

Student block that will become Bristol's tallest building acquired

A new student accommodation block in Bristol that is set to become the city's tallest building has been acquired. At 28 storeys high, St James House will break the 2020 record achieved by Castle Park View, which stands at a height of 98.37 metres.

The property, next to the Bearpit roundabout, was sold for an undisclosed sum to Cain International. The alternative asset manager is working with developer Olympian Homes to transform the site over the next few years.

The scheme will see the 1970s Premier Inn demolished and two towers – one featuring 442 beds and the other 132 larger co-living units – built in its place. There will also be approximately 15,000 sq ft of amenity space, including a cinema room, a fitness suite, study areas, a games room, and group dining facilities.

The developer is aiming to complete in time for the 2028-29 academic year. RG Group has been appointed to deliver the project.

Oliver Cummings, managing director, head of PBSA, Europe at Cain, said: "Securing an asset in such a central location with convenient transport links, positions us well to meet the strong demand while reinforcing our commitment to delivering high-quality well-amenitised PBSA developments in Russell Group university cities."

James Lindridge, chief operating officer and development director at Olympian, said the company was "thankful" to Bristol City Council for its support during the planning

process.

“Olympian are excited to be delivering another high-quality asset in partnership with Cain International and RG Group,” he said. “The scheme when complete, will be the tallest in Bristol, representing high-quality design and helping to resolve the undersupply of purpose built student accommodation in the city centre.”

Planning for the redevelopment was granted by Bristol City Council [earlier this year](#). The proposals drew criticism when announced in March, particularly the height of the towers and the close proximity to the a Grade-I listed church. But councillors on the development control A committee at the council voted to approve permission.

Mark Slatter, chairman of Olympian Homes, said at the time: “This development would replace a very tired building with what we hope will be the most elegant tall building in Bristol, helping relieve the pressure on wider family housing stock.”

The deal brings Cain’s purpose-built student accommodation (PBSA) equity platform to a total gross development value of approximately £800m.

Richard Simpson, chief executive at Olympian, added: “Our consistent track record of delivering high rise, high density living assets in city centres ensures we will continue to partner with global institutional capital in successfully delivering this strategy.”