

## **Policy CP21 Student Accommodation and Houses in Multiple Occupation**

To meet increasing accommodation demands from students and to create mixed, healthy and inclusive communities, the Council will support the provision of additional purpose built accommodation and actively manage the location of new Houses in Multiple Occupation. The Council will continue to work closely with the two universities and other education providers to achieve these goals.

### **i) Purpose Built Student Accommodation**

**A. The council will encourage the provision of purpose built accommodation to help meet the housing needs of the city's students. Proposals for new purpose built student accommodation will need to demonstrate that the following criteria have been addressed:**

- 1. Proposals should demonstrate that there will be no unacceptable impact upon residential amenity in the surrounding area through issues such as increased noise and disturbance;**
- 2. High density developments will be encouraged but only in locations where they are compatible with the existing townscape (see CP12 Urban Design);**
- 3. Sites should be located along sustainable transport corridors where accommodation is easily accessible to the university campuses or other educational establishments by walking, cycling and existing or proposed bus routes;**
- 4. Proposals should demonstrate that they would not lead to an unacceptable increase in on-street parking in the surrounding area;**
- 5. Proposals should be designed to be safe and secure for their occupants whilst respecting the character and permeability of the surrounding area;**
- 6. Schemes should demonstrate that they have entered into a formal agreement with one of the city's two Universities or other existing educational establishments within Brighton and Hove. The council will seek appropriate controls to ensure that approved schemes are occupied solely as student accommodation and managed effectively;**
- 7. Permanent purpose built student accommodation will not be supported on sites allocated for housing or with either an extant planning permission for residential development or sites identified as potential housing sites.<sup>256</sup>**

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<sup>256</sup> Sites identified as potential housing sites will include those identified in other City Plan policies and those listed in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment.

## **B) Strategic Allocations for Purpose Built Student Housing**

**In conjunction with the Universities and City College, the council will allocate the following sites for purpose-built student accommodation:**

- 1. Varley Halls, Coldean Lane, Brighton**
  - **Redevelopment of the remaining parts of the site wholly for student accommodation**
  - **150 bedspaces**
  
- 2. Preston Barracks and the University of Brighton, Lewes Road, Brighton (See DA3 Lewes Road Area)**
  - **Delivery of this site as part of a wider mixed use scheme**
  - **750 bedspaces<sup>257</sup>**
  
- 3. Pelham Street, Brighton (See DA4 New England Quarter and London Road Area)**
  - **Delivery of this site as part of a wider mixed use scheme**
  - **300 bedspaces**
  
- 4. Circus Street, Brighton (See DA5 Eastern Road and Edward Street Area)**
  - **Delivery of this site as part of a wider mixed use scheme**
  - **400 bedspaces**
  
- 5. East Slope and land adjoining to the east, University of Sussex, Brighton (See DA3 Lewes Road Area)**
  - **Redevelopment of existing accommodation and development of adjoining land for student accommodation providing a net increase over the existing 592 bedspaces in the East Slope Residences, subject to positive enhancement of the visual appearance of this part of the campus within the surrounding landscape**

### **ii) Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO's)**

**In order to support mixed and balanced communities and to ensure that a range of housing needs continue to be accommodated throughout the city, applications for new build HMO, and applications for the change of use to a Class C4 (Houses in multiple occupation) use, a mixed C3/C4 use or to a sui generis House in Multiple Occupation use (more than six people sharing) will not be permitted where:**

- **More than 10 per cent of dwellings within a radius of 50 metres of the application site are already in use as Class C4, mixed C3/C4 or other types of HMO in a sui generis use.**

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<sup>257</sup> Lewes Road (Preston Barracks and University of Brighton) Planning Brief – September 2011

## Supporting Text

4.228 The city's educational establishments and their students make an important contribution to the economic and cultural life of the city. There are approximately 35,200 students at the Universities of Brighton and Sussex, which includes 4,000 students from non EU countries<sup>258</sup>. Many students also attend other educational establishments, such as City College, the language schools and Brighton Institute of Modern Music. The Council will work with students and their education providers to ensure that the accommodation needs of the students are met in a sustainable way and that healthy and inclusive communities<sup>259</sup> are maintained and developed in the future.

4.229 Brighton & Hove City Council's 'Student Housing Strategy 2009-2014' identified a number of key issues associated with the large student population that need to be addressed in partnership with the city's two universities, other educational establishments, students, landlords and developers. The Strategy sets out several objectives, one of which is to promote and enable the appropriate development of purpose built student accommodation at suitable locations within the city. The council will continue to work closely with education providers to identify and seek to address the housing requirements of their students. Where appropriate, the council will liaise with partners, such as the police and health agencies, to address issues affecting the student population.

4.230 Over recent years the City Council has received an increasing number of speculative enquiries from developers regarding purpose built student accommodation. Assessing proposals for new purpose built accommodation against the above criteria will ensure that schemes are developed to a high standard and in appropriate locations which meet council, residents, students and educational institutions' priorities. In considering the effect of new development on residential amenity, this will include an assessment of the cumulative impact of other existing and proposed purpose-built student housing schemes close to the application site. When planning permission is granted for new student accommodation, a planning agreement or condition will be used to robustly secure that use.

4.231 Five sites are specifically allocated for new purpose built student accommodation. Redevelopment of part of the Varley Halls site by the University of Brighton is underway. Although proposals must address the significant constraints imposed by the site's sensitive location in terms of landscape, ecology and archaeology, further redevelopment will create 150 net additional bedspaces. The Lewes Road (Preston Barracks and University of Brighton) planning brief adopted in September 2011 sets out three possible development scenarios. Each scenario includes 750 student bedspaces, as part of the wider proposed mixed use development. In 2009, the City Council resolved to grant planning permission for a mixed use development at City

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<sup>258</sup> HESA 2011/12

<sup>259</sup> As stipulated in the National Planning Policy Framework

College's Pelham Street campus incorporating 300 bedspaces for students. That development did not proceed, but the City Council will work with City College and its partners to secure the redevelopment and improvement of the campus, including the provision of purpose built student accommodation. Circus Street is allocated for mixed use development, including 400 student bedspaces catering for the adjacent university site. Finally, the University of Sussex propose to redevelop their existing East Slope Residences and to develop adjoining land to the east. East Slope Residences currently has a significant negative impact upon views within the campus and upon the sensitive landscape setting. The setting includes the South Downs National Park and Stanmer historic park. The Council supports the principle of developing this land to allow the University to better meet accommodation demands, provided that the scheme significantly improves the visual appearance and setting of the campus and surrounding landscape.

4.232 The provision of additional bed spaces in purpose built student accommodation will also assist in encouraging students to choose managed accommodation over HMO's, which is particularly important for first year students.

4.233 The city has a high number of HMOs, partly as the supply of purpose-built accommodation has not matched the expansion of the student population and partly due to housing prices and availability within the city. The private sector has responded positively to the increasing demand for student housing and there has been a significant conversion of family housing to student occupied HMOs in many neighbourhoods. Another aim of the Student Housing Strategy is to support and enhance the quality and management of housing and residential environments within HMO dominated neighbourhoods.

4.234 In 2010 a new C4 use class for Houses in Multiple Occupation was created. The council already had concerns about the over-concentration of HMOs in certain parts of Brighton & Hove, as expressed through the Student Housing Strategy, and felt that these areas had the exceptional circumstances necessary to warrant an article 4 direction. An article 4 direction was subsequently made, meaning that planning permission is required for changes of use to small HMO (C4) uses in five of the city's electoral wards.

4.235 This policy will be used to control future changes of use to small (C4), mixed C3/C4 uses and large (sui generis) Houses in Multiple Occupation to address the potential impact of concentrations of HMOs upon their surroundings and to ensure that healthy and inclusive communities are maintained across the city.

4.236 To aid implementation of this policy, the Council will maintain a database of properties in HMO use. It will include properties in small HMO (C4) use, mixed C3/C4 uses and larger, sui generis HMO uses. The database will use a variety of information sources including planning records, details of HMOs licensed by the council and those properties identified as student housing through Council Tax records.

4.237 In assessing planning applications for new Houses in Multiple Occupation, a circle with a radius of 50 metres will be drawn from the centre point of the application site's front curtilage boundary. Residential properties partly or wholly within the circle will be checked to identify which are in HMO use (including C4, mixed C3/C4 or sui generis uses). Planning permission for the change of use will not be granted where more than 10 per cent of these neighbouring properties are already in HMO use. The assessment will include only residential properties and will exclude commercial uses, such as retail or office units.

4.238 The 10 per cent threshold contained in the policy above will be reviewed regularly to ensure that it continues to provide opportunities for a balance of household types. The baseline data of the current distribution of HMO's will be regularly kept up to date.