

## **Fourth Objection to the Doric Proposals**

**Ref: P13/V2733/FUL**

I strongly object to the latest Doric design proposals, including the '06/11/2014 additional information', for the redevelopment of West Way, Botley, Oxford. My reasons are as follows:

### **1. Recent Design Modifications**

- The reduction in height of the frontages onto West Way is superficial, since the student accommodation in the centre of the development is still six stories high. This recent modification does little to change the enormous scale of the whole development.
- The cinema block is still about twice the height of St Peter & St Paul's Church, so the west end of the Church and the stained glass windows will be shaded from the sun for almost the whole of the day.
- Little empathy has been shown to the people living in the age-restricted accommodation, most of which is well above ground level. Many of these residents find it difficult to walk up and down stairs. In the event of a fire, or even a fire practice, most will have great difficulty in descending several flights of stairs to get out of the building quickly.
- The piazza will be well above the present ground level, so it will be difficult for more elderly local residents to climb up the proposed ramp or walk up the numerous steps to gain access to the shops on the piazza.
- The height and scale of the modified buildings are still unacceptable.

### **2. Car Parking**

- The drawings show the extent of the 'undercroft car park'. All of the car parking will be below buildings, and most will be under the present ground level. Many people have told me that they would only use the car park in daylight hours. After dark the risks from using it would be too great.
- The recent proposals contain a planning obligation for a controlled parking zone (document - Letter to Vale – student parking Redacted.pdf (65kb)). This is to prevent any students from keeping cars. For this to be effective, the controlled parking zone will be very large. Are the residents of Botley living within about half a mile of the proposed development aware of this proposed restriction on their freedom to park their cars? This also restricts the parking arrangements for their visitors. Oxford City Council consults separately on parking zones. It is quite unacceptable that this proposed restriction is buried in the mass of recent documents, and not consulted upon openly and separately.

### **3 Botley is a Local Service Centre**

At the Vale Full Council meeting on 15 October it was agreed that Botley should be defined as a Local Service Centre. It should not be regarded as a district centre in the context of Oxford City.

Therefore this massive development by Doric cannot be justified as being appropriate for a Local Service Centre for local people to use. A much smaller scheme is required for the redevelopment of the Botley shopping area.

### **4. Summary of Relevant Planning Issues**

In summary the proposed development is unsatisfactory because the design does not satisfy the following material planning considerations –

1. Overshadowing and loss of light which will affect the Church and many houses along West Way.
2. Overdominance when compared with all the surrounding two storey houses.
3. Noise disturbance and air pollution affecting all the student rooms and hotel rooms facing the busy A34 road.
4. Highway safety issues on already congested roads surrounding the site.
5. Increase in traffic generation in spite of the errors in the Doric traffic analysis.
6. No car parking provisions during the redevelopment work for all the construction workers and their cars, or for the 500% increase in numbers of people employed on the new site.
7. The undercroft/underground car park will not be used by many people outside daylight hours.
8. There should be a separate consultation on having a very large controlled parking zone made to control student parking.
9. The design bears no relation to the design of any local buildings, and the scale is huge in comparison with any surrounding buildings that have not been demolished.
10. The local drainage has been improved for existing houses, offices and some future housing but not on the scale of this development with 525 undergraduate and postgraduate rooms and a 100 bed hotel. With two people occupying some postgraduate rooms and hotel rooms, and adding in the increase in the number of people working on the site, there could be an additional 1000 people present on the whole site. This would produce a substantial increase in pressure on the drainage system.
11. The demolition of the rectory and with no replacement is a significant loss of a community facility.

## **5. Conclusions**

The planning application from Doric for the redevelopment of West Way, including the recent additions, should be **REFUSED**.

**Dudley Hoddinott**

Liberal Democrat District Councillor for Appleton and Cumnor