

APPLICATION NO: 19/00204/FUL		OFFICER: Miss Michelle Payne
DATE REGISTERED: 18th February 2019		DATE OF EXPIRY : 20th May 2019
WARD: Lansdown		PARISH:
APPLICANT:	WorkShop Cheltenham	
LOCATION:	Car Park, Chester Walk, Cheltenham	
PROPOSAL:	Proposed Mixed Use Innovation Hub for the town centre	

REPRESENTATIONS

Number of contributors	16
Number of objections	7
Number of representations	1
Number of supporting	8

38 Sydenham Villas Road
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire
GL52 6DZ

Comments: 3rd April 2019
Copy of a letter of support to the Workshop Project

1st April 2019

WorkShop Cheltenham Limited
7 Royal Well Place
Cheltenham
GL50 3DN

Dear [REDACTED]

WorkShop and The Minster Churchyard

As you may know, [REDACTED] and I have met to discuss the WorkShop project and its potential for the town and the way it could open up and improve the use of the Minster churchyard. I have also spoken to [REDACTED] chair of our fabric committee who is supportive of these plans. I am now writing, at [REDACTED] suggestion, to add my support to the planning application which, I gather, is due to be considered by the Borough Council's planning committee on 18th April.

As well as adding my support to the proposal, I would like to suggest that the proposed wall between the WorkShop and the churchyard should be removed and a path across the West side of churchyard be constructed. This would provide much better access to the WorkShop and would open up the churchyard and help to improve its general atmosphere and use. Both the work on the churchyard boundary and the path will need diocesan approval via the usual faculty process. If this is of interest, then I would suggest that we brief the Parochial Church Council and the Diocesan Advisory Committee at the earliest opportunity. It will need approval from both.

I have also met with [REDACTED] from Cheltenham Festivals who is very excited about the potential of the project. We talked about possible links with the Minster and how the Festivals might use the churchyard and the Minster itself in conjunction with the WorkShop space.

With best wishes,

Rector of Cheltenham

Comments: 3rd April 2019

This project will improve the atmosphere and use of the churchyard of St Mary's Church dramatically. It has my full support.

Silverdale
St Annes Road
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire
GL52 2ST

Comments: 17th February 2019

I am writing to record my full support for this exciting project.

I moved from London to Cheltenham in early 1985 to join a fledgling PR agency. That agency was based in the former Horse & Groom, which is adjacent to this scheme and the facilities in the Horse & Groom at that time resembled a microcosm of this development proposal - a mini business hub providing space for and supporting freelancers and new, small businesses.

With the benefit of that support, that PR agency grew to be one of the UK's top 50 PR agencies and it still has offices in the town. It brought in work from all over the country, which local suppliers then benefited from. It also spawned a number of other businesses which also generated local employment and benefited the town's economy. So as a former director of two of those businesses I can personally vouch for the crucial support that such a hub can offer.

To have this new, much bigger and better hub right in the centre of town, on what has been a grubby, unloved site for many decades is particularly welcome.

The proposed use of the site also outweighs by far any need for the small number of parking spaces it will replace.

9 Fir Tree Close
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire
GL52 3EU

Comments: 19th February 2019

The roads surrounding the site are narrow and there are times when cars' park outside the Children's Library and delivery vans also use this area for deliveries to the Wilson/The White Spoon/ The Wilson Café and the Library making the area by the Children's Library sometimes very busy, and with it the attendant worry of child and adult safety. Surely it cannot be possible for this development not to have some form of vehicle movement in and out of the site on a daily basis? How will the users/staff/visitors for the Hub actually arrive for work/meetings? Deliveries to and from the site as well where will they park? Traffic will surely increase in the already narrow access to the site. And no parking on site apart from four spaces.

The Hub appears to be a two story construction, this will have the effect of blocking what little light is available to the rear of the building especially the Children's Library on the ground floor

which receives very little natural light, and on the other side as well as its outlook is The Wilson a 3 story building which also blocks the light to the front face.

Why has the Hub been selected to be placed in Chester Walk ? Would not the St James' Street car park be more suitable? Owned already by CBC, large surface area, parking literally on site, no heritage issue, better vehicular access on and off site, the area needs some form of 'boost', and still central for public transport. There would quite possibly be no heritage or archaeological issue with this area and if positioned well would not interfere with any natural light to surrounding buildings.

It does not make it clear how long term funding is set for. Funds and loans are mentioned but these are, one can assume, only open to availability of funds. There is no mention of any EU funding so this may not be an issue although conversely if some funding is through some link to the EU this funding may well disappear. Will year on year running costs be sufficient to ensure continued maintenance and security over a period of time? Or if funding is reduced will the area be left with deteriorating steel work (bearing in mind these container units have already been used once) unused units with no single authority agreeing to take over it's running costs. Until we are left with a derelict type area. Who will clear this if this happens?

Having looked at the available documents it appears there may also be issues over 'rough sleepers', the area around The Minster does have a history of an area that has anti-social and even more serious elements, and there appears to be areas in and on the site which would appeal to those that are of this particular persuasion, possibly making the area even less safe after dark.

I think this is totally the wrong area for this enterprise.

2 Kenilworth Villas
St Annes Road
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire
GL52 2SS

Comments: 14th February 2019

This is a really exciting scheme - i love what they are talking about doing, it sounds like it could really help bring much needed business and footfall to the High Street. They clearly understand what the town needs to help maintain it into the future and to retain the young and talented.

I also really love the idea of having a proper performance space in the center of town.

22 Hamilton Street
Charlton Kings
Cheltenham
GL53 8HX

Comments: 3rd March 2019

Whilst supporting the urgent need for an innovation hub in Cheltenham, this application is a situated in in a totally inappropriate place. The proposed architecture is an insult to Cheltenham's most historic grade 1 listed building, the nearby Minster. The proposal has no sense of, "contextual architecture" in the heart of Cheltenham. Whatever happened to "Civic Pride"? It's appearance also does nothing to enhance the prowess of the business community in Cheltenham.

The proposal should be sent packing and put away in one of its own shipping containers!

45 Denman Avenue
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire
GL50 4GF

Comments: 12th April 2019

We have a nearby business at 8 St George's Place and have a number of concerns that means we cannot support this project in its current state.

We are concerned that the materials used are not in keeping with the surrounding - especially the church. It will look like an eyesore, not an integrated part of the area.

We feel that access to St George's Place will be greatly affected during the construction work - hindering neighbouring residents, deliveries to our shop and other businesses around us, and stopping some of our customers from reaching us during what is already a volatile time for small businesses. We appreciate that the aim is to reduce such impact once the site is in use, but we also feel many people will continue to use cars, etc to reach this Hub rather than the proposed green alternatives. We already have a problem with the general public using the two parking spaces we pay for at the rear of our shop without permission, and we believe this would exacerbate that situation further.

During the work on Brewery Phase II, the clay nature and honeycomb structure of the area around and under the High Street meant that we experienced a lot of shaking to our building with stock occasionally being dislodged from the shelves. The site manager worked hard to understand our concerns and notify us of any work that might have a similar effect, but we were very relieved when it came to an end. We are concerned that such work in the car park behind would cause similar distress once more.

Echoing another respondent, I do feel the open plan nature of the site will invite homeless people to take shelter at night - and whilst this in and of itself is a failure on the part of society - we are all aware that it can, if anything, magnify the anti-social behaviour we see in the area.

I would urge the Council not to abandon this undertaking, but to greatly reconsider this site for said project. The failure of the Morrisons site at the North Place Car Park seems to make this an excellent alternative location - placing it close to more arterial transport links in the town for one and in a location where the proposed construction materials would be less likely to detract from the surrounding area. Furthermore it seems more likely such a project at North Place Car Park could be secured at night, preventing any escalation of anti-social behaviour.

We also feel that this is the wrong area for this project.

Cheltenham BID
2 Wolseley Terrace
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire
GL50 1TH

Comments: 22nd February 2019

Cheltenham BID's board would warmly welcome the WorkShop Cheltenham project to the town centre for several reasons.

We believe there is a need for affordable incubator spaces for start-up retail and office-based businesses in the town centre who can then move on to establish themselves elsewhere in the town. WorkShop's culture of encouraging the start-ups to flourish so that the spaces are then made available to other new businesses is an important aspect of the project for the BID.

One of the major challenges facing both Cheltenham and Gloucestershire as a whole is the number of young people who leave the town and county. WorkShop, with its focus on the creative and technology sectors, will be just the sort of "attractor" we need to retain them.

WorkShop's presence will also be a major positive for the immediate local area. The open spaces around Cheltenham Minster and the alleyways that lead from them can be blighted by anti-social behaviour. This project would bring a new vitality to the area during the day and evening that would quickly start to change that. The BID is already actively involved in supporting a separate project to improve the alleyways and the two will work together well.

We are excited that the proposals also include provision of a new events space. The BID has brought a number of new events to the town, which have driven increased footfall, but we have been hampered on occasions by the lack of availability of outdoor space in particular.

Cheltenham town centre has long-needed a Growth Hub because of the hands-on support that it would give to both existing and new businesses. It is significant that this is included within the proposals and this would be the ideal location for the first fully-functioning Cheltenham Growth Hub, with the support of both GFirst LEP and Creative England.

Director
Cheltenham BID

10 Pumphreys Court
Pumphreys Road
Charlton Kings Cheltenham
Gloucestershire
GL53 8BX

Comments: 26th February 2019

Whilst I would welcome many aspects of the proposed Innovation Hub, I strongly object to the use of the proposed site.

The development would, I feel, potentially cause far more problems than it would solve if it is built on the proposed site. In addition, the success of the Innovation Hub could suffer due to the hidden nature of the proposed location.

The site cannot be seen from the High Street or from Clarence Street. This would surely make potential start-up businesses less visually accessible to the public, causing many problems for them. In addition, the site has only 2 disabled parking spaces and no public parking spaces. The plans state that the other 2 parking spaces are equipped with electric charging points for pool cars, for the use of individuals and businesses at the scheme. Considering that there a proposed 6 full-time and 8 part-time employees; the units used by start-up businesses may require more staff; the potential numbers attending events, the cafe and the bar mentioned in the proposal; there seems no consideration for many of these seeking to park close to the facility. Cycles or public transport are not always suitable means of transport for many people. Where are visitors and business staff supposed to park? The Euro car park to the rear of the site is always packed and other public car parks are some distance away. Lack of adequate parking could well put off the very businesses and visitors that the Hub is looking to promote and provide for.

The businesses and community venue in this proposal would also, I assume, require deliveries of various kinds. Where are the delivery vehicles going to park? There is already congestion along Chester Walk when deliveries are made to the Museum, Library and White Spoon. How much more would there be with deliveries to the several start-up businesses, a cafe and a bar that would be located in the Hub? Are they, also, going to constrict the use of Chester Walk and cause further congestion and hazard? The only area wide enough along the road to conduct a 3-

point turn is at the entrance to the site, close to the entrance to the Children's /Local History Library building (which also has a Drop-In Centre for the disabled) and close to the disabled access to the main library. Larger vehicles may have to reverse along the length of Chester Walk. There is great potential for accidents to occur with increased volume of traffic in such a narrow area.

Others have suggested Using St James' Car Park as an alternative site, and this would make great sense: it is more visible and accessible to the public, there would still be available parking for both businesses and the public, and any delivery vehicles would not encounter the restrictions of the current proposed site. All this would help towards the success of the proposed venture, and the ensuing expansion of business and employment in the town centre.

Regarding the planned development structure, recessed doorways can be seen on the proposed block plan, and also a narrow area to the left of the structure adjacent to the building at the rear corner of the current car park. These are areas on the proposed plans that I feel could encourage both rough sleepers and crime (particularly drug use). Considering the enclosed nature of the site, this could create an environment which would pose a threat to safety in the area and possibly an increase in crime and perhaps rodent activity too.

The development would be comprised of 31 recycled shipping containers, and I wonder what will happen to the structure if it does not become self-sufficient by the end of the current proposers' finance? They have a time limit on their funding, so there is potential for the structure to become abandoned, which would leave a rotting metal structure that would cause immense problems and more deterioration of the area than ever.

Much depends on the success of the Innovation Hub and the business opportunities it hopes to encourage. This, in turn, depends a great deal on accessibility to and visibility of the development. The proposed site does not offer easy accessibility or visibility for such a venture, and I would therefore suggest that a more suitable site is found.

58 Roman Road
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire
GL51 8AA

Comments: 14th February 2019

As a regular user of the amenities at the main library and the children's and local history library, first of all I would object to the amount of traffic this would cause for any children or disabled people moving around that building.

I believe that the reason this site has been chosen is because of it's situation in Cheltenham's Central Business District. There would be very little visibility for people who were trying to find this site (there is already a well-hidden Tourist information office without signposting that people can rarely find)It will be well hidden between the churchyard, the libraries and the back of the buildings on St George's Place.

The parking allows only 4 places which seems to be ridiculous. This does not seem to be a very forward thinking decision. For people who are interested in using the space I think this would be a major drawback. It is also not a particularly lugubrious place to walk around.

I do believe that there is a much better space that could be utilised in the St James Street car park. It is bigger, more open and approachable in its aspect and I believe this would help to extend the CBD!!!!!!!

5 St James Terrace
Suffolk Parade
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire
GL50 2AA

Comments: 28th March 2019

I thoroughly approve of this exciting scheme which will enhance an important but neglected area so central and important to the town.

Cheltenham needs ambitious schemes like this to encourage young, creative people to work here and exchange ideas in a contemporary environment.

This innovative design has integrity. In my view, it is an honest design of today and I am pleased it does not employ pastiche which would only undermine the historic minster.

I feel it would also make this hidden away area more accessible and therefore less likely to be a denizen for drug addicts.

25 Cypress Gardens
Longlevens
Gloucester
GL2 0RB

Comments: 14th February 2019

Although I support businesses for cheltenham and youth, I believe the siting of this proposal is unacceptable. The adjacent necessary public building is for children to access the library service and also disabled users to go to a drop in centre for adult social care. The current situation is totally unhelpful for parking and access and yet again loses sight of supporting our minority vulnerable society members. The St James's site car park would be a more visible and relevant site to promote businesses and also to expand the awareness of cheltenham as a functional business centre that considers the needs of the whole of its community.

9 Kings Road
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire
GL52 6BH

Comments: 18th February 2019

Both as a local resident and as Chair of Gardens Gallery CIC I support this initiative to accelerate the fostering of creative enterprise in our town. The high value at low cost should provide a competitively priced and collegiate environment. Very exciting for our young people.

30 Redgrove Park
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire
GL51 6QY

Comments: 18th February 2019

Whilst I like the idea of start up office space in the centre of Cheltenham, please take into account the noise of the church bells installed in Cheltenham Minster, very close to the new development. The new bells were installed in 2017 with a lot of fundraising done by the bell ringers and the church members.

They are rung every Sunday morning 10.15 until 11am for service every Thursday evening from 7.30 until 9pm. There is also regular ringing on other evenings and Saturdays.

Sound control has been installed in the tower to deaden the sound, but if the new development hosts events in the evenings please be aware that the bells might be ringing.

Penrose House
30 Sydenham Road North
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire
GL52 6EB

Comments: 17th April 2019

I fully support this exciting project. A scheme like this in the town centre is long overdue and will put Cheltenham on the map. And I think the location is perfect for what's proposed.

I see many benefits arising from this scheme. At last, something for the young, creative and entrepreneurial people of the town - there just aren't enough opportunities in the town for them to make the most of their talent. It will be great to finally have somewhere affordable for those looking to start a business - too many are currently deterred from doing so by having to commit to long leases. To have a Growth Hub centre right in the middle of the town centre, readily accessible by all, will really help. I also think this scheme will improve and generate footfall for the Lower High Street area and establish a cultural zone in that part of town. I also believe it will help the town 'rediscover' the architectural gem that is the Minster, as well as hopefully sorting out the anti-social behaviour that blights the area around it. And to finally get a proper performance venue and event space in the town centre will be amazing and long overdue,

There are many reasons to support this project, and I do so wholeheartedly.

Festival House
Jessop Avenue
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire
GL50 3SH

Comments: 18th February 2019

Letter attached.

39 Hales Close
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire
GL52 6TE

Comments: 10th April 2019

I strongly support the space being utilised & the negative activities currently associated with the churchyard minimised.

I support the community hub as a facility & as an opportunity.

However, I am less sure about it being 3 stories tall when set alongside the Minster, & I don't feel the use of shipping containers, whilst cheap & environmentally sound, does anything to highlight, emphasise or compliment the beautiful architecture of the church.

It won't exactly blend in with anything around it & I feel it's design could be much more considerate & complimentary to its surroundings.

My second concern is the usual of parking. CBC sets such high town centre parking costs I have to question where any user of this facility is expected to park? Surely this has potential to adversely affect the use of the facility?



Formal Investments Ltd
Festival House
Jessop Avenue
Cheltenham GL50 3SH

PLANNING

Rec'd 15 FEB 2019

SERVICES

Michelle Payne
Planning Department
Municipal Offices
Promenade
Cheltenham
GL50 9SA

Our ref: FIL/NS/2249

Dear Michelle

Subject: Support of permission for WorkShop innovation hub: ref 19/00204/FUL

I write on behalf of Formal Investments in full support of the concept and proposal of the above named planning application.

Formal Investments operate significant employment sites both in Cheltenham and across the UK. With the operation of circa. 180,000 sq. ft. of office space in Cheltenham we are the largest office landlord. Essentially it is strange for us to support such a scheme, particularly as such a scheme will inevitably attract some tenants away from our local properties as well as continue to compete against us for the smaller sized tenants in the future. Despite this we strongly support the proposal due to the potential to benefit Cheltenham.

Essentially there is an unavoidable cost to creating any form of employment space, whatever use this may be. In the wider market, with such fierce competition, this tends to drive the minimum cost of delivery upwards predominantly driven by land and construction costs. From my understanding this proposed scheme will enable an affordable option at the entry level of the market. This can only be a good thing and encourage as many entrepreneurs as possible to start a business in the heart of Cheltenham. The more that try, the more likely some will succeed, all contributing to the future growth of Cheltenham.

In addition, these type of opportunities are traditionally pushed out of a town or city centre to the periphery where land is cheapest. By locating this innovation hub so centrally at the heart of Cheltenham a greater chance success is likely for any business locating there. The scheme will undoubtedly encourage further activity of all levels into the centre of town, maintaining the footfall as well as allowing the economy and businesses to thrive, which in turn can only enhance the experience of residents.

Delivery will form an important part of the success of this proposal, with planning permission the first step. I truly hope this application is given every opportunity to be a catalyst for regeneration of a neglected patch of the town and enjoy the successes the rest of the St James's Place area has in recent times.

Yours sincerely



Managing Director