

BCS9 and trees.....by Bristol TreeForum. 10.4.14

(This note does not include TPO nor conservation area law)


This document describes the methodology which the TreeForum uses for comments on planning applications (full, outline and householder) when trees are or might be involved. The text in yellow are paragraphs from the Core Strategy policy BCS9. We wish to work with local planning groups wherever possible, are happy to have any mistakes pointed out and our goal is for Bristol to have more trees because its (we) going to need them. Discussions on trees are now best done at Pre-App (it used to be the last thing!) because the incentives are there to consider trees for their amenity and environmental value.

1. Wildlife corridor...NO, no, no!

The integrity and connectivity of the strategic green infrastructure network will be maintained, protected and enhanced. Opportunities to extend the coverage and connectivity of the existing strategic green infrastructure network should be taken.

2. Existing trees...trees are defined as green assets

Individual green assets should be retained wherever possible and integrated into new development. Loss of green infrastructure will only be acceptable where it is allowed for as part of an adopted Development Plan Document or is necessary, on balance, to achieve the policy aims of the Core Strategy. Appropriate mitigation of the lost green infrastructure assets will be required.

 Use BS5837 to assess “important trees” as per DM17, usually those graded A or B or old/veteran trees. THEN...try to incorporate as many as possible in the development. Discuss at Pre-App (ideally showing evidence of having considered different options).

Also includes trees that don't need to be removed but might not be sustainable long term alongside a new building e.g. blocking light into a house or bedroom (fails BCS21).

THEN...measure the diameter (DBH at 1.5m) of those trees that need to be felled to calculate the BTRS (Bristol Tree Replacement Standard – DM17). Roughly this is the diameter in cm divided by ten (max 8 replacements; so 60cm diameter = 6 replacements).

THEN....use landscape plan to see how many can be planted on site (sensibly) and for mitigation planting offsite pay the council a large sum (15 years commuted sum) to plant in a park or a street.

Sometimes this commuted sum can add to over £50k and so incentivises the applicant to retain more of the trees!! DM17 will replace NE3.

3. New trees (planting obligation)...

Development should incorporate new and/or enhanced green infrastructure of an appropriate type, standard and size. Where on-site provision of green infrastructure is not possible, contributions will be sought to make appropriate provision for green infrastructure off site.

Described in DM15 (also BCAP 22 watersides, BCAP 25 as many as possible GI features and BCAP 29 asking for green infrastructure in car parks).