

Objection by Bristol Walking Alliance to 20/01150/F | Proposed redevelopment of the site, including demolition works and refurbishment of listed Soap Pan building to provide mixed use development



Bristol Walking Alliance (BWA) welcomes the potential for a new pedestrian route through the proposed redevelopment of the Soapworks site. However, we object to the current proposal because we believe the new pedestrian environment will be compromised by the proposed height of the surrounding buildings and also wish to see improvements to the existing pedestrian route running to the west of the site.

In the current planning application (20/01150/F), it is proposed to create a new pedestrian route between Old Bread Street and New Thomas Street. This will pass through an enclosed arcade from Old Bread Street, opening into a square with some planting, then up steps or a zig-zag ramp to New Thomas Street. Though the new public realm and pedestrian route is to be welcomed, the space is surrounded by new tall buildings, including a 20-storey tower to the south. It will therefore be in shadow much of the time, and will not receive the amount of sunlight recommended in the BRE Guidelines for an outdoor amenity space, as admitted on pg 35 of the Daylight and Sunlight Report.

As well as the adverse effect on sunlight, the proposed new buildings will create other adverse effects on the local environment. In particular, significant windiness will be created by the new buildings, as described in the Environmental Wind Report. The main areas of windiness affect three of the pedestrian routes around the site: the arcade, the passage between Blocks A and C and the existing archway west of Block A. Each of these is predicted to be near or beyond the limit of toleration for places 'where people are not expected to linger'.

The pedestrian route along Sles Lane, to the west of the site, is acknowledged to be one of significant pedestrian flows. It is on a key pedestrian route between Temple Meads Station and Old Market, and was identified as a 'Proposed Secondary Pedestrian Route' in the 2015 Bristol Central Area Plan. It is currently declared to be 3m wide, but shares use with cyclists. We believe the opportunity should be taken for this route to be enhanced through widening, active frontages, green spaces and tree planting on the section of the site that adjoins Sles Lane, as outlined in the Broad Plain Public Realm Strategy consultation.

Bristol Walking Alliance
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