

**22/06085/F – PLOT 1, MALAGO ROAD – BCS OBJECTIONS TO REVISED SCHEME, MARCH 2024.**

Bristol Civic Society objects strongly to this application as it has to previous iterations as is shown in the appended response submitted in February 2023. Our two principal objections relate to the adverse impact of the design, particularly the height and massing of the proposal, on the character of the area and to the amount of purpose-built student accommodation (PBSA). We are saddened and frustrated that the direction of travel of the revisions to the scheme exacerbate rather than address our concerns. The proposal is increasing in height and the quantum of student accommodation is growing. We are not convinced that provision of second staircases in the buildings, which we would expect should buildings of this height be permitted, justifies increasing the adverse impact of the proposal.

As noted in our earlier submissions, the planning inspectorate has upheld at appeal refusals of previous applications because they were harmful to the character of the area and contrary to Local Plan policies. The Society considers that this planning history would provide a firm foundation for refusing this application. We cannot see how the amendments to this, which increase the height of most the buildings by a storey, can do anything other than amplify the harm to the character of the area typified by low rise buildings at this, the western end of Malago Road. Many of these are residential and the increase in height will worsen the overbearing and overshadowing impact of the proposal upon them.

The Society's objections to the provision of PBSA are set out below in our appended earlier submission to which we add that students are a transient community whose contributions to local businesses will not be consistent but related mainly to term times for 30 or so weeks a year. Yet the revisions show a small increase in such accommodation. We reiterate those objections more strongly, therefore. It is the Society's wish that this application be refused but, should it be permitted, the proposals should, at the very least, allow for conversion to family accommodation or larger units were the demand for PBSA to falter. Adaptability should be part of the consideration of this application to ensure that it would comply with the Council's sustainability policies in the Local Plan.

**APPENDIX. 22/06085/F – PLOT 1, MALAGO ROAD – BCS OBJECTION FEBRUARY 2023.**

Bristol Civic Society objects strongly to this application. Although the Society does not object to the principle of developing this site, the proposals put forward have not been acceptable in our view. We objected to the proposals put forward in 2019 and 2021. In 2019, we suggested that redevelopment should take the form of mixed student and residential housing in an articulated terrace close to Malago Road with private courtyards to the rear. The 2019 proposals were refused and the decisions were upheld at appeal on the basis that they were harmful to the character of the area in contradiction to Local Plan policies. The Society objected to the 2021 proposal on the basis that the Inspector's decision had not been overcome. We consider that this application also fails to overcome the grounds for the Inspector's decision and would be harmful to the character of the area.

It is particularly unwelcome that the height of the buildings has been increased by a storey from 22/03144/PREAPP which had shown some reduction in height on earlier proposals. The existing character, particularly towards the western end of Malago Road is of much smaller, low rise buildings and we are at a loss to see how the height and flat roofs of the proposal could possibly be considered as anything but harmful to this. We fear that the proposal will overbear and overshadow the lower rise buildings and create canyon effects opposite proposed higher rise developments in Malago Road and Hereford Street.

The accommodation is entirely for students with the number of beds increasing from 432 in the preapp proposal to 474. The rooms will be nearly all single aspect, many facing north. Living conditions in north facing single aspect rooms will not be pleasant and south facing rooms could be subject to overheating if not well ventilated or air conditioned. The Society has not been opposed to the use of the site for student accommodation in the past. However, we have previously noted that conventional residential accommodation has been omitted. Inclusion of family or other more permanent residential accommodation would do much more to increase the variety of people living on the site and to contribute to longer term community development in accordance with the aims of the development framework for Bedminster Green.

The Society supports the Council's policies for mitigating the impacts of climate change. It is, therefore, important that building design minimises the need for energy to be used to keep the building warm in winter and cool in summer. We expect such measures to be agreed between the developers and the Council.