

## Planning Group Report, January 2002

*Roger Mortimer, Gillian Penrose*

### The UWE sites

Planning permission has, as expected, been given for the **Malvern House** site in Grove Road / Elm Lane. We and the Conservation Advisory Panel continued to oppose the plans because of over-development and other design matters. We also asked the planners why consent was being given for the loss of this educational use site when we understood a new primary school was needed to deal with existing and projected demand. We were told that their education colleagues had stated that there were primary school places available within 2 miles of the site they could not legally object to the change of use of the site from educational to residential. At the same time the education department is backing moves by the Diocese of Bristol to promote a new primary school to be created in Redland Hill House. An application is anticipated now that Ed Ware's application for a change of use has been withdrawn.

We cannot understand this contradictory reasoning but the result is that a second large educational site, with buildings, has now been lost in this area of north Bristol, at a time of a review of school provision. Watch out for the return of roosting chickens?

The other unfinished business relating to the Malvern House site concerns road alterations. We had expressed concern from the outset about the new access to this large development from Grove Road. Eventually the highway engineers decided that this could only be allowed if Grove Road is either made one way or closed to traffic at the Whiteladies Road end. We have been promised 'consultation' over what is to be done so we urge all interested residents to watch out for notices in the area and brown envelopes from the Planning Department.

On the face of it our Planning Group reports will no longer be dominated by the consequences of UWE's departure. However, at a time of some pressure on developers it would not be surprising to see proposals for changes to approved schemes - which may need careful study.

### Other Applications

In contrast to these major permissions, several small applications have been refused by the planners. At **7 Elmgrove Road** a proposal to remove the front garden for parking was turned down, as was a ugly large roof-light to a Listed house on Cotham Park and aerials and structures on the roof of **NatWest House**, Blackboy Hill.

To our relief the planners also held the line by refusing another takeaway in **Cotham Hill** in place of the bakers at **No 8**. Unfortunately there are now new planning regulations proposed by Government which, if implemented, will make it much more difficult for Bristol to slow the relentless increase in 'food and drink' premises at the expense of retail variety. Along with others we are opposing these misconceived changes in regulations.

Two separate applications for the erection of telecommunications equipment on top of the **Clifton Down Shopping Centre** have been submitted. The first on the prominent staircase tower and the second around the sides of the multi-storey car park. The first was refused, to our relief, on grounds of "perceived health risks" even though recommended for approval by the officers. In view of the Council's current moratorium, the second is also likely to be refused. Government advice on this type of application is not clear-cut, and previous appeal decisions have gone both ways - so an appeal is possible.

**Pete Woolston**, the butcher at 3 Lower Redland Road (listed building) is set to retire. He has submitted an application to refurbish living accommodation over the shop and insert another flat at the rear ground floor leaving a slightly smaller retail area. He hopes that a replacement butcher will materialise - so do we!!

A block of 6 flats (3 storeys plus attics) has been proposed on the gap site facing **Hampton Road** and looks set to get approval. It will be the same height as the adjoining townhouses although being higher up the slope it may appear taller.

We are hoping the Council will again seek to reduce the impact that the illuminated signs on the new **Murco Service Station** and shop will have on the residential neighbourhood along Hampton Road. A revised application has been submitted.