# Heritage concerns halt plans for rooftop terrace at Bristol’s V-Shed building



Plans to introduce a rooftop terrace on the V-Shed building in Bristol’s Floating Harbour have met opposition from heritage officials, sparking surprise and debate among local residents. The proposal, revealed by Bristol Live, involves constructing terraces above four harbourside bars and restaurants within the historic dockside building, aimed at providing panoramic views of the waterfront and Bristol Cathedral.

Padmanor Investments, owned by Steve Davis, has put forward the plans to add rooftop bars that would allow patrons to enjoy the cityscape from an elevated vantage point. However, both Historic England and Bristol City Council’s heritage department have voiced objections due to concerns that a pergola shelter on the terrace would obstruct a specific, highly valued sightline. This sightline offers a glimpse of the top section of Bristol Cathedral’s tower as seen from the corner of Narrow Quay near the Arnolfini across St Augustine’s Reach.

The council’s planning officers are set to recommend refusal of the scheme when it is considered by councillors at a meeting scheduled for 30 April. Their stance centres on the partial loss of what is described as a critical ‘heritage view’ of the cathedral from ground level, which they argue must be preserved.

The news has prompted mixed reactions from the Bristol community. Many residents have expressed bewilderment at the decision, highlighting what they perceive as inconsistency given the city council’s recent approvals for numerous tall buildings in the city centre that already obscure views of notable landmarks such as the cathedral, Cabot Tower, and the Wills Memorial Building.

Melissa Topping, a resident of Redfield, criticised what she termed a “double-standard”, observing, “It’s OK to have all the ugly student blocks going up blocking our view of four beautiful church spires and gorgeous rooftops, that we used to have, from the top of the hill in east Bristol?”

Similarly, Aman Khan noted, “With everything that’s been done to this area over the past 40 years, there’s nothing wrong with this idea. Anyone who wants a look at the Cathedral can stroll over and have plain sight of it. The bars would be well-patronised and ensure the economic future of a well-loved area of the city.”

Yvonne Lambert also voiced support for the project, particularly stressing the demand for elevated social spaces. “We need more spaces that are elevated for drinking,” she said. “Not even full swing of summer, and it’s been crazy trying to find a place to drink that isn’t fully booked. People deserve better. Not all this bus gate nonsense and clean air rubbish. We need more drinking places with views.”

Other community members referenced previous developments to highlight the perceived inconsistency of the objection. Paul Mizen pointed to the cafe at Canons Marsh, built on the waterfront and widely recognised to obstruct views of the cathedral. He said, “When they allowed a cafe to be built on the waterfront at Canons Marsh, which completely obstructed the views of the Cathedral, a precedent was set. I’m not always in favour of developments that obscure views, as with much of the centre of the city, but this seems minor compared to many.”

On social media platform X (formerly Twitter), Tom summed up the sentiment among some residents by stating, “We can’t have anything nice in this city.”

The Bristol Live report details that while the rooftop terrace on the V-Shed would partially block one highly specific view of the cathedral, it would simultaneously open up fresh and improved perspectives of the historic building for visitors directly on the terrace. This has added nuance to ongoing debates balancing heritage preservation with urban development and social amenities in Bristol. The final decision on the proposal is awaited following the upcoming planning committee meeting.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.bristol247.com/food-and-drink/news-food-and-drink/huge-roof-terraces-planned-top-former-dockside-warehouse/> - This article discusses plans for creating huge roof terraces on top of a former dockside warehouse, including the V-Shed, which aims to provide panoramic views of the harbour.
* <https://www.instagram.com/bristollive/reel/DIgUIYPJ9gD/> - This reel by Bristol Live mentions the proposal for a rooftop terrace at Bristol's Floating Harbour, highlighting potential views and debates surrounding its approval.
* <https://www.bristolcivicsociety.org.uk/v-shed-harbourside/> - Bristol Civic Society provides details on the current planning status of development proposals for V-Shed, including concerns about the impact on views of Bristol Cathedral.
* <https://s3-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/agents-society-assets-files/45c7aaf85c2c340a62db9bd12072f053-225282%20HARBOURSIDE%20LEISURE%20INVESTMENT%20V11%20FINAL.pdf> - This document outlines investment opportunities in the Harbourside area, including potential for roof terraces at V-Shed, highlighting its location and potential for redevelopment.
* <https://democracy.bristol.gov.uk/documents/s84518/2.%2022.00933.F%20-%20U%20Shed.pdf> - This planning document discusses development in the Bristol harbourside area, focusing on architectural preservation and the impact of new structures on historic views.