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Planning application 23/02475/F. Three Six Zero. Marlborough Street, Bristol BS1 3NX.

The Society broadly welcomes the proposals for the Change of Use from office use (Class E(g)) to student accommodation (Sui Generis) and associated works, including demolition and removal of part of the existing facade, construction of new facade in the central atrium, roof level extension, new atrium roof, creation of a roof terrace, alterations to entrance and landscaping.

We are pleased to see that the building is going to be retained, saving carbon and praise the owners for this move. It is no surprise the building needs a change of use as it has never been a particularly elegant building or one that is easy to use, despite its numerous refits and reduced rents.

Bristol needs more student beds which will hopefully remove the need for HMO's (housing in multiple occupation.) There should be a clearer plan from BCC regarding the quantity and location of such buildings; BCC need bring forward the SPD on PBSA at its earliest conveyance avoiding the unhelpful open-ended timescale as indicated on their website. As can be seen from the design and access statement, there are numerous large buildings close to Three Six Zero that are occupied by students. This proposed use as student accommodation is considered acceptable. Students, however, are transient and do not help form a community when clustered together in such large numbers resulting in a deadness of the area outside of termtime.

This use may well be accepted by BCC and the proposed expansion in height seems in keeping with its context, albeit the visible height increase is substantially more than described in the application. Nevertheless, the removal of the atrium does have a beneficial impact and helps reduce the bulk of the original building. The proposed new elevational treatment is a typical student beds architectural approach: it is mundane and does not do much to enhance the building.

We strongly suggest that another look at the design of the ground floor areas should take place. The ground floor spaces should be used to enhance the street scene. This is particularly important in this area as there have been ongoing issues with antisocial behaviour, graffiti (not street art!) and at times people feel vulnerable walking around the streets both in the early evening and at night. Cherry Lane and Stokes Croft elevations would benefit from a more active frontage with the student hub and study spaces in place of study beds as has been achieved with the elevation on Marlborough Street where the gym has been placed on the lower ground floor. This change would enable the courtyard to be opened up and have double aspect uses around the perimeter thus generating more light and visibility into the entrance courtyard.

Buildings in a city centre are heavily used and as such should have good quality, high grade surfaces at the tactile ground floor levels including ground surfaces. Therefore, we are not convinced that timber is the correct civic material to use in the high- traffic main entrance area that has historically been blighted by damage and antisocial behaviour.

We commend the use of the planters and the intention to increase the biodiversity of the space and hope the management company will maintain the landscaping, so it develops into what is shown in the CGIs.

The area around the Bearpit is likely to become the centre for more large-scale development (see Debenhams and Premier Inn proposals) therefore we would request that the detailed city centre development plan is realised early to avoid the apparent disjointed and unplanned way in which the area appears to be developing.