



an independent force for a better Bristol

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### **13-19 Dean Street St Pauls Bristol - 16/02249/F**

Proposal: Demolition of existing buildings and construction of 82 units of residential dwellings

#### **Summary**

The Society supports the redevelopment of the site. Unfortunately, the Society cannot support this proposal for a monolithic six floor block of 82 flats with ground floor car parking, which would be an over-scaled development that would harm historic character and legibility of the area. The Society agrees with the Conservation Recommendation that, *'The degree of harm posed by the development is not outbalanced by the public benefit of the less-than-policy-compliant affordable homes offering.'*

#### **Change of use**

The Society supports Juniper Homes' assessment that residential use in this location is more suitable than student accommodation.

#### **Demolition**

The Society supports the demolition of the current buildings; which have no architectural merit and are a negative feature in the conservation area.

#### **Height, mass and design**

If the Council agrees with the Conservation Recommendation that - *'Notwithstanding the earlier permission 14/01593/F, the current proposal fails to meet the basic requirement to preserve the special character of appearance of the Conservation Area, and represents harm to the setting of the Listed buildings'*. The effect of the recommendation would be that permission 14/01593/F ceases to be a material consideration in this planning application.

In its response to application 14/01593/F, the Society quoted paragraph 4.1 the St. Paul's Conservation Area Character Appraisal (CACA), which states, *"This Conservation Area represents one of the best surviving examples of formal Georgian town planning in Bristol. It has the highest proportion of listed buildings of any of the city's conservation areas (almost 70%) and the only Grade I listed square in Bristol, the Conservation Area is of national significance."*

In its response to application 14/01593/F, the Society said that any proposal should take into account the character of its context. This site is bounded by Dean Street, Wilder Street and Cave Street, which are service streets behind the architectural centrepiece, Portland Square. Dean Street, when viewed from the junction with Wilder Street, leads up to and is subservient to Portland Square. The Society was surprised by the grant of permission 14/01593/F for a building of the permitted height and mass, which takes Godwin House as its reference and ignores the context of the domestic scale of the nearer properties. The proposed building is bland and would be built to the back of the pavement in all three secondary streets. The increase in height of the elevation would increase the block's dominance of the narrow secondary streets. The balconies that oversail the pavements increase the proposal's overbearing quality. Without repeating them, the Society agrees with reasons that the Conservation Recommendation gives to support its conclusion that the proposal *'fails to conform to policies that protect local character and distinctiveness'*. The Society adds these further observations to the Conservation Recommendation.

In its response to application 14/01593/F, the Society said that "The original, bombed housing, designed to be subsidiary to the principal development, was three floors and a pitched roof. The current proposal is to build five floors. When considering whether to permit the height and mass of the proposed block, it is important for the Council not to repeat past planning mistakes. Figure 44 of the CACA shows York House; an example of a not to be repeated mistake. The mass and detailing of York House contrasts crudely with the quality of the adjoining Grade II, listed Georgian terrace. Trelawney House and County House on Surrey Street or further modern examples whose elevational treatment, proportions and detailing paragraph 7.2.14 criticises for failing to enhance the conservation area. By comparison, paragraph 7.2.15 states that *'Although the detailed design of most other 20th/21st century developments in this character area often fails to reflect the local tradition, they are acceptable background building because of their domestic scale and brick palette.'* Paragraph 7.2.16, describes the character area's most successful modern buildings. The three-storey plus mansard developments of St Paul Street and Pritchard Street are both examples of developments that represent the development management policy set out in the CACA. The Society could support a street elevation that is three floors tall, including the ground floor. It would not object to a fourth floor that is substantially set back. There must be no projections above the top floor to house plant. The roof should add interest to the skyline."