Policy DM28: Public Realm

2.28.1 The public realm comprises the streets, spaces and movement corridors within the built and natural environment to which the public have access. This might include privately owned spaces.

2.28.2 Policy BCS21 of the Core Strategy states that development should create a multifunctional, lively and well-maintained public realm that integrates different modes of transport, parking and servicing. This policy expands on this and other requirements of policy BCS21 by setting out detailed criteria for assessing the public realm element of new development proposals.

Development should create or contribute to a safe, attractive, high quality, inclusive and legible public realm that contributes positively to local character and identity and encourages appropriate levels of activity and social interaction.

Development will be expected to:

i. **Provide for or contribute towards an appropriate range of activity within the public realm, including spill-out spaces for trade, events, relaxation and recreation; and**

ii. **Sensitively integrate and prioritise appropriate levels of movement infrastructure for different modes, including provision for convenient pedestrian and cycle movement; and**

iii. **Provide an appropriate relationship with the building edge and a suitable transition between clearly defined public and private spaces; and**

iv. **Reduce crime and fear of crime by creating a well-surveilled public realm that is well managed and cared for; and**

v. **Enable easy, inclusive access into and through the public realm and to buildings that provides adequately for the mobility needs of all users having regard to age, gender and disability; and**

vi. **Ensure that any car parking and provision for servicing are appropriate to the context and are sensitively integrated so as not to dominate the public realm; and**

vii. **Where they are proposed or required by other policies, integrate sustainable drainage systems, natural and historic features and any planting into the design of the public realm; and**

viii. **Incorporate appropriate street furniture, lighting and surface materials of high quality, environmental performance and durability that enhance the quality, character and appearance of the public realm through their siting and design; and**

ix. **Retain in situ, where possible, traditional surface materials, boundary treatments and street furniture or, where this cannot feasibly be accomplished, reclaim them and reuse them elsewhere in the proposed development.**

Shared Spaces

Shared space or Home Zone solutions will be encouraged in appropriate locations. They should be designed and detailed to encourage low vehicle speeds, create a pedestrian-friendly environment, discourage inappropriate parking and incorporate street furniture and quality planting as an integral part of the proposed design.

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.