

From: Jemma Mitchell

Sent: 18 November 2019 01:14

To: Zulema Nakata <Zulema.Nakata@exeter.gov.uk>

Subject: Objection to planning application 19/1417/FUL - development of the ambulance station site

Dear Zulema,

Further to my call on Friday afternoon, thank you very much for allowing me to raise my objections to the proposed development of the ambulance station site in Newtown.

After considering the documents associated with the planning application 19/1417/FUL for a large 154 unit student accommodation block to be built on the former ambulance site on Gladstone Road, I have to object to this proposal. Firstly because of the unnecessary size of the proposed building which will dominate the neighbourhood, the neighbouring residents, the Newtown community, and the skyline by it's sheer height and extensive footprint.

I understand the developers intend to make the blocks stepped in elevation so that the sections nearest the houses of Sandford Walk will be lower in elevation, which is a beneficial consideration, however overall a plan for any building with an elevation of 5 or 6 floors in any part of the site will still massively affect the privacy, the character, and the bright southerly aspect of the properties on the near side of the street.

I cannot understand the council's continued encouragement and drive for more student blocks to be built in the city centre. Why are students increasingly being farmed in these block units which dominate the centre of Exeter now, as more and more are on the process of being built... literally changing the entire visual impact and skyline of the sidwell street side of the centre? They are stripping the city centre of its character and changing the shape of retail, residential, and professional activities in the city.

This proposed development is excessively and unnecessarily large. As a nearby resident at the top of East John Walk, I am particularly concerned that such a significant influx of students to the area will cause considerable amounts of noise as they access the site from various proposed entrances via the residential streets surrounding the site.

Whilst I appreciate that this site will undergo development of some kind, and developers willing to invest in the city want maximum return for their investment, I think this should be controlled and kept in relative check. If a development of this size goes ahead, the neighbouring police station site will no doubt follow suit with another massive block of student accommodation. Where is the proposal for more affordable housing for young professionals and young families who equally would like to live centrally?

Furthermore, traffic circulation on Heavitree already seriously problematic during the daytime and frequently at a stand still. Cars on Gladstone road, particularly as a result of shoppers racing to and from waitrose, and others using Gladstone road as a rat run, seem incapable of keeping to the 20mph speed limit. This development, even though it purports to be a car free site, will certainly increase traffic on these roads and cause even more pressure on an already hazardous junction for pedestrians.

It is also imperative that some traffic calming measures on Gladstone road are put into place as part of any future development of this ambulancr site and in due course the police station. I

have myself been almost mown down on numerous occasions, had a cat run over, and seen others on a daily basis, both adults and children at risk of being hit by cars speeding past with no regard for anyone safety or the speed limit. Indeed I have seen police cars racing up and down the street too, so it is little wonder no one else pays any attention to the 20mph speed limit. This has to be enforced.

As for the tree at the front of the ambulance station which is now at risk of being felled for this proposed development, which has a TPO on it but which, according to the planning application would limit the proposed building area by 25% and thus 35 letting rooms, it begs the question what exactly is the purpose of a tree preservation order if not to save important trees in the area and protect them from developers thirsty for even more financial gain.

There are some positives in the proposal too, the aim to build slightly back from the road, and to keep some open landscaped areas on the site, for the student residents to be closely managed with onsite monitoring 24/7 to reduce the impact of student revellers on the neighbours etc, and to keep it car free... If the council are insistent on allowing yet more student accommodation to be built in our precious city centre, although I think this drive has gone way over the top now, in principal I would be in favour of a much more modest sized development of student accommodation on this site. There is absolutely no place for a monstrous building of 154 units to be foisted upon this calm, characterful, residential location, with a happy jostling mix of families, young professionals, retired people, and a few students who all contribute to the community. Allowing this to go ahead as it is will also set a devastating precedent for the future development of the neighbouring police station site, which is a considerably larger area.

I hope very much that you will take all this and other people's valid objections into account when considering this planning application.

Yours sincerely,

Jemma Mitchell