

## **21/06878/F York Road, Mead Street (Bart's Spices)**

### **Summary**

Bristol Civic Society objects strongly to this application. The Society considers that proposals for the loss of commercial premises should not be considered in the absence of a masterplan for the area providing for a balanced redevelopment of the area from Bath Road to Bedminster Green. Such a plan should be adopted by the Council after full consultation with residents and other stakeholders. The proposal itself raises a number of concerns relating to its height, the resultant quality of life for residents and its impact on views, particularly those towards the Totterdown escarpment.

### **Change of Use.**

The Society is increasingly concerned that employment generating floorspace in the St Philips and Bedminster areas is being redeveloped for residential purposes in the absence of overall strategies for these areas aiming to achieve a balance of new uses. We agree that the areas are ripe for redevelopment but feel strongly that strategies to steer it should be formulated in full consultation with residents and other stakeholders before they are adopted by the Council. In the meantime, the Society cannot support the loss of employment generating uses on land defined in the Local Plan as a Principal Industrial and Warehouse Area.

### **Height, Massing and Impact on Views.**

The proposed development comprises an eight storey block adjoining St Lukes Road with two parallel eleven storey blocks. The block next to St Lukes Road is attached to the parallel Eleven storey block with a five storey development. The easternmost block is free standing separated from its neighbour by an area of public space. The Society is concerned that blocks of this height and mass will be harmful to views toward Richmond Street, with its colourful terraced houses, atop the Totterdown escarpment. This is one of Bristol's important, landmark views. Equally important are views toward the Grade I Listed buildings at Temple Meads Station and the spire of St Mary Redcliffe. A full analysis of the proposals impact on views agreed with the Council is essential before the application is considered. We are not convinced that the Visual Impact Assessment adequately addresses these concerns.

### **Quality of Living Environment.**

The Society has a number of concerns regarding the potential living environment which would result from this application. Air quality could be compromised by its location at the junction of St Lukes Road and the heavily used York Road. The preponderance of single aspect flats is also a concern. The provision of outdoor amenity space is very sparse for a development of 244 dwellings. It is not clear what facilities will result from the development on-site and the site itself is not convenient for day-to-day shopping requirements and other services. The impact of this development on school places in the area also needs to be considered.

### **Affordable Housing.**

Notwithstanding our overall objections to this proposal, the Society is supportive of the Council's push for affordable housing and so we would welcome 100% provision should the Council approve this application.