



Reading Conservation Area Advisory Committee
28 May 2024

Dear Tom Bradfield

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS - OBJECTION TO PLANNING APPLICATION 240173 – Broad Street Mall

SUMMARY

We would like to make some additional comments below on this application.

1. Height of towers

1.1 Our original comments stated ‘The towers in this proposal are up to 10 storeys taller than application 182137 and exceed the parameters (20 storeys) within the Minster Quarter Development Framework.’ Whilst this is true in terms of absolute number of floors, differences in how roof terraces, service floors etc. are calculated mean that this overstates the increase which is approx. 7 floors.

1.2 However, the increase in height of tallest tower from ground level is 23 metres compared with application 182137 and up to 28 metres compared with the Minster Quarter Development Framework. This represents an increase of 31% or 40% respectively. The south elevation plan for the tallest tower has been annotated below.



Figure 1 – Comparison of tallest tower height

1.3 The height and increase in mass of the towers is well set out in the objection submitted by BSANA.

2. HARM TO THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE ST MARY'S BUTTS/CASTLE STREET CONSERVATION AREA (CA) AND LISTED BUILDINGS

2.1 In their response to the consented application (182137), Historic England set out how that proposal would harm the St Mary's Butts/Castle Street CA and listed buildings, especially St Mary's Minster.

2.2 This proposal will cause greater harm to the CA and St Mary's Minster because of the increased height and mass of the towers.

3. OTHER MATTERS

3.1 We concur with the comments of the Baker Street Area Neighbourhood Association in relation to the impact of this development on the Russell Street/Castle Hill/Oxford Road Conservation Area and the quality of life of residents in that area and within this development.

3.2 We would like to draw attention to the report produced by Historic England's Historic Places Panel following their visit in November 2019, published in 2020. This report expressed concerns about the impact of the then proposed, up to 22 storey towers on top of Broad St Mall on the 'setting of heritage assets over a wide area' (para 4.3).

4. CONCLUSION

This application should be rejected for the reasons stated.

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Chair Reading CAAC
On behalf of Reading Conservation Area Advisory Committee
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