



Decision Notice and Statement of Reasons

Site visit made on 9 March 2026

Decision by H Faulkner BSc (Hons) MSc PGCE MRTPI

A person appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 16 March 2026

Application Reference: S62A/2025/0148

Site address: The Landing (Ground Floor Café), 125 Redcliff Street, Bristol BS1 6HU

- 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 18 December 2025 is made by Skelton Developments (Nottingham) Limited and was validated on 14 January 2026.
 - The development proposed is for external alterations to ground floor entrance area, including the installation of a new shopfront and timber hand rails, and the raising of floor levels.
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Decision

1. Planning permission is granted for external alterations to ground floor entrance area, including the installation of a new shopfront and timber hand rails, and the raising of floor levels in accordance with the terms of the application dated 18 December 2025, subject to the conditions set out in the attached schedule.

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 have been designated for non-major applications since 6 March 2024. Although that designation ceased on the 27 January 2026, the Planning Inspectorate will proceed to determine all those applications which were received prior to that date.
3. Consultation was undertaken on 19 January 2026 which allowed for responses by 16 February 2026. No responses from interested parties were received. The statement from the Council makes reference to verbal responses from Urban Design and Pollution Control. Standing advice was also provided by Transport Development Management (TDM). I have taken account of all written representations in making my decision.
4. As the application site lies in the Redcliffe Conservation Area (the CA), I have had special regard to Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act).

5. The Council has confirmed that the proposal is not liable for the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), and I agree as the development constitutes minor development due to the floor space increase being below 100m² and therefore exempt from CIL as set out in the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations (2010) as amended.
6. On 16 December 2025 the Government published a consultation on changes to the National Planning Policy Framework, with an associated Written Ministerial Statement. The consultation period ran until 10 March 2026. It is not known what the final form of the revised Framework will take following the consultation exercise. The consultation document therefore carries very limited weight.

Main Issues

7. Having regard to the application, comments from interested parties, the Council's report, together with what I saw on site, the main issues for this application are:
 - whether the location of the development accords with the strategy set out in the development plan;
 - the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area, including the CA;
 - whether the proposed development incorporates sustainability benefits;
 - the effect of the proposed development on flood risk;
 - the effect of the development on the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring properties; and,
 - the effect of the use of the proposed development on highway safety.

Reasons

Location

8. The site lies within the city centre, in a commercial area, where there are a mix of uses including offices and cafes. Although currently vacant, the application site has most recently been in use as a café and the proposal seeks to infill the corner section of the building to increase the available internal floorspace, whilst maintaining the existing use class.
9. The increase in floor area of a commercial use in a city centre is consistent with Policy BCS2 of the Bristol Development Framework Core Strategy 2011 (the CS) which promotes the city centre as a location for retail and leisure development. Furthermore, the proposal is supported by Policy BCAP47 of the Bristol Central Area Plan (BCAP) which seeks development which maintains a range of services to meet local needs through the renewal of existing retail units and active ground floor uses.
10. Overall, the location of the site is therefore suitable for the proposed extension to the internal area of an existing use and complies with Policies BCS2 and BCAP47 in this regard.

Character and Appearance

11. The site lies within the city centre. It is part of the ground floor of a three-storey building. The building is constructed predominately of brick, consistent with other buildings in the area. The corner of the building is currently open and adjacent to this opening are large shopfront windows.

12. According to the Redcliffe Character Appraisal the significance of the CA is formed through the relationship of the area to the water and its associated history. The historic Victorian warehouses and Georgian terraces contribute to the areas character and significance. However, with the exception of the church opposite the site, buildings in the immediate vicinity are modern in design and construction. Features such as large areas of glazing form part of the characteristic of the surrounding buildings. The existing building is in keeping with the neighbouring buildings however it makes a limited contribution to the significance of the CA.
13. The proposed alterations relate to a modern building and do not increase the building's footprint. The installation of windows to enclose the corner and the style of the windows and detailing is sympathetic to the character of the building, and reflect the modern architecture and expanse of glazing both on the host building and on nearby buildings, as identified above. The external works to the ramp and handrail would also result in a minimal change to appearance. These changes would have a limited effect on the buildings overall appearance and would preserve the character and appearance of the CA and preserve its significance.
14. Accordingly, the proposal is in accordance with Policies BCS2, BCS21 and BCS22 of the CS and Policies DM26 and DM30 of the Local Plan and Policy BCAP31 of the BCAP which collectively seek to ensure the proposals preserve conservation areas, contribute to local character and distinctiveness and ensure that high quality urban design is delivered.

Sustainability

15. Policy BCS15 of the CS relates to delivering sustainable design and construction including, amongst other things, maximising energy efficiency and the use of low carbon energy. The proposal includes the provision of new windows and doors to improve insulation. The background information provided by the applicant also notes that sustainable materials will be incorporated into the design, as well as the reuse of some material where possible.
16. The proposals are minor in scale and the sustainability elements proposed are modest, however, within this context they would accord with Policy BCS15 of the CS providing suitable sustainability benefits.

Flood Risk

17. The site is located within Flood Zone 3 and therefore at risk of flooding. In this instance due to the scale of the development there is no requirement for the Sequential Test to be undertaken. The use of the building is not changing, and therefore whilst there is an increase in internal floor area there is no change in terms of the vulnerability of the use.
18. Paragraph 181 of the Framework states that where appropriate applications should be supported by a site-specific flood-risk assessment. No such assessment was provided with the application. However, based on the information provided the proposal is consistent with paragraph 181, the development does not affect the vulnerability of the site and is adequately resilient.
19. The proposed alterations are limited to the new windows and door along with minor changes to internal and external levels and the access. The raising of the internal floor levels would have some benefit in improving flood resilience. The proposals so not result in any significant change to sustainable drainage.

20. Given the limited nature of the proposed works, they would not increase the risk of flooding on or beyond the site. Furthermore, safe access and escape routes would not change.
21. Overall, the proposed development is acceptable in terms of flood risk and would comply with policy BCS16 of the CS.

Living Conditions

22. No change of use is proposed and the works would further enclose the corner of the building. The site is within a commercial area where uses such as a café are expected and appropriate. Furthermore, there has been no objection from the Council's Pollution Control team.
23. It is not, therefore, likely that the proposal would result in unacceptable harm to the living conditions of existing residents. It therefore complies with Policy DM30 of the LP which expects alterations to existing buildings to safeguard the amenity of neighbouring occupiers and Policy DM35 of the LP which only seeks to resist development if there would be unacceptable noise pollution.

Highway Safety

24. The proposals do not alter a vehicular access, as a result there would be no impact on the highway. The alterations to the entrance and the ramp would result in a minimal change to the existing access arrangement for pedestrians. The slope remains acceptable for wheelchair users and the additional handrails are a benefit.
25. Reference is made in the Council's Urban Design comments in respect of the necessity of the wooden handrail and whether these would comply with the TDM requirements. No objections were raised on this basis. There has also been no objection from the Council's TDM. The proposed wooden handrails are short sections at the lower end of the ramp. They do not impinge on vehicular or pedestrian movements and it is unclear where the concern arises. Other legislation, such as Building Regulations, may apply in terms of suitability for disabled access provision.
26. The proposal consequently complies with Policies DM29 and DM23 of the LP which, amongst other things, require development to not give rise to unacceptable traffic conditions and ensure safe and adequate access for all sections of the community.

Other Matters

Biodiversity Net Gain

27. The application form states the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) requirement does not apply because the proposed development would be subject to the de minimis exemption. The proposal would not impact a priority habitat, would impact less than 25m² of on-site habitat, and there are no hedgerows. The proposal is for the infilling of the corner of a building and works to existing hard landscaping. I therefore have no reason to disagree with the conclusion of the applicant. However, considering Article 24 of the Town and Country Planning (Section 62A Applications) (Procedure and Consequential Amendments) Order 2013 (as amended), I have included an informative in this Decision that refers to the relevant regulatory provisions in this regard.

Coal Related Risks

28. The Coal Authority provided comments on the application, stating that no documents were visible and requesting a re consultation. There is no evidence of any further comments being received.
29. The proposed works are minor in nature and would involve only very limited excavation for the change to the paving. Therefore, there would be no increased coal related risks.

The Planning Balance

30. 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. I have found that the proposal would preserve the character and appearance of the CA and does not give rise to harm in any other respect. Given the above, I find that the development would accord with the development plan. There are no material considerations that justify making a decision contrary to the development plan. I therefore conclude that planning permission should be granted subject to conditions.

Conditions

31. I have considered the planning conditions suggested by Bristol City Council. A condition requiring the development to be commenced within three years is required, as is a condition specifying the plans, for certainty. In order to ensure the materials are consistent with the rest of the building a matching materials condition is required.
32. The Council have suggested a condition in respect of illuminated signage. However, such signage would require advertisement consent and therefore I do not consider that a condition in this regard would be reasonable.

Conclusion

33. For these reasons, and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that planning permission should be granted.

H Faulkner

Inspector and Appointed Person

Schedule of Conditions

Conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.

Reason: As required by section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved drawings:

4817-AWW-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-02211-P02

4817-AWW-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-02212-P02

4817-AWW-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-02213-P02

4817-AWW-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-02214-P02

4817-AWW-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-02215-P02

4817-AWW-ZZ-ZZ-DR-A-02216-P02

Reason: To provide certainty.

3. All external materials, including brickwork, frames and glazing, shall match the existing building in colour, texture and appearance.

Reason: To ensure the development preserves the character and appearance of the Redcliffe Conservation Area, in accordance with Policies BCS21, BCS22 and DM30.

Informatives:

- i. In determining this application 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. With regard to Biodiversity Net Gain, the permission which has been granted is for development which is exempt being 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). Approval of a Biodiversity Gain Plan will not be required before development commences.
- iii. 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, which means there is no right to appeal. 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 within 6 weeks of the date of the decision
- iv. 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>
- v. Responsibility for ensuring compliance with this Decision Notice rests with Bristol City Council, any applications related to the compliance with the conditions must be submitted to the Council.