspiring and monotonous in terms of massing and roof heights. This will create a depressing living environment for future residents of the scheme. This is a particularly sensitive location where Bristol's built environment meets the open landscape of

Ashton Court. The proposed regimented blocks of uniform design are considered inappropriate in such a setting.

#### 4) Festival Way cycle and pedestrian route

We welcome the retention of the existing Festival Way route. We note that Transport Development Management have recommended that the route "must be 5m wide, fully segregated, illuminated and signed, whereas a 3m width is proposed. The Festival Way is a popular route, particularly as a leisure route at weekends, hence the justification for a wide route. Commuting cyclists will want to travel more quickly and segregation is appropriate.