

COMMUNITY UPDATE

OCTOBER 2020

Business Benefits

A recent survey of 32 local businesses which surround the New Town Quarter area showed overwhelming support for the proposed development plans. The area brings together an interesting mix of mainly independent traders - including cafes, restaurants, bars, hairdressers and guest houses. Many of them were hit hard when RBS vacated their premises in 2017 and are now suffering further following the trading restrictions imposed by the pandemic.

The New Town Quarter will bring much needed investment to the city centre – and most importantly, bring people back to the local area to create a vibrant and exciting new destination. Here are some of the comments posted by local businesses who support our planning application:

Guest House, Eyre Place

The RBS site was always a highly visible focal point for visitors and activity and all the businesses in this area benefited from it. Now, more than ever, as we recover from six months of lockdown, we all need the site to once again be an attractive destination for both living and visiting, both for the immediate future and over the longer-term. We would all welcome more reasons to visit this area – especially more shops, offices, homes and restaurants. The area desperately needs a new focal point

Restaurant, Eyre Place

I feel the new development will bring this area exactly what it needs, and what it has lacked since the RBS closure. The proposed new homes, offices and attractions will draw more people to the area to the benefit of all the local businesses around here, including ours. It will give the area a renewed identity which is especially important as we all recover from the limitations imposed by the recent coronavirus lockdown, and as we face a potential economic recession in the near future.

Barber, Dundas Street

I have gradually built up my business following the RBS relocation, but have also now been hit hard by the coronavirus lockdown. We are all desperate to stay trading in the area but need a commitment that something significant is going to be happening to transform an ugly empty building and gap site right opposite us into a thriving and busy neighbourhood that will bring people back to the area. I would welcome the opportunity of redevelopment to both regenerate the site and revive the local economy, especially as part of the city's commitment to supporting post-lockdown economic recovery.

Café, Dundas Street

We desperately need the new investment that the redevelopment of the RBS building will bring, to attract more people to live, work and visit the area which will benefit everyone who owns a business here.

Even despite lockdown, there is definitely a renewed interest in the area, being so close to the city centre but also to areas like Stockbridge and Canonmills. We now need a big coordinated effort to get this part of the street noticed, and to get more people to stop and visit, especially during the off-season.

Bar, Dundas Street

This is a potentially exciting time for the neighbouring businesses along Dundas Street, but the whole area's redevelopment is being impacted by the empty RBS site, which if developed, has the potential to transform this part of the city centre. We are looking forward to progressing together with the new development to provide this part of Dundas Street with the focus, investment and attractions it so desperately needs following the closure of the RBS offices.

Restaurant, Henderson Row

There are lots of smaller units in this area, most of them food and drink related, which were in place to support the RBS offices when they were open and hundreds of people working there. Lots of these businesses were devastated when RBS moved out and many have left to open elsewhere. There was a real buzz about the place when RBS was here with people coming and going all the time. We now need something significant to replace RBS bring people back into the area - we need to get that buzz back. The council must support this development, especially if we are to reinvigorate our city centre following the restrictions imposed by the coronavirus lockdown.