# Plans for College House transformation into student accommodation approved



Plans have been confirmed for the transformation of College House in Bristol's city centre into student accommodation, following the approval from Bristol City Council on March 19. This redevelopment will see the upper four floors of the building repurposed to create 57 studio apartments aimed primarily at postgraduate or returning undergraduate students. The ground floor will retain the existing Tesco Express store and will not be included in the new accommodation plans.

College House, which overlooks College Green and is comprised of five storeys plus a basement, has largely been vacant and previously featured a planning application for 52 residential units. The new design will allocate between 15 to 20 square metres for each studio, including areas designated for living, studying, dining, and cooking, all with en-suite facilities. The project will also introduce three accessible studios and additional lobby space on each floor. Additionally, the basement is set to be converted to include storage, study areas, and a plant room.

Public reaction to the news of the new student flats has been mixed, with many readers engaging in discussions on the Bristol Post’s comments section. CharlesBridge expressed support for the innovative use of the currently disused space, stating, “Well, I'm sure we are all agreed that this shows an imaginative reinvention of the disused office.” Cheddar voiced a broader sentiment of reusing existing structures rather than demolishing them, emphasising the need for refurbishment.

Conversely, several residents raised concerns regarding the focus on student accommodation over affordable housing. One commenter, Jabbymisschief, pointed out that “Inner Bristol is designed for students and only students” and called for more affordable homes for local families. Other comments highlighted issues of council tax exemptions for student accommodations and questioned whether converting office spaces to student flats contributes to alleviating housing pressure for non-students.

In a separate planning development, two disused public toilet facilities in Bristol are also set to undergo conversions into eateries. A toilet on North Road in Redland, which has been derelict for over 25 years, is seeking permission for refurbishment to become a café or takeaway. The associated planning documents outlined the intention to transform the building’s external appearance and provide for customer service areas, kitchen facilities, and seating. The previously granted permission from 2014 for similar proposals was referenced as a basis for the new application.

Another public toilet on Westbury-on-Trym High Street, which was closed as part of a council cost-cutting measure in 2018, is proposed to be converted into a food outlet as well. Plans for this re-purposing also retain a large yew tree, subject to a tree preservation order, ensuring that the natural environment is considered alongside the development. Additional provisions for the site will include kitchen areas and customer facilities, allowing for community engagement.

Moreover, a planning application for a large house in multiple occupation (HMO) on Gloucester Road has been submitted, intending to expand an existing facility into a ten-bedroom accommodation. This proposal seeks to refurbish the property while retaining its ground-floor retail space, aiming to improve the overall appearance of the surrounding area with enhancements to the building's exterior.

All planning applications submitted to Bristol City Council are subject to public review and can be viewed via the council's planning portal, allowing residents to comment either in support or objection. As one of many proposals to shape the urban landscape of Bristol, these developments reflect ongoing efforts to adapt underutilised spaces for public and commercial benefit.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.bristol247.com/business/news-business/green-light-for-150m-purpose-built-student-accommodation/> - This article supports the general trend of student accommodation development in Bristol but does not directly corroborate the specific claims about College House.
* <https://www.unitegroup.com/articles/unite-students-to-build-600-bed-student-accommodation-at-temple-quarter-bristol> - This link provides additional context on student accommodation projects in Bristol but does not specifically address the College House development.
* <https://www.chapmantaylor.com/projects/avon-street-student-accommodation> - This source offers insights into other student accommodation projects in Bristol, highlighting efforts to repurpose spaces, though it doesn't directly address College House.
* <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/search-and-comment-on-planning-applications> - Although not directly mentioned, this link explains how Bristol City Council handles planning applications, supporting the process described in the article.
* <https://www.noahwire.com> - This is the original source for the article about College House and other developments in Bristol, though it doesn't provide additional external corroboration.
* <https://www.bristolpost.co.uk/news/bristol-news/bristol-planning-applications-latest-developments-8125173> - This link would potentially include discussions or news on Bristol developments, but specific stories about College House are not available in the search results.