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The Society a response to the proposed redevelopment of the former Sports Bar, 13-21 Baldwin Street - 16/06999/F

1<sup>st</sup> February 2021

### **Summary**

The Society welcomes the reuse of the redundant building and supports the current scheme and hopes that this planning permission will be built.

### **Proposal Summary**

The proposal is to redevelop Baldwin Street to provide 93 new purpose built student bedrooms in a studio configuration with communal spaces and retail space.

### **Change of use**

The Society supports the Council's policy to increase the resident population of the centre of the city; it would prefer the building to be adapted to residential accommodation but does not oppose student accommodation.

### **Demolition**

The Society accepts that the original interior is lost and supports the retention of the existing Baldwin Street elevation. The Society agrees that the integrity and importance of the existing facade outweighs demolition of the historic façade, which maintains local identity.

### **Height and mass**

The Society's principal interest is the effect of development on the public realm. On the assumption that the additional views that the Council requested have no adverse townscape impact, the Society supports the proposal to build additional floors behind a set-back.

### **Design**

Subject to the Council approval of the detail, the Society supports the retention of the facade and is comfortable with the new openings at from level 01 to 04 and at Level 05 (the extension), white render finish with metal capping. The development offers the opportunity

to rework the ground floor. The restored central entrance will be a conservation gain. However, although the new ground floor glazing offers openness and transparency and greatly improves the current degraded condition, it could offer a more active street frontage. Do the patterns of any of the earlier designs offer something more interesting at street level? Baldwin Street is not a primary shopping location. To avoid a vacant street frontage, the Society would prefer the future ground floor use to be as flexible as possible and offer commercial use as an alternative to retail. The Society would prefer to see the ground floor use ancillary to the use as student accommodation to ensure a greater probability of an active ground floor use.

### **The accommodation**

The Society's concerns would be the sustainability of the development and its adaptability to residential accommodation in the event of a shift in student accommodation market. The quality of natural light entering the accommodation is problematic in several areas. There is insufficient detail to comment on matters of light and the availability of other amenities.

### **Other amenities**

The provision of energy use and sustainability standards, communal facilities, building management, and reception area and cycle accommodation is unresolved. The respondents suggest a single entrance to the 'conciierge' area, possibly double height.

### **The materials of the retained Baldwin Street elevation**

The Society suggests that the finish could be buff coloured graffiti resistant render with pilasters picked out in white. Bath stone at street level would be attractive.