



Decision Notice and Statement of Reasons

Site visit made on 11 December 2025

By J Hobbs MRTPI MCD BSc (Hons)

A person appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 29 December 2025

Application Reference: S62A/2025/0131

Site address: Land on South West side of Strathmore Road, Adjacent to No 13 BS7 9QQ

- The application is made under section 62A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
 - The site is located within the administrative area of Bristol City Council.
 - The application dated 7 October 2025 is made by Mr Martin Thomas and was validated on 7 November 2025.
 - The development proposed was originally described as "This proposal is to seek outline planning permission to make use of this underutilised site by creating a 1 bed 2 person dwelling house in a desirable area."
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Decision

1. Planning permission is refused for the development described above, for the following reasons:
 - 1) It has not been demonstrated that the proposed development would respect the local pattern of development and positively contribute to the area's character. This would be contrary to Policy BCS21 of the Bristol Development Framework Core Strategy June 2011 and policies DM26, DM27 and DM29 of the Bristol Local Plan – Site Allocations and Development Management Policies, July 2014.
 - 2) It has not been demonstrated that the proposed development would enable the provision of adequate appropriate and usable private amenity space and create a high-quality environment for future occupants. This would be contrary to Policy BCS21 of the Bristol Development Framework Core Strategy June 2011, and policies DM27 and DM29 of the Bristol Local Plan – Site Allocations and Development Management Policies, July 2014.

Statement of Reasons

Procedural matters

2. The application was made under Section 62A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, which allows for applications to be made directly to the Planning Inspectorate where a Council has been designated by the Secretary of State. Bristol City Council (the Council) has been designated for non major applications since 6 March 2024.
3. Consultation was undertaken on 14 November 2025 which allowed for responses by 11 December 2025. Responses were received from the parties listed in Appendix 1. The Council submitted a statement which sets out its objections to the proposed development. Also, an interested party and a statutory consultee submitted a response to the consultation. I have taken account of all written representations in reaching my decision. I also carried out an unaccompanied site visit on 11 December 2025 which enabled me to view the site and the surrounding area.
4. On 16 December 2025, the Government published a consultation on proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework). Whilst broad changes to the structure of the Framework are proposed as part of this consultation, these proposals could be subject to further change and can only be given very limited weight at this stage. It has therefore not been necessary to consult the parties on the changes.

Main Issues

5. Having regard to the application, the consultation responses, and the Council's statement, together with what I saw on site, the main issues for this application are:
 - the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area;
 - whether the proposal would provide acceptable accommodation for future occupants, with particular regard to the provision of private external amenity space;
 - the effect of the proposal on the living conditions of nearby occupants;
 - whether the proposal would include appropriate cycle and refuse storage; and,
 - whether the proposal could comply with local sustainability standards.

Reasons

Planning History and Background

6. A planning application¹ for the demolition of the garage and the construction of a two-bed dwelling at the application site was submitted to

¹ Planning Application Ref. 23/04794/F

the Council. The applicant appealed² against the non-determination of that application; the appeal was subsequently dismissed in January 2025.

7. The application before me is for outline planning permission with all matters reserved for subsequent approval. Within the Design and Access Statement³ the applicant has referred to the previously dismissed scheme and has also referred to matters which are reserved for subsequent approval. I have taken any reference to access, appearance, landscaping, layout, and scale as being shown for illustrative purposes only. Therefore, I have not addressed specific comments made by the Council and interested party on the design shown in the Design and Access Statement within my decision.

Character and appearance

8. The application site comprises of a garage which the applicant indicates has fallen into a poor state of repair. During my site visit I observed that the roof of the garage has been removed. Therefore, the site appears as a gate with an area of hardstanding surrounded by tall boundary walls. Also, there is a small area of hardstanding in front of the gate which is not enclosed.
9. This section of Strathmore Road largely comprises of terraced houses, which due to their design appear to date back to the Victorian or Edwardian period. There is a consistent building line, and the height of the dwellings step down in line with the slope of the road. The terraced properties tend to have similar external finishes, prominent ground floor bay windows, and modest front gardens enclosed by a low brick wall.
10. Planning permission⁴ was granted for the demolition of two garages and construction of a two-bedroom dwelling in proximity to the application site. The resultant dwelling is of a contemporary design and is more similar in form, scale, and massing to the garages it replaced, than other dwellings along this section of the road.
11. As above, the matters of appearance, layout and scale are reserved for subsequent approval. Nonetheless, the proposed dwelling would be viewed as an extension to the existing terraced block; therefore, it should seek to assimilate with these traditional properties. As such, it should be built in accordance with the consistent building line and only be stepped down from 13 Strathmore Road (No 13) by a modest amount, to reflect that it would be sited downhill from the neighbouring property. A property with these proportions would appear cramped and as an overdevelopment of the application site, as the plot is modest in size and smaller than neighbouring residential plots.
12. A contemporary design would not be appropriate in this location as it would disrupt the rhythm of the terraced block. Furthermore, the nearby detached dwelling replaced two garages and has a horizontal emphasis. To ensure

² Appeal Decision Ref. APP/Z0116/W/24/3348152

³ Design & Access Statement, New 2 Bed dwelling in place of existing garage at Strathmore Road, dated 04.12.23 Revision: -

⁴ Planning permission Ref. 21/04648/F

that the proposed dwelling has sufficient internal living space, it would likely need to be at least two storeys tall due to the plot's modest size. As it would only replace one garage, the proposed dwelling would have a vertical emphasis and would not assimilate with the nearby detached dwelling.

13. The neighbouring property, No 13, is of a modern construction. However, its design largely reflects properties along this section of the road. Therefore, it assimilates with the historic development in the area.
14. It has not been demonstrated that given the character and appearance of the area and the constraints of the site, that an acceptable design could be proposed. Overall, I conclude that the proposed development would have a harmful effect on the character and appearance of the area. The proposed development would be contrary to Policy BCS21 of the Bristol Development Framework Core Strategy June 2011 (CS) and policies DM26, DM27 and DM29 of the Bristol Local Plan – Site Allocations and Development Management Policies, July 2014 (SADMP). These policies indicate that proposals will be expected to contribute towards local character by respecting the local pattern of development; and contribute positively to an area's character and identity by reinforcing local distinctiveness; amongst other matters.

Living conditions – future occupants

15. As above, the application is for outline planning permission with all matters reserved for subsequent approval. This includes appearance, layout, and scale. Notwithstanding this, as set out in my reasoning above, the proposed dwelling would be expected to be positioned in accordance with the established building line. The proposed dwelling would also need to be sufficiently deep to provide appropriate internal living space and circulation space to allow access to upper floors. The resultant dwelling would have a modest front garden and a very modest rear courtyard.
16. The modest front garden would be of a comparable size to neighbouring properties and would be able to accommodate both cycle and refuse storage. However, the rear courtyard would be very small and would need to be enclosed by tall boundary treatments to provide privacy. This would result in the space being significantly overshadowed for long periods of the day. In combination the size of the space, the lack of light, and the sense of enclosure would result in the rear private external amenity space feeling oppressive and not appropriate for future occupants.
17. Whilst there are some public open spaces in proximity to the application site, they are different in nature to private external amenity space. Therefore, the use of these spaces would not be suitable mitigation for a complete lack of appropriate private external amenity space.
18. A design could be produced which provides appropriate internal living space for future occupants. Nevertheless, this would be at the expense of private external amenity space, as outlined above. I am also satisfied that future occupants would experience appropriate levels of privacy and light, within the property, and all rooms would offer an appropriate outlook.

19. Overall, I conclude that the proposal would not provide appropriate accommodation for future occupants, with particular regard to the provision of private external amenity space. The proposal would be contrary to CS Policy BCS21 and SADMP policies DM27 and DM29, where they indicate that the layout and form of development will be expected to enable the provision of adequate appropriate and usable private or communal amenity space; and development in Bristol will be expected to create a high-quality environment for future occupants; amongst other matters.

Living conditions – neighbouring occupants

20. Development in the area is defined by blocks of terraced houses which are often positioned back-to-back. Due to the alignment of the roads, the proposed dwelling is likely to be positioned slightly closer to the properties behind on Rudthorpe Road than its immediate neighbour, No 13. Nonetheless, there could still be sufficient separation between the proposed dwelling and the property behind to ensure that it would not appear overbearing.
21. Also, the property could be designed to include features such as obscure glazing to ensure that the levels of privacy experienced by occupants of properties behind would not be harmfully affected. Furthermore, given the position of the proposed dwelling, broadly to the north of the dwellings behind, and potential separation, it would not harmfully affect the amount of natural light experienced within those dwellings.
22. Due to the separation between the application site and the properties on the other side of Strathmore Road, I am satisfied that a dwelling could be designed which would not harmfully affect the living conditions of occupants of those properties.
23. I conclude that the proposal would not have a harmful effect on the living conditions of nearby occupants. In this specific regard, the proposal would comply with CS Policy BCS21 and SADMP policies DM27 and DM29 where they indicate that development in Bristol will be expected to safeguard the amenity of existing development; and the layout and form of development will be expected to enable existing development to achieve appropriate levels of privacy, outlook, and daylight; amongst other matters.

Cycle and Refuse Storage

24. As above, if the proposed dwelling was built in accordance with the established building line, there would be sufficient space to the front of the property for cycle and refuse storage. If I were not dismissing the application for other reasons, conditions could be attached to a planning permission requiring details of cycle and refuse storage to be submitted to and approved by the Council. This would ensure that the proposed dwelling would have appropriate storage facilities.
25. I conclude that the proposal could include appropriate cycle and refuse storage. Therefore, the proposal would comply with CS Policy BCS15 and SADMP policies DM23 and DM32 where they indicate that development will be expected to provide adequate storage for cyclists and private residential

development will be expected to provide sufficient space for the storage of individual recycling and refuse containers; amongst other matters.

Sustainability

26. CS policies BCS13, BCS14, and BCS15 indicate that development should mitigate climate change through measures including high standards of energy efficiency; development will be expected to provide sufficient renewable energy generation to reduce carbon dioxide emissions from residual energy use in a building by at least 20%; and, new developments will be required to demonstrate how key sustainability issues have been addressed through the submission of a Sustainability Statement as part of a planning application.
27. As above, the application is for outline planning permission with all matters reserved for subsequent approval. As such, measures which seek to generate renewable energy or reduce carbon dioxide emissions could be included as part of any design. There is no substantive evidence that the proposed dwelling could not incorporate these measures. Therefore, if I were not dismissing the application for other reasons, a condition could be attached to the planning permission requiring a Sustainability Statement to be submitted to and approved by the Council. This would ensure that measures to address key sustainability issues would be included within the proposed dwelling.
28. I therefore conclude that the proposal could comply with local sustainability standards and comply with CS policies BCS13, BCS14, and BCS15 for the reasons set out above.

Other Matters

29. The development would not affect priority habitat, nor would it affect more than 25m² of habitat with a biodiversity value greater than zero or 5m of linear habitat on site. As such, the proposed development would comply with the de minimis exemption, stated within The Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024. Consequently, if the proposed development were permitted, the biodiversity gain planning condition would not apply.
30. The Council has identified the proposal as being chargeable development under The Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010. I have no reason to consider otherwise, and this is capable of being a material consideration as a local finance consideration.

The Planning Balance

31. Within the Design and Access Statement the applicant has indicated that the proposal would comply with several policies. Whilst it is not disputed that the proposal would comply with some development plan policies, it would be contrary to CS Policy BCS21 and SADMP policies DM26, DM27, and DM29. There are no policies within the development plan which support proposals which would be harmful to the character and appearance of an

area or the living conditions of future occupants, in any instance. Therefore, the proposal conflicts with the development plan when read as a whole.

32. I am aware from determining other applications submitted under section 62A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, that currently the Council cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing land. Footnote 8 of the Framework establishes that the policies which are most important for determining the application are out of date. In accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, planning permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole.
33. The proposed dwelling would be harmful to the character and appearance of the area and to the living conditions of its future occupants. Therefore, it would be contrary to paragraphs 129, 131 and 135 of the Framework. These paragraphs advise that planning decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land, taking into account the importance of securing well-designed and healthy places; the creation of high quality places is fundamental to what the planning process should achieve; and planning decisions should ensure that developments are sympathetic to local character and create places with a high standard of amenity. The effect of the proposed development would be significant, long lasting, and contrary to one of the fundamental aims of the planning process. As such, I ascribe very significant weight to this harm.
34. The proposed development would support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes. The Framework recognises the important contribution that small sites can make to meeting the housing requirement of an area. It also indicates that planning decisions should promote an effective use of land and seek to use brownfield land. It would also be in proximity to public open spaces and there would be economic benefits associated with the construction period and from an increased population living in the area.
35. There is no mechanism before me to ensure that the proposed dwelling would meet the definition of self-build and custom housebuilding from within the Self Build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015. As such, in the event I allowed the application it would be unlikely that the Council could consider the planning permission as a suitable permission to count towards addressing the demand for serviced plots. Consequently, I ascribe very limited weight to this as a benefit.
36. The proposed development would also be located close to a local centre where there are several services and facilities as well as a good provision of public transport. Therefore, the proposal would be in accordance with paragraphs 110 and 115 of the Framework. Interested parties have raised concerns with the provision of parking in the area. The proposed development does not include any off-street parking. There is no cogent evidence of parking stress in the area. Therefore, future occupants and their guests could safely park on the road. Moreover, the proposal would

provide increased opportunities for on-street parking through the removal of a dropped kerb. This would be a benefit of the proposal.

37. In accordance with paragraph 125 of the Framework, I give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and I ascribe substantial weight to the overall benefits of the proposal.
38. Nonetheless, for the reasons given above, the adverse impacts of granting planning permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole. The proposed development would therefore not benefit from the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Conclusion

39. The proposal would conflict with the development plan, when read as a whole, and the material considerations, including the presumption in favour of sustainable development, do not indicate that a decision should be made other than in accordance with the development plan. Therefore, the application should be dismissed, and planning permission should be refused.

J Hobbs

Inspector and Appointed Person

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 the Planning Inspectorate gave clear advice of the expectation and requirements for the submission of documents and information, ensured consultation responses were published in good time and gave clear deadlines for submissions and responses.
- 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 is final, which means there is no right to appeal. An application to the High Court under section 288(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 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>

Appendix 1 - Consultee responses

Bristol City Council – Local Planning Authority

Bristol City Council – Transport Development Management

Helen Short – Interested Party