

**Statement to Planning Committee 11/03/2020**

**19/02276/FUL**

Bath City Football Club, High Street, Twerton, Bath, BA2 1DB

Mixed-use redevelopment of Twerton Park and adjoining land, comprising of; replacement spectator stand, new east terrace and playing pitch (levelling with 3G surface); 12no. affordable dwellings (C3 Use), 33no. co-living apartments (Sui Generis); 356 beds of student accommodation (Sui Generis); community function space (D1 Use); gymnasium (D2 use); commercial units (A1/A2/A3/A4/A5 and AA Uses); modifications to the external appearance of the existing retail and residential units (providing 6no. additional apartments) between 105 and 116 High Street; associated landscaping and public realm works.

***Against***

Bath Preservation Trust really wanted to be supportive of this project. And indeed we ARE supportive of the redevelopment of the club, the regeneration of the High Street, and the provision of housing on the site.

We attended the first of the many community engagement meetings, and were pleased to hear of the aspirations of the club to provide community facilities and much needed housing for local people.

It is therefore a matter of regret that the plans before you contain a very large amount of private sector student housing, not obviously convertible to residential if in the future there is a reduction in demand for this type of accommodation.

It is also a matter of regret that in doing so the scale and massing of the project have far exceeded what is appropriate for the site on a prominent location on the hillside and in the Twerton conservation area.

The argument that purpose-built student housing moves students out of former family houses is only achievable if the rentals for the student accommodation are comparable to those of HMOs.

We see no guarantees of this and therefore do not believe it can be a valid planning argument that these student blocks will improve the pressure of HMOs within Twerton and its neighbours.

On this basis we cannot see sufficient justification for exceeding Bath’s building heights parameters and creating these out-of-scale buildings and would suggest that the application is refused on grounds of failing to neither preserve nor enhance elements of Twerton’s townscape and heritage, which contribute SO positively to this part of the conservation area.