

Site Allocations and Development Management Policies

Local Plan



Adopted July 2014

- 2.28.3 A well-designed public realm will accommodate a wide range of activities that provide opportunities for human interaction, contributing to health and wellbeing and the character and vibrancy of the area. For example, providing space for events such as street markets and live performances and opportunities to wait, sit, stroll and play as an integral part of public realm design has the potential to greatly enhance the future use and enjoyment of the public realm.
- 2.28.4 In assessing whether a proposed development provides adequately for inclusive access, regard will be had to the council’s Environmental Access Standards. These are available on the Equalities Policy and Data pages of the council’s website in the section entitled ‘Eliminating discrimination - council policies’.
- 2.28.5 Regard will also be had to other council documents in assessing the design of the public realm, including where appropriate the City Centre Public Realm and Movement Framework and the Public Realm Standards Toolkit.
- 2.28.6 The public realm should be designed with ease of maintenance in mind and built up to the standard and specification required to enable, where appropriate, future maintenance by the council.
- 2.28.7 Further information on Home Zones can be found in the national guidance document “Manual for Streets”.

Policy Links

Bristol Local Plan Core Strategy – Lead Policy

- BCS21: Quality Urban Design

Other key Core Strategy policies

- BCS9: Green Infrastructure
- BCS10: Transport and Access Improvements
- BCS13: Climate Change
- BCS22: Conservation and the Historic Environment

Application Information

The following should be submitted with planning applications to show how the proposal addresses this policy:

- The Design and Access Statement should contain a rationale for the public realm design, with reference to the above considerations.
- Ownership and management plans should be submitted for all development proposals that would create new public realm.

Policy DM29: Design of New Buildings

- 2.29.1 New buildings should be designed to a high standard with design solutions founded upon a coherent concept and rationale.
- 2.29.2 This policy implements the requirements of policy BCS21 of the Core Strategy to deliver high quality, adaptable buildings that make a positive contribution to an area’s character and identity. The policy also seeks active building frontages that will enable a safe and secure built environment.

New buildings should be designed to a high standard of quality, responding appropriately to their importance and reflecting their function and role in relation to the public realm.

Proposals for new buildings will be expected to:

- i. Be clearly organised in terms of their form and internal layout and circulation to reflect the hierarchy of function they will accommodate, the uses they will serve and the context they will address; and
- ii. Incorporate active frontages and clearly defined main entrances facing the public realm that emphasise corners and reinforce the most prominent frontages; and
- iii. Respond to the solar orientation of the building to support energy efficient design while ensuring as far as possible that active rooms face the public realm; and
- iv. Provide appropriate natural surveillance of all external spaces; and
- v. Ensure that existing and proposed development achieves appropriate levels of privacy, outlook and daylight; and
- vi. Allow for future adaptation or extension to accommodate alternative uses or to respond to the changing future needs or circumstances of occupiers by means of their internal arrangement, internal height, detailed design and construction; and
- vii. Provide appropriately for inclusive access and circulation; and
- viii. Incorporate opportunities for green infrastructure such as green roofs, green walls and green decks that may be accessed and used where appropriate; and
- ix. Incorporate exteriors and elevations that provide visual interest from a range of viewing distances and are visually organised and well-proportioned; and
- x. Incorporate high quality detail of an appropriate scale and proportion, arranged in a coherent way that contributes positively to the overall design approach of the building; and
- xi. Employ high quality, durable and sustainable materials of an appropriate texture, colour, pattern and appearance that contribute positively to the character of the area.

New residential development should provide dual aspect where possible, particularly where one of the aspects is north-facing.

Shopfronts, Signage and External Installations

Shopfronts will be expected to have regard to the host building and the wider street scene in terms of the scale, proportion and overall design and to provide independent ground floor front access to upper floors.

External signage will be expected to adopt a scale, detail, siting and type of illumination appropriate to the character of the host building, the wider street scene and longer distance views.

External installations and security measures should be carefully integrated into the overall design of the host building with the aim of avoiding harm to the appearance of the building and achieving desirable design outcomes.

- 2.29.3 The design of new buildings should provide visual interest that takes account of near, medium and long distance views, with due attention given to the composition of all elevations. This will require building surfaces to be well detailed at both small and large scales. Small-scale detail is particularly important at ground floor level to create interest for pedestrians, while large scale details and modulation of the building envelope provide interest in longer distance views and relieve the actual and perceived bulk of buildings that could otherwise be seen as large and unrelenting; in this respect, the treatment of the roofscape and skyline are particularly important. Consideration should be given to how the use of a building and its constituent internal elements can be expressed in its design.
- 2.29.4 Residential developments should include living rooms, dining rooms and/or kitchens fronting the street as the most intensively used habitable spaces, while in non-residential development intensively used reception and circulation areas can also provide activity.
- 2.29.5 Active frontages can also be provided by accommodating mixed uses and/or multiple-occupiers and, where possible, sleeving undercroft parking with other development. This will facilitate multiple entrance points on to the surrounding public realm.
- 2.29.6 Buildings should be laid out and constructed in such a way as to enable future adaptability. Through the flexible layout of access and circulation arrangements, the provision of adequate floor to ceiling heights and the appropriate construction of the wall and roof structures, new buildings can be designed to enable their internal spaces to be reconfigured or adapted to different uses while maintaining natural lighting and ventilation to existing and future occupiers.
- 2.29.7 In assessing whether a proposed development provides adequately for inclusive access, regard will be had to the council's Environmental Access Standards. These are available on the Equalities Policy and Data pages of the council's website in the section entitled 'Eliminating discrimination - council policies'.
- 2.29.8 There are many different external installations that new buildings are often required to accommodate, including renewable and low-carbon energy sources, shading devices, green infrastructure and security measures. The best design solution will emerge where these are considered from the outset as an integral part of the design.
- 2.29.9 Further information and detailed design guidance relating to shopfronts, security shutters and external signage can be found in Policy Advice Note 8 'Shopfront Guidelines'.

Policy Links

Bristol Local Plan Core Strategy – Lead Policy

- BCS21: Quality Urban Design

Other key Core Strategy policies

- BCS9: Green Infrastructure
- BCS13: Climate Change
- BCS15: Sustainable Design and Construction
- BCS22: Conservation and the Historic Environment

Application Information

The following should be submitted with planning applications to show how the proposal addresses this policy:

- The Design and Access Statement should make clear the concept and rationale underlying the proposed building design, including the approach to adaptability.

Policy DM30: Alterations to Existing Buildings

2.30.1 This policy deals specifically with extensions and alterations to existing buildings and applies to all building types, not just residential premises. In doing so, the policy implements the requirements of policy BCS21 of the Core Strategy to deliver high quality buildings that make a positive contribution to an area’s character and identity whilst safeguarding the amenity of existing development.

Extensions and alterations to existing buildings will be expected to:

- i. Respect the siting, scale, form, proportions, materials, details and the overall design and character of the host building, its curtilage and the broader street scene; and**
- ii. Retain and/or reinstate traditional or distinctive architectural features and fabric; and**
- iii. Safeguard the amenity of the host premises and neighbouring occupiers; and**
- iv. Leave sufficient usable external private space for the occupiers of the building.**

Extensions should be physically and visually subservient to the host building, including its roof form, and not dominate it by virtue of their siting and scale.

The principles set out in policy DM29 will apply where development proposals involve new or altered shopfronts, external signage and/or external installations and security measures.

Proposals that would sensitively adapt existing buildings to alternative uses as an alternative to demolition will be supported. Proposals that would retrofit existing buildings with sustainability measures will also be encouraged subject to an assessment against the above criteria.

2.30.2 The retention and re-use of existing buildings throughout the city can have significant sustainability and regeneration benefits, as well as helping to preserve local character. Reusing buildings avoids the consumption of building materials and energy and the generation of waste from the construction of replacement buildings.

2.30.3 Poorly conceived building extensions and alterations can have a detrimental impact upon a neighbourhood and the amenity of nearby occupiers. Where possible, significant extensions and alterations should be confined to the rear and minor elevations of a building.

2.30.4 In most instances, it will be appropriate for proposed works to retain and reflect the character and appearance of the existing building. In these cases, innovative design solutions will also be acceptable if they would be of exceptional design quality and would complement rather than detract from the existing building. There will, however, also be instances where the existing building is architecturally unremarkable or poor. In such circumstances, it might be appropriate to significantly remodel the appearance of the building or for extensions and alterations to sensitively contrast with the character of the building. The design approach adopted should draw on analysis of local character and distinctiveness undertaken in accordance with policy DM26 and should consider any impact upon the wider street scene.

- 2.30.5 Every effort should be made to retain traditional or distinctive architectural features and fabric that contribute positively towards the character of the building. Consideration should also be given to the sympathetic reinstatement of lost features and the removal of unsympathetic additions. If traditional facing materials exist and cannot be practicably retained in situ, they should be suitably reclaimed for re-use as part of the proposed development.
- 2.30.6 Care should also be taken to ensure that any extension or alteration does not result in a harmful loss of sunlight or daylight through overshadowing of its neighbours. Furthermore, extensions should not be overbearing or result in unacceptable overlooking or loss of privacy.
- 2.30.7 Any proposed extension should retain sufficient external private space to meet the continuing requirements of the building. These include the appropriate retention of usable amenity space, green infrastructure, off-street parking and storage provision.
- 2.30.8 Further information and detailed design guidance specifically in relation to householder applications can be found in Supplementary Planning Document No.2 'A Guide for Designing House Alterations and Extensions'.
- 2.30.9 Further information and detailed design guidance relating to shopfronts, security shutters and external signage can be found in Policy Advice Note 8 'Shopfront Guidelines'.

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Application Information

The following should be submitted with planning applications to show how the proposal addresses this policy:

- Where required, the Design and Access Statement should set out the rationale for the siting and design of any alterations or extensions with reference to the above criteria.

Policy DM31: Heritage Assets

- 2.31.1 Heritage assets, which can range from whole landscapes to individual items of street furniture, are a finite non-renewable resource that can often be irreparably damaged by insensitive development. Great weight is given to the conservation of designated heritage assets. As set out in the Core Strategy, the historic environment is important not just for its own sake, but also as an asset that can add value to regeneration and help to draw businesses to the city, acting as a stimulus to local economic growth.
- 2.31.2 The key to the sympathetic management of heritage assets is through a clear understanding of the assets themselves and the context in which they exist. Early