



Report of the Director of Environment & Neighbourhoods

Inner North West Area Committee

Date: 7th February 2008

Subject: Housing Strategy Report

Electoral Wards Affected:

Headingley
Hyde Park & Woodhouse
Kirkstall
Weetwood

Ward Members consulted
(referred to in report)

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

Council Function

Delegated Executive Function available for Call In

Delegated Executive Function not available for Call In Details set out in the report

Executive Summary

Demographic changes that have affected the communities comprising the Area of Housing Mix require a strategic approach to restore a more balanced housing market and population mix.

This report provides an update on the work that has been ongoing on the development of a housing strategy for the Area of Housing Mix which aims to establish such an approach.

1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise Members of the Inner North West Area Committee of progress in formulating a housing strategy and the timetable for finalising the strategy and an accompanying action plan.

2.0 Background Information

- 2.1 Over the last 5 to 10 years there has been a substantial increase in the number of students coming to study in Leeds. There has also been a continuing preference amongst students to live close to the two Leeds universities and more widely in 'Leeds 6'. This has led to investment landlords purchasing existing residential properties to establish houses in multiple occupation, to house the increasing student population. There has also been a trend of parents of students buying houses to house their children, and more recently buy to let investors have also been active in buying former residential family homes for rental purposes.
- 2.2 The conditions described have led to a significant alteration to the demographic balance of the communities in 'Leeds 6' with students often outnumbering existing 'stable' residential households and increasing levels of instability and turnover. This imbalance was recognised by the adoption of an Area of Housing Mix in 2006, which aims to encourage accommodation of students and the development of purpose built student accommodation outside the area.
- 2.3 The development over recent years of a substantial supply of purpose-built accommodation for students in and around the city centre, has led to a movement of many students (mostly first years) from shared housing in the Area of Housing Mix into the new purpose built blocks, leading to a substantial number of un-let shared homes. Bringing these homes back into residential use will be costly to purchasers and often difficult as they are located in areas of high student concentration.
- 2.4 House prices have increased substantially over recent years, restricting access for first time buyers and hindering opportunities for households to trade up within the area. Many residential households have moved out of the area with implications for local schools and other amenities.
- 2.5 Private rents have become unaffordable to non-sharing households, with young workers sharing becoming an increasing part of local housing demand. The supply of affordable rented housing has reduced and opportunities to access such housing diminished.
- 2.6 Action is now needed to address the various imbalances in the local housing markets in the Area of Housing Mix, to enable long term sustainability of those communities and the maintenance of a vibrant but diverse population.

3.0 Developing a Housing Strategy for the Area of Housing Mix

- 3.1 A group established by the Inner North West Area Committee has been working to establish a housing strategy and has engaged re'new to under take work to draft a strategy and action plan. The strategy will complement and link to the Strategy for Housing Students in Leeds and the Shared Housing Action Plan. A framework strategy has been draw up for consultation and this is attached as Appendix A.

3.2 A range of housing interventions will be needed with some variation between the various parts of the Area of Housing Mix. A draft matrix is attached as Appendix B and shows the range of potential actions, including:

- Seeking housing mix on new private housing developments;
- Seeking increased affordable housing provision through S106 agreements for rent or shared ownership;
- Seeking means to bring un-let properties back into use for rent or low cost home ownership;
- Establishing a Community Land Trust to facilitate community housing provision;
- Encouraging demand from new communities likely to want to settle in the area (such as refugees with leave to stay and migrant workers wanting to settle in the UK);
- Financial assistance to 'de-convert' family housing converted to use as a HMO;
- Loan assistance to housing improvement;
- Considering how to enable financial assistance to first time buyers; and
- Promotion of the Area of Housing Mix as a place to live and settle.

3.3 It is proposed that following input from the Area Committee and members of the Housing Strategy sub group, a first draft of the strategy will be produced by the end of February 2008. Further consultation will then ensue, with a final draft along with a draft action plan being produced by early April 2008.

4.0 Recommendations

4.1 The Area Committee is asked to note the contents of the report.

Appendix A: Housing Strategy for the Area of Housing Mix (Framework)

INTRODUCTION

- Background to changes in Leeds 6.
- Definition of area Area of Housing Mix (ie ASHORE expanded as recommended by the Lobby)
- Map of area and sub areas I have provided a Map to Area Management (copy available)
- [Get historical stuff from Richard Tyler]
- Brief description of issues at play and what is needed to be done
- Purpose of the strategy

BROAD AIMS

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Sustainable Communities Plan – aim at balance in communities; avoid concentration of housing tenures or of population types

Government Housing and Planning Policy including Housing Act 2004, Housing Green Paper: Homes for the Future, Regional Spatial Strategy and PPS3

Government Higher Education Policy – increasing numbers of young people going into higher education

Vision for Leeds – Going up a League, economic growth graduate retention and increased knowledge economy

Leeds Housing Strategy – housing of students as a component part along with trying to create and maintain balanced communities

- HMO licensing
- Affordable Housing
- Empty Property Strategy

Strategy for Housing Students in Leeds – contributory strategy to the Leeds Housing Strategy. Aims to achieve a balance between encouraging students and ensuring their safe accommodation and need to achieve a better balance between the student and residential populations

Local Planning policies – ASHORE and Area of Housing Mix, encouragement of purpose-built student accommodation (ie H15 and H15A; also, add LDF developments.

Shared Housing Group and Shared Housing Action Plan

ISSUES

Demographic Imbalance

- Increasing student numbers without any real planning of accommodation needs.
- Tenure balance – changes since 1981

- Concentrations of shared housing and changes in student population and shared housing - Universities unable to house 1st years and instead many lived in shared housing adding to already large numbers of returning students living in shared housing in Leeds 6 [Studentification]
- Purpose Built student housing – inside and outside Area of Housing Mix
- Impact of buy to let – commercial and by parents of students

Impacts of increasing tenure imbalance

- Schools
- Infrastructure/congestion
- Shops and resort economy
- Environment (development, waste)
- Crime and ASB
- Loss of social capital

Access to housing in Leeds 6

- Social housing stock – levels and reducing availability
- House prices and income levels needed to afford in different parts
- Entry level prices in different parts
- Scope for new development

Empty/unlet properties

- Extent of problems
- Numbers wholly empty and partially empty
- Landlord intentions?

PRIORITIES

A. Demand Side

1. *Rebalancing the community (new markets)*

a) Seeking to introduce more 'settled' households

- Families moving within or into the area trading up
- Asylum seekers and Migrant workers
- Young couples (family builders)
- Young professionals/workers (1st/2nd jobs)
- Graduates

b) Headingley Homes Manning Stainton's scheme

c) Encouraging dispersal of students to areas outside the Area of Housing Mix (see Strategy for Housing Students in Leeds)

2. *Assistance with Deconversion*

- a) Many unlet homes will have been converted either to make more bedrooms or to satisfy HMO licensing. People purchasing will face substantial deconversion costs.
- b) Seek funding to enable loans to secure de-conversion
- c) Consider using re'build/youthbuild trainees to do conversion work

3. *Housing Improvement*

- a) Decent Homes

- b) Assistance to homeowners
- c) Energy efficiency/affordable warmth

B. Supply Side

1. *Affordable housing provision*

- a) Land availability
- b) HRA land for development of affordable housing using Housing Corporation grant
- c) Using S106 agreements to secure affordable housing:
 - i. on-site; balance between social rented, shared equity and sub-market rent
 - ii. off-site; Gifting of street properties where appropriate for renting through housing association or sale under shared equity
- d) Headingley Homes - Improvement for sale or rent?

2. *Community Land Trust*

- a) Format and purpose
- b) Acquisition of assets
- c) Use of assets to fund further acquisition
- d) Refurbishment
- e) Renting
- f) Equity stakes

3. *Bringing empty homes back into use*

- a) Establish Empty Homes team/officer
- b) Identifying the scale and ownership of unlet properties and owners intentions
- c) Establish long term voids
- d) Establish options for using Housing Act 2004 powers
- e) Consider full council tax charge on empty homes
- f) Explore partnerships between landlords/owners and housing associations
- g) Acquisition for improvement and letting or sale under shared equity through Headingley Homes

C. Market Management

1. *HMO Licensing*

- a) Continuation of action (i.e. mandatory HMO licensing)
- b) Consideration of additional licensing to include all shared housing?

2. *Planning policies*

- a) Area of Housing Mix
- b) Change in Use Classes Order
- c) LDF policies (AAP, SPD [NDS, Affordable Housing])

3. *Housing/ Tenancy Management and Support and Neighbourhood Management*

- a) Manage tenants
- b) Seek to improve behaviour – community code
- c) Neighbourhood management issues (crime and grime)
- d) Controlling anti-social behaviour
- e) Environmental management (moving in and out times)

DELIVERY

- Shared Housing Group/SHAP
- Partnerships (private sector/housing associations/Headingley Homes)
- Headingley Development Trust
- West North West Homes
- Estate and Lettings Agents
- Private Landlords
- Housebuilders/developers

OUTPUTS/OUTCOMES

- A more balanced community
 - Tenure patterns closer to the Leeds average
 - Population mix closer to the Leeds average
 - A majority of homes to be in permanent occupancy
- Increased provision of affordable housing
 - More social rented homes
 - More homes available for sale as equity shares
- Fewer unlet or empty properties
- Better access for starter households to housing in Leeds 6
- Improved Management of PRS
 - Better management standards in the private rented sector
 - Less nuisance incidents from residents of shared housing
 - More accredited landlords
 - All HMOs liable for licensing to be licensed

Appendix B: Inner North West Leeds Housing Intervention Matrix

Map Code	Area	Housing Supply	Demand management	Housing and neighbourhood management
M	<i>Meanwood</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acquisition and refurbishment for equity share/rent under S106 agreements for sites in NW Leeds (HDT) Bringing empty properties back into use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encouraging movement into purpose built accommodation ??? Refurbishment (Loans) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Infrastructure? HMO Licensing
W1	<i>Woodhouse</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acquisition and refurbishment for equity share/rent under S106 agreements for sites in NW Leeds (HDT) Bringing empty properties back into use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encouragement of demand from refugees with permission to stay and migrant workers wishing to settle Homelessness leasing Shared housing for young workers Deconversion loans/grants? Refurbishment (Loans) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intensive Neighbourhood Management Operation Champion HMO Licensing
W3	<i>Little Woodhouse</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acquisition and refurbishment for equity share/rent under S106 agreements for sites in NW Leeds (HDT) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shared housing for young workers Deconversion loans/grants? Refurbishment (Loans) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Infrastructure Environmental management HMO Licensing
HP1	<i>Hyde Park</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acquisition and refurbishment for equity share/rent under S106 agreements for sites in NW Leeds (HDT) Leeds Girls High site – S106 agreement – on site/off site? Affordable housing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Equity share housing - Sub market rented housing Bringing empty properties back into use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encouragement of demand from refugees with permission to stay and migrant workers wishing to settle Homelessness leasing Shared housing for young workers Deconversion loans/grants? Refurbishment (Loans) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intensive Neighbourhood Management Operation Champion Environmental management HMO Licensing
HP2	<i>North Hyde Park</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leeds Girls High site – S106 agreement Affordable housing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Equity share housing - Sub market rented housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial assistance to 1st time buyers Deconversion loans/grants? Refurbishment (Loans) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental management HMO Licensing
H4	<i>Headingley Hill</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leeds Girls High site – S106 agreement Affordable housing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Equity share housing - Sub market rented housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demand management issues arising from LGHS site Deconversion loans/grants? Financial assistance to 1st time buyers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental management HMO Licensing

Map Code	Area	Housing Supply	Demand management	Housing and neighbourhood management
H3	<i>South Headingley</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leeds and Yorkshire - Valley ??? – S106 agreement - off-site Acquisition and refurbishment for equity share/rent under S106 agreements for sites in NW Leeds (HDT) Bringing empty properties back into use Financial assistance to 1st time buyers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encouragement of young families and young couples Encouragement of demand from refugees with permission to stay and migrant workers wishing to settle Homelessness leasing Self-contained and shared housing for young workers Financial assistance to 1st time buyers De-conversion grants/loans ?? Refurbishment (Loans) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intensive Neighbourhood Management Environmental management HMO Licensing
H1	<i>Central Headingley</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acquisition and refurbishment for equity share/rent under S106 agreements for sites in NW Leeds (HDT) Bringing empty properties back into use Financial assistance to 1st time buyers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encouragement of young families and young couples Encouragement of demand from refugees with permission to stay and migrant workers wishing to settle Homelessness leasing Self-contained and shared housing for young workers Financial assistance to 1st time buyers De-conversion grants/loans ?? Refurbishment (Loans) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intensive Neighbourhood Management Environmental management HMO Licensing
H2	<i>Far Headingley (including Becketts Park)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tetley Hall Site – S106 agreement – off site? Parklane- Baltimore Diner site – S106 – off-site? Headingley Campus halls of residence Acquisition and refurbishment for equity share/rent (HDT) Affordable housing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Equity share housing - Sub market rented housing Bringing empty properties back into use Financial assistance to 1st time buyers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encouragement of young families and young couples Self-contained and shared housing for young workers Financial assistance to 1st time buyers De-conversion grants/loans ?? Refurbishment (Loans) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental management HMO Licensing
MG	<i>Moor Grange</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tetley Hall Site – S106 agreement – off site? Parklane- Baltimore Diner site – S106 – off-site? Headingley Campus halls of residence Affordable housing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Equity share housing - Sub market rented housing Bringing empty properties back into use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decent Homes Improvements Encouragement of young families and young couples Self-contained and shared housing for young workers De-conversion grants/loans ?? Financial assistance to 1st time buyers Refurbishment (Loans) – ex council properties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental management HMO Licensing

Map Code	Area	Housing Supply	Demand management	Housing and neighbourhood management
WP	<i>West Park/Weetwood</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial assistance to 1st time buyers • Tetley Hall Site – S106 agreement – off site? • Affordable housing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Equity share housing - Sub market rented housing • Financial assistance to 1st time buyers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decent Homes Improvements • Financial assistance to 1st time buyers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental management • HMO Licensing
B2	<i>Burley Lodge</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquisition and refurbishment for equity share/rent under S106 agreements for sites in NW Leeds (HDT) • Bringing empty properties back into use • Parklane/Glassworks site? – off site provision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouragement of demand from refugees with permission to stay and migrant workers wishing to settle • Homelessness leasing • Self-contained and shared housing for young workers • Deconversion loans/grants? • Completion of Group repair in Burley Lodge • Financial assistance to 1st time buyers • Refurbishment (Loans) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intensive Neighbourhood Management • Environmental management • HMO Licensing
B1	<i>Burley</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquisition and refurbishment for equity share/rent under S106 agreements for sites in NW Leeds (HDT) • Bringing empty properties back into use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouragement of demand from refugees with permission to stay and migrant workers wishing to settle • Decent Homes improvements • Financial assistance to 1st time buyers • De-conversion grants/loans ?? • Refurbishment (Loans) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Streetscene • Environmental management • HMO Licensing
K	<i>Kirkstall</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kwiksave site – S106 agreement – on-site/off-site • Acquisition and refurbishment for equity share/rent under S106 agreements for sites in NW Leeds (HDT) • Affordable housing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Equity share housing - Sub market rented housing • Bringing empty properties back into use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • De-conversion grants/loans ?? • Decent Homes improvements • Refurbishment (Loans) • Financial assistance to 1st time buyers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Streetscene • Environmental management • HMO Licensing