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City Development
Exeter City Council

61 Thornton Hill
EXETER
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16 April 2021

Unit 6, The Depot Phase 1, Bampfylde Street. Conversion of ground floor unit 6 to residential Student Accommodation. [21/0459/FUL*](#)

Planning sub-committee of Exeter Civic Society has considered this application and wishes to object.

While Planning Sub-committee of Exeter Civic Society sympathises with MACE on the delays they have experienced and particularly on the current difficulty in achieving the original well-considered concept of street-level shops and services which would enliven Bampfylde Street and Belgrave Road and, in a later application, Summerland Street we cannot accept that this application to convert Unit 6 to student accommodation should be approved.

During this last year and more it is very unlikely that all seven shop units would be successfully rented. The suggestion in Savills' letter of 21 March that efforts of efficient marketing and reduced rents should be replaced by this abrupt and irreversible change cannot be accepted. A much longer period of increasing normality with greater footfall to the completed Leisure Centre St Sidwell's Point, Bus Station and Coach points may bring the situation back towards the concept of vibrant and active street frontages which was an attractive feature of the original proposal and certainly helped in its Approval. It appeared then that this sad area of central Exeter could overcome many decades of depression. It will still hopefully do so but the removal of the Unit 6 shop, visible from Sidwell Street, would break the connectivity in that direction also.

We trust that the application will be Refused and that the City Council will encourage MACE to continue the long wait for economic recovery.

One other aspect concerns us. In a public location individual student rooms should not be at close pavement level. The architect clearly understood this and it would be unwise to depart from the excellent design for this level. MACE clearly realise too that the redesign would not provide rooms as safe as they usually offer, and they attempt to mitigate this by 'defensive' railings and planting which would, we fear, be inadequate and might make the situation all the more intriguing.

We trust that for reasons of reduction of loss of shop-units and the vulnerable location of the extra proposed student accommodation the application will be Refused

Pamela Wootton

For Planning sub-committee of Exeter Civic Society