

Policy Links**Bristol Local Plan Core Strategy – Lead Policy**

- BCS7: Centres and Retailing

Other key Core Strategy policies

- BCS10: Transport and Access Improvements

Application Information

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

- In the case of proposals outside of centres applications should explain the need proposed to be met by the development and include an assessment of the availability of suitable sites in centres.
- Detailed impact assessments for proposals outside of centres which exceed the thresholds set out in the policy. Assessments should address:
 - The impact of the proposal on existing, committed and planned public and private investment in a centre or centres in the catchment area of the proposal;
 - The impact of the proposal on town centre vitality and viability, including local consumer choice and the range and quality of the comparison and convenience retail offer;
 - The impact of the proposal on allocated sites outside town centres being developed in accordance with the development plan;
 - In the context of a retail or leisure proposal, the impact of the proposal on in-centre trade/turnover and on trade in the wider area, taking account of current and future consumer expenditure capacity in the catchment area up to five years from the time the application is made; and
 - If located in or on the edge of a town centre, whether the proposal is of an appropriate scale (in terms of gross floorspace) in relation to the size of the centre and its role in the hierarchy of centres.

Policy DM8: Shopping Areas and Frontages

2.8.1 This policy applies to Bristol's 10 Town Centres and its 9 District Centres as defined in the Core Strategy and identified on the Policies Map. It aims to support vitality and viability and promote diversity within these centres by maintaining a healthy mix of uses within a variety of unit sizes capable of accommodating a range of retailers and associated uses.

2.8.2 Primary Shopping Areas are defined where there will be a high proportion of Use Class A1 retail shopping uses. Secondary Shopping Frontages are also defined, providing opportunities in centres for a greater diversity of uses.

2.8.3 Proposals for development within the city centre will be assessed against the relevant policies of the Bristol Central Area Plan.

Within Primary Shopping Areas and Secondary Shopping Frontages identified on the Policies Map development will be expected to maintain or provide active ground floor uses.

Primary Shopping Areas

Within Primary Shopping Areas change of use of shops (Use Class A1) to another use will not be permitted unless the proposed use would:

- i. Make a positive contribution to the vitality, viability and diversity of the Primary Shopping Area and centre; and
- ii. Not fragment any part of the Primary Shopping Area by creating a significant break in the shopping frontage; and
- iii. Not result in a loss of retail floorspace of a scale harmful to the shopping function of the centre; and
- iv. Be compatible with a retail area in that it includes a shopfront with a display function and would be immediately accessible to the public from the street.

Secondary Shopping Frontages

Within Secondary Shopping Frontages the development of retail or other related uses will be acceptable where they would help to maintain or enhance the function of the centre. In all cases the proposed use will be expected:

- i. To complement the retail function of the centre and not harm its vitality, viability or diversity; and
- ii. Not to harmfully dominate or fragment frontages; and
- iii. To maintain an appropriate balance and diversity of uses in all parts of the Secondary Shopping Frontage; and
- iv. To generate a reasonable level of footfall and be of general public interest or service; and
- v. To be compatible with a shopping area in that it includes a shopfront with a display function and would be immediately accessible to the public from the street.

In all cases, proposals which would result in the loss of retail floorspace, including storage or servicing space, will be expected to demonstrate that they will not be detrimental to the continued viability of the retail unit.

2.8.4 The Primary Shopping Areas identified in the Town and District Centres represent the retail core of those centres. They contain a high proportion of retail shops supported by significant numbers of uses such as cafés, bars, and financial and professional services. In order that the retail function of the town and district centres is not eroded, the policy aims generally to maintain the existing proportion of retail by retaining shops (Use Class A1). However, it provides some flexibility for other uses where they would make a positive contribution to the role of the centre.

2.8.5 Primary Shopping Areas are particularly sensitive to breaks in the A1 retail frontage as they have an impact on footfall and affect shoppers' perceptions of parts of the centre. A significant break (criterion ii of the policy) will be considered to have occurred where uses would, individually or cumulatively, change the perceived function of that part of the frontage away from one associated primarily with shopping. The impact of any break will be assessed having regard to its extent, location and potential impact on shopper footfall at that location or in other parts of the centre.

2.8.6 The Secondary Shopping Frontages support the overall function of the centres by allowing for a greater diversity of uses. The emphasis remains on active uses at ground floor level but the policy allows for further opportunities for development of uses such as cafés and financial services where they are complementary to the centre’s role. In order that secondary frontages still maintain their shopping role the policy aims to ensure that an appropriate balance and diversity of uses is maintained.

2.8.7 ‘Retail or other related uses’ are defined as Use Classes A1-A5 or other similar uses such as gyms, arts and cultural premises and community facilities which would add to the vitality of the area and are considered to be active ground floor uses. Developments such as offices and residential make an overall contribution to the role of centres but are not considered to provide active ground floor uses.

Policy Links

Bristol Local Plan Core Strategy – Lead Policy

- BCS7: Centres and Retailing

Other key Core Strategy policies

- BCS21: Quality Urban Design

Application Information

Planning applications should indicate how the criteria in this policy have been addressed.

Policy DM9: Local Centres

2.9.1 Throughout Bristol a network of 27 Local Centres serve the day-to-day needs of local areas. These centres are defined in the Core Strategy and identified on the Policies Map. Local Centres generally contain shops providing a range of groceries, fresh food and facilities such as post offices. They also often contain specialist or niche shops which contribute to the diversity and distinctiveness of centres, as well as including cafés, pubs or financial services uses. By ensuring an appropriate balance of uses is supported, this policy aims to maintain and strengthen the role of Local Centres in providing a community focus and in providing for day-to-day shopping needs.

2.9.2 Proposals for development within the city centre will be assessed against the relevant policies of the Bristol Central Area Plan.

Within Local Centres shown on the Policies Map development will be expected:

- i. To generate a reasonable level of footfall and be of general public interest or service; and
- ii. To maintain an appropriate balance of uses in the Local Centre; and
- iii. To help maintain or enhance the function of the centre and its ability to meet day-to-day shopping needs; and
- iv. Not to harmfully dominate or fragment the centre’s retail frontages; and
- v. To be compatible with a shopping area in that it includes a shopfront with a display function and would be immediately accessible to the public from the street.