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Dear Mr Waller

Thank you for your letter dated 7th October 2019 and for attending the recent Totterdown public meeting. I am happy to address your comments below and explain more about our strategy for Temple Quarter Enterprise Campus and the wider University. I'll answer each point in turn for clarity.

On points 1 – 3 regarding the increase in student numbers

The growth figure referred to in the Draft Bristol Local Plan Review relates to estimated combined growth of the University of Bristol and University of the West of England. At the University of Bristol, we are planning for a student body of 30,000 students. To provide context, we anticipate our student body will be close to 26,000 in total this academic year. A substantial amount of planned growth (3000 students) will be accommodated at Temple Quarter, with the remaining growth spread across our Langford and Clifton campuses and associated sites such as the Bristol Royal Infirmary, Southmead and Science Park.

We expect the majority of our growth in coming years to be postgraduate taught students. We are also planning to expand our online study options alongside executive programs, which will involve only reduced or no student time on Bristol campus. We are constantly developing and changing the range of our degree courses we offer, therefore it is not possible to give you a specific breakdown by undergraduate, postgraduate taught or research degree.

On points 4 – 6 regarding purpose-built student accommodation

The location of our new purpose-built student accommodation (PBSA) will be attractive and provide good value for money. We hope this will encourage students to choose purpose-built student accommodation rather than creating any additional demand for houses of multiple occupation (HMOs).

With regards to cost, the offering is different to renting in the private sector or in HMOs. PBSA includes, for example, utilities and television licences etc. in a student's rent. When full costings are modelled, purpose-built accommodation offers good value for money and priced to suit a variety of budgets.

We take our responsibility to be a good neighbour very seriously and work hard to manage our relationship with the community. The new schemes we are keen to lease will have a team based on

site 24/7, supported by the broader Residential Life and Security teams. These various teams are all authorised to curtail any activities deemed to be inappropriate.

On points 7 and 8 regarding houses of multiple occupation (HMO) in neighbouring areas

Working to plan for student accommodation with the City Council, the University is seeking to increase the number of purpose-built student accommodation bed space at the same rate as the student population increases. The intention is not to put any additional pressure on the HMO market and allow new HMO bed spaces created to be rented by other people in Bristol.

The new purpose-built student accommodation will be designed to offer variety and be attractive to first year, returning and international students. Surveys show an increasing trend for students to stay in purpose-built student accommodation, designed to meet their needs, rather than in a shared house.

On point 9 and the timescale of building new student accommodation

The University agrees the lease and lease terms with developers and operators before work commences. The aim is to increase available bed spaces at the same rate as the increase in student numbers. The development process to secure delivery of accommodation is, like all development, subject to change and some uncertainty arising from, e.g., securing land, its remediation, planning permission etc. Hence our number planning can never be 100% accurate. It is based on the detail we have from developers as to their confidence in delivery within the development system.

On point 10 regarding growth in student numbers and the alignment to housing capacity

We will continue to plan with BCC and developers to deliver new purpose-built student accommodation to meet projected growth numbers, thus avoiding pressure on existing housing stock in surrounding communities.

With regards to this academic year, all new undergraduates who made Bristol their first choice and applied before the required date (before June 30th, 2019 for academic year 2019/20) were offered a room within University residences. There was a small surplus in demand created by a small number of students who applied after this date, where we were not being able to *immediately* allocate University accommodation.

We supported these students individually in various ways, including offering accommodation at our Langford campus and with a specialist third-party PBSA providers.

Colleagues in our accommodation team worked hard to individually support the dozens of students over and above the 6,000 students we had already placed in University owned or University managed accommodation. The aim, as with every year, is to offer to move such students into University-allocated accommodation in Bristol as soon as suitable spaces become available.

On point 11 regarding contingency plans

The design of the PBSA building does not facilitate a phased construction approach so the option of a 'partial build' will not apply. We have adopted a robust tendering process and engaged with a Tier 1 Contractor who has the experience, capacity and economic capability to deliver the Temple Quarter scheme.

We continually review activity within the Temple Quarter Enterprise Zone and regularly discuss with the Council the number of additional PBSA schemes coming forward. Our scheme is designed to accommodate 953 students and contingency plans are currently being reviewed to cater for any unforeseen events that may delay the opening of the scheme. Other developers have schemes in the planning process to offer ca. 2000 beds within easy walking distance of the new campus.

On point 12 and 13 regarding converting purpose-built student accommodation for residential purposes

The building owners offer a design that does allow conversion to private flats if necessary, but our intention is to secure only a sufficient number of purpose-built student accommodation beds to support the planned growth.

The University of Bristol aims to minimise our impact on the houses of multiple occupancy market and we will ensure land used for PBSA is efficiently utilised.

On point 14 and our relationship with our neighbours

As part of the Temple Quarter development, we have a team of academics and practitioners working on a programme to embed engagement with local (and wider) communities into the life of the campus. We are taking a holistic approach to this work, looking at our education delivery, research and role as an institutional 'citizen' in the city. Some of the key projects being explored at present include:

- a flexible undergraduate degree aimed at local people who may not have followed a conventional route through school;
- a space on the campus, called the Bristol Rooms, which will include hotdesking space for civic partners and community organisations, putting them at the heart of our research and helping to create new opportunities, like student internships in local communities;
- a programme of evening activity at the campus called Twilight Temple Quarter which will include evening classes for students and local communities, leisure activities and pop-up events and catering spaces;
- partnership working off campus, including at the Barton Hill Settlement where we are working with partners to create a 'micro campus' as part of a wider micro-settlement that is being developed.

I hope these responses reassure you that we plan our student accommodation carefully, based on student demand, good design and value for money, and that we take our responsibility as a civic university very seriously.

Yours sincerely



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Deputy Vice-Chancellor