

THE ANNEXE AT 11-13 WHITELADIES ROAD, BRISTOL, BS8 1PB.

Planning Statement for
Urban Creation (11-13WLR) Ltd
October 2025
Our Ref: 25-00053

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Quality Assurance

This report has been prepared within the quality system operated at Rapleys LLP according to British Standard ISO 9001:2015.

We confirm that the undersigned is an appropriately qualified and experienced Chartered Planner experienced in the commercial property sector.

Created by:

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1 INTRODUCTION

Overview

1.1 This Planning Supporting Statement has been prepared by Rapleys LLP on behalf of Urban Creation (11-13 WLR) Ltd, the freehold owner of the site and applicant. It supports an application seeking full planning permission to deliver a terrace of 4 PBSA houses for short-term let to replace the rear annexe at 11-13 Whiteladies Road.

1.2 The formal description of development is therefore as follows:

Demolition of the rear annexe and delivery of 4 terrace PBSA houses with associated landscaping and other works.

Submitted Plans and Documents

1.3 In addition to this Planning Supporting Statement, the following documents and drawings comprise the full application package:

- Suite of existing and proposed plans produced by Shu Architects:
- 2131 400 P1-Location Plan
- 2131 401 P1-Existing Site Plan
- 2131 402 P1-Proposed Site Plan
- 2131 403 P1-Floor Plans
- 2131 410 P1-North Elevations
- 2131 411 P1-West Elevations
- 2131 412 P1-South Elevations
- 2131 413 P1-East Elevations
- 2131 414 P1-House Sections and Stores
- 2131 415 P1-Colour Elevations
- 2131 416 P1-Visualisations
- 2131 417 P1-Shared Communal Room
- 2131 DAS 2025-10-17
- 2131 Waste Statement 2025-10-17
- 2947-LLA-ZZ-GF-DR-L-0001 P01 Landscape Masterplan
- 2947-LLA-ZZ-GF-DR-L-0003 Landscape Sections
- 2947-LLA-ZZ-ZZ-RP-L-0002 P01 Landscape Strategy Document
- AH2330 11-13 Whiteladies HS v01
- Application Form

- CIL Form

2 SITE DESCRIPTION

Context

- 2.1 The site is 11-13 Whiteladies Road, a 3-storey semi-detached period-style building set back from the road. In addition to the main building, to the rear of the site, there is a standalone single-storey annexe. This application focuses entirely on the rear annexe and does not seek to change any part of the main 11-13 Whiteladies Road building, which is subject to a separate application.
- 2.2 The entire site benefits from parking both to the front and the rear of the property, along with two vehicle entrances, both accessed directly off Whiteladies Road. Whiteladies Road is a significant route for vehicular travel into Bristol City Centre. There are several public transport options available within proximity of the site, including bus stops and other forms of sustainable transport such as electric scooters and public bicycles.
- 2.3 The immediate area surrounding the site, namely the Triangle and Park Street, is very busy. It has a variety of commercial units, including shops, bars, restaurants, public parks, employment opportunities, and a range of different types and tenures of residential development. Additionally, the University of Bristol's main Campus is situated approximately 300 meters away.
- 2.4 The site is located within the Whiteladies Road Conservation Area, classified by the large period buildings predominantly built from stone. There are several listed buildings in the immediate vicinity, including 7 & 9 Whiteladies Road directly to the south, which is a Grade II listed building (Historic England reference number 1202690) listed in 1994.



Conservation Area Description.

- 2.5 The immediate area is characterised by the tree-lined street of Whiteladies Road and large period buildings, predominantly arranged as semi-detached properties. The properties on the east side

of Whiteladies Road front onto an avenue of mature trees, have generous plot sizes, including large front gardens, many of which are now parking courtyards. The properties are characterised by their attractive façades, many of which are finished with bath stone and painted timber sash windows. Nos. 11-13 Whiteladies Road was built between 1855 and 1874 as a pair of residential villas.

An excellent site for Purpose-Built Student Accommodation

- 2.6 The site is exceptionally well located for PBSA. It is located within close proximity of the University Precinct; a BCC designation covering the University of Bristol's main campus and the area surrounding it. Within the University Precinct, applications relating to higher education and University expansion are encouraged. Transport Links to other University Campuses are also available within close proximity (including the regular U1 and U2 bus services) of the site, making it ideal for student accommodation in sustainability terms. The site is marked by the red star directly to the West of the Main Campus, and approximately 150m north of Beacon House (a central study and learning hub, offering over 500 flexible study spaces, quiet zones, student support facilities, and a public-facing cafe.)



Relevant Designations

- 2.7 The Bristol City Council Local Plan Policies Map identifies the following designations which are of relevance to the site: The site is located within the Whiteladies Road Conservation Area.
- The site is within Flood Zone 1, with some areas at risk of suffering from surface water flooding.

- The site falls within the 'City Centre' district.
- The site falls within the 'Bristol Central Area Plan Boundary'.
- The site falls within the City Centre Area 'The West End'.

Planning History

2.8 The planning history for the site is limited. For completeness, all previous applications shown on Bristol City Council's planning applications database have been listed below:

Reference Number	Description of Development	Status
89/01364/L	Demolition of workshop at rear addition of 4 no. windows to existing building & erection of three storey office.	GRANTED subject to condition(s)
89/01378/F	Erection of three storey office building with associated car parking.	REFUSED
90/02139/F	Refurbishment of existing annexe (to 11-13 Whiteladies Road) to provide office accommodation.	GRANTED subject to condition(s)
94/01342/A	Non-illuminated company sign and car park sign.	GRANTED subject to condition(s)
02/01802/F	Continuation of use of two rooms located on the first floor as an Appointment Only Manicure Studio (Class D1).	GRANTED subject to condition(s)
02/00459/F	Erection of first floor extension to single storey building at rear, to provide additional office accommodation.	REFUSED
02/02297/F	Erection of first floor extension to single storey building at rear, to provide additional office accommodation (Use class B1).	GRANTED subject to condition(s)
06/04952/VC	Felling of 3 Ash trees located to the rear of the property.	Preservation Order NOT REQUIRED
25/10493/COU	Application to determine if prior approval is required for a proposed: Change of use from Commercial, Business and Service (Use Class E) to Dwellinghouses (Use Class C3) Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) - Schedule 2, Part 3, Class MA - 17 dwellings.	GRANTED subject to condition(s)
25/10495/F	Installation of bin and bike storage, enlargement of roof lights and light wells and other works.	GRANTED Subject to condition(s)

Reference Number	Description of Development	Status
25/11594/F	Change of use from office to provide 20 no. short term lets/Guesthouse/hotel (Use class C1) and associated works.	GRANTED Subject to condition(s)
25/13554/PINS	Application for Planning permission for Change of use from office to provide 20 no. purpose-built student units and associated works.	UNDER CONSIDERATION
25/12838/PINS	Application for Planning permission for Demolition of the rear annexe and delivery of 4 mews houses for short-term let with associated landscaping and other works.	Refused

2.9 The applications listed above relate to the wider site, which also includes the frontage building. There are, however, a number applications within this list which are of particular relevance to this current proposal. These are set out below:

2.10 The first relevant consent (Ref: 02/02297/F), was an application which was approved in 2002, which proposed the development of the rear annexe by way of addition of a second floor with associated internal and external improvements. This consent was subject to four conditions, one of which required the newly built second storey to match the existing original work adjacent. This consent, therefore, concluded that the principle of the second story can be acceptable, subject to appropriate design.

2.11 The second relevant consent (Ref: 25/10493/COU) passed through the consultation process without raising an objection. This permitted development consent permits the change of use from an office (Use Class E) to a dwelling house (Use Class C3), showing that the loss of office use class is acceptable in this location. The implications of this application are discussed in full within the Key Planning Considerations section below.

2.12 The third relevant application (Ref: 25/13554/PINS) is currently under consideration with Bristol City Council. This application seeks full planning permission for the conversion of the main building at 11-13 Whiteladies Road from office (Use Class E) to 20 no. purpose-built student accommodation units and associated works.

2.13 Finally, the application (Ref: 25/12838/PINS) was refused by the Planning Inspectorate in August 2025. This application sought the redevelopment of the rear annexe to provide 4 no. short-term let units. The decision notice for the application (Ref: 25/12838/PINS) is attached in the Appendix of this Planning Statement. This application now seeks to address the reasons for refusal set out in the application (Ref: 25/12838/PINS) and positively address them to deliver an acceptable proposal.

3 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

The Development Plan

3.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires Local Planning Authorities to determine planning applications in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

3.2 In this instance, the following Development Plan documents and policies are considered relevant:

Bristol Core Strategy (June 2011)

- Policy BCS2 Bristol City Centre
- Policy BCS5 Housing Provision
- Policy BCS10 Transport and Access Improvements
- Policy BCS13 Climate Change
- Policy BCS14 Sustainable Energy
- Policy BCS15 Sustainable Design and Construction
- Policy BCS16 Flood Risk and Water Management
- Policy BCS18 Housing Type
- Policy BCS20 Effective and Efficient Use of Land
- Policy BCS21 Quality Urban Design
- Policy BCS22 Conservation and the Historic Environment
- Policy BCS23 Pollution

Site Allocations and Development Management DPD (July 2014)

- Policy DM1 Presumption in favour of sustainable development
- Policy DM2 Residential Sub-divisions, Shared and Specialist Housing
- DM12 Retaining Valuable Employment Sites
- Policy DM23 Transport Development Management
- Policy DM26 Local Character and Distinctiveness
- Policy DM27 Layout and Form
- Policy DM28 Public Realm
- Policy DM29 Design of New Buildings
- Policy DM31 Heritage Assets
- Policy DM32 Recycling and Refuse Provision in New Development
- Policy DM33 Pollution Control, Air Quality and Water Quality

- Policy DM35 Noise Mitigation

Bristol Central Area Plan (March 2015)

- BCAP1 Mixed-use development in Bristol City Centre
- BCAP4 Specialised student housing in Bristol City Centre
- BCAP5 Development and Flood Risk
- Policy BCAP7 Loss of Employment Space
- BCAP25 Green infrastructure in city centre developments
- BCAP29 Car and cycle parking in Bristol City Centre
- BCAP42 The Approach to the West End

Supplementary Planning Documents / Guidance

- Climate Change and Sustainability Practice Note (2012)
- Planning Obligations SPD
- Broadband Connectivity Practice Note
- Waste and Recycling: Collection and Storage Facilities (2017)
- A Guide to Cycle Parking Provision (2005)
- Travel Plan for New Developments

National Planning Policy Framework

3.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It provides guidance within which local planning authorities can produce their own development plans. In addition to providing guidance for local planning authorities and decision-takers in the compilation of plans, the NPPF is also a material consideration in determining applications. A presumption in favour of sustainable development is at the centre of the NPPF.

3.4 Additionally, following the ruling of *Mead v The Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities* [2024] it is now the case that Planning Practice Guidance ('PPG') has the same legal status as the National Planning Policy Framework ('NPPF'). Noting this, consideration has been given to relevant extracts of Planning Practice Guidance throughout the development of this proposal.

Emerging Development Plan

3.5 Bristol City Council is in the process of preparing a new Local Plan, which will replace most of the current Development Plan documents. The emerging plan was submitted to the Secretary of State for examination on 25th of April 2024. Hearing sessions for the examination concluded in February 2025, and the inspectors are currently considering Main Modifications, although adoption is unlikely until 2026.

- 3.6 A wide range of objections were made by residential and PBSA developers, along with the University of Bristol and the University of the West of England; these were then discussed during the examination process. Key concerns included:
- The Council's calculation of student housing need is considered to be under-evidenced and inaccurate.
 - Policy H7 imposes unnecessary and unjustified restrictions on the delivery of PBSA in the city, and;
 - In terms of overall housing, the Council's decision to set aside the standard method of evidenced housing need calculation and the cities and urban centres uplift is not in conformity with national policy. The emerging plan is 'capacity driven'.
- 3.7 Paragraph 49 of the NPPF states that, from the day of publication, LPAs may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to the stage of preparation of the emerging plan, the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies, and the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the NPPF.
- 3.8 Rapleys is aware that the Regulation 19 consultation and examination attracted a significant level of objection, particularly with respect to the draft policies – notably H7 – and the evidence base concerning PBSA. Given the number of unresolved objections at this juncture, it is considered that the LPR policies, and H7 in particular, can only be attributed limited weight in the decision-making process. At the time of writing, there has been no indication from the inspectors as to the suitability of the plan.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

- 3.9 In accordance with the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010, Bristol City Council have produced a CIL Charging Schedule which was adopted on 1st January 2013. The Charging Schedule sets out the amounts payable per sq.m of net additional floorspace for the majority of new developments.

4 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Land Use

- 4.1 The development comprises the demolition of the existing annexe (Use Class E) and the construction of a two-storey flat-roofed terrace comprising 4 PBSA units (Use Class Sui Generis) with associated landscaping and amenities. These 4 units will form additional PBSA accommodation for the currently proposed PBSA development within the main building (Ref: S62A/2025/0118). Noting this, some elements of the previous application, such as the reception, bike storage, waste storage and communal space, will also serve the accommodation proposed in this application. Throughout this statement, the elements which serve both applications will be clearly noted.

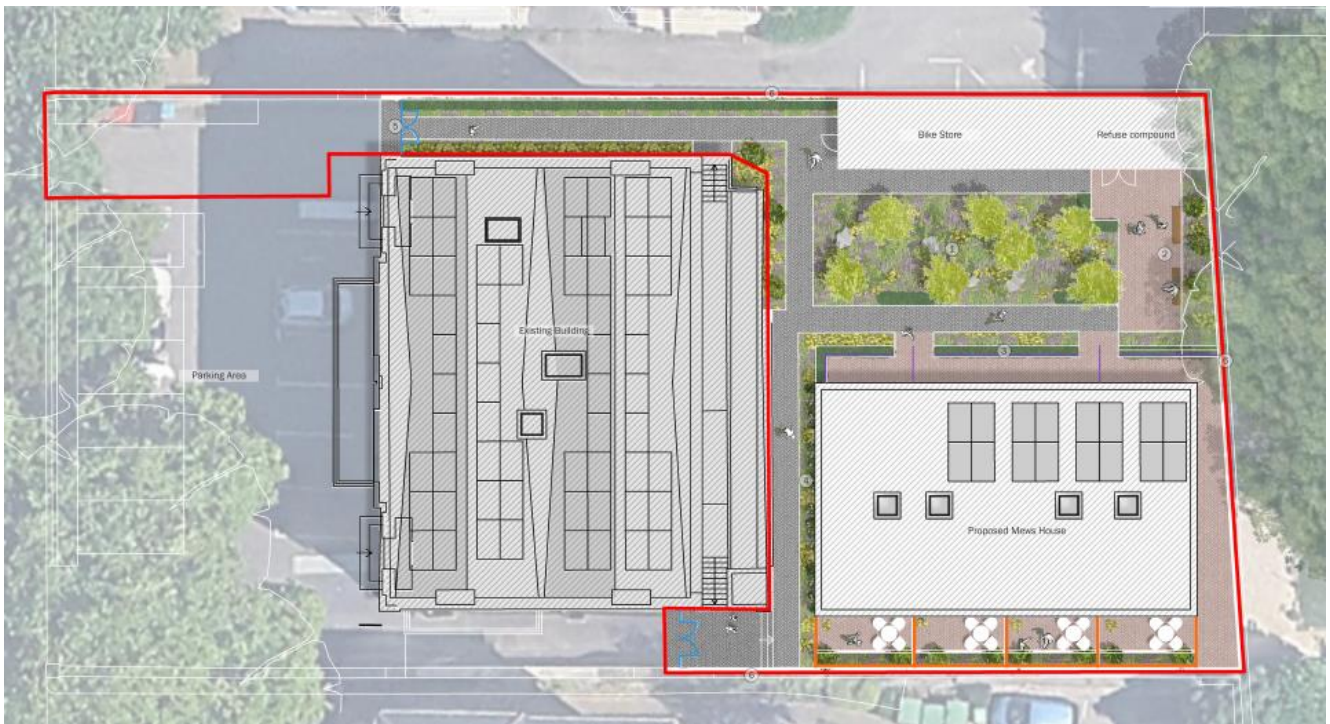


Figure 1 - Landscaped Site Plan

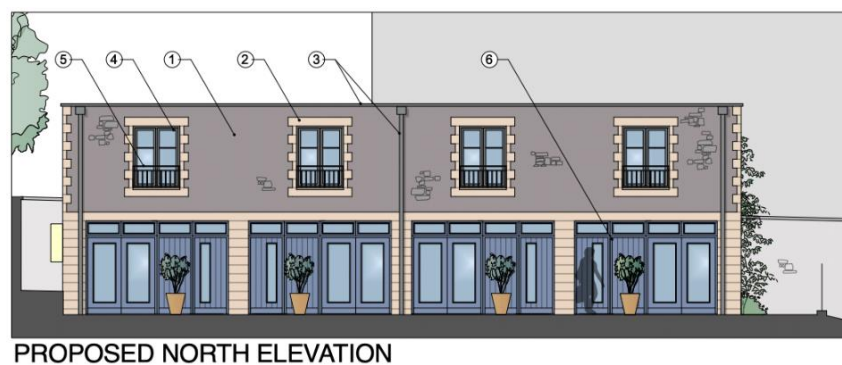


Figure 2 - Proposed Elevation Plan

Design

- 4.2 The layout of the accommodation is shown in the proposed floor plans and site plan submitted with this application. Four two-storey, two bed units are to be delivered as shown below:

- 4.3 The Design and Access Statement produced by Shu Architects details how the investigation into the planning history and surrounding context informed the design approach. The final proposal has evolved from the previous application (Ref: 25/12838/PINS) and now shows a flat roof. This design evolution reduces the impact on the surrounding context by lowering the proposed height to just 1m higher than the existing.
- 4.4 Design feedback from the refused application earlier in the year was considered. The style and design of other infill houses in the Clifton Conservation Area were also considered. It is therefore proposed that the houses utilise rubble stone and dressed Bath stone coins to emulate the rear elevations to Elmhurst Road. The roof is now proposed to be flat, with a parapet surround. These reflect the highest quality materials, which can be identified in the local context.
- 4.5 Internally, the flats will be equipped with all amenities expected within a short-term let guest house, these include a kitchen, bathroom, bedroom, laundry facilities and lounge area. The reception desk in the main building will act as the point of contact between students and staff, with the annexe being entirely for residential use.

Scale and Massing

- 4.6 The poor quality existing situation at the rear of the site has led to the proposed demolition of the single-storey structure, to allow for the delivery of the two-storey replacement. The new proposal sits within the footprint of the existing building; however, its area has been reduced in size, as shown by the Existing and Proposed Floor Plans submitted with this application.
- 4.7 As the existing structure was built tight to the site boundary, this new, smaller proposal has been pulled away from the adjacent east and south boundary walls. This will reduce any dominance on the neighbouring properties, allow the proposal to become more subservient to the main building, and help create space for each unit to have a private rear patio.
- 4.8 Additionally, the proposed building footprint has been reduced on all sides, reducing the volume of the first ground floor considerably.

Accommodation & Amenity Space

- 4.9 It is proposed that the four units will all be two-bedroom, one bathroom, with a downstairs W.C. The full layout can be seen on the proposed floor plans. All units proposed are identical, albeit two will be mirror images of the others. Each unit is dual aspect on both floors, with windows facing to the north and south, thereby avoiding any potential conflict with the rear windows on the main building. Also, to provide additional natural light, rooflights are proposed above the second-story hallways.
- 4.10 Externally, directly to the north of the units, a landscaped frontage is proposed, which will provide a high-quality outlook for all the units within the annexe and allow future residents to enjoy access to the greenspace. To the rear of the annexe, each unit will benefit from a private patio, providing residents with private outdoor space.

Highways & Transportation

Access

- 4.11 Access to the site for vehicles and pedestrians will remain the same as the existing situation which works well. Vehicles will enter and exit the site via Whiteladies Road with a one-way entrance and exit system.
- 4.12 The current parking area for the annexe office will be removed and replaced with a more favourable landscaping area. The existing parking in front of the site will remain in accordance with application reference 25/11594/F. This decision has permitted a reduction in the number of parking spaces at the rear, allowing for improved landscaping and larger lightwells.
- 4.13 The parking provision will be split. Car parking is located at the front of the property, whereas cycle parking is provided via a secure parking store located at the rear of the development, with a visitor's cycle space provided at the front of the site.
- 4.14 Full details and an annotated plan detailing the access provision are provided on Page 10 of the Heritage, Design and Access Statement.

Servicing Arrangements

- 4.15 As noted above, the Mews houses will be serviced identically to the C1 units proposed in the main building. This is set out within the Waste Statement produced by Shu Architects; however, the main elements of note have been set out again below:
- 4.16 Refuse from each room will be collected daily by staff and transported to the secure communal bin store located at the rear of the site, out of sight of the public realm. The bin store arrangement is contained on the Proposed Site Plan. The store will be enclosed by a 1.8m slatted timber fence.
- 4.17 The refuse and recycling bins will be moved to the holding area next to the Whiteladies Road pavement on scheduled collection days by a staff member from the operating company. This area is where the existing waste from the offices is currently picked up. The landlord will coordinate with the Refuse Management section at Bristol City Council to ensure timely collection. After the waste has been collected, the bins will be promptly returned to the refuse storage area.

Energy & Sustainability

- 4.18 This application also seeks the installation of several renewable energy technologies. A select number of PV panels are proposed across the roof of the new annexe, and ASHPs will be installed along the eastern wall of the proposed development, hiding them from sight.

Trees & Landscaping

- 4.19 As detailed within the suite of plans which has been submitted with this application, the rear parking court of 11-13 Whiteladies Road is proposed to be 'reimagined' as a landscape dominant area with paths allowing for easy movement between the bin store, Annexe, main building and bike store. This landscaping will include grassy areas and will also be accompanied by seven new trees.

- 4.20 The proposed scheme makes up a high-quality environment both internally and externally, especially when compared with the existing situation.

5 KEY PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Principle of Development

New (Sui Generis) Purpose Built Student Accommodation

Site Suitability

- 5.1 An evidenced undersupply of PBSA in Bristol has driven the necessity for this proposal.
- 5.2 The site's close proximity to the University of Bristol's Clifton Campus, along with its excellent transport links, makes it well-suited for new purpose-built student accommodation. Students will have easy access to all essential services, both educational and residential, as well as open spaces, without the need for private transport. In short, the location is highly sustainable.
- 5.3 Given the city centre nature of the immediate area, which includes a variety of residential and commercial uses and busy, lively streets, it is not considered that the development will result in a harmful concentration of a singular use such as PBSA. Further commentary is provided on this point below.
- 5.4 Furthermore, the development will contribute towards improving the mix of residential uses in the city, reducing pressure on residential homes in more traditional residential areas by providing focused and managed student bed spaces in an appropriate location, in accordance with local and national planning policy aspirations. Pressure on these homes will only increase if PBSA is not approved and delivered – made more acute by the current shortfall in general housing delivery.
- 5.5 For the reasons explained above, the delivery of PBSA in this location is considered to represent, in principle, a sustainable use of this site.

Policy Assessment

- 5.6 Policy DM2 and BCAP4 are currently used to assess applications for student accommodation in Bristol. Policy DM2 explicitly states that specialist student housing schemes will be acceptable within the city centre. The relevant test for such development is therefore set out within city centre policy BCAP4, which states:

Specialist student housing schemes that contribute to the diversity of uses within the local area will be acceptable within Bristol City Centre unless it would create or contribute to a harmful concentration of specialist student housing within any given area.

- 5.7 In addition to BCAP4, emerging policy H7 seeks to ensure that there would not be a 'local imbalance' of purpose-built student accommodation. Although this policy is not yet adopted and carries very limited weight due to the nature and volume of the objections, it does refer to testing, as a 'guideline', such an imbalance using a 200m radius from the site within a city centre location.
- 5.8 As such, using the Council's 'Pinpoint' system, the location of 'specialist student housing' (both PBSA and HMO, as specified by policy BCAP4) has been mapped within 200m of the site. This

investigation shows that there are 183 specialist student housing bedspaces within the area and a total of 257 HMO bedspaces (see figure below). When combined, this totals to 440 bedspaces within 200m. This falls comfortably below emerging Policy H7's guideline as to what could cause a local imbalance in this area (1,000 bedspaces).

- 5.9 It should also be noted that the calculation and reasoning set out above were first provided to the Planning Inspectorate within an application for the change of use of the 'Main Building' at the site under application Ref: S62A/2025/0118. This application seeks to deliver 19 PBSA units. Whilst this application has not yet been determined, BCC have provided a written consultation response to the application to the Planning Inspectorate. Within this response, BCC concludes that whilst the concentration of PBSA and HMOs in the locality is high, it is not considered that this proposal would contribute towards a harmful concentration. This response is included in Appendix B for reference.
- 5.10 Noting this, and considering that this application proposes an increase of just 4 PBSA units, it is again considered that, in accordance with BCAP4, a harmful concentration will not be created as a result of this approval.
- 5.11 It must also be stressed that there are other weighty material factors involved in determining site suitability and, therefore, reliance on capacity testing a guideline 200m radius should not deliver an overall conclusion. The fact that the site is located so close to the University is considered more important to sustainable spatial planning in this respect.
- 5.12 For additional assurance, and notwithstanding that the policy states that student accommodation is acceptable within City Centre locations, Policy DM2 sets out criteria against which specialist housing can be assessed against. This is assessed against the development below:
1. The development would harm the residential amenity or character of the locality as a result of levels of activity that cause excessive noise and disturbance to residents
- 5.13 The "character of the locality" is one of activity and vibrancy, consisting of a busy thoroughfare. This is not a quiet suburban area, more vulnerable to disturbance. Nearly all neighbouring uses are commercial; however, the wider area includes offices, retail, educational, residential, and religious buildings. Indeed, for this reason, the site is considered better suited for PBSA development than, for example, family housing. Taking the above into account, the proposed development is not considered to present an unacceptable risk in terms of noise or disturbance to existing residents.
- 5.14 Additionally, should this application be consented, the applicant is content to accept a condition requiring the production and adoption of a Student Management Plan to ensure the 'character and locality' can remain unharmed.
2. Levels of on-street parking that cannot be reasonably accommodated or regulated through parking control measures
- 5.15 Directly south of the site is the 'Controlled Parking Zone' which is subject to strict parking controls. Existing parking spaces on Whiteladies Road are controlled by pay and display (short stay) restrictions. The other option for parking is the West End Car Park approximately 200 metres away.

5.16 As stated previously, the site will provide 6 x private parking spaces (1 disabled) within the front courtyard. Notwithstanding, it is considered that 'car-free' development would be acceptable in this location.

5.17 As with assessment criteria 1, a condition could be imposed to prevent future residents from obtaining parking permits for spaces outside the site. This can also be included within a Student Management Plan required to be produced and adopted once the application has been approved.

3. Cumulative detrimental impact of physical alterations to buildings and structures

5.18 As explained above, the proposed physical alterations have been carefully considered to respond to the site constraints, historic environment and prevailing design character. Further information can be found in the Key Consideration section – Design and Heritage.

4. Inadequate storage for recycling/refuse and cycles

5.19 Policy compliant refuse/recycling and cycle storage are provided. See the Transport section of this report below for further details.

5. The development would create or contribute to a harmful concentration of such uses within a locality as a result of any of the following:

5.20 As discussed above in relation to policy BCAP4, the proposed development will not result in a harmful concentration of student uses. Policy DM2 explicitly states that specialist student housing schemes will be acceptable within the city centre. The site is considered well suited to PBSA given its location so close to the University Precinct.

5A. Exacerbating existing harmful conditions including those listed above; or

5.21 As set out above, the proposed development has been designed to prevent/mitigate noise, disturbance, litter and on-street parking issues.

5.22 The proposal improves the condition of the building internally and externally and reduces pressure on housing in Bristol by delivering a student-focused development.

5B. Reducing the choice of homes in the area by changing the housing mix.

5.23 The proposal will not impact the existing residential units in the area. Instead, it will broaden the choice of housing by introducing new student units to help address considerable unmet demand in the Bristol PBSA market.

Student Housing Need

Background

5.24 There is wide-ranging evidence that demonstrates a severe undersupply of student accommodation in Bristol. Key facts and figures produced by Cushman and Wakefield's (C&W) in 2024 are provided below:

5.25 **Lowest net increase.** Of all major cities in the UK, Bristol has experienced the lowest net increase in PBSA beds (6,384) between the years 2012 – 2022.

- 5.26 **High rental costs for students.** The weighted average annual rent in Bristol for 2024/25 (£10,765.57) is the highest in the UK, 29.03% above the national average (£8,343.39). The average private sector direct-let bed price (£17,991.08) is also the highest outside London, 88.20% above the national average (£9,559.32).
- 5.27 **Largest numbers of students unable to access PBSA.** Bristol has the highest percentage of students needing a bed but unable to access PBSA (65.62%) among major UK markets.
- 5.28 **High student-to-bed ratio relative to other markets.** Bristol's student-to-bed ratio of 2.85:1 (2022/23) is the highest outside London, significantly above the national average (2.12:1) and comparable major UK markets (2.07:1).
- 5.29 **More students occupying general housing stock.** From 2013/14 to 2022/23, the number of students needing a bed but unable to access PBSA increased by 12,819 (65.07%), leading to 3,205 more houses occupied by students. This is the highest rate of students living in HMOs among major UK markets.
- 5.30 Additionally, an assessment of the uses in the area, based on Bristol City Council's Pinpoint service, highlights the vast presence of bars, nightclubs, restaurants, museums, and theatres, all of which are conducive to the average student's lifestyle. The map below illustrates individual establishments (note that general shops, while prevalent, are not included).
- 5.31 Given this context, introducing 'sui generis' student beds would enhance the area's vitality and economy through increased interaction with these tourism uses.

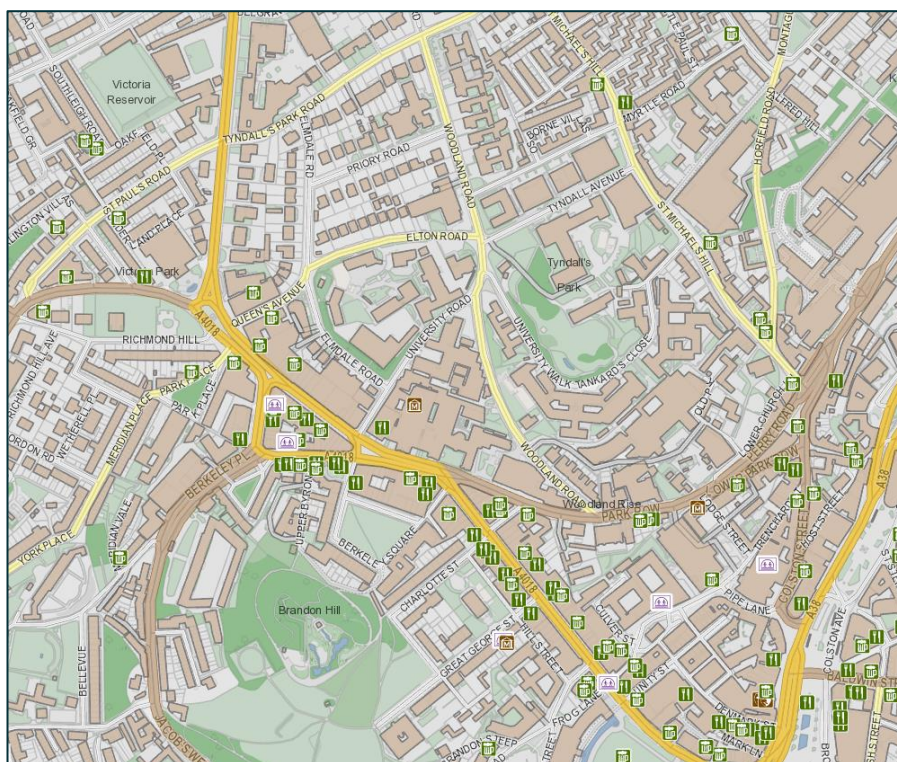


Figure 3 - Pinpoint map of Park Street and the Triangle

Local Plan Review

- 5.32 The Local Plan Review currently only seeks to deliver a minimum housing target of 1,925 new homes per annum, which equates to approximately 56% of the housing need in the city. Significant concerns have also been raised at the Local Plan Examination about the Council's calculation of student housing need, which is a subset of overall housing need.
- 5.33 The Council's evidence fails to recognise the current and historic long-term undersupply of purpose-built student accommodation (PBSA) in the city. The identified need figure of 8,800 student bedspaces is unsound. It is based solely on the UoB's prediction that an additional 8,834 beds will be required to serve their students by 2040 (rounded to 8,800). Importantly, it fails to account for:
- The historic and existing unmet need for PBSA in the city.
 - The demand for PBSA beds arising from the predicted growth in student numbers at University of the West of England (UWE) and other Higher Education providers over the plan period.
- 5.34 There is also the issue of an inconsistent approach to the evidence base. For example, the base date for the plan is Sept 2024 (NPPF), however, the PBSA completions are from 2019. The Inspectors have queried this inconsistency.

Summary

- 5.35 The proposal shows clear compliance with policies DM2 and BCAP4, which aim to ensure proposals of this type have no adverse effect on the surrounding population through increases in student density or activity. Analysis of PBSA provision nearby confirms that there would be no overconcentration. In addition, Policy DM2 explicitly states that specialist student housing schemes will be acceptable within the city centre.
- 5.36 Given the location of the site adjacent to the designated University Precinct and the city centre nature of the immediate area, which includes a variety of residential and commercial uses and busy, lively streets, it is not considered that the development will result in a harmful concentration of a singular use such as PBSA.

Loss of Office Use

- 5.37 Policy DM12 aims to protect employment sites, premises, and floor space outside the city's Principal Industrial and Warehousing Areas. It ensures that valuable employment sites are retained unless there is a strong justification for their loss, such as contributing positively to the mix of uses in the area or meeting other strategic objectives. DM12's explanatory text clarifies that the policy does not apply to employment sites in Bristol City Centre, however, Policy BCAP7 reiterates many of its major themes.
- 5.38 Policy BCAP7 Loss of Employment Space focuses on revitalising vacant or outdated office buildings, located in areas with low demand for new office uptake. It states that:

'In Bristol City Centre, where there are existing office buildings that are vacant or underused by reason of their location or their ability to meet modern business needs (notably in and

around the Nelson Street and Lewins Mead area), development involving the loss of existing office floorspace will be acceptable where it would contribute positively to the mix of uses in the area. Redevelopment or significant remodelling of the city centre's poorest quality office buildings will be encouraged in preference to conversion, potentially including some further intensification of use.'

- 5.39 Whilst this proposal does relate to the change of use from an office (Use Class E) to a residential-based use (Sui Generis), this change does not result in a total loss of employment at the site. The proposed use will require a number of employees at different levels to facilitate its successful operation, this will include receptionists, cleaners, site management and others.
- 5.40 This report, alongside Application ref: 25/11594/F has previously detailed the site's city centre location, the local area's commercial and historic significance, and its sustainable transport links. The site is well positioned to provide accommodation to students who will require access to the university and the city centre, all without the use of private transport.
- 5.41 Moreover, the dated office interior, combined with its lack of DDA compliance and accessibility issues, makes the existing site a less-than-optimal choice for potential office tenants.
- 5.42 Taking the above into account, it is considered that the provision of a Sui Generis use would make a positive contribution to the vitality and economy of the area by allowing a greater amount of choice of accommodation to potential future visitors of Bristol. In this regard, BCAP7's requirements for development involving the loss of office floor space are considered to have been met.
- 5.43 One final consideration to be noted in relation to Policies DM12 and BCAP7 is the changing national position around the Use Class Order. From the 1st September 2020, the Use Class Order 1987 was significantly amended. This change created new broader use classes such as Class E (combining retail, office, and other commercial uses), Class F1 (learning and non-residential institutions), and Class F2 (local community uses). This reorganisation removed previous classes such as A (retail), B1 (business), and D1/D2 (non-residential institutions and assembly/leisure). Importantly, these changes aimed to provide greater flexibility for repurposing buildings, especially in town centres and high streets, to better meet society's changing needs.
- 5.44 The changes listed above all came into effect well after the publication of BCC's Site Allocations and Development Management Policies (2014) and Bristol Central Areas Plan (2015). When considering this, adopted policies such as DM12 and BCAP7 should be afforded limited weight, given they no longer reflect the current national legislation or the government's new emphasis on flexibility.

The fallback position

- 5.45 Another material consideration which should be taken into account during the evaluation of this application is the presence of a fallback position. As detailed within Section 3 of this Statement, the subject main building and annexe at the site benefit from Prior Approval (ref: 25/10493/COU) for the change of use to 17 No. C3 residential dwellings pursuant to Schedule 2, Part 3, Class MA

of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended).

- 5.46 This extant Prior Approval is considered to constitute a legitimate fallback position in accordance with *Snowden V Secretary of State for the Environment [1980] JPL.749* and is therefore considered as a significant material consideration in the determination of this application.
- 5.47 The basic principle of the ‘fallback’ position is to consider and compare the development for which planning permission is sought with what the applicant can legitimately do with the subject land on the basis of the planning position as it stands without permission for the development which is now sought, so long as there is a realistic possibility of the ‘fallback’ position happening¹.
- 5.48 Further detail with regard to the ‘possibility’ was provided by Mr Justice Hickinbottom in *R (Zurich Assurance) v North Lincolnshire Council [2012] EWHC 3708* (Admin) who stated at para 75 of his judgement that: “...The prospect of the fallback position does not have to be probable or even have a high chance of occurring; it has to be only more than a merely theoretical prospect. Where the possibility of the fallback position happening is “very slight indeed”, or merely “an outside chance”, that is sufficient to make the position a material consideration (see *Samuel Smith Old Brewery (Tadcaster) v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government [2009] EWCA Civ 333* at [20]-[21] per Sullivan LJ)”
- 5.49 The matter was further considered by *LJ Lindblom in Mansell v Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council [2017] EWHC 2832* specifically with reference to Class Q Prior Approvals as the ‘fallback’ position, which in summary detailed:
- the basic principle is that for a prospect to be a “real prospect”, it does not have to be probable or likely: a possibility will suffice; &
 - the clear desire of the landowner to develop and maximise the value of the site is sufficient to demonstrate there was a “real prospect”.
- 5.50 With regard to the fall-back position, the submitted scheme would deliver significant improvements upon a consent which could be lawfully relied upon and implemented by the applicant. These improvements include:
- A new build, sustainable and highly efficient new block offering four additional accommodations.
 - Delivery of a host of new renewable energy sources.
 - External design improvements. (discussed below)
 - Provision of a boutique accommodation to visitors to the city, in a sustainable location.
 - Improvements to the building which were not securable via Prior Approval.
 - Additional landscaping

¹ R (Zurich Assurance) v North Lincolnshire Council [2012] EWHC 3708 (Admin)

- 5.51 It is hoped that by highlighting this fallback position, the council will take note that this application is proposed to improve on an existing situation which has already been approved at the site through consent ref: 25/10493/COU.

Design and Heritage

- 5.52 Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires a Local Planning Authority to pay 'special attention' to the desirability of preserving and enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area.
- 5.53 The NPPF places the onus on the applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affecting their development, and the level of detail provided should be proportionate to the assets' importance (Para 200, NPPF).
- 5.54 Policy BCS22 requires that development proposals safeguard or enhance heritage assets and the character and setting of areas of acknowledged importance. This is supported further by DM31 which requires development that has an impact upon a heritage asset to conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the asset, or its setting. This policy position at a local level is consistent with the statutory duties imposed by Sections 66 & 72 of the Planning (Listed Building & Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
- 5.55 Following the previous application (Ref: s62A/2025/0111) being refused, steps have been taken to ensure that the character and appearance of the nearby listed buildings and Conservation Area are adequately preserved from impact and any opportunity for enhancement is also secured. To fully understand the heritage context surrounding the site, a Heritage Statement has been produced by experts, Armour Heritage.
- 5.56 The report evaluates the significance of 7-9 and 11-13 Whiteladies Road as well as the Whiteladies Road Conservation Area designation. For full details of this assessment, consult the Heritage Statement, however the report concluded that:

The revised design responds positively to the reasons in the previous refusal by adopting an appropriately modest scale and a coherent terraced arrangement, with materials and detailing that are sympathetic to the local vernacular. Replacing a bland, utilitarian car park and a poor quality outbuilding with a well-designed, subordinate terrace would preserve and, in townscape terms, enhance this part of the Conservation Area.

- 5.57 Specific design revisions made in response to the previous applications feedback is set out below:
- 5.58 External changes to the annexe have responded to feedback set out in application Ref: 25/12838/PINS Decision Notice. The relevant feedback has been copied below for clarity.

Materials

'They (the terrace) would be constructed a two-tone brick façade, and a high-quality painted timber elevation is proposed the ground floor, which does not appear to reflect the prevailing building style or materials used within the conservation area.'

'Moreover ... the predominant material palette is formed of bath stone, rubble stone and painted timber windows.'

- 5.59 Taking note of the response, the new proposal has exchanged the two-tone brick façade and the painted timber for an improved palette which includes rubble stone and dressed Bath stone coins. This design reflects the rear elevation of the property behind the site, 21 Elmdale Road, allowing the proposal to blend into the surrounding context extremely well. This is demonstrated on Page 9 of the Design and Access Statement.
- 5.60 The Heritage Statement evaluates these design amendments and states that the revised design responds positively to the reasons in the previous refusal by adopting an appropriately modest scale and a coherent terraced arrangement, with materials and detailing that are sympathetic to the local vernacular. Replacing a bland, utilitarian car park and a poor-quality outbuilding with a well-designed, subordinate terrace would preserve and, in townscape terms, enhance this part of the Conservation Area.
- 5.61 proposal satisfies the statutory duties under Sections 66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 - preserving the setting of the Listed Buildings and preserving and enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area and accords with the NPPF tests for conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

Roof and Height

'Furthermore, the proposed dwellings would have a generic, low quality appearance and would have gable fronted pitched roofs.'

'Moreover, rather than gable-ended slate roofs, the predominant roof form in this part of the conservation area is hipped roofs set behind flat parapets'

- 5.62 To address the above, the proposed eaves will be designed as a simple parapet with a flat roof behind. The height of the proposed parapet will be just 1 meter taller than the parapet of the existing building. As illustrated in the wider site elevations, the roof level will still remain lower than that of the surrounding properties, ensuring its subservience to 11-13 Whiteladies Road and the modern rear extension of 7-9 Whiteladies Road.

Layout

To the contrary, the proposal scheme would introduce two storey built form to the rear of the property, in what would have originally been its rear garden area. The proposed development would comprise dwellings which would not address a street frontage and would be perpendicular to the frontage buildings addressing the main road. This would be discordant with the overall urban grain of the conservation area and would therefore cause harm to its overall character and appearance.

- 5.63 The existing rear buildings at 7&9 Whiteladies Road and Prince Rupert House on Tyndall's Park Road both demonstrate that the urban grain in this part of the Conservation Area is most varied.

There are clearly buildings of different ages, footprints and designs. The absence of a rear access road is not relevant in this case as 'backland' development serviced from the frontage is clearly evident. The BCC assessment of the character of this part of the Conservation Area is incorrect. The setback design, new material palette and additional landscaping result in a proposal which is unobtrusive and in no way discordant with the urban grain of the Conservation Area.

Landscaping

5.64 To complement the new terrace design, LizLake, Landscape Architects, have produced an improved Landscaping Scheme. The new courtyard has been extensively landscaped with a grove of Birch trees at the centre of the courtyard, with a shade-tolerant palette of evergreen and deciduous species to provide year-round structure. Evergreen hedge planting will provide further benefit, whilst climber planting provides additional screening along the eastern façade of the terrace, which faces Whiteladies Road.

5.65 These provisions provide a considerable benefit for the future tenants of the building and also revitalises the rear of the site, turning a dated carpark back into a thriving rear garden as it would once have been. This is considered to be a significant enhancement to the surrounding Conservation Area.

Summary

5.66 It is considered that this amended proposal, when taken as a whole, satisfies the statutory duties under Sections 66(1) and 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 - preserving the setting of the Listed Buildings and preserving and enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area and accords with the NPPF tests for conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

Residential Amenity

5.67 Policy BCS18 of the Core Strategy states that development should provide sufficient space for everyday activities and enable residential units to be flexible to the changing life circumstances of occupants. Policy BCS21 states that development will be expected to safeguard the amenities of existing development and create a high-quality environment for future occupiers.

5.68 Given that this application only proposes limited external development, the potential for impacting neighbouring uses is limited. Notwithstanding this, the design has been carefully considered to ensure a high-quality environment for future occupants. In particular, the scheme provides the following:

- All proposed rooms are equipped with all the amenities expected within a short-term let guest house, these include a kitchen, bathroom, bedroom, laundry facilities and lounge areas.
- All bins will be collected from the rooms and deposited within the bin storage at the rear of the site so as not to create any amenity uses.
- Reception facilities at the entrance will provide guests with a clear route to assistance should it be required.

- Ample natural light and large windows for all rooms.
- Four private patios
- A private landscaped garden for the enjoyment of guests.

5.69 Whilst it is considered that the amenities set out above are able to provide a level of amenity far in excess of the baseline requirement for PBSA development within Bristol, should this be conclusion not find favour with the LPA, it is proposed that the future occupiers could also have access to an additional space subject to the approval of application ref: S62A/2025/0118. This application relates to the change of use of the main building at the site to provide 19 PBSA units. Within this application, provision for a communal room within the basement has been proposed. If this application is granted approval, the future residents of the rear annexe could also have access to this amenity. The communal space is detailed within the Design and Access Statement; however, as it was not included within the original S62A/2025/0118 application, it is not visible on this application's submitted plans.

5.70 If this is found to be necessary, the applicant is prepared to accept a 'Grampian Condition' included within the consent, requiring the Communal Room to be operational prior to commencement of the use of the PBSA rooms.

5.71 In either event, future residents will enjoy a high standard of amenities within the site, and the proposal will not give rise to any adverse impacts on any existing residential or business use surrounding the site. Noting this, policies BCS18 and BCS21 are both considered to be accorded with.

Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure

5.72 Policy BCS9 – Green Infrastructure requires developments to incorporate new and/or enhanced green infrastructure of an appropriate type, standard and size. Policy DM15 reinforces this requirement by adding that 'new green infrastructure assets will be expected to be designed and located to maximise the range of green infrastructure functions and benefits achieved, wherever practicable and viable.

5.73 The only existing green infrastructure on the site is a small hedge to the rear. Within application ref: 25/11594/F, to improve this situation, a new hedge was proposed along the entire wall connecting the site with Whiteladies Road. This will improve biodiversity and green infrastructure.

5.74 In addition, this application proposes a large landscaping area alongside the planting of 7 new trees at the rear of the site. The full details of the extensive new planting strategy is set out in the Landscape Masterplan, Landscape Strategy Document and Landscape Sections. This is considered to significantly enhance the biodiversity and green infrastructure provision at the site and therefore is considered to accord with Policies BCS9 and DM15.

5.75 A BNG Exemption Statement is provided within this application. It confirms that the proposal will not impact more than 25m² of habitat and is therefore exempt from BNG requirements and planning conditions under the 'de minimis' rule of Section 4 of The Biodiversity Net Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024.

Highways

- 5.76 Policy BCS10 of the Core Strategy states that development should be located where sustainable travel patterns can be achieved with higher density mixed-use development at accessible centres and along or close to main public transport routes. Policy DM23 of the Development Management Policies outlines that development should not give rise to unacceptable traffic conditions or highway safety impacts. Policy DM32 requires that all new developments must include shared recycling facilities and refuse bins with adequate capacity to accommodate the needs of the development.
- 5.77 The proposed development is sustainably located and served by suitable cycle parking and refuse facilities. Full details can be found in the Waste Statement by Shu Architects, submitted with this application. It should be noted that:
- The site has two access routes, both via Whiteladies Road.
 - Whiteladies Road is a significant transport corridor through the north of Bristol City Centre.
 - There are several public transport options available within proximity of the site, including bus stops and other forms of sustainable transport such as electric scooters, public bicycles and Clifton Down train Station within a 10-minute walk (this can give access to Bristol Temple Meads and the national rail network).
 - Application ref: 25/11594/F which is currently under determination with Bristol City Council, proposes 8-cycle spaces have been delivered through 4 no. Sheffield cycle stands within a secure enclosure at the rear of the site, and one Sheffield stand at the front of the site for visitors. This far exceeds the minimum cycle parking standards detailed within Appendix 2 of BCC's Site Allocations and Development Management Plan, and is sufficient to also support the proposed four short-term let Mews houses as well.
 - The proposed units will also be serviced by 6 car parking spaces (1 disabled space). This is in excess of the minimum car parking requirements detailed within Appendix 2 of BCC's Site Allocations and Development Management Plan.
 - A secure refuse store and garden store has been located at the rear of the site.

Energy and Sustainability

- 5.78 Policies BCS13, BCS14 and BCS15 and BCS16 of the Core Strategy relate to sustainability issues and tackling climate change. Of note, Policy BCS14 sets out a hierarchy for heating, cooling and hot water supply for new developments. It also seeks to ensure that new developments incorporate sufficient renewable energy generation measures to reduce carbon dioxide emissions from residual energy use by at least 20%.
- 5.79 The policy requirements have been taken into account throughout the early design stages of this development. In accordance with the Heat Hierarchy, PV panels and ASHP are proposed to meet demand. An Energy and Sustainability Statement has been prepared by JMDC Services Ltd to measure the effectiveness of the renewable provisions proposed. The calculations and

methodology used within the statement are in accordance with the Policy Guidance and the Bristol Climate Change and Sustainability Practice Note. The report concludes a total CO2 reduction of 75.9% which far exceeds the requirements of BCS14 and all other local sustainability policies.

Drainage

- 5.80 BCS16 focuses on flood risk management; as explained above, the site falls within Flood Zone 1, with a small amount of the site (predominantly the Whiteladies Road access) being at risk of potential surface water flooding. Notwithstanding the above, it should also be noted that the site is almost entirely hard standing at this present time and the proposal seeks to both reduce the footprint of the existing annexe and also introduce a variety of green infrastructure. Noting this, it is not considered that a Sustainable Drainage Strategy is required for this application to be approved.
- 5.81 Application ref: S62A/2025/0118, which is currently under consideration with the Planning Inspectorate, was deemed invalid upon its submission due to the site's access along Whiteladies Road being at risk of surface water flooding. To address this, a letter was provided by Rapleys LLP to the Planning Inspectorate explaining the situation. This letter has been attached in Appendix C. Upon receipt of the letter, the Planning Inspectorate then validated the application. It is hoped that the addition of this letter within the Statement will mean this application, when submitted, will not be deemed invalid for the same reason.

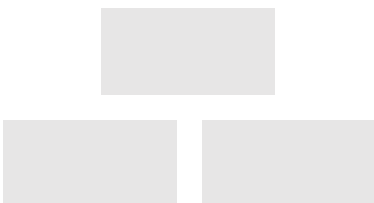
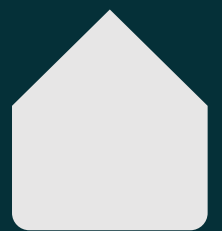
CIL

- 5.82 In accordance with the Bristol City Council Community Infrastructure charging schedule, hotels are to be charged at £70/m². The existing annexe has been occupied for at least 6 continuous months across the last 3 years. Details of the occupancy can be provided on request. As a result, the site as a whole is considered to pass the CIL vacancy test, and CIL should therefore only be payable on the net additional floorspace arising from the development.
- 5.83 The following measurements are relevant:
- Annexe Proposed GIA = $76.7 \times 4 = 306.8\text{m}^2$
 - Annexe Existing GIA = 214m^2
 - Garden Store + Bike = 24.4m^2
 - Bin Store has no roof, therefore not required for CIL.
- 5.84 A completed CIL Form will be submitted alongside this application. This document will cover the CIL contribution required.

6 SUMMARY & CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared on behalf of Urban Creation (11-13 WLR) Ltd, the site owner and applicant. It supports a full planning application for the demolition of the rear annexe (currently in Use Class E) and development of four PBSA units (Use Class Sui Generis) and associated landscaping and other works.
- 6.2 This application has been made following the approval of a Class MA Prior Approval application and a supporting external works application for the change of use from Use Class E (office) to Use Class C (dwelling houses) (Application Refs: 25/10493/COU and 25/10495/F).
- 6.3 This statement demonstrates that the provision of student accommodation at the site will not result in a harmful concentration within the local area, and when considering the sustainable location of the site in relation to the university campus, the change of use from office to PBSA (Sui Generis) is considered acceptable.
- 6.4 The development has been assessed against policies DM2 and BCAP4, with acknowledgement given to emerging policy where relevant. It is concluded that the scheme will not create or contribute towards a harmful concentration of student housing in the area, but rather, it will contribute towards meeting housing need and make effective use of vacant, poorly performing (in energy and accessibility terms), and unproductive floorspace.
- 6.5 The proposed redevelopment of the rear annexe responds well to the main 11-13 Whiteladies Road site and the surrounding built environment. This proposal offers a positive reimagination of an underused city centre asset. Other benefits of note include:
- Improved landscaping with a vast ecological improvement, which also results in a reduction in hard surfacing and a superior drainage situation.
 - A well-designed and tidy bin and bike store arrangement.
 - Improved views from the public domain, and
 - Sustainable energy solutions and CO2 reduction.
- 6.6 The site is found to be highly sustainable, being located within minutes of substantial public transport options. Additionally, the proposed units can work well in conjunction with the currently underdetermined application ref: S62A/2025/0118.
- 6.7 The proposed development is therefore found to be highly sustainable and in accordance with the Development Plan. When taking into account all other material considerations, including national planning policy, the proposed development should be supported and approved without delay.

Application Ref: 25/12838/PINS Decision Notice





Statement of Reasons & Decision Notice

Site visit made on 23 July 2025

by Mr [REDACTED] BA(Hons) PGCert MA FRGS MRTPI IHBC

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 8 August 2025

Application Ref: s62A/2025/0111

Site Address: **11 to 13 Whiteladies Road, Clifton, Bristol BS8 1PB**

- The application was made under Section 62A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (TCPA) by Urban Creation (11-13WLR) Ltd.
 - The site is located within the local planning authority area of Bristol City Council.
 - The application was dated 30 June 2025, with a valid date of 1 July 2025.
 - Consultation closed on 4 August 2025.
 - The development proposed is described as: '*Demolition of the rear annexe and delivery of 4 mews houses for short-term let with associated landscaping and other works.*'
-

Statement of Reasons

Summary of Decision

1. The application for planning permission is **REFUSED** for the reasons set out in this Statement of Reasons and Decision Notice.

Procedural Matters

2. The application was submitted under s62A of the *Town and Country Planning Act 1990*, as amended (TCPA). This allows for applications to be made directly to the Secretary of State (SoS), where a local authority has been designated. Bristol City Council (BCC) have been designated for non-major development since March 2024. The SoS has appointed a person under section 76D of the TCPA 1990 to determine the application instead of the SoS.
3. Following the closure of the representation period, Article 22 of *The Town and Country Planning (Section 62A Applications) (Procedure and Consequential Amendments) Order 2013* requires the SoS (or appointed person) to consider the application either by hearing or on the basis of representations in writing.
4. Taking into account Section 319A of the TCPA and the *Procedural guidance for Section 62A Authorities in Special Measures*¹ published by the SoS, as the appointed person I considered that the issues raised in this case should be dealt with by means of the Written Representations procedure.
5. The site is located within the Whiteladies Road Conservation Area. There are also several listed buildings in close proximity; including 7 & 9 Whiteladies Road to the south which are Grade II Listed Buildings (Historic England reference number 1202690).

¹ [Procedural guidance for Section 62A Authorities in Special Measures - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/procedural-guidance-for-section-62a-authorities-in-special-measures)

6. Therefore, the proposal requires consideration under the duties set out at s66(1) and s72(1) of the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990*, as amended (PLBCAA).

Recent planning history

7. The most recent planning permission is provided on page 7 of 22 of the Applicant's Planning Support Statement.² In the main, these applications principally relate to the main building on the site (which face Whiteladies Road), rather than the annexe building to the rear; for which planning permission is sought to demolish under this application and replace with four dwellings.

Planning Policy and guidance

8. The adopted development plan for this area comprises the *Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Local Plan (adopted July 2014)* (herein the LP) and the *Bristol Development Framework Core Strategy (adopted June 2011)* (herein the CS).
9. The *National Planning Policy Framework* (the Framework), and the associated national Planning Practice Guidance, are important material considerations.

Main Issues

10. The main issues are:

- i) Whether or not the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Whiteladies Road Conservation Area, and;
- ii) Whether or not the proposal would preserve the setting of nearby listed buildings.

Statutory Parties or Interested Persons

11. Any representations should have been made by 4 August 2025. Full details of the comments can be found on the application website at:
12. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/section-62a-planning-application-s62a20250111-11-13-whiteladies-road-clifton-bristol-bs8-1pb>
13. A representation from the designated planning authority recommended refusal of planning permission on the basis of harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area. One representation was received from a local business, objecting to the proposal.
14. All written representations have been considered before making the decision here.

Reasons

Conservation Area

15. The proposed development comprises the demolition of the existing single storey annexe (Use Class E) and the construction of a two-storey terrace of four houses for short-term let (Use Class C1) with associated landscaping and

² https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6865052b3b77477f9da0726c/11-13_WLR_Annexe_Full_App_Redacted.pdf

amenities. It is understood that the four units sought would form additional C1 accommodation for the currently proposed Class C1 development within the main building (Ref: 25/11594/F).

16. The Applicant has described the four proposed dwellings as 'mews houses'. Whilst they would face onto a small garden 'courtyard' area, they are not the typical form or design of mews buildings. For example, there is little indication that the annexe sought to be demolished is a converted historic stables or coach house located to the rear of grander residences. As such, the use of mews as a built form in this location appears to be the exception rather than a prevailing characteristic.
17. Indeed, the immediate area is characterised by the tree-lined street of Whiteladies Road and large period buildings, predominantly arranged as semi-detached properties. The properties on the east side of Whiteladies Road front onto an avenue of mature trees, have generous plot sizes, including large front garden areas; many of which are now used as parking areas. The buildings are characterised by attractive facades; many of which are finished with bath stone and painted timber sash windows. Nos 11-12 Whiteladies Road were built between 1855 and 1874 as a pair of residential villas.
18. The Conservation Area Enhancement Statement (undated) states that *'Whiteladies Road, the second area, conveys the impression of a gently curving road, built to a grand design, ascending between the 'town', represented by the Queens Road area, and the 'country' seen in terms of The Downs. It is generously proportioned but varied in character, with highly ornamented, large-scale, villa-type buildings set back from their boundaries, contrasting with the informal small-town character of the continuous shopping frontages in the Blackboy Hill section. There is also a more dense terraced element linking the two. It is also distinguished in parts by being lined with mature plane trees.'*
19. The significance of the conservation area derives from the architectural unity and the 'grand design' linking the town to the country, and the setting back of residential development from the plane tree lined highway. To the contrary, the proposal scheme would introduce two storey built form to the rear of the property, in what would have originally been its rear garden area. The proposed development would comprise dwellings which would not address a street frontage and would be perpendicular to the frontage buildings addressing the main road. This would be discordant with the overall urban grain of the conservation area and would therefore cause harm to its overall character and appearance.
20. Furthermore, the proposed dwellings would have a generic, low quality appearance and would have gable fronted pitched roofs. They would be constructed a two-tone brick façade, and a high-quality painted timber elevation is proposed the ground floor, which does not appear to reflect the prevailing building style or materials used within the conservation area.
21. Moreover, rather than gable-ended slate roofs, the predominant roof form in this part of the conservation area is hipped roofs set behind flat parapets and the predominant material palette is formed of bath stone, rubble stone and painted timber windows. The Whiteladies Road Conservation Area Enhancement Statement states; *'The domestic architecture styles have a consistency of design and materials contributing to the essential character of*

the conservation area. As such, the proposed design and materials would undermine the character of the conservation area and would detract from its generally unified appearance.

22. I accept that there are other existing buildings adjacent to the site which do not follow the established urban grain, overall scale and massing, roof form and material palette which is characteristic of the conservation area. However, these have caused harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area and its significance.
23. Moreover, the exacerbation of this harm through the introduction of further harm arising from the inappropriateness of the proposed style and materials does not provide justification for further harm to the conservation area. Furthermore, for the aforesaid reasons, the proposal would fail to make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness as sought by Paragraph 210 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework).

Listed building

24. With regard to the nearby Grade II listed building at 7 and 9 Whiteladies Road and its setting, it is clear that this listed building sits within its own plot which is defined by low walls on many of its perimeter boundaries. Moreover, the way in which this building is experienced in terms of its architectural and historical special interest (which also contribute to its significance) would be unaffected by the proposal in this case. That is because whilst the proposed two storey building would be located close to the northern boundary, it would not compete visually with the listed building or those features which specifically contribute to its significance as a listed building.

Summary on main issues

25. The proposed development would fail to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Whiteladies Road Conservation Area. This is due to its ahistorical siting within the plot, its design including its two-storey form, and the materials proposed. Whilst this harm would be no greater than 'less than substantial' as set out in Paragraph 215 of the Framework (and, articulated further, towards the moderate part within that scale), considerable importance and weight should be given to the desire to preserve heritage assets.
26. Paragraph 215 also requires the decisionmaker to weigh the less than substantial harm against the public benefits of the proposal. The public benefits in this case have not been articulated clearly by the Applicant in their submission. However, public benefits here could include the provision of four dwellings under a C1 use class, in a centrally located location, with reasonably good transport links to services, shops and other facilities in Bristol city centre.
27. There are also benefits such as the creation of renewable energy from the proposed solar panels – although it is not clear as to whether this would be to a policy compliant amount (20%) as sought by Policy BCS14 as supported by Policy BCS15 both of the CS. It has also been suggested that the site could be landscaped, which would provide some visual benefits and potentially some limited biodiversity benefits.
28. However, I do not find that these public benefits, whether individually or cumulatively, outweigh the less than substantial harm to the designated heritage asset in the form of the Whiteladies Conservation Area. As such, the

proposal would be contrary to Policies BCS21, BCS22 of the CS and Policies DM26, DM27, DM30 and DM31 of the LP, which, amongst other aims, seek that development proposals should safeguard or enhance heritage assets and the character and setting of areas of acknowledged importance including conservation areas.

29. It would also conflict with policies of the Framework, which is an important material consideration; including those set out in Chapter 16: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

Other Matters

Fall back

30. My attention is drawn to a 'fall back' position set out within Paragraphs 5.13 to 5.19 of the Applicant's *Planning Statement*, June 2025. I have not been provided with the full details of that permission referenced 25/10493/COU. In any case, it does not provide justification for addressing or overcoming the harms I have identified arising from the scheme that is before me to consider.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

31. The Applicant has provided a BNG Exemption Statement. This confirms that the proposal will not impact more than 25m² of habitat, and is therefore considered to be exempt from BNG requirements and planning conditions under the de minimis rule of Section 4 of *The Biodiversity Net Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024*. At the same time, Policy BCS9 of the CS and Policy DM15 of the LP require that developments incorporate new and/or enhanced green infrastructure.
32. However, as the application is to be refused on the main issue identified, I have not considered this matter further.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

33. Bristol City Council consider that the proposed development is chargeable development under the *Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulations* (see email dated 1 July 2025). Based on the evidence before me I have no reason to conclude otherwise, and this is capable of being a material consideration as a local finance consideration.
34. Whilst I am satisfied that the necessary mitigation under CIL can be achieved in this case, given that the proposal is unacceptable and therefore to be refused, I have not considered this matter further.

Conditions

35. Bristol City Council suggested conditions to be imposed, were the decision-maker to grant permission. Whilst the decision is to refuse permission, for clarity, I do not consider that the suggested conditions would overcome or address the harms identified in this instance.

Planning balance and Conclusions

36. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

37. In this case, I find that the proposal would conflict with Policies BCS21, BCS22 of the CS and Policies DM26, DM27, DM30 and DM31 of the LP. As such, I also find that it would not accord with the adopted development plan when considered as a whole. Moreover, there are not material considerations in this case which weigh in favour of the proposal that indicate a decision should be made otherwise than in accordance with the development plan.

38. As such, planning permission should be REFUSED, in this case.

■ ■■■■■

INSPECTOR (appointed person for the purposes of s62A and s76D TCPA)

Decision Notice

Reference: s62A/2025/0111

Decision Date: 8 August 2025

The planning application for the demolition of the rear annexe and delivery of four mews houses for short-term let with associated landscaping and other works is **REFUSED**.

This is because the proposed development would fail to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Whiteladies Road Conservation Area, which is a designated heritage asset. This is due to its ahistorical siting within the plot, its incongruous design and two-storey form, and the materials proposed. As such, it fails to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area as required by s72(1) of *The Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990*, as amended. Whilst this harm would be no greater than 'less than substantial' as set out in Paragraph 215 of the Framework (and articulated further towards the moderate part within that scale), considerable importance and weight should be given to the desire to preserve heritage assets. The proposed development has not been justified, nor can the harm be outweighed by public benefits cited in this case.

Accordingly, the proposal fails to comply with Policies BCS21 (Quality Urban Design) and BCS22 (Conservation and the Historic Environment) of the *Bristol Development Framework Core Strategy (adopted June 2011)* and Policies DM26 (Local Character and Distinctiveness), DM27 (Layout and Form), DM30 (Alterations to Existing Buildings) and DM31 (Heritage Assets) in the *Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Local Plan (adopted July 2014)*. It also conflicts with Section 16 of the *National Planning Policy Framework* and the *Whiteladies Road Conservation Area Enhancement Statement*.

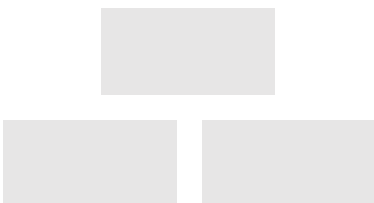
***** END OF REFUSAL REASONS *****

Informatives:

- i. *In determining this application, the Planning Inspectorate, on behalf of the Secretary of State, has worked with the applicant in a positive and proactive manner. In doing so, no substantial problems arose which required the Planning Inspectorate, on behalf of the Secretary of State, to work with the applicant to seek any solutions.*
- ii. *The decision of the appointed person (acting on behalf of the Secretary of State) on an application under section 62A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 ('the Act') is final. An application to the High Court under s288(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is the only way in which the decision made on an application under Section 62A can be challenged. An application must be made promptly within 6 weeks of the date of the decision.*
- iii. *These notes are provided for guidance only. A person who thinks they may have grounds for challenging this decision is advised to seek legal advice before taking any action. If you require advice on the process for making any challenge you should contact the Administrative Court Office at the Royal Courts of Justice, Strand, London, WC2A 2LL (0207 947 6655) or follow this link: <https://www.gov.uk/courts-tribunals/planning-court>.*

***** END OF INFORMATIVES *****

Application Ref: S62A/2025/0118 BCC Comments



SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site is located on Whiteladies Road within the defined City Centre Area of Bristol. The site comprises a 3-storey building, as well as a basement and annexe to the rear, which at the time of submission is solely in office use (Use Class E).

The current application relates to the main building and the external areas but does not include the annexe.

The site is located within the Whiteladies Road Conservation Road.

RELEVANT HISTORY

66/03830/P_U: Change use of property edged and hatched orange on Plan to drawing office - Permission Granted

25/10493/COU: Application to determine if prior approval is required for a proposed: Change of use from Commercial, Business and Service (Use Class E) to Dwellinghouses (Use Class C3) Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) - Schedule 2, Part 3, Class MA - 17 dwellings - Prior Approval Given

25/10495/F: Installation of bin and bike storage, enlargement of roof lights and light wells and other works - Permission Granted

25/11594/F: Change of use from office to provide 20 no. short term lets/Guesthouse/hotel (Use class C1) and associated works – Permission Granted

25/12838/PINS: Application for Planning permission for Demolition of the rear annexe and delivery of 4 mews houses for short-term let with associated landscaping and other works - Refused

APPLICATION

The application seeks permission for the conversion of the existing office space to 20no. purpose-built student units. The application includes the installation of lightwells to the front, side and rear of the building.

Refuse and cycle storage would be located at the rear boundary of the site. Wall mounted air source heat pumps would be installed against the northwest boundary of the site. The roof would be fitted with 60no. PV panels and 3no. smoke hatches/rooflights.

Please see the application form and plans for further information.

COMMENTS

Pollution Control –

This application includes the provision of 6 air source heat pumps in one area, to serve the proposed 20 student flats. No further details have been given as to the size or noise output for the heat. I therefore have concerns as to the potential for harm, by way of noise, to be caused to the occupants of neighbouring properties, and those in the development itself, nearest to the heat pumps.

I would therefore ask for the following condition should the application be approved:

1. Noise from air source heat pumps

No commencement of use of any air source heat pumps shall take place until an assessment on noise from the heat pump(s) at nearby residential properties has been submitted to and been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. If the assessment indicates that noise from the air source heat pump(s) is likely to affect neighbouring affecting residential or commercial properties then a scheme of noise mitigation measures shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Council prior to the commencement of the development.

The assessment shall take into account the guidance given in BS 4142:2014+A1:2019 Methods for rating and assessing industrial and commercial sound and of BS 8233: 2014 Guidance on sound insulation and noise reduction for buildings and Microgeneration Certification Scheme planning standards (MCS 020).

Transport Development Management –

Verbal Comments:

- Cycle parking standard for student accommodation is 1 in 4 for students and 1 in 12 for visitors. The proposed 8no. cycle parking spaces and 1no. visitor parking space is within that figure
- Bin storage is sufficient although refuse receptacles should be situated a highway to allow ease of access and collection
- The development would require a moving-in, moving-out statement if approved

KEY ISSUES**A) PRINCIPLE OF PURPOSE-BUILT STUDENT ACCOMMODATION**

Policy BCAP7: Loss of employment space Employment sites in Old Market & The Dings, St. Paul's & Stokes Croft and other areas of inner east Bristol should be retained for employment use unless it can be demonstrated that:

- i. There is no demand for employment uses; or
- ii. Continued employment use would have an unacceptable impact on the environmental quality of the surrounding area; or
- iii. A net reduction in floorspace is necessary to improve the existing premises; or
- iv. It is to be used for industrial or commercial training purposes.

In Bristol City Centre, where there are existing office buildings that are vacant or underused by reason of their location or their ability to meet modern business needs (notably in and around the Nelson Street and Lewins Mead area), development involving the loss of existing office floorspace will be acceptable where it would contribute positively to the mix of uses in the area.

Redevelopment or significant remodelling of the city centre's poorest quality office buildings will be encouraged in preference to conversion, potentially including some further intensification of use.

It is noted that the main building on the application site has permission to change the use of the property from office (Class E) to residential (Class C3) under the prior approval application 25/10493/COU. As such, the loss of the employment use is considered to be acceptable on the basis that the application for prior approval would constitute a reasonable fallback position for the development in this regard.

Policy DM2: Residential Sub-divisions, Shared and Specialist Housing states that proposals for specialist student housing will not be permitted where the development would create or contribute to a harmful concentration of such uses within a locality as a result of exacerbating existing harmful conditions with regard to residential amenity or the character of the locality; or reducing the choice of homes in the area by changing the housing mix.

Policy BCAP4: Specialist Student Housing in Bristol City Centre states that specialist student housing schemes that contribute to the diversity of uses within the local area will be acceptable within Bristol City Centre unless it would create or contribute to a harmful concentration of specialist student housing within any given area.

These policies do not give a specific threshold at which a harmful concentration would be reached, however, the supporting text sets out that harmful concentrations are likely to arise when problems commonly associated with student accommodation cumulatively result in detrimental effects on residential amenity. The supporting text of BCAP4 states that while locations close to the University of Bristol may be desirable for specialist student housing, the need for such development must be balanced against the need to preserve the residential amenity of communities in the area.

Draft Policy H7: Managing the Development of Purpose-Built Student Accommodation (PBSA) of the emerging local plan provides more detail on appropriate locations for student accommodation and how development of PBSA should maintain a balance with other uses.

The site is not located in an area of growth and regeneration and is not within the University of Bristol Precinct. In applying H7, the site is considered to be an 'other location'. There is no threshold limit of bedspaces set out within H7 which would form a harmful concentration within other locations, therefore it remains a matter of judgement as to what would constitute a harmful concentration of PBSA within the locality.

There are three existing PBSA developments within the immediate locality; 19 Elmdale Road (13 bedspaces), Prince Rupert House (16 bedspaces) and 4 St Pauls Road (15 bedspaces). A further 127 bedspaces have been approved but not yet commenced at Maggs House, which is approximately 200m from the site. The site is approximately 100m from the University of Bristol Precinct. While there does not appear to be any PBSA in the area of the Precinct closest to the site, there is a high proportion of students accessing the area regularly.

Furthermore, there is a high proportion of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) within the locality. There are 107 residential properties within 100m of the site and 11.21% of these properties are operating as HMOs. In addition to this, there are a further 7 properties where an HMO license application has been submitted and not yet approved. If these license applications were to be approved, it would bring the overall percentage of residential properties within 100m of the site being used as HMOs to 17.7%. Given the proximity of the site to the Bristol University Precinct, it is likely that many of the HMOs are being used as student accommodation, although they would not be considered to be PBSA. HMOs within the Precinct do not require a license because they are subject to the separate **legislation**, therefore, it is likely that there are a significant number of further HMOs being used for student accommodation which are not counted within the datasets held by the LPA.

Overall, there is a high concentration of student accommodation within the locality, however, an assessment of the impacts to amenity and character of the area is required in order to demonstrate whether or not this concentration is harmful.

Adjacent properties on the eastern side of Whiteladies Road are predominantly in commercial use. A number of properties are vacant but advertised as being to-let to commercial occupiers. As such, the proposal would be unlikely to result in a harmful concentration of PBSA for the immediate neighbours of the site because they are currently in commercial use and therefore there would not be any amenity impacts to residential occupiers. Furthermore, the proposal would be unlikely to impact the character of the area as any external alterations required to convert the existing building to student accommodation would not result in an intensification of development on the site or harm the appearance of the building.

To the rear of the site, the majority of properties are either existing student accommodation or HMOs. There are two flats within no. 21 Elmdale Road which are listed as being residential dwellings and it is presumed that these are in single-household occupation as there is no evidence to suggest that these have been converted to HMOs.

The majority of single-household dwellings within 100m of the site are on Sunderland Place. Although these properties are close to the application site, they would not be in direct relationship with the proposed development because they are separated by Whiteladies Road and form part of a quieter, predominantly residential street, which has a different character to the predominantly commercial character of Whiteladies Road. The application site is considered to be a sufficient distance away from these dwellings such that the proposal would not result in a harmful concentration of PBSA with respect to amenity or character impacts.

The remaining residential flats at no.21 Elmdale Road are surrounded by existing HMOs and other commercial properties. Elmdale Road forms the boundary with the University of Bristol Precinct. The HMOs and existing university buildings are likely to have an impact on the character of

Elmdale Road and the amenity of existing single-household dwellings. However, the proposed development would not be directly adjacent to the existing flats at no. 21 and the proposed development is set within a fairly large plot. As such, the proposed development would not directly sandwich the existing residential dwellings between PBSA and HMOs.

While the concentration of HMOs and PBSA in the locality is high, and in some cases may already be harmful, it is not considered that this proposal would contribute towards a harmful concentration in isolation for the reasons outlined above.

B) DESIGN AND HERITAGE ASSETS

The Authority is required under Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to pay special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area.

Section 16 (Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment) of the NPPF states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance. Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification.

Policy BCS21 (Quality Urban Design) states that development should be of a high-quality design and respect the local area.

Policy BCS22 (Conservation and the Historic Environment) states that development proposals should safeguard or enhance heritage assets and the character and setting of areas of acknowledged importance including: Scheduled ancient monuments; Historic buildings both nationally and locally listed; Historic parks and gardens both nationally and locally listed; Conservation areas; and Archaeological remains.

Policy DM26 (Local Character and Distinctiveness) states that development should respond appropriately to the height, scale, massing, shape, form and proportion of existing buildings, building lines and set-backs from the street, skylines and roofscapes. Development should also respect, build upon or restore the local pattern and grain of development.

Policy DM30 (Alterations to Existing Buildings) sets out that new development will be expected to respect the siting, scale, form, proportions, materials, details and the overall design and character of the host building, its curtilage and the broader street scene.

Policy DM31 (Heritage Assets) sets out that development will be expected to conserve and where appropriate enhance heritage assets and/or its setting. These include schedule monuments, archaeological sites, listed buildings, conservation areas, historic parks and gardens and locally important assets.

The proposal seeks a number of external alterations to enable the conversion of the building to PBSA. The alterations proposed have already been approved under application ref. 25/10495/F. There are no material changes to the alterations as already approved and therefore these are considered to be acceptable.

C) NEIGHBOURING AMENITY

Policy BCS21 states that new development should safeguard the amenity of existing development.

Policy DM30 states that alterations to existing buildings should not jeopardise the residential amenity of adjacent occupants in terms of privacy, overlooking, overshadowing and overbearing.

Policy BCS23 in the Bristol Core Strategy and Policy DM35 in the Site Allocations and Development Management Policy also state that new development should also not lead to any detrimental increase in noise levels.

The proposal would convert the existing commercial building to student accommodation, which is a form of residential use. The proposal does not involve any extensions to the existing building beyond the existing footprint. As such, there are no concerns that the proposal would result in any overbearing or overshadowing for neighbouring properties.

The existing commercial building is not occupied at nighttime as it is typically only occupied during normal working hours. As a result of the proposal, the building would be occupied during both daytime and nighttime hours. However, the building is sufficiently separated from other neighbouring dwellings such that there are no concerns regarding overlooking impacts.

Pollution Control were consulted and raised no concerns with regard to noise impacts related to the proposed use. However, they noted that no information had been submitted to demonstrate that the proposed air source heat pumps (ASHPs) would not have a harmful impact on noise generation and transference. Pollution Control recommended that a condition be added to the decision notice to require the submission of a noise assessment prior to commencement of the use of the ASHPs to demonstrate that they would not result in any harmful noise impacts for neighbouring properties. Subject to this measure, the proposal would be considered acceptable with regard to noise generation and transference.

D) AMENITY FOR FUTURE OCCUPIERS

Policy BCS18: Housing Type states that development should provide sufficient space for everyday activities and enable residential units to be flexible to the changing life circumstances of occupants. In addition, Policy BCS21: Quality Urban Design sets out criteria for the assessment of design quality in new development and states that development will be expected to create a high-quality environment for future occupiers, and safeguard the amenity of existing development.

Policy DM2: Residential Sub-divisions, Shared and Specialist Housing states that development must provide a good standard of accommodation by meeting relevant requirements and standards set out in other development plan policies.

Draft Policy H7: Managing the Development of Purpose-Built Student Accommodation of the emerging local plan sets out that development will be required to provide a high standard of accommodation.

The Space Standard Practice Note (March 2021) provides further information on the implementation of policy BCS18: Housing Type and provides further clarification on the council's use of the Nationally Described Space Standard. It is noted that the Nationally Described Space Standards (2015) (NDSS) do not apply to PBSA, however, the Practice Note sets out that sufficient communal facilities and services will be expected to be included to meet the requirements of the intended number of residents.

The proposed development does not provide any communal areas, which would be to the detriment of the amenity of future occupants. The Practice Note sets a method for calculating total minimum internal floor area for communal facilities provided in shared-living proposals. This sets out that the total internal floor area of the proposed units should be subtracted from the total internal floor area of the living units as required by the NDSS. The resulting difference will be the amount of communal space required. In this case, the method indicates that 33.4m² of communal floorspace should be provided to ensure that future occupants have sufficient space

for everyday living. In addition to providing students with enough space for everyday activities, shared spaces enable students to socialise and develop social cohesion.

The lack of communal space is considered to harm the overall quality of the accommodation provided for future occupants. In the event that the LPA were able to negotiate amendments on this application, it would have been requested that communal space be incorporated, which would likely result in the number of bedspaces being reduced.

The proposed accommodation in the basement floor of the building is considered to be poor with regard to overall light levels and outlook as future occupants would be looking out into a lightwell with a wall only 1.6m or 1.1m away. Furthermore, the units proposed in the basement are the smallest provided within the building. As such, the overall quality of the living environment of these units would be poor.

It is noted that prior approval has been given for the conversion of the existing office building to residential accommodation (application ref. 25/10493/COU). This application involved residential accommodation in the basement which had similarly poor levels of outlook, however, this application could only be considered against the criteria set out in the Town and Country Planning General Permitted Development (England) Order 2015 (as amended) Schedule 2, Part 3, Class MA. This does not allow for consideration of levels of outlook. Notwithstanding this, it is accepted that this application is a reasonable fallback position for the applicant. However, the residential units which were given prior approval did meet the required threshold area set out in the NDSS as this is a requirement of Schedule 2 (9A).

The proposed basement units would have poor outlook and an oppressively small overall floor area, which would be exacerbated by the fact that the future occupants would rely on these units as their sole living space given the lack of communal facilities. The smallest studio would be 21.44m², which is 16.45m² smaller than the smallest studio allowed under the prior approval. This would result in cramped, oppressive conditions which would not provide enough space for everyday activities and studying. Furthermore, the lack of communal space would harmfully impact the living conditions and social cohesion of all future occupants of the development. Overall, the proposal is considered to provide a poor living environment for future occupants which would not be acceptable.

E) TRANSPORT

Policy BCS10 (Transport and Access Improvements) of the Core Strategy states that development should be designed to ensure streets where traffic and other activities are, are integrated and should be designed to ensure the provision of safe streets. Proposals will be determined and schemes will be designed to reflect the following transport user priorities as set out below:

- a) The pedestrian;
- b) The cyclist;
- c) Public transport;
- d) Access for commercial vehicles;
- e) Short stay visitors by car;
- f) The private car.

The needs of disabled people will be considered within all of the above headings.

Policy BCS15 (Sustainable Design and Construction) of the Core Strategy states that all new development will be required to provide satisfactory arrangements for the storage of refuse and recyclable materials as an integral part of its design. Major developments should include communal facilities for waste collection and recycling where appropriate.

Policy DM23 (Transport Development Management) of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies (Adopted July 2014) outlines that development should not give rise to unacceptable traffic conditions and would be expected to provide safe and adequate access onto the highway. It also states that parking must be safe, secure, accessible and usable.

Policy DM32 (Recycling and Refuse in New Development) of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies (Adopted July 2014) states that all new residential properties will be expected to provide sufficient space for the storage of individual recycling and refuse containers to reflect the current collections regime or communal recycling facilities and refuse.

Draft Policy H7 of the emerging local plan states that in all cases, proposals for purpose-built student accommodation should make provision for disabled access and disabled parking for occupants and visitors.

The existing site includes 20no. car parking spaces for the commercial use. The proposed site plan shows 6no. car parking spaces for the proposed student accommodation at the front of the site and 6no. car parking spaces at the rear for commercial uses, which is a reduction in 8no. spaces overall.

One of the car parking spaces for the student accommodation is shown to be accessible, however, it is noted that there would be no level access or ramped access for future occupants accessing the building and therefore the overall development would not provide safe and adequate access for all future users.

The level of car parking proposed is over the maximum allowance set out in Appendix 2 of DM23, however, it is acknowledged that the parking spaces are existing and therefore this is acceptable in this instance.

The quantum of cycle parking provided is acceptable for the student accommodation, however, it is unclear whether any cycle parking is provided for the commercial use, given that vehicle parking spaces have been retained for this purpose. The proposed refuse stores do not distinguish between stores for the collection of commercial or domestic waste, which would not be acceptable. As such, further details of policy compliant refuse and cycle stores would be required prior to occupation to ensure that the facilities provided were adequate and attractive for all users of the site. Subject to this measure, the proposed refuse and cycle storage would be acceptable.

F) BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN

The effect of paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is that planning permission granted for development of land in England is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition (biodiversity gain condition) that development may not begin unless:

- (a) Biodiversity Gain Plan has been submitted to the planning authority, and
- (b) the planning authority has approved the plan. There are statutory exemptions and transitional arrangements which mean that the biodiversity gain condition does not always apply.

Based on the information available this permission is considered to be one which will not require the approval of a biodiversity gain plan before development is begun because one or more of the statutory exemptions or transitional arrangements is/are considered to apply - in this case the exemptions below:

Development below the de minimis threshold, meaning development which:

- i) does not impact an onsite priority habitat (a habitat specified in a list published under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006); and
- ii) impacts less than 25 square metres of onsite habitat that has biodiversity value greater than zero and less than 5 metres in length of onsite linear habitat (as defined in the statutory metric).

SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Themes of sustainability, carbon reduction and climate change underpin national planning policy. Policies BS13-15 of the Core Strategy relate to the LPAs expectations with regard to sustainable construction of new buildings and emissions in respect of climate change. These policies must be addressed and the guidance within the LPAs Climate Change and Sustainability Practice Note followed. New development is expected to minimise energy requirements. This will be achieved by high standards of energy efficiency including optimal levels of thermal insulation, passive ventilation and cooling, passive solar design, and the efficient use of natural resources in new buildings. Core Strategy Policy requires new development to also incorporate an element of renewable energy to reduce carbon emissions by a further 20% above energy saving measures.

The applicant has submitted an energy and sustainability statement which outlines that the development will use a centralised communal ASHP arrangement to provide hot water and heating. There would also be 60no. PV panels located on the roof.

These measures would result in an 83.31% reduction in residual CO₂ emissions, which would be compliant with Policy BCS14.

CONCLUSION

The application is recommended for refusal on the grounds of poor living conditions for future occupants and lack of safe and adequate access for all future users of the site.

SUGGESTED REFUSAL REASONS

1. The proposed basement units would have poor outlook and an oppressively small overall floor area, which would be exacerbated by the fact that the future occupants would rely on these units as their sole living space given the lack of communal facilities. This would result in cramped, oppressive conditions which would not provide enough space for everyday activities and studying. Furthermore, the lack of communal space would harmfully impact the living conditions and social cohesion of all future occupants of the development. Overall, the proposal is considered to provide a poor living environment for future occupants which would not be acceptable. The proposal as submitted contravenes Section 12 of the NPPF, Policies BCS15 (Sustainable Design and Construction), BCS18 (Housing Type), and BCS21 (Quality Urban Design) of the Bristol Core Strategy (adopted 2011) and Policies DM2 (Residential Sub-divisions, Shared and

Specialist Housing), DM27 (Layout and Form) and DM30 (Alterations to Existing Buildings) of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies (adopted 2014).

2. The proposal would not provide level or ramped access to any of the proposed accommodation which would prevent safe and adequate access for all future users and prejudice disabled occupants from accessing the site. The proposal is therefore contrary to Section 9 of the NPPF, Policy BCS10 (Transport and Access Improvements) of the Bristol Core Strategy (adopted 2011) and Policy DM23 (Transport Development Management) of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies (adopted 2014).

SUGGESTED CONDITIONS (without prejudice)

Time Limit

1. Full Planning Permission

The development hereby permitted shall begin before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: As required by Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

Pre-Occupation

2. Traffic Management Plan

No building or use hereby permitted shall be occupied or use commenced until a traffic management plan setting out the agreed arrangements for managing student drop off/collection procedures and location, at the start/end of semester/academic year, has been prepared, submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The measures shall thereafter be implemented in accordance with the approved traffic management plan for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To ensure the safe operation of the public highway at the start/end of semester/academic year.

3. Completion and Maintenance of Car/Vehicle Parking - Shown on Approved Plans

No building or use hereby permitted shall be occupied or use commenced until the car/vehicle parking area (and turning space) shown on the approved plans has been completed and thereafter the area shall be kept free of obstruction and available for the parking of vehicles associated with the development. Driveways/vehicle parking areas accessed from the adopted highway must be properly consolidated and surfaced, (not loose stone, gravel or grasscrete) and subsequently maintained in good working order at all times thereafter for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To ensure that there are adequate parking facilities to serve the development constructed to an acceptable standard.

4. Noise from air source heat pumps

No commencement of use of any air source heat pumps shall take place until an assessment on noise from the heat pump(s) at nearby residential properties has been submitted to and been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. If the assessment indicates that noise from the air source heat pump(s) is likely to affect neighbouring affecting residential or commercial properties then a scheme of noise mitigation measures shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Council prior to the commencement of the development.

The assessment shall take into account the guidance given in BS 4142:2014+A1:2019 Methods for rating and assessing industrial and commercial sound and of BS 8233: 2014 Guidance on sound insulation and noise reduction for buildings and Microgeneration Certification Scheme planning standards (MCS 020).

Reason: In the interests of safeguarding residential amenity.

5. Implementation / Installation of Refuse Storage and Recycling Facilities Shown on Approved Plans

Prior to occupation, further details of refuse storage facilities shall be submitted to, approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and installed. Thereafter, all refuse and recyclable materials associated with the development shall either be stored within this dedicated store/area, as shown on the approved plans, or internally within the building(s) that form part of the application site. No refuse or recycling material shall be stored or placed for collection on the adopted highway (including the footway).

Reason: To safeguard the amenity of the occupiers of adjoining premises; protect the general environment; prevent any obstruction to pedestrian movement and to ensure that there are adequate facilities for the storage and recycling of recoverable materials.

6. Further details of cycle storage prior to occupation of development

Prior to occupation, further detailed drawings of the cycle storage at the scale of 1:10 shall be submitted to and be approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority before the development is occupied. The detail thereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with that approval.

Thereafter, the cycle parking shall be kept free of obstruction and be available for the parking of cycles only for the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To ensure the provision and availability of adequate cycle parking.

7. Reporting of Unexpected Contamination

In the event that contamination is found at any time when carrying out the approved development, it must be reported immediately to the Local Planning Authority. An investigation and risk assessment must be undertaken in accordance with DEFRA and the Environment Agency's 'Model Procedures for the Management of Land Contamination, CLR 11', and where remediation is necessary a remediation scheme must be prepared which ensures the site will not qualify as contaminated land under Part 2A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 in relation to the intended use of the land after remediation.

Following completion of measures identified in the approved remediation scheme a verification report must be prepared, which is subject to the approval in writing of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that risks from land contamination to the future users of the land and neighbouring land are minimised, together with those to controlled waters, property and ecological systems, and to ensure that the development can be carried out safely without unacceptable risks to workers, neighbours and other offsite receptors.

Compliance

8. External Works to Match

All new external work and finishes and work of making good shall match existing original work adjacent in respect of materials used, detailed execution and finished appearance except where indicated otherwise on the approved drawings.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and the character of the area.

List of approved plans and drawings

9. List of approved plans and drawings

The development shall conform in all aspects with the plans and details shown in the application as listed below, unless variations are agreed by the Local Planning Authority in order to discharge other conditions attached to this decision.

- Location Plan, 600, date received 13/08/2025
- Existing Site Plan, 601, date received 13/08/2025
- Existing Floor Plans, 602, date received 13/08/2025
- Existing Elevations, 603, date received 13/08/2025
- Proposed Site Plan, 604, date received 13/08/2025
- Proposed Floor Plans, 605 rev. P1, date received 13/08/2025
- Proposed Elevations, 606, date received 13/08/2025
- Existing and Proposed Section A-A, 607, date received 13/08/2025
- Railing and Lightwell Details, 608, date received 13/08/2025
- Biodiversity Net Gain Exemption Statement, date received 13/08/2025
- Energy and Sustainability Statement, date received 13/08/2025

- Marketing Report, date received 13/08/2025
- Waste Management Statement, date received 13/08/2025

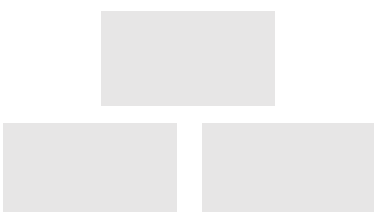
Reason: For the avoidance of doubt.

Informatives

1. Restriction of Parking Permits - Existing Controlled Parking Zone/Residents Parking Scheme

You are advised that the Local Planning Authority has recommended to the Highways Authority which administers the existing Controlled Parking Zone/Residents Parking Scheme of which the development forms part that the development shall be treated as car free / low-car and the occupiers are ineligible for resident parking permits as well as visitors parking permits if in a Residents Parking Scheme.

11-13 Whiteladies Road Flood Note



FLOOD RISK NOTE

11-13 Whiteladies Road, Bristol, BS8 1PB

Reference: 25-00053

Date: 20th August 2025

Introduction

- 1.1 An application seeking planning permission to change the use of 11-13 Whiteladies Road from offices to student accommodation was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) on 30th July 2025 (application ref. S62A/2025/0118).
- 1.2 Upon reviewing the submitted information, PINS wrote to the applicant on 19th August 2025 to advise that the application was invalid, and that a Flood Risk Assessment would be required in order to meet statutory requirements for validation. An excerpt from the correspondence is copied below for convenience.

"Flood Risk Assessment - the Flood Map for Planning identifies that part of the site is at risk of flooding from surface water and the proposal introduces a more vulnerable use. In accordance with the local validation requirements and footnote 63 of the National Planning Policy Framework, the application should be supported by a Flood Risk Assessment. A Flood Risk Assessment has not been submitted with the application."

- 1.3 This Flood Risk Note has been prepared in response to the above request.

Flood Risk

- 1.4 The application site is located within Flood Zone 1. A small portion of the site access and car parking at the front of the site is located within an area of surface water flood risk, as shown below.

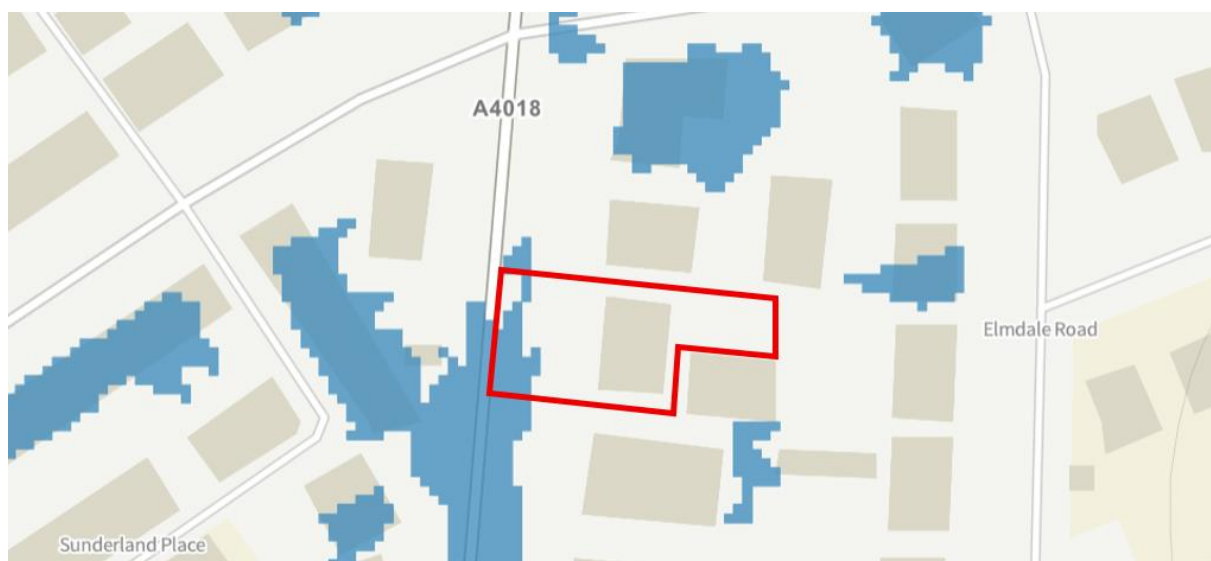


Figure 1: Extract from the EA Surface Water Flood Map with the site outlined in red.

- 1.5 The area of flood risk is limited to the highway and part of the site access and car park. It does not encroach into the building, so the risk to future residents is considered to be very limited.
- 1.6 In terms of external works, it is proposed to reconfigure the parking bays (which involves no change to the tarmac surface) and plant a new hedge along the western boundary to Whiteladies Road. These works will not have an adverse impact on flood risk. Indeed, the hedgerow will introduce a permeable surface at the boundary and offer an improvement in terms of surface water drainage.

Flood Alleviation Works

- 1.7 Bristol City Council is currently undertaking works to remedy the surface water problems on this part of Whiteladies Road.
- 1.8 In June 2022, the Council published a *Flood Alleviation and Footpath Scheme – Engagement Report* for comment by local people and interested parties.
- <http://bristol.gov.uk/files/ask-bristol/9427-whiteladies-road-flood-alleviation-and-footpath-scheme-engagement-report-june-2022/file>
- 1.9 On 19th May, a contract was awarded to ETM Contractors Limited to carry out the works.
- <https://www.contractsfinder.service.gov.uk/notice/20b9526f-3284-4ea6-8d6c-fb61b09c5d3b>
- 1.10 A subsequent post on the Bristol City Council website dated 30th June 2025 provides further details, including the following specification of works:
- *adding a separated cycleway, with a black tarmac surface, on both sides of the road at the same height as the pavements*
 - *adding 'beany block kerbs' that combine the roadside kerbs with a built-in drainage system*
 - *resurfacing the road*
 - *raising the driveways of six private properties using like-for-like materials*
 - *repaving the pavements and increasing their height, to reduce the impact of the tree roots*
 - *adding rubber crumb around the trees*
- <https://news.bristol.gov.uk/press-releases/d8724209-2dbe-4afb-ba73-88eaea3a8b02/whiteladies-road-to-close-northbound-for-flood-prevention-works#:~:text=Construction%20work%2C%20to%20prevent%20flooding,on%20Monday%2014%20July%202025.>
- 1.11 The BCC website also confirms the following:
- The work starts on 14th July 2025 and is expected to be completed by the end of 2025.
 - The project, which will cost around £800,000, will be funded through the highways maintenance block allocation from the UK government's City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement secured by West of England Mayoral Combined Authority.
- 1.12 Subsequent to the website article, BCC contacted the applicant and owner of 11-13 Whiteladies Road to confirm the phasing arrangements and associated dates for the works, which include:

- Phase 1 - Mon 14/07/25 to Fri 22/08/25
- Phase 2 - Thu 21/08/25 to Tue 16/09/25
- Phase 3 - Tue 16/09/25 to Wed 22/10/25
- Phase 4 - Tue 21/10/25 to Wed 19/11/25

1.13 The works to raise the footway outside 11-13 Whiteladies Road fall into Phase 4, which should be completed by 19th November 2025, which would be before any student occupation of the building.

1.14 The above works are underway, as shown on the photographs appended to this note.

Conclusion

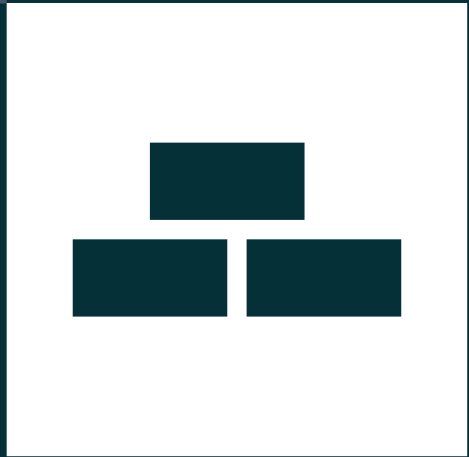
1.15 Taking into account the nature and location of the surface water flood risk (only affecting the site access and parking area), the nature of proposed external works in the flood risk area (re-marking the lines for parking bays and a new hedge, the latter offering a drainage improvement), and given that BCC is currently undertaking works to alleviate the flood risk issues, it is considered that the proposed development at 11-13 Whiteladies Road can be undertaken without any unacceptable flood risk impacts.

APPENDIX - Photographs of ongoing flood mitigation and road improvement works at Whiteladies Road, taken 19th August 2025.









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