



Residents & Traders

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Planning Scrutiny Committee's Report at CSAQ's AGM on 13th Feb 2018

by Hamilton Caswell – *"A busy year!"*

CONCLUDED CASES

33 COLSTON ST. UNIVERSITY ACCOMMODATION

In October 2015, the former YMCA suffered a large fire gutting its top two storeys. Everything below was ruined by water damage. The University's 121 students were temporarily re-housed. Rebuilding took place from Autumn '16 to Autumn '17 and the facade was smartened-up.

The removal of all the plant and equipment and the re-opening of Trenchard Street took place in late 2017 at around the same time as the building was re-occupied by The University's students.

The University has not yet reinstated the "To Let" sign outside the lower (left-hand) commercial unit, but we hope that a restaurant or similar will occupy it to provide some much-needed active frontage to a somewhat bleak Lower Colston Street.



CHANGE FROM COSTUME & JOKE SHOP (A1 retail) TO WINE BAR (A4 food & drink)

(Colston Street, opposite Foster's Almshouse)

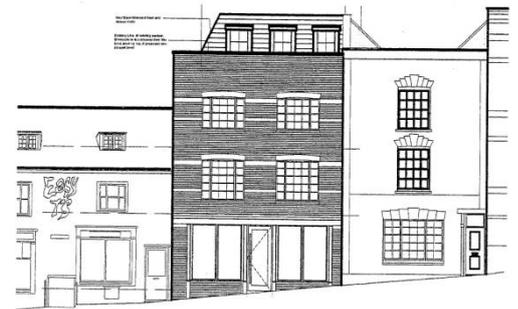
An application for change of use from retail A1 to a Class A4 drinking establishment was granted in July 2016 and it has been converted and re-opened as Le Poivrot wine bar, also serving some food.



19 LOWER PARK ROW (Voyageur)

Voyager rebuilt this building, and had applied for previous mansard roof extensions which had been refused. In January 2017 they sought planning permission to add a fourth storey - the illustrated mansard extension. This appeared to us to be less intrusive than previous rejected proposals, and it received our support.

We congratulate the owner/developer on the quality of brickwork, detailing and building on the facade and mansard. However, it is regrettable that the new white-rendered left-hand stairwell extension did not appear on the application's elevation (shown above), because it did not give us a chance to suggest that it would have been more in keeping had it incorporated red brick, a period window and a pitched roof in the very historic street of Lower park Row (formerly Griffin Lane).



ROPEMAKER'S COURT

17/01447/F May 2017

Congratulations to architect Joel Bailie-Lane, member of our planning scrutiny committee. His brief was to turn the rather odd roof of Ropemakers' Court (next-door-but-one to the Ship Inn) into an occupiable mansard roof additional storey.

Initially, we were worried that the new mansard might obscure too much of the fascinating roof details of the adjacent Jacobean Building. However, this worked out very well, and Ropemakers' Court now looks a much happier building than before, with noble echoes of the mansard roof profile of Thomas Patey's terrace of fine townhouses just above The Ship.



GRAND APPEAL, 30 & 32 Upper Maudlin Street

Joel was also the architect for renovations/alterations to the former Jamieson's restaurant. These buildings were bought by the Grand Appeal (hospital fundraising) for new offices and accommodation for parents of sick children. We supported this, provided that the offices- shop windows were active retail frontages for Wallace and Gromit novelties and not 'Blanked off' with vinyl stickers. Joel also became building supervisor for the renovations. The upper Bath stonework and copings were in particularly dirty and crumbling condition, but they have now been superbly rebuilt and renovated with a smart colour scheme. These properties form the left-hand end of a fairly symmetrical row of five properties with pediments at either end. This group of buildings now forms a very welcoming start and an asset to the CSAQ's trading area.



29 PARK ROW

This splendid stone pedimented building stands on the corner of Park Row and Woodland Road. It was sadly neglected by the University, who put in a pre-application enquiry to demolish it along with some derelict sheds to the rear. The CSAQ and the Civic Society requested the retention of the stone building.

Fortunately it was decided that the University would only demolish the sheds to the rear, but would preserve the stone building. The sheds have been demolished, and work has now commenced to renovate the stone building which will remain as a local landmark monument for the future.



LEWIN'S PLACE (left) AND FROMMSGATE HOUSE (right) – before and after

Both of these are former double office blocks (the other halves being hidden behind this visible ones) and have been transformed from offices into residential and student accommodation respectively. We supported the developer's decision to convert Lewin's Place into residential flats, bucking the trend for student use. The small prison-like windows were enlarged down to floor level with balconies added. The white plant room top storey was relieved with large, generous windows.

We congratulated architects O'Leary Goss on their good work, and in turn they are using our testimonial when applying for an RICS 2018 Award.

Fromesgate has been converted to accommodate several hundred students. The bland facade has been broken up with central grey cladding which continues up to the plant room on the roof. The latter been lowered and centralised.



DIGITAL ADVERTISING ON BROADMEAD'S TELEPHONE KIOSKS, SCREENS & HOARDINGS

Hamilton attends ADBLOCK's meetings, who aim to ban all street advertising in Bristol. They objected to planning applications for bright, electronic ever-changing digital advertising on panels, telephone boxes and hoardings in Broadmead etc., being particularly distracting to motorists. Some applications were refused, but most were passed.

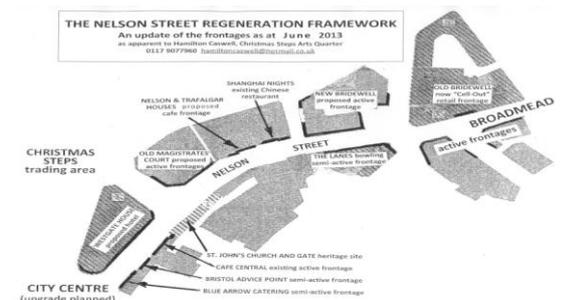


ONGOING CASES

NELSON STREET REGENERATION REVIEW

This 2008 Bristol City Council scheme SP8 aims to maximise footfall through Nelson Street, linking Broadmead with the City Centre, by improving the infrastructure and encouraging active shop frontages through out length.

CSAQ has always supported this, hoping that some of the shopper's footfall will divert over to and up Christmas Steps to benefit our somewhat isolated trading area. The active frontages are proving slow to arrive, but CSAQ is asking for this process to be speeded up.



ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCH AND ITS FUTURE

The church is a landmark in our area, but has been redundant since 1998 and was de-consecrated by the Diocese who still own it. In late 2016 squatters were occupying the church and started a fire which gutted the interior and caused the collapse of the north aisle's roof. The fire has finally induced the Diocese to sell the building. During 2017, Civic Society chair Simon Birch organised an architects' competition to produce a future use and scheme for the building. They put in a bid based on the winning design, but some powerful businessmen have put in rival bids. The Diocese plans to put the proceeds towards the of regeneration St. Nicholas Church by Bristol Bridge.



COLSTON HALL SCHEME – PHASE 2

Phase 1 was the building of the foyer, which was completed at a cost of 20 million pounds. Hamilton and Joel attended the stakeholder's preview of Phase 2 will be a £50 million pound remodelling of the interior of the halls themselves. This will include an acoustically world-class main hall with more comfortable seating and sight-lines, a remodelled 'Lantern' Hall with retractable tiered seating, use of the cellar space for late night jazz etc, and a restaurant behind the Grade 2 listed facade's colonnade plus improved dressing rooms. Following the public consultation, the planning application was submitted in the Summer of 2017.



UNIVERSITY'S PROPOSED TYNDALL AVENUE PEDESTRIANISATION (before and after)

As part of Bristol University's 'Campusification', they proposed closing Tyndall Avenue to traffic and to pedestrianise it with paving and shrubs. It would be pleasant and prestigious for the University. However, there has been major objection from the surrounding community groups including the CSAQ and also from the Highways Dept. It is seen as "Landgrabbing" and would disrupt the traffic network, reducing access to the CSAQ traders, remove much vital parking, and give the appearance of privatisation and campusification of a road that has served the public since long before the University began moving in. Widespread opposition to this scheme vastly outweighs only three letters of support. This application is yet to be determined.



ELECTRICITY HOUSE

At the City Centre end of the Nelson Street Regeneration Scheme, Electricity House has now been cleaned and renovated with the upper floors converted into up-market residential flats which are now mostly occupied. The ground floor was intended for commercial/retail/restaurant uses. This would help us by encouraging shoppers through from Nelson Street and towards Christmas Steps. It remains empty to date. An American chain sports-gym applied to occupy it, but we would prefer popular retail and food outlets.



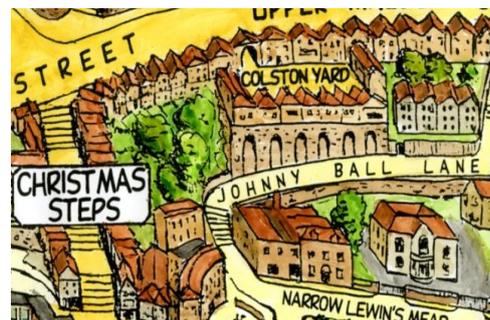
TRENCHARD STREET IMPROVEMENT SCHEME (INCLUDING FROGMORE STREET)

Bristol City Council's Richard Goldthorpe is finalising an improvement scheme to redign and improve the "Racetrack" road around the Hatchett Inn, to try to create a "Hatchett Square", to review the traffic movements and generally improve the environment in this neglected and little-loved area of our south-west border.



SCRUBLAND ABOVE JOHNNY BALL LANE (green space illustrated above Hotel Du Vin)

We received a pre-application consultation proposal to build a large block of student accommodation block on this difficult sloping site, following four various previous aborted schemes. We commented that 1) We would prefer adult residential to even more students, 2) It is too high and would block the rear view of Colston Street properties, 3) The architecture needs to be improved, 4) Construction should be from below past Hotel Du Vin and not from Colston Street *via* Colston Yard.



MARLBOROUGH HOUSE (opposite the Bus Station's entrance)

In December. Planning application 17/05962/F sought change of use from offices to 50 flats of student accommodation. Our ward Councillor Paul Smith objected, saying that affordable housing was more needed than yet more students. We hoped that it could remain in business use as it is in the commercial heart of the city, but agreed with Cllr. Smith that adult residential use would be preferable to student use as the latter is becoming concentrated in this area of the city.



SENATE HOUSE

This is the University's administrative headquarters on the corner of Woodland Road and Tyndall Avenue. This month Hamilton attended a pre-application consultation where they wish to build a ground floor restaurant to infill the courtyard in the middle of the U-shaped building. This would replace their Hawthorne's restaurant. The architectural change does not appear to be controversial, but the restaurant would attract an estimated 400-500 at meal-times. This could make the Hawthorne's pedestrian crossing much busier, which is already a major problem in the University's proposal to redirect traffic around Tyndall Avenue and over that crossing.



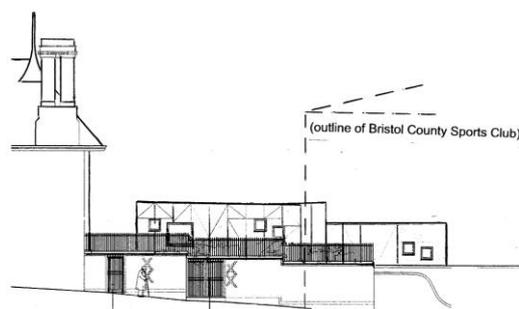
ZED ALLEY NIGHT CLUB, HOST STREET

During 2017, the County Sports Club displayed a large vinyl banner "ZED ALLEY, home of live music". Planning Enforcement instructed them to remove the banner (illegal in a conservation area). Neighbours CSJ Planners and the CSAQ attended a licensing hearing at which the club was instructed only to use the main Colston Street entrance for all their customers. The club is flouting this ruling, having resurrected the banner and continuing to use the Host Street door as their entrance. CSJ and we will report this.



FOSTER'S ALMSHOUSES' FORMER GARDEN (Between the Almshouses and the County Sports Club)

A developer had bought the garden on the right-hand side. In October 2016, he submitted a planning application for a pair of modern box-like buildings to accommodate 12 students, now amended to one box for 10 students. The CSAQ objected on the grounds of a) A very modern building out of keeping with all the surrounding historic and listed buildings, b) Destroying the leafy garden setting of Foster's Almshouses, a tourist landmark, c) Adding to the excessive amount of student accommodation in the immediate area, pointing out that resident students now outnumber local residents by more than two to one. Over thirty further objections were submitted, including one from Historic England. We hope that planning case officer will refer this case to the full planning committee for a decision. Unusually, it has dragged on for 16 months, with the developer adding bits to the application from time to time. We must keep a close eye on this one.



5 PERRY ROAD (A1 retail to A3 food & drink)

This former boutique had been run as a “The One” Chinese food outlet without planning permission for two years. The operator parks outside half-on the pavement blocking busy Perry Road during every lunchtime and evening, and has chained a blue food waste bin to the shopfront, narrowing the pavement still further. They recently gained planning permission for change of use from A1 retail to A3 food & drink on condition that they removed the car and the bin and installed a specified cooking fumes extraction system. CSAQ will point out that they continue to trade without abiding by these planning conditions.



BRI “OLD BUILDING” and FRIPP’S CHAPEL To be demolished?

Student housing developers Unite bought the whole site from the hospitals’ trust. There was strong campaigning by the CSAQ, Bristol Civic Society, Kingsdown Conservation Group and others to retain and renovate the two historic buildings.

However, in early 2017, Unite proposed the demolition of the 1792 Georgian Old BRI and of Fripp’s Chapel, and to cover the entire block with modern buildings, including a massive 715 student bedrooms. A small medical school was included, with some offices. Well over 100 objectors all said that the student complex was far too big. CSAQ said it should only be about half of that size.

CSAQ requested the listing of both buildings. Historic England declined to list the Old BRI (which means it is probably doomed), but eventually listed Fripp’s Chapel, which we hope will save it, although Unite may appeal against this.

We are closely watching for future developments.

