

## **DEVELOPMENT AT ST. CHRISTOPHER'S NOW IS THE TIME TO COMMENT**

With the planning application now in, you currently have until 27<sup>th</sup> April\* to let Bristol City Council know what you support or object to about the proposals for what is a huge major development for Westbury Park. (\* This deadline seems likely to extend. We will let you know if it does but stick with the 27<sup>th</sup> April for now.)

**Please bear with us**; there is a lot to explain about the **proposals**, our own thoughts on what **comments you might make** and **how to make comments** that could carry real weight.

In terms of the comments we suggest you might make, please be aware that these reflect our views after reading most of the 127 or so reports accompanying the planning application, though you can of course say what you wish.

***DON'T MISS OUT – SEND IN YOUR COMMENTS IN NOW***

*Jeff Bishop and Kevin Chidgey, WPCA*

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### ***THE PROPOSALS***

The overall proposed is for an '**Extra Care**' development for people over 70 who are basically fit and active but who need some on-site care and support each week. *(NB. This is not 'Sheltered Housing' nor is it a 'Care Home'; it fits between these, and Westbury Park does not currently have an Extra Care facility.)*

#### **The main components of the project are:**

- 122 apartments – 11 one bedroom, 111 two bedroom.
- Shared facilities: café/bar/dining, art room, activity room, hydro pool, gym, exercise studio (some availability to local community).
- Offices, etc. for staff.
- Parking for residents, visitors, staff, pool cars/minibus.
- Gardens (some open to the community).
- Rooms for community and school use.

#### **Here is some explanation of the proposed layout, which you can see overleaf:**

- The five lodges on Westbury Park converted to 25 apartments.
- 86 apartments in four 'villas' and eleven 2 bedroom, two storey 'cottages' behind.
- The listed Grace House converted for facilities and staff (with added pool).
- North House (south east) converted for spaces for community and school.
- Main vehicle access one way route in from Westbury Park then back out.
- Resident vehicle access for four cottages from corner of Bayswater Avenue.
- Pedestrian entrances from Westbury Park, Bayswater Avenue and The Glen.
- 65 parking spaces are spread around the site.
- Various gardens between the buildings.



- The 5 existing Westbury Park lodges are along the edge to the left.
- The villas are the big green buildings.
- The villa at the top (A) is 3 storeys, the next one down (B) is 6 storeys, the bottom left one (C) is 5 storeys and the biggest one to the right (D) is 4 storeys.
- The cottages are to the far right top and at the bottom.
- The two storey listed Grace House is the diamond-shaped white building.

**Now what we know from comments made already is the key concern for many:**

Here is a view from The Downs - the 6 storey building (Villa B) clearly visible behind:



This is an applicant generated view from The Glen of the 4 storey Villa D:



This is an applicant generated view from the corner of Bayswater Avenue and St. Helena Road:



And – perhaps most importantly – our generated impression of the new buildings (NB. to show the scale and impact of the new buildings, not the actual designs)



## **POSSIBLE COMMENTS**

Comments on the planning application (22/01221/F) need not only be about **objections**; they can also show **support**. From the many comments we have received from local people there appears to be support for an extra care facility in Westbury Park so that people can downsize but still stay in the area. We will say that.

But that support is **in principle** only. There are several important aspects of the proposals where we think you could make valid objections .... and are probably keen to do so having seen the images above!

Not surprisingly then, a first objection – and one that could really carry considerable weight – is about **overdevelopment**: too much building, too high, too close to neighbours. And that overdevelopment has **negative impacts** – (a) in heritage terms on our area and on The Downs (the site and its surrounds are in The Downs Conservation Area), (b) on the setting of the Grade II listed Grace House (dramatically overwhelmed by 6, 5 and 4 storey buildings very near it), (c) on the privacy and outlook of neighbouring houses and (d) on the serious loss of trees in the highly significant ‘copse’ visible from the corner of Bayswater Avenue and St. Helena Road. (Well, visible now but try to find it on the image above!)

Less easy to pick up, but also very important, is the issue of parking. The evidence we and SCAN are compiling strongly suggests that 65 spaces will not be enough and that would lead to significant **overspill onto surrounding streets**, with related traffic problems. This is another aspect on which an objection would carry real weight.

And if there is overspill parking, then there are concerns about **pedestrian gates** onto The Glen and Bayswater Road, making it easy for people to park then nip into the development. Objections on that would carry weight (but be aware that this would not apply so much if enough parking was provided.)

Objections about **traffic** generally into/from the Westbury Park entrance/exit would carry little weight because it is likely to be less than when St. Christopher’s was fully operational. But objections about **vehicle access at the Bayswater Avenue corner** (if only for **four** residents’ cars) would be worth doing.

One other important area of objection is **ecology, biodiversity and wildlife**. The tree loss in the site corner (above) is part of the overdevelopment issue but many trees all across the site will be removed and – the developers say – replaced. But, again, there is poor and unconvincing evidence about that and all other aspects of ecology, including the site’s role as a wildlife corridor. An objection on these issues now carries more weight with a legal requirement for a ‘net gain’ in biodiversity.

Other possible objections could be about no affordable homes, the loss of special needs provision, too many care homes already etc. But, if you choose to object, be aware that these issues may not be given much weight.

You could also comment on the quality of the **community engagement**, though this is not really what is called a 'material' planning consideration

### **HOW BEST TO COMMENT**

You can just use what you know already and what you have read and seen here to make your comments on the application (number 22/01221/F). If you want to dig further or have specific aspects you want to know more about before commenting you can go to the link below and search for the relevant supporting document.

To make a comment, start by going to:

<https://pa.bristol.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?keyVal=R8HHL0DN0DG00&activeTab=summary>

#### **Then:**

- Press 'Comments' and fill in 'Your Title' etc.
- For 'Commentator Type' use either 'Neighbour' or 'Amenity-Residents Group'.
- Tick 'Object' or 'Support'. You could tick neutral if you object to some aspects but support others.
- To add your comment, it is best to take time before logging on to write a note, making sure it is all as correct as it should be. Then just cut and paste it into the 'Your Comment' box.
- You can write as much or as little as you want but be sure to make it very clear what exactly you object to or support.
- It can be useful to look at what other comments are already listed. Repeats are good.
- Press 'Submit'.

To see that your comment is on (leave it a little while), go to 'Documents' again. Your comment should be at or near to the top and all the planning application documents are below.

### **Digging into Detail**

There are 127(!) documents submitted as part of the planning application (on the Documents page). If you are keen to get into the detail, we suggest scrolling down to look at the following – the main, overall items:

- Proposed Masterplan
- Site Sections
- Landscaping General Arrangement

If you want to check real detail overall or on specific topics of interest, look at one or any of:

- Design and Access Statement (3 files, not all listed together!)
- Planning Statement
- Open Space Assessment
- Built Heritage Statement
- Transport Statement (includes the parking assessment)

- Travel Plan (5 files, not all listed together!)
- Townscape And Visual Impact Assessment
- Sustainability Statement (3 Files)
- Verified Views (2 files)
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment
- Other Landscaping reports
- Energy Report
- Ecology Report
- Biodiversity Net Gain Report
- Statement of Community Involvement (3 files)