

Policy DM21: Development of Private Gardens

2.21.1 Private residential gardens make an important contribution to the city’s green infrastructure and to the character of its residential areas. This policy aims generally to retain private residential gardens in the city whilst setting out the limited circumstances where their development may be acceptable.

2.21.2 The Core Strategy sets out the approach to providing new homes to 2026. Delivery of the new homes can mainly be secured through the development of a mix of sites across the city and has not been based on the assumption that development of significant amounts of garden land will be required. However, development of garden land may be appropriate where it would contribute to sustainable forms of development. Where such developments occur they can make a limited but useful contribution to the overall supply of new homes.

Development involving the loss of gardens will not be permitted unless:

- I. The proposal would represent a more efficient use of land at a location where higher densities are appropriate; or**
- II. The development would result in a significant improvement to the urban design of an area; or**
- III. The proposal is an extension to an existing single dwelling and would retain an adequate area of functional garden.**

In all cases, any development of garden land should not result in harm to the character and appearance of an area.

Development involving front gardens should ensure that the character of the street is not harmed and that appropriate boundary treatments and planting are retained.

2.21.3 The Core Strategy seeks higher densities of development in and around the city centre, in or close to other centres and along or close to main public transport routes. In such locations the loss of garden land may be acceptable where a more efficient use of land would result, and provided the proposed development would not result in harm to the character of the area. In accordance with other policies, new green infrastructure would also need to be incorporated into the development.

2.21.4 Loss of garden land may be acceptable where improved urban design can be achieved. Improvements to urban design may occur, for example, where the development would fill an incongruous gap in an otherwise built-up frontage. Redevelopment of a number of properties may result in overall loss of garden land but create improved design.

2.21.5 Changes to front gardens do not always require planning permission. Where permission is necessary, the policy ensures that the character of an area is not harmed by inappropriate material, loss of boundary treatments and discordant design features.

Policy Links

Bristol Local Plan Core Strategy – Lead Policy

- BCS9: Green Infrastructure

Other key Core Strategy policies

- BCS5: Housing Provision
- BCS20: Effective and Efficient Use of Land
- BCS21: Quality Urban Design

Application Information

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

- The Design and Access Statement should explain the rationale for the proposed design setting out, where relevant, how the proposed development would secure higher densities at an appropriate location and/or demonstrating how the proposed development would improve the urban design of an area.
- The Sustainability Statement should show how new green infrastructure has been incorporated into the development proposals.