

22/01365/F - Mixed-use redevelopment comprising a hotel with ground floor commercial uses, an aparthotel and residential dwellings (including affordable housing), with associated landscaping and open space.

Summary

Bristol Civic Society welcomes the redevelopment of this site. The proposed uses are suitable and the proposed permeability and pocket park would provide a welcome relief from the dense development of the surrounding area. We welcome the commitment to minimise vehicle access to the development but urge that cycle parking and storage facilities are at least compatible with the Council's requirements. We make a number of suggestions below which we feel could improve the scheme.

Building Heights

These are broadly acceptable in the context of the site although we would appreciate the inclusion of seasonal shadow diagrams to assess the impact of the scheme, for example, on Valentine Bridge and Glass Wharf. We understand that Historic England are opposed to the proposed buildings being visible above the Brunel buildings when viewed from the approach to Temple Meads. The Society shares that opinion and would urge the developer to pursue change of the design of the apart hotel to resolve this issue. Thus far the buildings are shown without servicing facilities at roof level. We support this and trust that more detailed design work will accommodate services without adding height or untidiness to the buildings. If the locations of verified views demonstrating the impact of the development have not been agreed with the Council we would hope that they will be before an application is submitted.

Building Design

The Society reserves its position on building design until it is finalised but we have some initial reactions. The emphasis on verticality in the articulation of the hotel and apart hotel buildings is welcome. We wonder whether the orthogonal approach to the design of the buildings could be relieved if alternative designs to the residential block were considered as has been done with the Eye building on the opposite bank of the Floating Harbour.

Public Realm.

The elevation of the hotel to Brunel Way abuts the pavement leaving little room for planting to relieve what would be a somewhat enclosed streetscape. We would urge the developers to consider solutions to this and, at least, ensure a very active frontage at street level. The proposed pocket park could be a welcome refuge for people waiting for trains and it would be good if its presence could be signposted at the station.