

2.26.11 For the purposes of this policy:

- Infill development is defined as development in a small gap in an otherwise built-up frontage, usually consisting of the frontage plots only;
- Backland development is defined as development to the rear of existing buildings, usually with no street frontage of its own.

Policy Links

Bristol Local Plan Core Strategy – Lead Policy

- BCS21: Quality Urban Design

Other key Core Strategy policies

- BCS9: Green Infrastructure
- 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 evidence of a detailed analysis and response to local character and distinctiveness, proportionate to the nature and scale of the proposed development, with reference to the above criteria.
- Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments should be submitted for applications for tall buildings and for other schemes that are likely to have a significant visual impact within the landscape.

Policy DM27: Layout and Form

2.27.1 This policy is concerned with the successful arrangement and form of buildings, structures and spaces. The layout of the built environment makes a key contribution to creating quality urban design as required under the Core Strategy, and as such the policy relates to all aspects of Core Strategy policy BCS21.

The layout, form, pattern and arrangement of streets, open spaces, development blocks, buildings and landscapes should contribute to the creation of quality urban design and healthy, safe and sustainable places. It should make efficient use of land, provide inclusive access and take account of local climatic conditions.

Proposals should not prejudice the existing and future development potential of adjoining sites or the potential for the area to achieve a coherent, interconnected and integrated built form. Where such potential may reasonably exist, including on sites with different use or ownership, development will be expected to either progress with a comprehensive scheme or, by means of its layout and form, enable a co-ordinated approach to be adopted towards the development of those sites in the future.

Streets and Spaces

Development will be expected to:

- i. Create or contribute towards a simple, well-defined and inter-connected network of streets and spaces that allows for convenient access to a choice of movement modes and routes, as appropriate to the size of the development and grain of the surroundings, without compromising the security of the development; and

- ii. Provide direct, clear, safe and attractive links to existing routes, local and wider services, amenities and facilities including public transport; and
- iii. Ensure that the layout, scale and enclosure of streets and spaces are appropriate to their function, character, capacity, hierarchy and local climatic conditions; and
- iv. Incorporate existing and new green infrastructure to reinforce the character of streets and spaces.

Opportunities for new street linkages will be sought where the existing permeability of the area is poor, desire lines exist or where historic routes can be reinstated.

Blocks and Plots

The layout and form of development, including the size, shape, form and configuration of blocks and plots, will be expected to:

- i. Achieve continuity of development edge that encloses and clearly defines the public realm whilst physically securing the private realm; and
- ii. Create distinct public fronts and private backs with clear and obvious ownership and responsibility for external spaces provided; and
- iii. Enable active frontages to the public realm and natural surveillance over all publicly accessible spaces; and
- iv. Establish a coherent and consistent building line and setback that relate to the street alignment; and
- v. Respond appropriately to local climatic conditions including solar orientation and prevailing winds to maximise the opportunities for energy efficient design, renewable energy generation and access to sunlight within the development, while minimising the negative effects of wind including wind turbulence and funnelling; and
- vi. Enable existing and proposed development to achieve appropriate levels of privacy, outlook and daylight; and
- vii. Be flexible to accommodate alternative but appropriate building types, plot types and uses which could adapt or change independently over time, taking into account the possibility for future extension; and
- viii. Enable the provision of adequate appropriate and usable private or communal amenity space, defensible space, parking and servicing where necessary.

Height, Scale and Massing

The height, scale and massing of development should be appropriate to the immediate context, site constraints, character of adjoining streets and spaces, the setting, public function and/or importance of the proposed development and the location within the townscape. Design solutions should optimise adaptability and energy efficiency and promote health and wellbeing.

Landscape Design

Through high quality landscape design, development will be expected to contribute to a sense of place with safe and usable outdoor spaces which are planned as an integral part of the development and respond to and reinforce the character of the context within which it is to be set.

In contributing to green infrastructure, design should incorporate valuable existing natural and manmade landscape features, while reinforcing it with new structural tree planting where appropriate.

Proposals for the landscape design and planting of development will be expected to:

- i. Take account of the function, circulation and servicing of places and site constraints including underground services; and
- ii. Use trees and other plants appropriate to the character of the site and its context, including native trees; and
- iii. Allow sufficient space for safeguarding valuable existing vegetation and the healthy establishment of trees and other planting; and
- iv. Integrate sustainable urban drainage systems; and
- v. Incorporate hard detailing and materials and planting appropriate to context and fit for purpose, for all elements including surfacing, change of level, boundary treatments, and site furniture; and
- vi. Accommodate capacity for local food growing where possible.

Servicing and Management

Development should be designed taking into account the needs and practicalities of servicing and long term management of public or shared private spaces and facilities including communal and landscaped areas and deliver a secure, supportive, safe environment for users that helps to foster a sense of community and minimise the opportunities for crime.

Development that would create new public realm and/or shared private spaces and facilities should be managed in accordance with an agreed Ownership and Management Plan which should include the upkeep and the long-term maintenance of shared private spaces and facilities including landscaped areas and external boundaries.

- 2.27.2 The layout and form of development is expected to have regard to the local context including local character and distinctiveness in creating a clearly defined and coherent urban structure with a sense of place.

Streets and Spaces

- 2.27.3 Streets are more than just traffic channels for vehicles and should be designed as public spaces, taking into account the needs of all users but prioritising pedestrians and cyclists and public transport.

Blocks and Plots

- 2.27.4 It is expected that most new development will be configured as perimeter blocks with coherent and consistent building lines unless the local context or site constraints dictate otherwise, or the proposed development would have an important public function for which an alternative configuration would be more appropriate. A change in building line should clearly demonstrate benefits to the quality of the public space and the maintenance of privacy and security should not prejudice the quality of the public realm.
- 2.27.5 Private or communal amenity space can include gardens, balconies and roof terraces and should support, among other things, quiet relaxation, safe play and/or opportunities for growing food as appropriate to the proposed development and the local context.

Landscape Design

- 2.27.6 The quality of the built environment can greatly be enhanced by a considered landscape design at an early stage of the design process including site appraisal and planning informed by up to date information and surveys of the site constraints and characteristics. The landscape design should contribute to the delivery of sustainable places and recognise the important role that green infrastructure plays in adapting to climate change and sustainability. For larger scale developments, a strategic landscape strategy for the entire site may be sought that sets out an integrated vision for the development.
- 2.27.7 In assessing the layout and form of development, regard will also be had to relevant national good practice guidance.

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
- 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 contain a rationale for the proposed layout and form of the development, with reference to the above considerations.
- Sunlight and daylight studies may be required for schemes where there is doubt over the acceptability of their impact on the amenity of existing development.
- Ownership and management plans should be submitted for all development proposals that would create new public realm and/or shared private spaces and facilities.