

PLANNING STATEMENT

Incorporating

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT &

HERITAGE STATEMENT

Proposed Replacement Balcony and Spandrel Panel Finishes

At

Thomas Lane Apartments, Thomas Lane, Redcliffe, Bristol, BS1 6JT

On behalf of

THOMAS LANE APARTMENTS MANAGEMENT COMPANY LIMITED

Prepared by

3 Sixty Real Estate Ltd

May 2022

Introduction

This report has been commissioned by the applicant, Thomas Lane Apartments Management Company Limited. This report describes the application site and its relationship to its surroundings and demonstrates that the proposed development complies with the Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

The proposal is for the replacement of the existing timber balcony finishes with glass and metal alternatives and to replace the timber spandrel panels beneath the windows to aluminium with powder coated finish. This will have the two-fold benefit of enhancing the appearance of the property along with improving fire safety.

The site is located within the defined City Centre and the defined Redcliffe Conservation Area.

The proposals will not change the existing use of the site, nor alter existing operations; the changes are cosmetic.

This Planning Statement will describe the site and its surroundings, provide a brief history of the site, describe the development proposals, describe the relevant local and national planning policies, analyse the development against relevant planning policies, and draw some conclusions.

Location and Surrounding Area

The site comprises a mixed-use apartment block; a 6 storey building with pavilion roof over located on the corner at the junction of Thomas Lane with Redcliffe Street.

The application site provides a mixed use, with a commercial café use on the ground floor and residential uses (23 apartments) on the floors over. There are off-street car parking spaces provided at the front of the property.

There are a mix of land uses in the locale. In the surroundings are residential apartment blocks, offices, commercial uses and a courthouse.

Figure 1 & Figure 2 show aerial images of the application to show the building in its context.

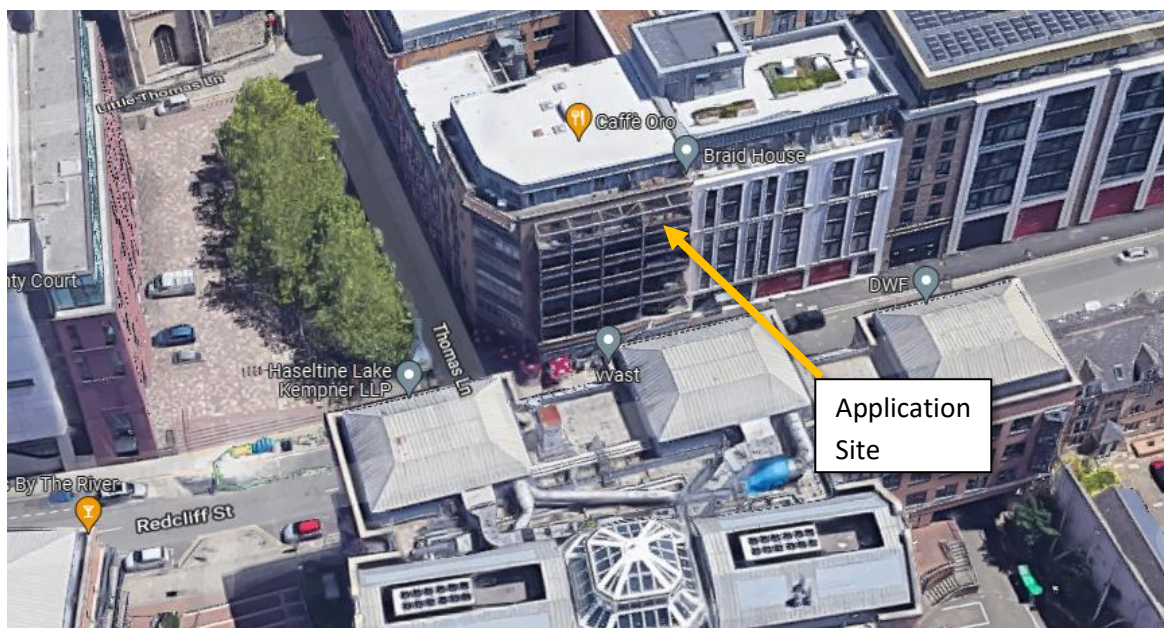


Figure 1 - Aerial Map of the Application Site Looking East



Figure 2 - Aerial map of the area surrounding the application site orientated north.

The Bristol Development Plan Proposals Map confirms the site is in the defined City Centre, the Bristol Central Area Plan, and the City Centre Neighbourhood of 'Redcliffe'. An extract from the Development Plan Proposals Map appears at **Figure 3**.

The site is not listed. It is within the Redcliffe Conservation Area. **Figure 4** shows its relationship to nearby listed buildings.

The site is in Flood Zone 3 (**Figure 5**).

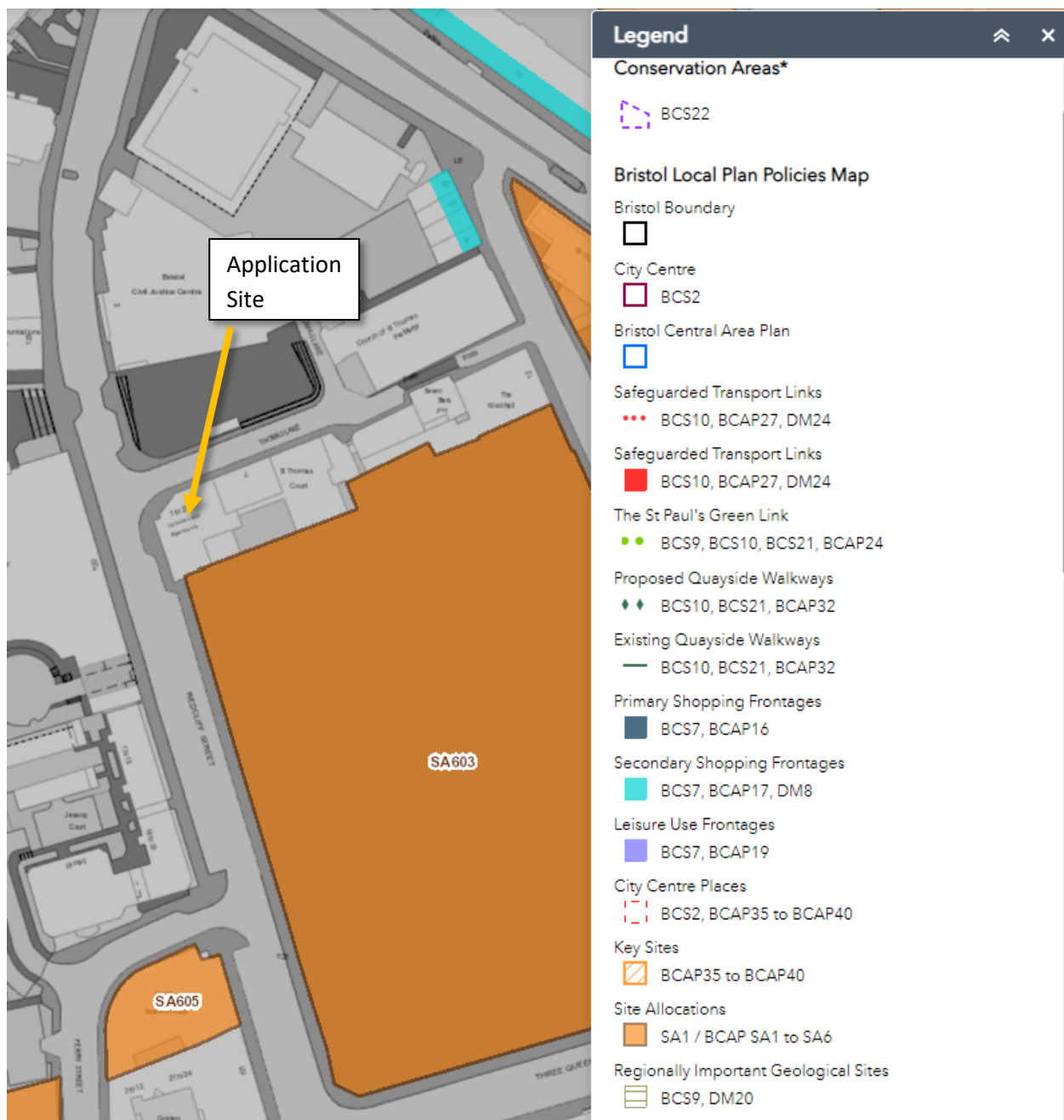


Figure 3 - Proposals Map Extract Showing Location of the Site in the context of planning designations and constraints.

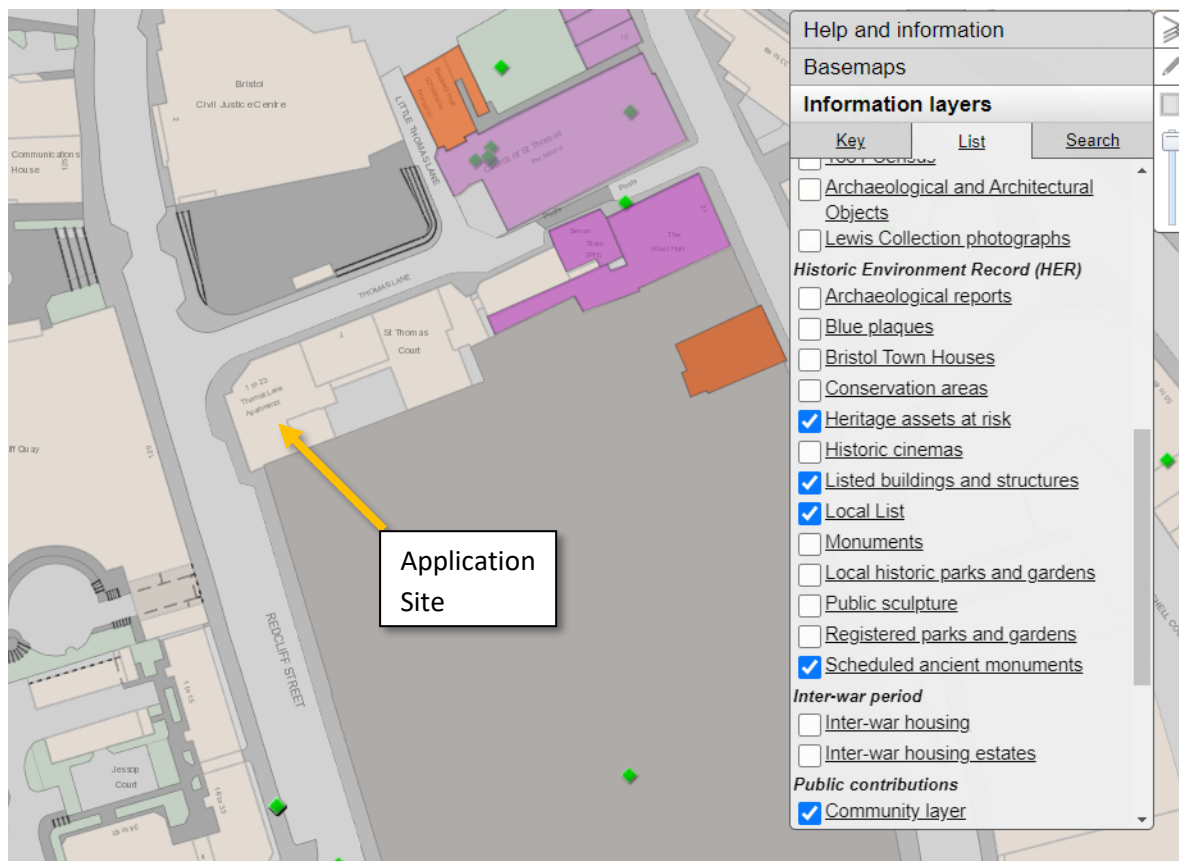


Figure 4 - The Application Site shown in the context of Listed buildings in the surroundings (highlighted purple).

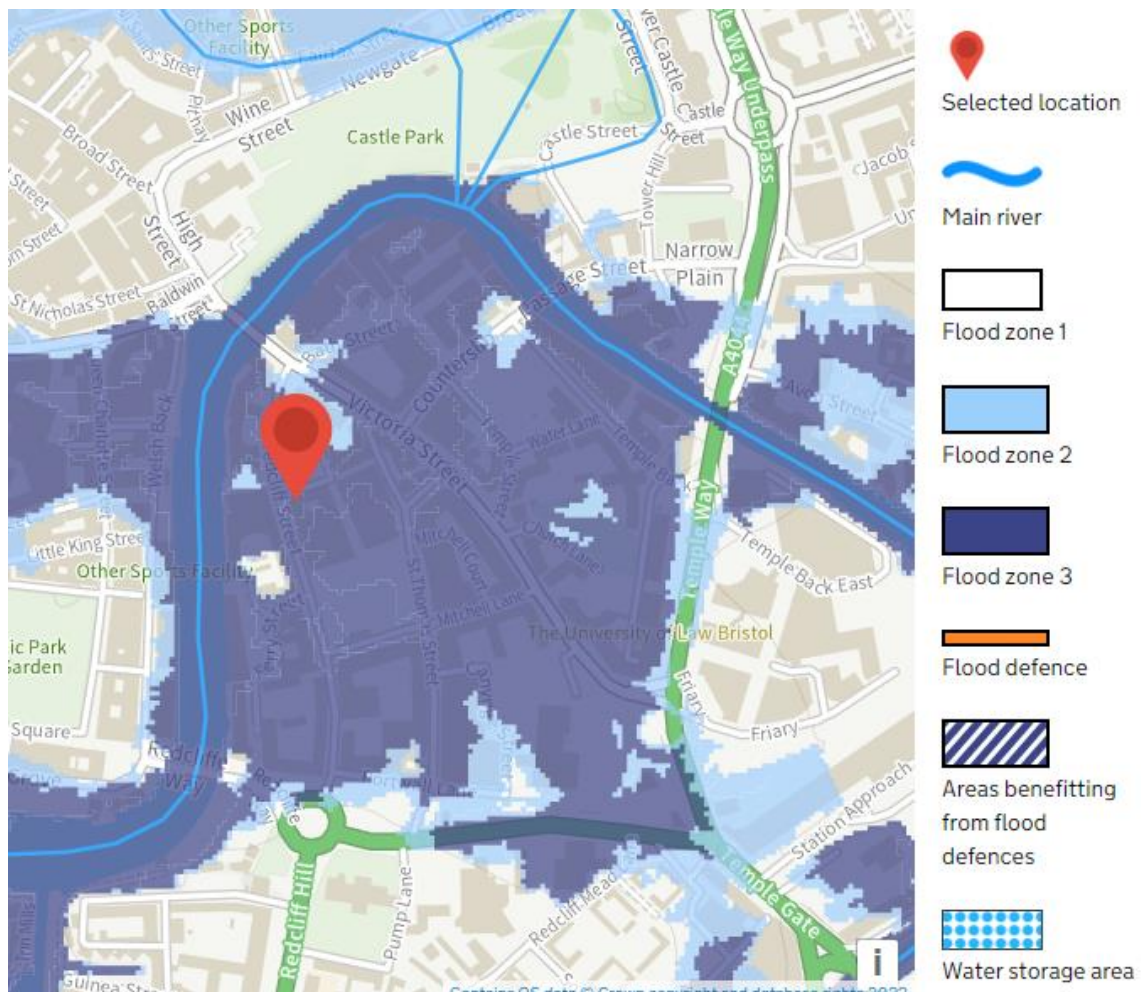


Figure 5 – Environment Agency Flood Map - Site location marked by red pin.

Planning History

The application site has limited planning history. Details of the most recent, relevant applications are included in the table below.

Reference	Description	Decision
08/03590/F	The retention of an Automated Teller Machine.	Granted 16 Oct 2008
02/04001/F	Erection of 7 storey building and conversion and extension of Dunns Building to provide A1/A3/B1 uses and 23 residential flats, erection of 6 storey office building and conversion of Decimal House to office use, with associated car parking.	Granted 21 Aug 2003

There are further planning applications recorded for this site on Bristol City Council's online planning records from the late 1990s. They are not considered to be particularly relevant to the proposal, so are not rehearsed in the table above.

The Proposals

The proposals concern the replacement of the timber balcony finishes with glass and steel alternatives. Additionally, the timber spandrel panels are proposed to be replaced by grey powder coated aluminium panels

The description of the development is as follows:

“Proposed development to replace existing timber balcony finishes with glass and metal alternatives and to replace the existing timber spandrel panels with powder-coated aluminium alternatives.”

An image of the existing west elevation appears below.



Figure 6 - Image of the west elevation showing the existing balcony finishes, with close-up view in the righthand image.

Unscaled plan extracts of the existing and proposed elevations of the main elevations fronting the highway are included below at **Figure 7 & Figure 8**.



Figure 7 – Existing Elevations (NTS).



Figure 8 - Proposed Elevations (NTS)

Planning Policy

Section 38 (6) of the Planning & Compensation Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The Bristol City Council's Development Plan comprises the following documents:

- Core Strategy (Adopted June 2011)
- Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Local Plan (Adopted July 2014)
- Bristol Central Area Plan (Adopted March 2015)
- Neighbourhood Plans (where relevant)

The development plan also includes non-statutory, Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs).

The relevant development plan policy is set out below.

LOCAL POLICY

Core Strategy (Adopted June 2011)

Policy BCS2 – Bristol City Centre

Bristol City Centre's role as a regional focus will be promoted and strengthened. Development will include mixed uses for offices, residential, retail, leisure, tourism, entertainment and arts and cultural facilities. The city centre boundary will expand into:

- The St. Philip's area, north of the Feeder Canal;
- The Newfoundland Street area; and
- The former diesel depot site, Bath Road

Development up to 2026 will include:

- Around 150,000m² of net additional high quality office floorspace;
- The provision of around 7,400 new homes; and
- Improved transport systems and connectivity, including new public transport, pedestrian and cycling routes and transport hubs.

There will be a continuing consolidation and expansion on the University of Bristol and Bristol Royal Infirmary sites.

More efficient use of land and a greater mix of uses will be encouraged particularly within the Broadmead, Nelson Street and St James' Barton areas. Throughout the city centre higher density, mixed use development will be encouraged with active ground floor uses along the busier streets. Continued improvement will be promoted in regeneration areas including Redcliffe and Harbourside and at city centre gateways including Old Market, Stokes Croft, Cumberland Basin and Temple Meads. The Floating Harbour will be maintained as a location

for maritime industries and water related recreation activities. Design of development will be expected to be of the highest standard in terms of appearance, function, conservation of heritage assets, sustainability and maintaining and enhancing green infrastructure. Key views will be protected. Street design will give priority to pedestrian access, cycling and public transport. New development should include measures to secure public access and routes for walking, cycling and public transport, including access to waterfront areas. Major developments should demonstrate measures to enhance social inclusion and community cohesion, especially in respect of those communities close to the city centre. Opportunities will be taken to reduce the severance of parts of the city centre from neighbouring communities caused by major roads and other physical barriers. Facilities and services, including those of a small scale, which contribute to the diversity and vitality of the city centre will be encouraged and retained.

Policy BCS13, BCS14, & BCS15

Policies BCS13, BCS14 and BCS15 govern the use of renewable energy technologies within a development.

Policy BCS16

Development in Bristol will follow a sequential approach to flood risk management, giving priority to the development of sites with the lowest risk of flooding. The development of sites with a sequentially greater risk of flooding will be considered where essential for regeneration or where necessary to meet the development requirements of the city.

Development in areas at risk of flooding will be expected to:

- *be resilient to flooding through design and layout, and/or*
- *incorporate sensitively designed mitigation measures, which may take the form of on-site flood defence works and/or a contribution towards or a commitment to undertake such off-site measures as may be necessary,*

In order to ensure that the development remains safe from flooding over its lifetime.

All development will also be expected to incorporate water management measures to reduce surface water run-off and ensure that it does not increase flood risks elsewhere. This should include the use of sustainable drainage systems (SUDS)

Policy BCS18 – Housing Type

All new residential development should maintain, provide or contribute to a mix of housing tenures, types and sizes to help support the creation of mixed, balanced and inclusive communities.

- *To achieve an appropriate tenure, type and size mix the development should aim to:*
- *Address affordable housing need and housing demand;*
- *Contribute to the diversity of housing in the local area and help to redress any housing imbalance that exists;*
- *Respond to the requirements of a changing population;*
- ***Employ imaginative design solutions [author emphasis].***

Residential developments should provide sufficient space for everyday activities and to enable flexibility and adaptability by meeting appropriate space standards.

Policy BCS21 – Quality Urban Design

New development in Bristol should deliver high quality urban design. Development in Bristol will be expected to:

- *Contribute positively to an area's character and identity, creating or reinforcing local distinctiveness.*
- *Promote accessibility and permeability by creating places that connect with each other and are easy to move through.*
- *Promote legibility through the provision of recognisable and understandable places, routes, intersections and points of reference.*
- *Deliver a coherently structured, integrated and efficient built form that clearly defines public and private space.*
- *Deliver a safe, healthy, attractive, usable, durable and well-managed built environment comprising high quality inclusive buildings and spaces that integrate green infrastructure.*
- *Create a multi-functional, lively and well-maintained public realm that integrates different modes of transport, parking and servicing.*
- *Enable the delivery of permanent and temporary public art.*
- *Safeguard the amenity of existing development and create a high-quality environment for future occupiers.*
- *Promote diversity and choice through the delivery of a balanced mix of compatible buildings and uses.*
- *Create buildings and spaces that are adaptable to changing social, technological, economic and environmental conditions.*
- *To demonstrate the delivery of high quality urban design, major development proposals with a residential component should be assessed against 'Building For Life' (or equivalent methodology). As a guide, development should aim to achieve the standards set out in the table below.*

BCS22 – Conservation and the Historic Environment

Development proposals will 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;
- Archaeological remains.

Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Local Plan (Adopted July 2014)

Policy DM26 – Local Character and Distinctiveness

General Principles

The design of development proposals will be expected to contribute towards local character and distinctiveness by:

- i. Responding appropriately to and incorporating existing land forms, green infrastructure assets and historic assets and features; and*
- ii. Respecting, building upon or restoring the local pattern and grain of development, including the historical development of the area; and*
- iii. Responding appropriately to local patterns of movement and the scale, character and function of streets and public spaces; and*
- iv. Retaining, enhancing and creating important views into, out of and through the site; and*
- v. Making appropriate use of landmarks and focal features, and preserving or enhancing the setting of existing landmarks and focal features; and*
- vi. Responding appropriately to the height, scale, massing, shape, form and proportion of existing buildings, building lines and set-backs from the street, skylines and roofscapes; and*
- vii. Reflecting locally characteristic architectural styles, rhythms, patterns, features and, themes taking account of their scale and proportion; and*
- viii. Reflecting the predominant materials, colours, textures, landscape treatments and boundary treatments in the area.*

Development will not be permitted where it would be harmful to local character and distinctiveness or where it would fail to take the opportunities available to improve the character and quality of the area and the way it functions.

Development should retain existing buildings and structures that contribute positively to local character and distinctiveness. Where the loss of an existing building or structure is acceptable due to the wider planning benefits of a development proposal, opportunities should be sought to reuse any materials that contribute to local character and distinctiveness.

Specific Development Types

Infill development will be expected to have regard to the prevailing character and quality of the surrounding townscape. The higher the quality of the building group and the more unified the character of the townscape, the greater the need to reproduce the existing pattern, form and design of existing development. Infill developments on return frontages should be compatible with the open

character of corner sites and be subservient in height, scale and massing to the primary frontage building.

Backland development will be expected to be subservient in height, scale, mass and form to the surrounding frontage buildings. It should not prejudice the opportunity to develop the adjoining land of similar potential nor should the proposed access arrangements cause adverse impacts to the character and appearance, safety or amenity of the existing frontage development.

In forms of existing development that relate poorly to the surrounding development or lack a coherent and integrated built form, development will be expected to take reasonable opportunities to improve the area's character, enclosure, permeability, public realm and appearance and better integrate the area with its surroundings.

Policy DM27 – Layout and Form

The layout, form, pattern and arrangement of streets, open spaces, development blocks, buildings and landscapes should contribute to the creation of quality urban design and healthy, safe and sustainable places. It should make efficient use of land, provide inclusive access and take account of local climatic conditions.

Proposals should not prejudice the existing and future development potential of adjoining sites or the potential for the area to achieve a coherent, interconnected and integrated built form. Where such potential may reasonably exist, including on sites with different use or ownership, development will be expected to either progress with a comprehensive scheme or, by means of its layout and form, enable a co-ordinated approach to be adopted towards the development of those sites in the future.

Streets and Spaces

Development will be expected to:

- i. Create or contribute towards a simple, well-defined and inter-connected network of streets and spaces that allows for convenient access to a choice of movement modes and routes, as appropriate to the size of the development and grain of the surroundings, without compromising the security of the development; and*
- ii. Provide direct, clear, safe and attractive links to existing routes, local and wider services, amenities and facilities including public transport; and*
- iii. Ensure that the layout, scale and enclosure of streets and spaces are appropriate to their function, character, capacity, hierarchy and local climatic conditions; and*
- iv. Incorporate existing and new green infrastructure to reinforce the character of streets and spaces.*

Opportunities for new street linkages will be sought where the existing permeability of the area is poor, desire lines exist or where historic routes can be reinstated.

Blocks and Plots

The layout and form of development, including the size, shape, form and configuration of blocks and plots, will be expected to:

- i. Achieve continuity of development edge that encloses and clearly defines the public realm whilst physically securing the private realm; and*
- ii. Create distinct public fronts and private backs with clear and obvious ownership and responsibility for external spaces provided; and*
- iii. Enable active frontages to the public realm and natural surveillance over all publicly accessible spaces; and*
- iv. Establish a coherent and consistent building line and setback that relate to the street alignment; and*
- v. Respond appropriately to local climatic conditions including solar orientation and prevailing winds to maximise the opportunities for energy efficient design, renewable energy generation and access to sunlight within the development, while minimising the negative effects of wind including wind turbulence and funnelling; and*
- vi. Enable existing and proposed development to achieve appropriate levels of privacy, outlook and daylight; and*
- vii. Be flexible to accommodate alternative but appropriate building types, plot types and uses which could adapt or change independently over time, taking into account the possibility for future extension; and*
- viii. Enable the provision of adequate appropriate and usable private or communal amenity space, defensible space, parking and servicing where necessary.*

Height, Scale and Massing

The height, scale and massing of development should be appropriate to the immediate context, site constraints, character of adjoining streets and spaces, the setting, public function and/or importance of the proposed development and the location within the townscape. Design solutions should optimise adaptability and energy efficiency and promote health and wellbeing.

Landscape Design

Through high quality landscape design, development will be expected to contribute to a sense of place with safe and usable outdoor spaces which are planned as an integral part of the development and respond to and reinforce the character of the context within which it is to be set.

In contributing to green infrastructure, design should incorporate valuable existing natural and manmade landscape features, while reinforcing it with new structural tree planting where appropriate.

Proposals for the landscape design and planting of development will be expected to:

- i. Take account of the function, circulation and servicing of places and site constraints including underground services; and*
- ii. Use trees and other plants appropriate to the character of the site and its context, including native trees; and*
- iii. Allow sufficient space for safeguarding valuable existing vegetation and the healthy establishment of trees and other planting; and*
- iv. Integrate sustainable urban drainage systems; and*
- v. Incorporate hard detailing and materials and planting appropriate to context and fit for purpose, for all elements including surfacing, change of level, boundary treatments, and site furniture; and*
- vi. Accommodate capacity for local food growing where possible.*

Servicing and Management

Development should be designed taking into account the needs and practicalities of servicing and long term management of public or shared private spaces and facilities including communal and landscaped areas and deliver a secure, supportive, safe environment for users that helps to foster a sense of community and minimise the opportunities for crime.

Development that would create new public realm and/or shared private spaces and facilities should be managed in accordance with an agreed Ownership and Management Plan which should include the upkeep and the long-term maintenance of shared private spaces and facilities including landscaped areas and external boundaries.

Policy DM30 – Alterations to Existing Buildings

Extensions and alterations to existing buildings will be expected to:

- i. 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; and*
- ii. Retain and/or reinstate traditional or distinctive architectural features and fabric; and*
- iii. Safeguard the amenity of the host premises and neighbouring occupiers; and*
- iv. Leave sufficient usable external private space for the occupiers of the building.*

Extensions should be physically and visually subservient to the host building, including its roof form, and not dominate it by virtue of their siting and scale.

The principles set out in policy DM29 will apply where development proposals involve new or altered shopfronts, external signage and/or external installations and security measures.

Proposals that would sensitively adapt existing buildings to alternative uses as an alternative to demolition will be supported. Proposals that would retrofit existing buildings with sustainability measures will also be encouraged subject to an assessment against the above criteria

General principles

Development that has an impact upon a heritage asset will be expected to conserve and, where appropriate, enhance the asset or its setting.

- *Archaeology:*
Scheduled monuments and other non-designated archaeological sites of equivalent importance should be preserved in situ. In those cases where this is not justifiable or feasible, provision should be made for excavation and record with an appropriate assessment and evaluation. The appropriate publication/curation of findings will be expected.
- *Listed Buildings:*
Alterations, extensions or changes of use to listed buildings, or development in their vicinity, will be expected to have no adverse impact on those elements which contribute to their special architectural or historic interest, including their settings.
- *Conservation Areas:* *Development within or which would affect the setting of a conservation area will be expected to preserve or, where appropriate, enhance those elements which contribute to their special character or appearance.*
- *Registered Historic Parks and Gardens:*
- *Development will be expected to have no adverse impact on the design, character, appearance or settings of registered historic parks and gardens and to safeguard those features which form an integral part of their character and appearance.*
- *Locally important heritage assets:*
Proposals affecting locally important heritage assets should ensure they are conserved having regard to their significance and the degree of any harm or loss of significance.

Understanding the asset Development proposals that would affect heritage assets will be expected to demonstrate, by a thorough understanding of the significance of the asset, how any change proposed would conserve and, where appropriate, enhance that significance.

Conserving heritage assets

Where a proposal would affect the significance of a heritage asset, including a locally listed heritage asset, or its wider historic setting, the applicant will be expected to:

- i. Demonstrate that all reasonable efforts have been made to sustain the existing use, find new uses, or mitigate the extent of the harm to the significance of the asset; and*
 - ii. Demonstrate that the works proposed are the minimum required to secure the long term use of the asset; and*
 - iii. Demonstrate how those features of a heritage asset that contribute to its historical, archaeological, social, artistic or architectural interest will be retained; and*
- i. Demonstrate how the local character of the area will be respected.*

Recording the asset

Where a proposal would result in the partial or total loss of a heritage asset or its setting, the applicant will be required to:

- i. *Instigate a programme of recording of that asset; and*
- ii. *Ensure the publication of that record in an appropriate form.*

Energy efficiency measures and renewables

The installation of energy efficiency measures and micro-renewables in historic buildings (including listed buildings) and in conservation areas will be permitted, provided that the works are the minimum required to achieve the energy efficiency improvements and do not conflict with the general principles described above, prioritising low-impact measures over invasive measures.

Bristol Central Area Plan (Adopted March 2015)

Policy BCAP47: The Approach to Redcliffe

Development will be expected to preserve, enhance and, where appropriate, reinstate Old City's historic character, particularly in its scale and massing, grain and the choice of materials used, and should contribute where appropriate to the reinstatement of historic routes through the area.

OTHER RELEVANT PUBLICATIONS

The City Centre Framework – June 2020

The role of the framework is to set out proposals to improve movement, public realm and the approach to regeneration and development in Bristol city centre. It will assist in informing investment decisions by property/landowners and funding organisations.

Urban Living SPD – Nov 2018

The Urban Living Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) adds further guidance to the policies contained within the Bristol Local Plan. The Urban Living SPD will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

Redcliffe Conservation Area Character Appraisal (June 2008)

Conservation area character appraisals help developers/residents and other stakeholders to understand the history of an area and why it is special. They help shape future developments and planning policies, as well as giving residents an idea of what enhancements could be made.

NATIONAL POLICY

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Para 10 of the NPPF states that '*So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way,*

Para 126 of the NPPF states that 'The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and

how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the process.'

Para 159 states *"Inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk (whether existing or future). Where development is necessary in such areas, the development should be made safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere."*

Para 194 states, *"In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation."*

Paragraph 197 of the NPPF states that *"In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:*

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
- b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and*
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness."*

Para 199 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."*

Para 201 states that *"Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:*

- a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and*
- b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and*
- c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and*
- d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use."*

Para 202 states that *“Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.”*

Para 206 that *“Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.”*

Development Impact (Planning Analysis)

Is the proposal acceptable in principle?

The existing use of the building is for residential use with commercial uses on the ground floor. The proposed development will do nothing to alter this established use. The proposals instead concern external alterations to the main building.

The Bristol Local Plan contains policies that govern external alterations to existing buildings (which will be analysed in more detail below).

The principal reason for the proposed development is to improve fire safety by replacement of combustible materials with safer alternatives. This is in line with the current thrust of policy makers at the HSE and also the adopted Bristol City Council Urban Living SPD that sets out policy requirements to prioritise fire safety at the beginning of a project and with a recommendation for *“Considering issues of fire safety at the outset,...”*.

As such, there is policy support in principle for the proposed alterations, subject to further scrutiny.

Do the proposals Constitute Sustainable Development?

Paragraph 8 of the NPPF states that there are three overarching objectives to achieving sustainable development; economic, social and environmental. The development is assessed against each of these objectives below:

An Economic Objective

The development will introduce replacement balconies and spandrel panels. These proposed features are more robust than the existing, thereby reducing the maintenance of the building in the long-term.

A Social Objective

The improvements to the features of the building will enhance its visual relationship with the locale, by blending with the other apartment blocks in the vicinity. Introducing features that improve long-term upkeep of the building will help ensure the quality of the accommodation is upheld.

An Environmental Objective

Improving the robustness and fire safety of the building will improve its lifespan and help its green credentials.

The development is therefore considered to adhere to the three objectives of sustainable development as set out in the NPPF, and paragraph 10 of the NPPF confirms that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which applies in this case.

Will the proposal preserve the character of the nearby Conservation Area?

Please see Heritage Statement below.

Will the development provide enough car parking, and will it adversely affect the local highway network?

The proposed development will not alter the number or split of the existing residential units or alter the ground floor commercial space. As such, there are no requirements to adjust any of the existing parking arrangements.

Consequently, the proposals would comply with Policy DM23 and the NPPF regarding highways impact.

Is the design of the proposal acceptable?

The finish of the existing timber balconies and timber spandrel panels are unusual within the surrounding area, with nearly all nearby building sporting glass and metal balustrades and frames for the windows and doors. Below are some photographs of these nearby buildings along Redcliffe Street and one from St Thomas Street.



View of Redcliffe Street looking north. Note the window and balcony finishes.



View of building on Redcliffe Street. Note the balcony and spandrel panel finishes.



View of building on Redcliffe Street. Note the balcony and spandrel panel finishes.



View of building on Redcliffe Street. Note the balcony and spandrel panel finishes.



View of building on Redcliffe Street to the south of the application building. Note the balcony and spandrel panel finishes.



View of new building on St Thomas Street. Note the balcony and spandrel panel finishes.

The proposed change will serve to subtly modernise the aesthetic of the building by introducing a finish more in keeping with that of the surrounding buildings, while improving the design quality of the host building.

As such, the scheme's design and materials are appropriate for the site and accord with development plan policies BCS5, BCS20, BCS21, DM26, DM27, DM30, and the pertinent policies within the NPPF.

Would the development be at adverse risk from flooding?

The application site is in Flood Zone 3, but the development does not alter or raised the flood risk at the site. All existing drainage systems would be retained and unaffected by the proposals.

Heritage Statement

The application site is located within the Redcliffe Conservation Area. The building is not subject to a listing.

Section 72 of the Planning (Listed buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 sets out the general duty as respects conservation areas in exercise of planning functions, stating:

“(1)In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, of any [functions under or by virtue of] any of the provisions mentioned in subsection (2), special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.”

The Bristol City Council Character Appraisal for Redcliffe defines the character and special interest of the Redcliffe Conservation Area, recognising that it is an area of great contrast. It states that the northern portion (within which the application site is located) is dominated by Victorian warehouses and 20th century buildings. This compares with the southern portion of the Conservation Area that has a more residential character, typified by the Georgian terraces along Redcliffe Parade.

The proposed development will make subtle changes to the host building that will only serve to improve its appearance and provide an aesthetic that is more in keeping with the other similar buildings in the vicinity.

The character of the building will not be changed by the proposed development because its use will not alter. The host building’s contribution to the Conservation Area will not be changed by the development and hence the proposals will not harm the character of the conservation area. To this end, the High Court has established that the test for ‘preserving’ a conservation area amounts to ‘doing no harm’ (EWHC 185, R (Forge Field Society) v Sevenoaks DC). The development is therefore considered to adhere to the pertinent heritage policies in the development plan and the NPPF.

For these reasons, the proposal accords with Policy DM31 and the NPPF.

Conclusion

The development proposes new balcony and spandrel panel finishes with the principal aim of improving fire safety. The by-product of this change will be to present a building that is more in keeping with its surroundings, with an improved visual quality and character.

The development would not affect any designated heritage assets, nor introduce any flood risk issues.

The use of the building would remain the same, and vehicular parking and access would not be altered.

The development should therefore be approved, and no material considerations suggest otherwise.