

Bristol Development Framework

Core Strategy



Adopted June 2011



Policy BCS21

New development in Bristol should deliver high quality urban design. Development in Bristol will be expected to:

- Contribute positively to an area’s character and identity, creating or reinforcing local distinctiveness.
- Promote accessibility and permeability by creating places that connect with each other and are easy to move through.
- Promote legibility through the provision of recognisable and understandable places, routes, intersections and points of reference.
- Deliver a coherently structured, integrated and efficient built form that clearly defines public and private space.
- Deliver a safe, healthy, attractive, usable, durable and well-managed built environment comprising high quality inclusive buildings and spaces that integrate green infrastructure.
- Create a multi-functional, lively and well-maintained public realm that integrates different modes of transport, parking and servicing.
- Enable the delivery of permanent and temporary public art.
- Safeguard the amenity of existing development and create a high-quality environment for future occupiers.
- Promote diversity and choice through the delivery of a balanced mix of compatible buildings and uses.
- Create buildings and spaces that are adaptable to changing social, technological, economic and environmental conditions.

To demonstrate the delivery of high quality urban design, major development proposals with a residential component should be assessed against ‘Building For Life’ (or equivalent methodology). As a guide, development should aim to achieve the standards set out in the table below.

	To 2012	2013-2015	2016 onwards
All major developments of 10+ dwellings	Building For Life Good standard (overall score 14/20)	Building For Life Good standard (overall score 15/20)	Building For Life Very Good standard (overall score 16/20)

Explanation

- 4.21.8 Successful urban design is founded upon an understanding and respect for an area's unique built, natural, cultural and socio-economic context. Development in Bristol should therefore be informed by context analysis such as that which will inform the Bristol Central Area Action Plan. Design can contribute positively to local character by responding to the underlying landscape structure, distinctive patterns and forms of development and local culture.
- 4.21.9 Creating an accessible and permeable public realm, connecting places and spaces, will help to ensure that many daily needs can be met within walking and cycling distance. The layout, form and mix of development should support walking, cycling and public transport provision. Opportunities should be taken to create or reinforce a logical and legible hierarchy of routes, intersections and public spaces, the design of which will vary dependent upon movement, activities and uses supported. Built form should be used to assist in this regard, with the inclusion of focal buildings and features where appropriate to act as visual points of reference.
- 4.21.10 Development should be arranged in a coherent manner that makes efficient use of land and infrastructure. This will be best achieved by integrating with existing streets, public spaces and development edges and by configuring buildings to create clearly defined public / active fronts and private / passive backs.
- 4.21.11 The built environment should be designed to deliver safe, secure, attractive, healthy, comfortable and convenient places in which to live, work, play and spend time. Development should take the opportunities available to improve the quality and appearance of an area and the way it functions. The built environment should be inclusive, respecting how people experience the city and addressing the needs of all in society.
- 4.21.12 Development should deliver a multi-functional public realm comprising streets and spaces that can accommodate a range of appropriate uses and activities both now and in the future, which will assist in providing animation, vitality and surveillance. The provision and enhancement of green infrastructure and delivery of a coherent landscape scheme should be planned as an integral part of any development. Major development schemes should also enable the delivery of permanent and temporary public art, promoting a multi-disciplinary approach to commissioning artists in the design process.
- 4.21.13 A high quality built environment should consider the amenity of both existing and future development. Consideration should be given to matters of privacy, outlook, natural lighting, ventilation, and indoor and outdoor space. Development should also take account of local climatic conditions.
- 4.21.14 Quality development should be achieved through a robust and collaborative design process from inception to completion on the ground. The design process should go beyond the development construction phase and should also ensure that suitable management arrangements and maintenance regimes are put in place. The Design and Access Statement that accompanies a planning application should demonstrate how development proposals contribute to the criteria set out within this policy. The drafting of Design and

Access Statements should evolve under the design process, and both inform and be informed by the development proposals.

- 4.21.15 Building for Life is a nationally recognised methodology for assessing the design quality of residential development, led by CABE and the Home Builders' Federation, using 20 criteria. Whilst the policy does not imply conformity with specified standards is the sole guide to a decision, the Building for Life methodology offers a systematic way of demonstrating that the overall objective and criteria in Policy BCS21 have been addressed. Therefore, proposals for major development with a residential component should demonstrate, through the Design and Access Statement, how the development would deliver high quality design, with reference to the Building for Life assessment criteria. This statement will be reviewed by a CABE-accredited assessor who will prepare a formal report for the consideration of the decision maker. If Building for Life is discontinued in the future, the Council will identify an equivalent alternative methodology to guide decisions. Minor developments should also aim to achieve a similar standard of design.

Policy Delivery

This policy will be delivered through the development management process, including the use of Design and Access Statements.

A citywide urban context analysis will be undertaken which will inform the council and developers in the process of contextual appraisal and response. The analysis will be informed by community involvement. It will also draw on the evaluation work undertaken as part of the on-going programme of conservation area appraisals. The citywide urban context analysis will be produced in conjunction with the proposed supplementary planning document on urban design.

Where needed to manage and promote change, the council will seek to work with stakeholders as appropriate in the preparation of area design frameworks, masterplans, design codes and site-specific briefs.

Community engagement will be expected at the pre-application stage in accordance with the Statement of Community Involvement. Where appropriate, support will be sought from national, regional and local bodies including CABE, South West Design Review Panel and Bristol Urban Design Forum.

Further detailed policies and guidance on urban design principles for Bristol will be set out in the Site Allocations & Development Management DPD and supplementary planning documents addressing housing mix and urban design. This DPD will include a policy on Development and Health which will set out the approach to Health Impact Assessments.

The following adopted supplementary planning documents and supplementary planning guidance will continue to be of relevance until they are reviewed:

- SPD1 "Tall Buildings" (January 2005)
- SPD2 "A Guide for Designing House Alterations and Extensions" (October 2005)
- PAN8 "Shopfront Guidelines" (1997)

- PAN15 “Responding to Local Character – A Design Guide” (1998)

Performance in delivering quality urban design will be monitored and assessed using national methodologies including Building For Life and Lifetime Homes. Both development proposals and completed developments will be assessed against the nationally agreed Building for Life criteria by CABE-accredited assessors.

Assessment of design proposals will draw upon CABE best practice guidance and government guidance set out in “Manual For Streets”.

Indicators

Housing Quality – Building for Life Assessments (Core Output Indicator H6)

