

Appendix 1: Proposed Changes to Core Strategy Policy H6

The summer 2013 changes are shown as additions in **shade** and deletions in ~~double strikethrough~~. Pre-submission changes are incorporated but not highlighted.

Houses in Multiple Occupation, Student Accommodation, and Flat Conversions

5.2.19 Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) are an increasingly popular part of the housing market within Leeds. As rooms can be rented individually they provide affordable accommodation used primarily by students, young people and those on lower incomes. Whilst the need for this type of accommodation is not in dispute, HMOs tend to be grouped together in certain inner city areas, becoming the dominant type of housing which can lead to social and environmental problems for local communities.

5.2.20 According to figures published by Unipol, Leeds had 43,500 students in 2010/11 of which approximately 30,500 sought accommodation through the private rented sector. The City's Universities and specialist colleges are an important part of the Leeds economy, but significant growth in student numbers in the past has led to high concentrations of student housing in areas of Headingley, Hyde Park and Woodhouse. This generated concerns about loss of amenity to long term residents as well as wider concerns about the loss of housing suitable for families.

5.2.21 Leeds' SHMA 2010 suggests a levelling off in growth in student numbers in the early years of the Plan which raises question marks over the future of approximately 4000 surplus student bed-spaces. Demand for student accommodation is variable and is expected to fluctuate over the plan period. Although there is always expected to be a significant demand from many students wanting to live in shared private residential houses which are now classed as HMOs.

5.2.22 The SHMA 2010 anticipates growth in the need for HMOs in the early years of the Plan to accommodate young people reliant on housing benefit and because of strong demand for private rented accommodation from working people unable to buy. This could affect all areas of Leeds, but is likely to be focussed on the inner areas popular for rented property.

5.2.23 Changes of occupation of houses from dwelling-house (class C3 of the use class order) to small shared house (class C4) will require planning permission in the area affected by the HMO Article Four Direction. This includes all of inner Leeds and adjoining suburbs. Changes of occupation to large shared houses (sui generis) already require planning permission in every part of the city. The government has recognised that high concentrations of HMOs in an area can lead to the following impacts:

- Increased anti-social behaviour, noise and nuisance
- Imbalanced and unsustainable communities
- Negative Impacts on the physical environment and streetscape
- Pressures upon parking provision
- Increased crime
- Growth in the private sector at the expense of owner-occupation

- Pressure on local community facilities
- Restructuring of retail, commercial services and recreational facilities to suit the lifestyles of the predominant population.

5.2.24 Core Strategy policy needs to balance the need for growth in HMOs with the need to avoid high concentrations which cause loss of amenity and undermine the health and stability of communities. Ease of access to work and universities without needing a car also needs to be considered. New HMOs should be located in sustainable locations which allow ease of access to work and education by means of sustainable transport, whilst reducing the need to use the private car. Proposals for new HMOs should look to address detailed local amenity issues as discussed in paragraph 5.2.22, including local parking pressures and impacts on neighbours.

5.2.25 Leeds has a diverse housing stock ranging from large Victorian terraces to modern city centre flats. Some houses tend to be more suitable for families and when these are in areas with high concentrations of HMOs they should remain available for occupation by families. Factors to consider include the size of the dwelling, the amount of garden and private amenity space available, location of the property and any prolonged period of vacancy.

5.2.26 The decade period 2001 – 2010² witnessed considerable development of new purpose built student accommodation particularly in and around the north west sector of the City Centre. ~~Growth in this accommodation is to be welcomed in order to meet need and to deflect pressure away from private rented houses in areas of over concentration. Nevertheless, care is needed to ensure that purpose built accommodation does not itself become over concentrated and is located with good access to the universities.~~ By mid-2013 there was evidence that new purpose built student accommodation had re-balanced the market away from private rented sector provision but if this trend continued unabated it could lead to serious oversupply of purpose built accommodation. So as well as ensuring that new purpose built accommodation is of sufficient quality, does not become over concentrated and is located with good access to the universities, policy should also consider the need for new student accommodation. This will be measured by regard to:

- i) forecasts for future year student intakes of the Universities in Leeds
- ii) national forecasts for students attending university in future years
- iii) how much the national cohort of 16-19 year olds in England is set to increase or decrease and trends of the “age participation rate” for higher education
- iv) the amount of surplus student bedspaces in purpose built accommodation and private rented housing in Leeds accounting for quality and geographic location
- v) the amount of bedspaces permitted but incomplete in purpose built accommodation in Leeds

5.2.27 Conversion of houses into flats will be one of the means of meeting need for smaller households. However, this has to be reconciled with the importance of protecting local amenity and creating good standard dwellings with sufficient parking space and security. Factors to take into account when assessing sufficiency of parking include:

- The amount of parking available on and off site
- Existing parking pressures

The number of units proposed
'Deconversion' of previously converted flats back into dwelling houses is sometimes sought in order to cater for large families. This will usually be considered acceptable and, if involving only 2 units to 1, does not normally need planning permission.

POLICY H6: HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION (HMOs), STUDENT ACCOMMODATION, AND FLAT CONVERSIONS

A) Within the area of Leeds covered by the Article IV Direction for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs), Development proposals for new HMOs will be determined:

- i) To ensure that a sufficient supply of HMOs is maintained in Leeds,**
- ii) To ensure that HMOs are distributed in areas well connected to employment and educational destinations associated with HMO occupants,**
- iii) To avoid detrimental impacts through high concentrations of HMOs, which would undermine the balance and health of communities.**
- iv) To ensure that proposals for new HMOs address relevant amenity and parking concerns.**
- v) To avoid the loss of existing housing suitable for family occupation in areas of existing high concentrations of HMOs.**

B) Development proposals for purpose built student accommodation will be controlled:

- ~~i) To help extend the supply of student accommodation taking pressure off the need for private housing to be used,~~ accept new provision where a provider demonstrates that there is a need for additional student accommodation or that it has a formal accommodation agreement with a university/higher education institution for the supply of bed-spaces**
- ii) To avoid the loss of existing housing suitable for family occupation,**
- iii) To avoid excessive concentrations of student accommodation (in a single development or in combination with existing accommodation) which would undermine the balance and wellbeing of communities,**
- iv) To avoid locations which are not easily accessible to the Universities by foot or public transport or which would generate excessive footfall through residential areas which may lead to detrimental impacts on residential amenity.**
- v) To ensure new accommodation is of an appropriate quality and size in terms of environmental health standards**
- vi) To ensure new accommodation can be physically adapted for occupation by average sized households**

C) Development proposals for conversion of existing houses into flats will be accepted where all the following criteria apply:

- i) The property is not a back-to-back dwelling;**
- ii) The property is of sufficient size (min. 100m sq gross) and the internal layout is shown to be suitable for the number of units proposed;**
- iii) The impact on neighbouring dwellings is not likely to be detrimental to the amenity of their occupants by virtue of the conversion alone or cumulatively with a concentration of converted dwellings, HMOs, or residential institutions;**

- iv) Where there is a demand for family sized accommodation and the property has (or has the potential for provision of) good access to suitable space for private recreation, provision is normally made for at least one family sized unit in the proposed mix of flats;**
- v) Sufficient easily accessible and appropriately located off and on street car and cycle parking is incorporated;**
- vi) The proposed dwellings provide satisfactory internal living accommodation in terms of daylight, outlook and juxtaposition of living rooms and bedrooms;**
- vii) Each dwelling has safe and secure (and where possible, level) access from the street and any parking areas and suitable accessible enclosures are provided for refuse storage.**

'Sufficiency of supply' of HMOs is to be measured with reference to the SHMA, Unipol Data, University Admission Forecasts and the effects of Housing Benefit rule changes