

# Purpose-built Student Accommodation and Shared Living

Supplementary Planning Document Consultation version (November 2021)





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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Purpose and Scope

The *Purpose-built student accommodation and shared living Supplementary Planning Document* (SPD) provides further guidance on the implementation of a range of existing and emerging Local Plan policies relevant to the development of purpose-built student accommodation and other forms of shared living accommodation but excluding Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs). Key policies include [DM2: Residential Sub-divisions, Shared and Specialist Housing](#) set out in the *Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Local Plan* (SADMP) and [BCAP4: Specialist student housing in Bristol City Centre](#) set out in the *Bristol Central Area Plan Local Plan* (BCAP). The SPD is also intended to support relevant policies set out in the new Local Plan. The policies aim to encourage balanced communities in Bristol by steering development towards suitable locations and by preventing harmful concentrations of this type of housing. The policies also expect development to contribute to the mix of uses in an area, to protect the residential amenity and character of areas and to achieve good standards of accommodation. Relevant extracts of the full policies and supporting text are set out in Appendix A.

The guidance provided in this SPD identifies situations where harmful concentrations of this form of development are likely to arise. These include areas where student bed space densities reach identified thresholds and where shared living accommodation intensifies shared housing concentrations. Where development does not result in harmful concentrations guidance is provided that supports a mixed use approach and the delivery of good standards of accommodation. Guidance is also provided on suitable locations for purpose-built student accommodation and how potential adverse impacts on communities arising from this form of development can be prevented. The SPD also identifies other important Local Plan policy requirements relating to climate change and biodiversity.

Guidance supporting Local Plan policies relevant to the development of HMOs is set out in the Council's [Managing the development of houses in multiple occupation SPD](#).

### 1.2 Status of the Document

The draft *Purpose-built student accommodation and shared living Supplementary Planning Document* (SPD) is being prepared in accordance with part 5 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

The document will be used alongside relevant Local Plan policies to determine all applications for purpose-built student accommodation and other forms of shared living accommodation excluding HMOs. It is expected that this SPD will also be used in conjunction with the new Local Plan once the Local Plan review has been completed. The document will constitute an important material consideration in the decision-making process.

A list of all existing Local Plan policies referred to in this SPD and their equivalent new Local Plan policies is set out at Appendix B.

All guidance documents referred to in this SPD include any subsequent additional or replacement guidance.

### 1.3 Purpose-built Student Accommodation in Bristol

Bristol is home to two major higher education institutions, the University of Bristol (UoB), with its main campus located within the city centre, and the University of the West of England (UWE), with its main campus located at Frenchay to the north of the city and within the adjoining authority of South Gloucestershire. A number of other higher education institutions are also located in the city.

The city's main institutions have seen significant growth in recent years. Student numbers at the University of Bristol and the University of the West of England have increased by almost 30% since 2001/2 with numbers in 2019/20 totalling some 58,000. The University of Bristol has projected further growth in student numbers until 2027/28. A major physical expansion of the university is also underway with a new Enterprise Campus due to open at Temple Quarter in 2025.

Student accommodation has traditionally been provided by universities in the form of halls of residence located on campus or at residential sites, and, by private landlords in the form of shared houses/flats or bedsits (Houses in Multiple Occupation - HMOs) located within existing residential areas. Whilst these forms of housing continue to meet student needs, the expansion in higher education has increasingly seen the development of purpose-built student accommodation (PBSA), mostly within the city centre. This has been delivered by private providers and let to students through the universities or directly by the provider. This form of development has helped to ease demand for accommodation and relieved pressure on the city's housing stock. Such development has also supported the renewal of parts of the city centre, enabling the re-use or re-development of redundant buildings. Student schemes have also increased levels of activity within areas and have brought additional vitality to areas in need of regeneration.

The growth in student numbers and the development of purpose-built student accommodation can also bring less positive effects. The expansion and concentration of such development can result in harm to surrounding areas. Impacts can include noise and disturbance caused by increased levels of activity surrounding such developments and problems relating to parking, waste and anti-social behaviour if developments are poorly managed. Concentrations of purpose-built student accommodation can also create imbalances in the type and tenure of housing supply within an area and a reduction in the mix of uses across an area affecting its character and function. The development of purpose-built student accommodation can also displace or inhibit other forms of housing from coming forward.

Since the year 2000 student bed space supply in Bristol has increased by 170% with bed space numbers in 2021 totalling some 14,000. The majority of accommodation has been delivered in the city centre, however the distribution of supply has created significant clusters in certain areas. These are located in and around St. James' Barton; Nelson Street and Lewins Mead; Park Street, St. George's Road and Frogmore Street and Corn Street and Baldwin Street. Some communities within and surrounding these areas have expressed concern over increasing concentrations of purpose-built student accommodation and the potential for damaging impacts should further development come forward.

### 1.4 Shared Living Accommodation in Bristol

New forms of purpose-built communal housing are now coming forward in a number of larger UK cities including Bristol. These shared living developments are similar in form and concept to purpose-built student accommodation and provide a modern alternative to the traditional shared house arrangement. Developments generally cater for a younger working age population and are popular

in central city and urban areas where housing costs are high. A number of developments have come forward in Bristol mostly within the city centre.

This form of accommodation can be more affordable and flexible and therefore suitable for younger people and other households that are not living as families. As well as reducing and sharing housing costs for individuals, communal living can also promote health benefits for occupiers enabling increased social interactions and helping individuals form relationships and networks within the shared living community.

Whilst shared living developments may meet specific housing needs in Bristol future supply should be carefully managed to prevent harmful effects and to ensure the quality of accommodation. In particular, the need for development should be balanced with the city's wider housing requirements and should not displace or inhibit the delivery of other forms of housing including affordable housing. Accommodation provided must also be good quality and comply with standards applied to most permanent new homes. Whilst the delivery of this form of accommodation in Bristol is relatively low scale, future unmanaged growth could have potentially damaging effects.

## 1.5 Policy Context

### National

To achieve sustainable development the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) expects the planning system to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities as a key social objective. This includes provision of a sufficient range of homes and a built environment that supports a community's social wellbeing. In particular, policies within the NPPF expect Local Plans to reflect the range of housing types and tenures needed by different groups in the community and to help achieve the creation of inclusive and safe places that promote social interaction and address identified wellbeing needs.

National planning practice guidance expects local planning authorities to plan for sufficient student accommodation and to engage with higher education establishments to understand accommodation requirements in their area. The guidance states that encouraging more dedicated student accommodation may provide low cost housing that takes pressure off the private rented sector and increases the overall housing stock. Local planning authorities are also encouraged to consider the needs of students alongside local residents before imposing caps or restrictions on students living outside university-provided accommodation.

National planning practice guidance identifies the use of tenure data from the Office for National Statistics to help understand the future need for private rented sector housing. The guidance also identifies changes in rent levels as an indicator of demand and specifies a number of evidence sources.

### Local

The Council's policies relating to purpose-built student accommodation and other forms of shared housing, housing type and community health and well-being are set out in the Bristol Local Plan and are consistent with National Planning Policy.

The management of purpose-built student accommodation and other shared housing development is covered by policy [DM2: Residential Sub-divisions, Shared and Specialist Housing](#) set out in the *Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Local Plan (SADMP)*. Further detail on the

management of purpose-built student accommodation within the city centre is covered by policy [BCAP4: Specialist student housing in Bristol City Centre](#) set out in the *Bristol Central Area Plan Local Plan (BCAP)*. Policy **DM2** provides an approach to addressing the impacts and issues that may result from these forms of development and aims to ensure that the residential amenity and character of an area is preserved and that harmful concentrations do not arise. The policy also expects development to provide a good standard of accommodation by meeting relevant requirements and standards set out in other development plan policies. The policy supports the development of purpose-built student accommodation in the city centre subject to further policy criteria provided in the *Bristol Central Area Plan*. Policy **BCAP4** expects the development of purpose-built student accommodation within the city centre to contribute to the diversity of uses within a local area. The policy also aims to ensure that harmful concentrations do not arise within any given area of the city centre. Relevant extracts of the full policies and supporting text are set out in Appendix A.

Also of relevance is *Core Strategy Local Plan* policy [BCS18: Housing Type](#) and *SADMP Local Plan* policy [DM14: The Health Impacts of Development](#). Policy **BCS18** ensures that all residential development maintains, provides or contributes to a mix of housing in an area to support mixed, balanced and inclusive communities. To achieve this development should address the city's housing requirements, including housing demand and affordable housing need where relevant, and contribute to the diversity of housing in an area helping to redress any housing imbalance that exists. Policy **DM14** ensures that all new development contributes to and does not result in unacceptable impacts on health and wellbeing. Development of purpose-built student accommodation or other forms of shared housing that are likely to result in harmful concentrations and or unacceptable health and wellbeing impacts on surrounding communities or future occupiers will be contrary to these policies.

Other Local Plan policies relevant to the development of purpose-built student accommodation and other forms of shared housing are set out in relevant sections of this document and are listed in full at Appendix B.

## 2. Purpose-built Student Accommodation

### Background

#### 2.1 What is Purpose-built Student Accommodation?

For the purposes of this SPD purpose-built student accommodation is defined as all forms of residential accommodation for use by students that provide a minimum of 10 bed spaces. The accommodation can either be purpose-built or created through the conversion of a building. Accommodation of less than 10 bed spaces is more likely to meet the definition of a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) under the Housing Act 2004. Guidance relating to the development of HMOs is set out in the Council's [Managing the development of houses in multiple occupation SPD](#).

Purpose-built student accommodation typically comprises cluster units and/or self-contained apartments with occupiers provided with a range of shared spaces and facilities. Cluster units are self-contained multi-occupancy apartments generally comprising individual private bedrooms and study spaces with communal kitchen(s) and social areas. Cluster units vary in size typically providing between 4 and 12 bed spaces. The specification of purpose-built student accommodation has changed and improved over the years. A wide range of accommodation now exists catering for different student needs.

#### 2.2 The Need for Purpose-built Student Accommodation

Student numbers at both of Bristol's universities totalled some 58,000 in 2019/20, 30,680 at the University of the West of England and 27,375 at the University of Bristol<sup>1</sup>. The University of the West of England have not identified significant planned growth in student numbers. The University of Bristol have projected further growth in student numbers to 2027/28. Not all students will require accommodation and many will not need to live in Bristol. It is estimated that 57% of total student numbers need accommodation within the city at any one time. In 2019/20 this accounted for some 33,000 students<sup>2</sup>.

Much of this accommodation requirement is provided through the private rented sector in the form of HMOs. However, a growing proportion is being provided as purpose-built student accommodation. This type of accommodation is sought by the universities alongside halls of residence to meet accommodation guarantees for first year students. Such accommodation is also increasingly sought by returning students<sup>3</sup> in place of more traditional shared house arrangements. Evidence provided by Bristol universities and the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) shows that the number and proportion of returning students resident in purpose-built accommodation has increased over recent years. The on-going provision of purpose-built student accommodation in appropriate locations will therefore help to ease accommodation demand from students in all years and help to relieve pressure on the city's housing stock.

Whilst the replacement of all types of student housing with purpose-built student accommodation is unrealistic and not desirable for many students, all future growth in student numbers should be met through this form of accommodation. This will ensure the local housing stock remains available to meet general housing needs and to limit further impacts on residential areas through the growth of

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) 2019/20 student numbers data.

<sup>2</sup> Analysis based on University of the West of England and University of Bristol 2016/17 student accommodation data and Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) 2019/20 student numbers data.

<sup>3</sup> Students in years 2 and 3.

HMOs. This approach is consistent with national policy. The growth in student numbers expected over the ten year period from 2017/18 to 2027/2028 will create an additional need for some 6,400 bed spaces city-wide. The need for additional bed spaces beyond 2028 will be set out in the new Local Plan.

## Additional Guidance

### 2.3 What is a Harmful Concentration?

SADMP Local Plan policy [DM2: Residential Sub-divisions, Shared and Specialist Housing - General Criteria](#) section (ii) does not permit purpose-built student accommodation where development would create or contribute to a harmful concentration within a locality. The policy identifies a harmful concentration as a worsening of existing harmful impacts on the residential amenity and character of a locality, or, a change to the housing mix that reduces housing choice. Whilst the policy supports the principle of developing purpose-built student accommodation within the city centre this is subject to the requirements of *BCAP Local Plan* policy [BCAP4: Specialist student housing in Bristol City Centre](#) which aims to ensure that harmful concentrations do not arise within any given area of the city centre.

The supporting text to policies **DM2** and **BCAP4** provides further detail on when harmful concentrations are likely to arise. This is where issues associated with purpose-built student accommodation (see section 1.3) cumulatively result in detrimental effects on the qualities and characteristics of a residential area or residential uses. These are defined as generally quieter surroundings; a reasonable level of safe, accessible and convenient car parking; a well-maintained or visually attractive environment and the preservation of buildings and structures that contribute to the character of a locality. The supporting text to policy **DM2** also identifies harmful concentrations arising where the choice of housing available is reduced and no longer provides for the needs of different groups within the community.

The supporting text to policies **DM2** and **BCAP4** also provides further detail on the method for assessing development. This includes analysis of the type and mix of housing in the area, including the amount of purpose-built student accommodation and HMOs at street, neighbourhood and ward levels. Assessments should also consider the impacts of the development at each area level.

To further support assessments of purpose-built student accommodation development against policies **DM2** and **BCAP4** and to support the objectives of policies **BCS18** and **DM14** additional guidance on what constitutes harmful concentrations at a neighbourhood level is provided as follows:

#### Purpose-built Student Accommodation Threshold Assessment

A harmful concentration of purpose-built student accommodation can arise when bed spaces exceed a certain level in any given neighbourhood. This may result in harm to the residential amenity and character of an area and/or a change to an area's housing mix reducing wider housing opportunities and choice. Concerns over such impacts have been raised by communities within and outside of the city centre. Analysis of these areas has identified bed space densities significantly above city averages. To help understand when imbalances in the provision of purpose-built student accommodation might occur indicative bed space density thresholds have been calculated. The thresholds represent significant deviations from average densities and help to identify the likely tipping point in any given neighbourhood, beyond which negative impacts to residential amenity and character are likely to be experienced and housing opportunity and choice start to reduce.

The bed space density thresholds for the city centre and elsewhere are set out below. The neighbourhood area is defined by a 200 metre radius measured from the application property or site point as defined by the Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG). Existing purpose-built student accommodation on the edge of the 200 metre radius will be included if the property point, as defined by LLPG, falls within the radius.

#### **Harmful concentration - Purpose-built student accommodation bed space density thresholds**

##### *City Centre: 70 bed spaces per hectare*

Within a neighbourhood area proposals for the development or intensification of purpose-built student accommodation are unlikely to be consistent with Local Plan policy where development would result in a density of 70 bed spaces per hectare or more within the neighbourhood area.

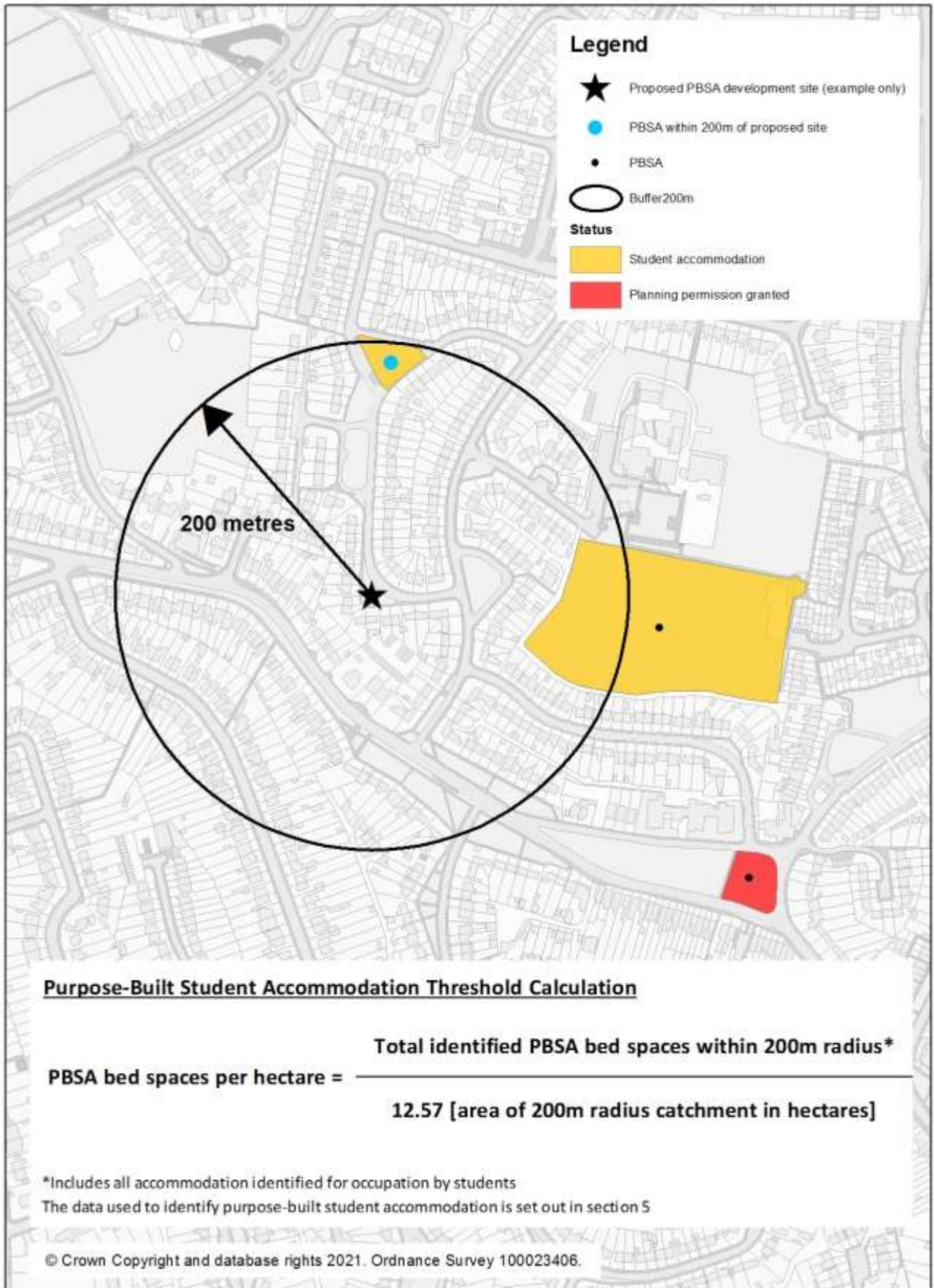
##### *Outside City Centre: 10 bed spaces per hectare*

Within a neighbourhood area proposals for the development or intensification of purpose-built student accommodation are unlikely to be consistent with Local Plan policy where development would result in a density of 10 bed spaces per hectare or more within the neighbourhood area.

When considering applications the Council's Development Management service will calculate the bed space density for any given 200 metre radius. Fig. 1 shows a worked example of the purpose-built student accommodation threshold assessment which includes an explanation of the calculation. The City Centre boundary is shown at Fig. 2. The bed space density thresholds will not apply to areas identified as suitable for purpose-built student accommodation as shown in Fig. 2.

The data used to identify purpose-built student accommodation is set out in section 5. The location of identified purpose-built student accommodation development can be viewed using the Council's web mapping tool [Pinpoint](#) available on the Council's website. Further details on the use of Pinpoint are also provided in section 5.

**Fig. 1: Purpose-built Student Accommodation Threshold Assessment - Worked Example**



## Purpose-built Student Accommodation and other forms of Shared Housing

Other forms of shared housing, specifically Houses in Multiple Occupations (HMOs), can result in a wide range of negative impacts when concentrated within areas. The [Managing the development of houses in multiple occupation Supplementary Planning Document](#) explains these impacts and identifies situations where harmful concentrations are likely to arise. Other forms of communal living, in particular shared living development, also have the potential to create some negative impacts due to the high density of occupation. Harmful conditions could arise in a locality when impacts arising from different forms of existing shared housing, including HMOs and or shared living accommodation, combine with impacts arising from existing and or proposed purpose-built student accommodation.

### Harmful concentration - Shared housing

Proposals for the development or intensification of purpose-built student accommodation are unlikely to be consistent with Local Plan policy where any of the following conditions apply:

- Where relevant the density of purpose-built student accommodation bed spaces has reached the relevant bed space threshold within the neighbourhood area as set out in section 2.3, or, purpose-built student accommodation bed spaces have reached the limits identified for suitable locations as set out in section 2.5.
- The proportion of HMOs has reached the threshold level within the neighbourhood area as set out in the [Managing the development of houses in multiple occupation Supplementary Planning Document](#).
- The relative concentration of HMOs and purpose-built student accommodation together with the number of existing or proposed shared living bed spaces within the neighbourhood area combine to create or contribute to a harmful concentration of shared housing overall.

Bed space density thresholds for purpose-built student accommodation should be excluded from this assessment in areas identified as suitable for purpose-built student accommodation as shown in Fig. 2.

Shared housing concentration assessments should be undertaken at the neighbourhood level, however this should not preclude assessments being undertaken at other appropriate geographical levels.

The data used to identify HMOs and shared living accommodation is set out in section 5. The location of authorised HMOs can be viewed using the Council's web mapping tool [Pinpoint](#) available on the Council's website. Further details on the use of Pinpoint are also provided in section 5.

## 2.4 Where Should Development go?

SADMP Local Plan policy [DM2: Residential Sub-divisions, Shared and Specialist Housing](#) does not permit the development of purpose-built student accommodation where the residential amenity or character of an area would be harmed or where development would create or contribute to a harmful concentration of such uses. The policy supports the principle of development within the city centre subject to BCAP Local Plan policy [BCAP4: Specialist student housing in Bristol City Centre](#) which aims to ensure that harmful concentrations do not arise within any given area.

The supporting text to policy **BCAP4** provides further criteria and detail on locations that are unsuitable and suitable for concentrations of purpose-built student accommodation within the city centre. Unsuitable areas include those with a strong residential context; examples are given of St. Pauls, Old Market and parts of Harbourside. Suitable areas include those where there is little or no existing residential population; examples are given of Old City, Nelson Street and Newfoundland Way. The suitability of locations close to the University of Bristol should be balanced against the need to preserve the residential amenity of surrounding communities.

*BCAP Local Plan* policies [BCAP11: University and hospital development](#), [BCAP36: Bristol Shopping Quarter](#) and [BCAP38: Nelson Street and Lewins Mead](#) identify locations suitable for the development of purpose-built student accommodation. **BCAP11** identifies the University Precinct for educational and ancillary uses associated with the University of Bristol. **BCAP36** encourages the use of unused upper floors within the Bristol Shopping Quarter for student accommodation. The supporting text to the policy also encourages student accommodation within the area to promote investment. **BCAP38** identifies student housing as part of the mix of uses to be developed in Nelson Street and Lewins Mead, however concentrations of purpose-built student accommodation in this area have reached extremely high levels.

To further support assessments of purpose-built student accommodation development against policies **DM2** and **BCAP4** and to support the objectives of policies **BCS18** and **DM14** additional guidance on the suitability of locations is provided below. The guidance expands upon the existing Local Plan policy approach towards specific locations and is informed by assessment of existing concentrations of purpose-built student accommodation, the future need for purpose-built student accommodation and the University of Bristol's expansion plans. Bed space limits for suitable locations are also identified. An explanation of how these limits have been set and how they will operate will be outlined in a supporting evidence paper.

#### Suitability of Locations for Purpose-built Student Accommodation

Proposals for the development or intensification of purpose-built student accommodation are likely to be consistent with Local Plan policy where development comes forward in the following locations:

- The University of Bristol's existing precinct (up to 800 bed spaces) and its residential campuses at Clifton (up to 200 bed spaces) and Stoke Bishop (up to 1,000 bed spaces).
- Bristol Temple Quarter (up to 2,300 bed spaces) and St. Philip's Marsh (up to 700 bed spaces).
- Bristol Shopping Quarter at Broadmead and Frome Gateway (up to 1,000 bed spaces).
- Central Bedminster (up to 1,000 bed spaces).

Proposals for the development or intensification of purpose-built student accommodation at Western Harbour should have regard to the vision and any subsequent masterplan for the area.

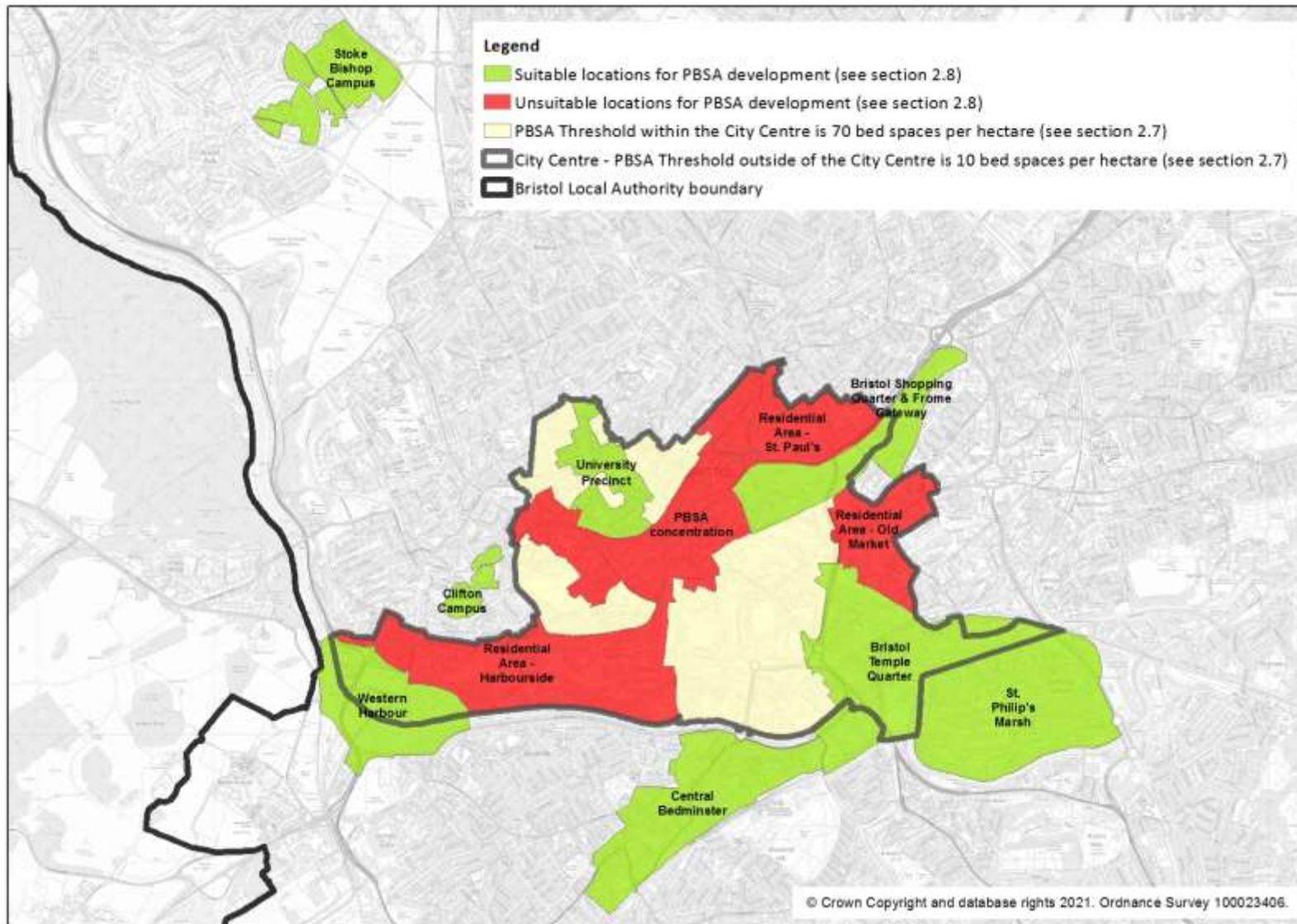
Proposals for the development or intensification of purpose-built student accommodation are unlikely to be consistent with Local Plan policy where development comes forward in the following locations:

- Areas with a strong residential context.
  - Locations within Bristol City Centre including St. Pauls, Old Market and parts of Harbourside.
  - Other locations where the majority surrounding land use is residential.

- Areas where further development will create or contribute to a harmful concentration.
  - Locations within Bristol City Centre including areas within and around St. James' Barton; Nelson Street and Lewins Mead; Park Street, St. George's Road and Frogmore Street and Corn Street and Baldwin Street.
  - Other locations where the purpose-built student accommodation bed space density threshold is reached and or a harmful concentration of shared housing is identified.

All named locations are identified on the map at Fig.2.

Fig. 2: Locations for Purpose-built Student Accommodation



## 2.5 When and How Should a Mix of Uses be Provided?

*Core Strategy Local Plan* policy [BCS2: Bristol City Centre](#) encourages higher density mixed-use development throughout the city centre. *BCAP Local Plan* policy [BCAP1: Mixed-use development in Bristol City Centre](#) expects development in Bristol City Centre to contribute to the mix of uses in the wider area. This includes new homes, employment and other uses as appropriate to the site and its context. The supporting text to the policy explains that proposals may be refused planning permission if they do not include a sufficient mix of uses, taking account of the existing mix of uses in the area and impact any change to the mix of uses would have on the character, amenity and economy of the area. The text also states that the larger the site, the more likely it is that a mix of on-site uses will be sought.

Policy **BCAP1** is supported by *BCAP Local Plan* policy [BCAP4: Specialist student housing in Bristol City Centre](#) which expects purpose-built student accommodation development in the city centre to contribute to the diversity of uses within the local area. The supporting text to the policy expects assessments of proposals to consider the mix of uses delivered on any individual site.

Council guidance supporting the creation of mixed-use development is set out in the [Urban Living Supplementary Planning Document](#) and the [City Centre Framework](#).

To further support assessments of purpose-built student accommodation development against policies **BCS2**, **BCAP1** and **BCAP4** additional guidance on other Local Plan policy requirements relevant to the delivery of mixed-use development is provided as follows.

### Residential Uses

*Core Strategy Local Plan* policy [BCS5: Housing Provision](#) identifies locations across the city for the delivery of new homes. *Core Strategy Local Plan* policy [BCS2: Bristol City Centre](#) identifies a significant level of delivery required within the city centre. The current calculated level of new homes needed for Bristol ensures that locations across the city, particularly the city centre remain a focus for ongoing housing provision. Meeting the need for new homes will therefore require the development of sites for residential uses across the city including a wide range of locations within the city centre. In addition *Core Strategy Local Plan* policy [BCS18: Housing Type](#) expects all forms of residential development to provide an appropriate mix of housing to address overall demand including affordable housing need. The development of large-scale purpose-built student accommodation in suitable locations within and outside the city centre should therefore include a proportion of other compatible residential uses, having regard to the city's current housing requirements<sup>4</sup>, where this is appropriate and feasible.

### Employment Uses

*Core Strategy Local Plan* policies [BCS8: Delivering a Thriving Economy](#) and [BCS2: Bristol City Centre](#) identify the provision of new office floor space within the city centre. *BCAP Local Plan* policy [BCAP6: Delivery of employment space in Bristol City Centre](#) encourages development to include a proportion of office or other employment floorspace of a scale and type appropriate to the site and its context. To meet these policy expectations proposals for the development of large-scale purpose-built student accommodation in suitable city centre locations should consider the inclusion of new appropriate workspace. Considerations should take account of the location and existing use of the site, the impact on surrounding uses and what any given site can feasibly accommodate.

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<sup>4</sup> Bristol's current housing need, as set out in the [West of England Combined Authority Local Housing Needs Assessment \(LHNA\) summary](#), is around 64,000 homes over the next 20 years (up to 2040) including around 22,000 affordable homes.

## Other Uses

*Core Strategy Local Plan* policy [BCS2: Bristol City Centre](#) encourages active ground floor uses as part of mixed use development along busier streets within the city centre. *BCAP Local Plan* policy [BCAP31: Active ground floor uses and active frontages in Bristol City Centre](#) seeks active ground floor uses and active frontages in specified locations. These areas are in addition to designated Primary Shopping Frontages and Secondary Shopping Frontages, where active ground floor uses are already a requirement of relevant Local Plan policies. Proposals for the development of large-scale purpose-built student accommodation in suitable city centre locations should aim to meet these policy expectations.

### **Purpose-built student accommodation - Mixed-use**

Proposals for large-scale purpose-built student accommodation development in suitable locations should, where appropriate and feasible, include a proportion of other compatible residential uses.

Proposals for large-scale purpose-built student accommodation development in suitable city centre locations should, where appropriate and feasible, include an appropriate range of uses that contribute to the mix of uses in the wider area.

Development should be consistent with relevant Local Plan policies and guidance.

## 2.6 How Can Adverse Impacts on Communities be Prevented?

*SADMP Local Plan* policy [DM2: Residential Sub-divisions, Shared and Specialist Housing - General Criteria](#) section (i) does not permit purpose-built student accommodation where development would harm the residential amenity or character of a locality. The policy identifies potential adverse impacts that should be avoided including excessive noise and disturbance to residents, levels of on-street parking that cannot be reasonably accommodated or regulated and inadequate storage for refuse/recycling and cycles.

To meet this policy requirement all proposals for purpose-built student accommodation should demonstrate how potential adverse impacts identified in policy **DM2** will be avoided. This could be achieved through the submission of a management plan which sets out details relating to (but not limited to) the management of the building; moving in and moving out processes; the approach to community liaison; expected codes of conduct for occupiers including disciplinary procedures; cycle and car parking arrangements, travel plans for occupants and the storage of refuse and recycling. Further Local Plan policies and guidance relating to cycle and car parking and refuse and recycling storage are set out in section 2.7.

### **Purpose-built student accommodation - Avoiding Impacts on Communities**

Proposals for the development or intensification of purpose-built student accommodation should demonstrate how the development would protect the residential amenity and character of the locality. Development should be consistent with relevant Local Plan policies and guidance.

## 2.7 What is a Good Standard of Accommodation?

*SADMP Local Plan* Policy [DM2: Residential Sub-divisions, Shared and Specialist Housing - General Criteria](#) expects purpose-built student accommodation development to provide a good standard of accommodation by meeting relevant requirements and standards set out in other development plan policies. The supporting text to the policy explains that consideration should be given to layout, internal living space, external amenity space, outlook, privacy, adaptability, security, cycle and car parking and refuse and recycling storage. The text also refers to specific policies where requirements and standards are set out but does not provide a definitive list.

To further support assessments of purpose-built student accommodation development against policy **DM2** additional guidance, including reference to other key Local Plan policy requirements, standards and guidance and other published advice, is provided as follows.

### Internal Living Space

*Core Strategy Local Plan* policy [BCS18: Housing Type](#) expects all residential developments to provide sufficient space for everyday activities and enable flexibility and adaptability by meeting appropriate space standards. To meet this policy expectation, proposals for purpose-built student accommodation development should have regard to guidance on minimum room standards set out in the Council's [Space Standards Practice Note \(March 2021\)](#). Development should also be consistent with the aims of *SADMP Local Plan* policy [DM4: Wheelchair Accessible Housing](#) and implemented in accordance with the Council's Practice Note [Government's Housing Standards Review: Operation of Bristol Local Plan Policies](#).

### External Amenity Space

*Core Strategy Local Plan* policy [BCS21: Quality Urban Design](#) expects development to create a high quality environment for future occupiers. The supporting text to the policy identifies outdoor space as a consideration. *SADMP Local Plan* policy [DM27: Layout and Form](#) expects the layout and form of development to enable the provision of adequate and appropriate communal amenity space which can include gardens. Outdoor spaces should also be usable and safe. Further guidance on the provision of communal outdoor space is set out in part 2 of the Council's [Urban Living Supplementary Planning Document](#).

### Outlook and Privacy

*Core Strategy Local Plan* policy [BCS21: Quality Urban Design](#) expects development to safeguard the amenity of existing development and create a high quality environment for future occupiers. *SADMP Local Plan* policy [DM27: Layout and Form](#) and [DM29: Design of New Buildings](#) expects development to achieve appropriate levels of privacy, outlook and daylight and to preserve these amenities for existing development. *SADMP Local Plan* policy [DM30: Alterations to Existing Buildings](#) expects extensions and alterations to existing buildings to safeguard the amenity of the host premises and neighbouring occupiers.

### Adaptability

*Core Strategy Local Plan* policy [BCS15: Sustainable Design and construction](#) expects the design of new development to address the issue of flexibility and adaptability by allowing future modification of use or layout and facilitating future refurbishment and retrofitting. *Core Strategy Local Plan* policy [BCS21: Quality Urban Design](#) expects development to create buildings and spaces that are

adaptable to changing social, technological, economic and environmental conditions. *SADMP Local Plan* policy [DM27: Layout and Form](#) expects the layout and form of development to be flexible to accommodate alternative but appropriate building types, plot types and uses which could adapt or change independently over time. Policy **DM27** also expects design solutions to optimise adaptability. *SADMP Local Plan* policy [DM29: Design of New Buildings](#) expects the design of new buildings to allow for future adaptation or extension to accommodate alternative uses or to respond to the changing future needs or circumstances of occupiers by means of their internal arrangement, internal height, detailed design and construction. The supporting text to policy **DM29** expects the [Design and Access Statement](#), submitted as part of the planning application, to include the approach to adaptability.

## Security and Fire Safety

*Core Strategy Local Plan* policy [BCS21: Quality Urban Design](#) expects development to deliver a safe and secure built environment. *SADMP Local Plan* policy [DM14: The Health Impacts of Development](#) does not permit development that has an unacceptable impact on health and wellbeing. *SADMP Local Plan* policy [DM27: Layout and Form](#) expects the layout of the built environment to contribute to the creation of safe and healthy places and development to deliver a secure, supportive, safe environment for users that helps to foster a sense of community and minimise the opportunities for crime. *SADMP Local Plan* policy [DM28: Public Realm](#) expects development to create or contribute to a safe public realm. Further guidance on the design of safe and secure residential environments is set out in [Secured by Design Homes 2019](#) published by the UK Police Service.

Statutory planning requirements relating to Fire Safety at the planning application stage for development which involves one or more relevant high-rise residential buildings have been introduced through planning gateway one. Further details are set out in national planning practice guidance under [Fire safety and high-rise residential buildings \(from 1 August 2021\)](#).

## Cycle and Car Parking

*SADMP Local Plan* policy [DM23: Transport Development Management](#) sets out the transport and traffic considerations that development should address and applies to development across the city except within the city centre. Considerations includes the traffic implications of development; access and improvements to public transport, walking and cycling; transport assessments and travel plans and parking and servicing arrangements including cycle parking and facilities. *BCAP Local Plan* policy [BCAP29: Car and cycle parking](#) sets out the approach to cycle and car parking in Bristol City Centre. Relevant [parking standards](#) are set out at Appendix 2 of the *SADMP Local Plan*. Guidance on cycle parking is set out in the Council's guidance note [A guide to cycle parking provision](#).

In accordance with the parking standards proposals for purpose-built student accommodation development should exclude parking for residents except for disabled parking for residents and visitors. In addition accommodation providers could strongly discourage students from bringing their cars to the city for the duration of their academic studies through code of conduct agreements and travel plans.

Where purpose-built student accommodation is granted planning permission future residents may not be eligible for parking permits where these are required. Further information on [restrictions on parking permits](#) can be found on the Council's website.

## Refuse and Recycling Storage

SADMP Local Plan policy [DM32: Recycling and Refuse Provision in New Development](#) sets general requirements for the provision of recycling and refuse facilities in all development. Detailed guidance is provided in the Council's guidance note [Waste and Recycling: Collection and Storage Facilities - Guidance for developers, owners and occupiers](#) including any subsequent additional or replacement guidance.

Container types and capacities for recycling and refuse will depend on the number of bed spaces proposed. For further information on recycling and refuse arrangements contact the Bristol Waste Company.

## Further Considerations

To ensure proposals for purpose-built student accommodation are able to meet the needs of students, as assessed by local higher education institutions, consideration should be given to any relevant design guidance and strategies issued by those institutions where this is consistent with the aims of Local Plan policy.

Key design requirements identified by local higher education institutions are set out as follows:

- **Scale and format:** Larger scale developments should generally exceed 250 bed spaces with units configured in a cluster-flat format. Individual studios are not a preferred method of accommodating students, however a proportion of studios may meet some student needs. This scale and format of accommodation encourages social interaction and reduces the potential for isolation. This in turn assists with the pastoral care of students and supports their health and well-being. These requirements are consistent with the aims of SADMP Local Plan policy [DM14: The Health Impacts of Development](#) which does not permit development that has an unacceptable impact on health and wellbeing and SADMP Local Plan policy [DM27: Layout and Form](#) which expects the layout of the built environment to contribute to the creation of healthy places and development to deliver a supportive and safe environment for users that helps to foster a sense of community.
- **Space standards:** Developments should have regard to any room size and communal area requirements set by individual institutions. Such requirements are consistent with the aims of Core Strategy Local Plan policy [BCS18: Housing Type](#) which expects all residential developments to provide sufficient space for everyday activities and enable flexibility and adaptability by meeting appropriate space standards.
- **Accessibility standards:** Developments should have regard to any accessible bedroom requirements set by individual institutions. Such requirements are consistent with the aims of SADMP Local Plan policy [DM4: Wheelchair Accessible Housing](#).
- **Safe environments:** Developments should have regard to any design requirements and strategies set by individual institutions that promote a safe and secure living environment for students. To support this aim roof terraces and balconies should not be provided. This approach is consistent with the aims of SADMP Local Plan policy [DM14: The Health Impacts of Development](#) which does not permit development that has an unacceptable impact on health and wellbeing and SADMP Local Plan policy [DM27: Layout and Form](#) which expects the layout and form of the built environment to contribute to the creation of safe and healthy places and development to deliver a secure, supportive and safe environment for users.

**Purpose-built student accommodation - Good standard of accommodation**

Proposals for the development or intensification of purpose-built student accommodation should provide a good standard of accommodation. Development should be consistent with relevant Local Plan policies and guidance.

**2.8 How Can Affordable Accommodation be Provided?**

Bristol is one of the most expensive cities for student accommodation in the United Kingdom<sup>5</sup>. The average cost of accommodation provided through Bristol's universities is currently around £6,700 per annum<sup>6</sup>. The average accommodation cost of a commercial provider is around £9,400 per annum<sup>7</sup>. A significant proportion of commercial provision is in the form of studio apartments, a more expensive option than more traditional cluster-flat arrangements. The average rent for a room in a shared house is around £6,000 to £6,500 per annum<sup>8</sup>.

Around half of bed spaces provided by the city's universities have annual rental costs above 70% of the current annual [full government maintenance loan for student living costs](#) which is £9,488. Around one third of domestic<sup>9</sup> students resident in Bristol were awarded the full maintenance grant in 2017/18<sup>10</sup>. These are students whose household incomes generally fall within the lowest level income band of £25,000 per annum or less. This combination of high rental costs and numbers of students from lower income households, whose families may be less able to offer financial support, indicates a need for more affordable student accommodation in Bristol. This would help to reduce financial pressures on students and their families.

The principle of seeking affordable housing from different forms of residential development is established in national planning policy. Affordable housing can be required from developments proposing housing for sale or rent where a need for affordable housing is identified. The Council has existing Local Plan policies that seek a target proportion of affordable housing within major residential development proposals to meet identified housing needs. The application of this approach to different forms of residential development is considered appropriate where there is evidence that the needs of particular groups are not being met by the market.

Emerging Local Plan policy H7: *Managing the development of purpose-built student accommodation*, set out in the [Local Plan Review consultation March 2019](#), provides an approach to the delivery of affordable student housing. To meet identified needs development of large-scale purpose-built student accommodation should have regard to the affordable student housing requirement set out in this draft policy. The percentage of affordable student housing provided should be consistent with the target percentages sought for different areas in *Core strategy Local Plan* policy [BSC17: Affordable Housing Provision](#). This includes 40% in the Bristol Inner East, Inner West and North West areas and 30% in all other locations. The percentage target areas can be viewed using the Council's web mapping tool [Pinpoint](#) available on the Council's website. Further details on the use of Pinpoint are provided in section 5.

<sup>5</sup> Natwest Student Living Index 2021.

<sup>6</sup> Based on analysis of published University of Bristol and University of the West of England undergraduate per annum rental costs (38 to 51 week terms) for all university provided accommodation in 2021/22. Calculation is based on average of all individual bed space rental costs.

<sup>7</sup> Based on analysis of published rental costs of main commercial providers in 2021. Calculation is based on the median of all published rental costs.

<sup>8</sup> Based on average rental costs published by the University of Bristol and provided by Bristol SU Lettings.

<sup>9</sup> Students who are normally resident in England.

<sup>10</sup> Based on analysis of data provided by the Student Loans Company.

The following design matters should also be considered to ensure purpose-built student accommodation remains affordable to all students.

- Providing the majority of accommodation as cluster-flats rather than studio flats.
- Providing a range of room type options, including different specifications and rooms without en-suite facilities, to meet different affordability requirements.
- Providing flexible and adaptable accommodation layouts to allow for non-student lettings during holiday periods. This could reduce tenancy periods and costs for students.
- Only providing facilities and amenities that are appropriate, relevant and necessary to the student experience.

## 3. Shared Living

### Background

#### 3.1 What is Shared Living

Shared living, including co-living and intergenerational/multigenerational housing, is a communal living concept that provides a modern alternative to traditional shared house arrangements. Owned and managed by private companies shared living developments seek to create an intentional community by bringing together people in a communal residential environment that allows the sharing of resources and costs. Developments are designed to facilitate social interaction and collaboration and to support events and activities encouraged as part of the shared living experience. A range of amenities are often provided on site and rentals usually cover housing, utilities and other incidental costs.

Shared living accommodation typically comprises private space, in the form of self-contained studios or non self-contained living units, and other shared social and functional spaces for relaxation, leisure, working, dining, cooking and laundry. Accommodation can vary in size ranging from converted houses to large-scale purpose-built developments.

Co-living developments are mostly targeted towards younger urban residents. Schemes are designed to support particular lifestyle requirements and aspirations. This includes spaces and facilities provided to enable remote and co-working, business collaboration and social networking, the sharing of daily routines and organised group events.

Other forms of shared living include inter-generational or multigenerational housing where people from younger age groups live with and support older people either within a single family or from different households. The model is similar to co-living with an emphasis on fostering mutual care and interaction between generations.

For the purposes of this SPD the guidance will apply to shared living developments that provide a minimum of 10 bed spaces. The accommodation can either be purpose-built or created through the conversion of a building. Certain forms of shared living accommodation may be defined as HMOs under the Housing Act 2004. Guidance relating to the development of HMOs is set out in the Council's [Managing the development of houses in multiple occupation SPD](#).

### Additional Guidance

#### 3.2 What is a Harmful Concentration?

SADMP Local Plan policy [DM2: Residential Sub-divisions, Shared and Specialist Housing - General Criteria](#) section (ii) does not permit forms of shared housing where such development would create or contribute to a harmful concentration within a locality. The policy identifies a harmful concentration as a worsening of existing harmful impacts on the residential amenity and character of a locality, or, a change to the housing mix that reduces housing choice.

The supporting text to policy **DM2** provides further detail on when harmful concentrations are likely to arise. This is where issues associated with shared housing cumulatively result in detrimental effects on the qualities and characteristics of a residential area and/or where the choice of housing is reduced and no longer provides for the needs of different groups within the community.

The supporting text to policy **DM2** also provides further detail on the method for assessing development. This includes analysis of the type of housing in the area at street, neighbourhood and ward levels and consideration of the impacts of the development at each of these area levels.

To further support assessments of shared living development against policy **DM2** and to support the objectives of policies **BCS18** and **DM14** additional guidance on what constitutes a harmful concentration is provided as follows:

### Shared Housing Concentration Assessment

Shared living developments provide a form of accommodation that is similar in use and occupation to other forms of shared housing such as HMOs and purpose-built student accommodation. The higher density nature of these developments can create the potential for additional noise and disturbance caused by increased levels of activity. Increasing the proportion of shared housing in an area can also create or contribute to an imbalance in the type and tenure of housing available affecting an area's character and reducing housing choice. Harmful conditions could arise in a locality when impacts arising from different forms of existing shared housing, including HMOs and or purpose-built student accommodation, combine with the impacts arising from existing and or proposed shared living development.

#### Harmful concentration - Shared housing

Proposals for the development or intensification of shared living accommodation are unlikely to be consistent with Local Plan policy where any of the following conditions apply:

- The proportion of HMOs has reached the threshold level within the neighbourhood area as set out in the [Managing the development of houses in multiple occupation Supplementary Planning Document](#).
- Where relevant the density of purpose-built student accommodation bed spaces has reached the relevant bed space threshold within the neighbourhood area as set out in section 2.3, or, purpose-built student accommodation bed spaces have reached the limits identified for suitable locations as set out in section 2.5.
- The relative concentration of HMOs and purpose-built student accommodation together with the number of existing or proposed shared living bed spaces within the neighbourhood area combine to create or contribute to a harmful concentration of shared housing overall.

For the purposes of the shared housing concentration assessment relevant bed space density thresholds for purpose-built student accommodation should be applied across all areas.

Shared housing concentration assessments should be undertaken at the neighbourhood level, however this should not preclude assessments being undertaken at other appropriate geographical levels.

The data used to identify HMOs, purpose-built student accommodation and shared living accommodation is set out in section 5. The location of authorised HMOs and identified purpose-built student accommodation can be viewed using the Council's web mapping tool [Pinpoint](#) available on the Council's website. Further details on the use of Pinpoint are also provided in section 5.

### 3.3 When and How Should a Mix of Uses be Provided

Relevant Local Plan policy requirements and guidance seeking the delivery of mixed use development, as set out in section 2.5, will be applied to shared living development proposals.

#### **Shared living - Mixed-use**

Proposals for large-scale shared living development should, where appropriate and feasible, include a proportion of other compatible residential uses.

Proposals for large-scale shared living development in the city centre should, where appropriate and feasible, include an appropriate range of uses that contribute to the mix of uses in the wider area.

Development should be consistent with relevant Local Plan policies and guidance.

### 3.4 What is a Good Standard of Accommodation

Relevant Local Plan policy requirements and guidance seeking a good standard of accommodation, as set out in section 2.7, will be applied to shared living development proposals.

#### **Shared living - Good standard of accommodation**

Proposals for the development or intensification of shared living accommodation should provide a good standard of accommodation. Development should be consistent with relevant Local Plan policies and guidance.

## 4. Other Local Plan Policy Requirements

A number of other Local Plan policies relating to climate change and biodiversity should be applied when determining proposals for purpose-built student accommodation and or shared living accommodation. Relevant key policies and guidance are set out as follows.

### 4.1 How Can Development Address Issues Relating to Climate Change?

*Core Strategy Local Plan* policy [BCS13: Climate Change](#) requires development to take into account the impact of climate change. Development is required through a range of measures to mitigate its own impact on climate change and to adapt to the effects of climate change. *Core Strategy Local Plan* policy [BCS14: Sustainable Energy](#) requires development to minimise its energy requirements and incorporate renewable and low-carbon energy sources to reduce carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions, selecting heating and cooling systems sustainably. *Core Strategy Local Plan* policy [BCS15: Sustainable Design and Construction](#) expects the design and construction of new development to minimise environmental impact and reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by addressing a range of key issues.

*BCAP Local Plan* policy [BCAP20: Sustainable Design Standards](#) sets specific standards against national sustainability methodologies for development within Bristol City Centre. *BCAP Local Plan* policy [BCAP21: Connection to Heat Networks](#) expects development in Bristol City Centre to explore opportunities to connect to an existing heat network or develop an on-site or local heat network.

Detailed guidance on the application of these policy standards and requirements is set out in the Council's [Climate Change and Sustainability Practice Note](#) and the Council's Practice Note [Government Housing Standards Review: Operation of Bristol Local Plan Policies](#).

Local Plan policies relating to Green Infrastructure (see section 4.2 below) also have a role in the mitigation of and adaptation to climate change.

#### Development and Climate Change

Proposals for the development of purpose-built student accommodation and shared living accommodation should be consistent with relevant Local Plan policies and guidance relating to the mitigation of and adaptation to climate change.

Further information on the Council's approach to climate change is set out in the [Mayor's Climate Emergency Action Plan](#) and the [One City Climate Strategy](#).

### 4.2 How Can Development Address Issues Relating to Biodiversity?

*Core Strategy Local Plan* policy [BCS9: Green Infrastructure](#) aims to protect, provide, enhance and expand the green infrastructure assets which contribute to the quality of life within and around Bristol. This includes the protection and enhancement of the city's biodiversity. The [Bristol Biodiversity Action Plan](#) will be used to guide decisions on protection, enhancement and provision of additional green infrastructure relating to biological conservation. *Core Strategy Local Plan* policy [BCS15: Sustainable Design and Construction](#) expects the design and construction of new development to explore opportunities to incorporate measures which enhance the biodiversity value of development. *Core Strategy Local Plan* policy [BCS23: Pollution](#) requires development to be sited and designed in a way that avoids adverse impacts on the biodiversity of the surrounding area.

Development is also required to preserve or enhance water quality and associated habitat of surface water courses.

SADMP Local Plan policy [DM15: Green Infrastructure Provision](#) sets out criteria for the incorporation of green infrastructure into development. SADMP Local Plan policy [DM17: Development Involving Green Infrastructure Provision](#) sets out a detailed approach to the conservation of existing green infrastructure assets. SADMP Local Plan policy [DM19: Development and Nature Conservation](#) provides detailed criteria to assess development affecting nature conservation value. SADMP Local Plan policy [DM22: Development Adjacent to Waterways](#) expects development to protect, maintain and enhance the nature conservation of the waterway and its bank.

BCAP Local Plan policy [BCAP22: Habitat Preservation, Enhancement and Creation on Waterways](#) expects development to preserve and enhance the biodiversity role of waterways within the city centre. BCAP Local Plan policy [BCAP25: Green Infrastructure in City Centre Developments](#) expects development within the city centre to include green infrastructure.

Other Local Plan policies seeking the incorporation and or preservation of green infrastructure in the design of new buildings, structures and places are set out in *Core Strategy Local Plan* policies [BCS21: Quality Urban Design](#) and [BCS22: Conservation and the Historic Environment](#) and SADMP Local Plan policies [DM26: Local Character and Distinctiveness](#), [DM27: Layout and Form](#), [DM28: Public Realm](#), [DM29: Design of New Buildings](#) and [DM31: Heritage Assets](#).

#### **Development and Biodiversity**

Proposals for the development of purpose-built student accommodation and shared living accommodation should be consistent with relevant Local Plan policies and guidance relating to the preservation and enhancement of biodiversity.

Further information on the Council's approach to ecological decline is set out in the [Bristol City Council Ecological Emergency Action Plan](#) and the [One City Ecological Emergency Strategy](#).

## 5. Information on Data

### 5.1 Student and Shared Living Bed Spaces

The data on purpose-built student accommodation and shared living bed spaces is drawn from annually updated records of all completed schemes and schemes with planning permission. The update is carried out as part of the Council's annual [Residential Development Survey](#).

### 5.2 HMOs

The data on HMOs includes:

- All licensed HMOs including properties with a mandatory licence or an additional licence (in areas of the city where additional licensing schemes have been declared);
- All planning permissions and other authorisations for HMOs that are not licensed.

HMO data is updated on a quarterly basis. Not all HMOs can be identified as licences and/or planning permission/authorisation is not required for all properties.

Further information on calculating the proportion of HMOs in any given area is set out in the [Managing the development of houses in multiple occupation Supplementary Planning Document](#).

### 5.3 Pinpoint

The location of purpose-built student accommodation and authorised HMO properties can be viewed using the Council's web mapping tool [Pinpoint](#) available on the Council's website.

To view the location of purpose-built student accommodation and HMOs with planning permission open the 'Environment and planning' section under 'Local information' and check the map boxes relating to 'Student accommodation' and 'HMO planning permissions'.

To view the location of HMO licensed properties open the 'Housing and property' section under 'Local information' and check the 'map' boxes relating to 'Property Licence - Additional HMO' and 'Property Licence - Mandatory HMO'.

The location of all properties will be visible on the map. A zoom function allows the map to be viewed at different scales. Click on the 'Legend' tab of the 'Map options' box on the right hand side of the screen to view further information.

## Appendix A: Local Plan Policies for Purpose-built Student Accommodation & Shared Housing

### **Policy DM2: Residential Sub-divisions, Shared and Specialist Housing**

The Core Strategy sets out the overall approach to developing new homes in the city. It proposes an overall number of homes, seeks affordable housing and aims for a broad housing mix. This Development Management policy offers an approach to addressing the impacts and issues of certain forms of housing; in particular... shared housing, specialist student accommodation...

The ... supply of shared housing provide an important contribution to people's housing choice. The policy aims to ensure that such development also preserves the residential amenity and character of an area and that harmful concentrations do not arise. The policy also aims for a good standard of accommodation.

Student numbers in the city have risen substantially since 2001 creating demand for a range of private rented accommodation...The policy aims to ensure that future specialist housing for students...meets appropriate standards and is sensibly located.

### ***Residential Sub-divisions, Shared and Specialist Housing – General Criteria***

**Proposals for: ...**

- **specialist student housing; and**
- **other forms of shared housing**

**will not be permitted where:**

- i. **The development would harm the residential amenity or character of the locality as a result of any of the following:**
  - **Levels of activity that cause excessive noise and disturbance to residents; or**
  - **Levels of on-street parking that cannot be reasonably accommodated or regulated through parking control measures; or**
  - **Cumulative detrimental impact of physical alterations to buildings and structures; or**
  - **Inadequate storage for recycling/refuse and cycles.**
- ii. **The development would create or contribute to a harmful concentration of such uses within a locality as a result of any of the following:**
  - **Exacerbating existing harmful conditions including those listed at (i) above; or**
  - **Reducing the choice of homes in the area by changing the housing mix.**

**Where development is permitted it must provide a good standard of accommodation by meeting relevant requirements and standards set out in other development plan policies...**

### *General Criteria*

Whilst making a valuable contribution to the city's housing requirements ..... shared housing can have an impact on residential amenity and the character and housing mix of an area. Specific issues common to both forms of housing can include:

- Noise and disturbance associated with intensification of the residential use and/or the lifestyles of occupants;
- Pressure for on-street parking;
- A shift from permanent family housing to more transient accommodation;
- Impacts on social cohesion;
- A shift in the character of shops and businesses supporting the community;
- Impact of external alterations;
- Poor waste management.

When making assessments on new development, consideration is to be given to the particular qualities and characteristics of a residential area or residential uses that might contribute to it being an enjoyable or otherwise satisfactory place to live. These usually include generally quieter surroundings; a reasonable level of safe, accessible and convenient car parking; a well-maintained or visually attractive environment and the preservation of buildings and structures that contribute to the character of a locality. Harmful concentrations are likely to arise when issues commonly associated with these uses, listed in para. 2.2.5 above, cumulatively result in detrimental effects on these residential qualities and characteristics. Harmful concentrations will also result where the choice of housing is reduced and no longer provides for the needs of different groups within the community.

Assessments should consider the relative impacts at street, neighbourhood and ward levels.

The policy also seeks the provision of a good standard of accommodation for future occupiers. Consideration should be given to layout, internal living space, external amenity space, outlook, privacy, adaptability, security, cycle and car parking and refuse and recycling storage. Relevant requirements and standards are set out in the policies listed in the Policy Links section.

### *Specialist Student Housing*

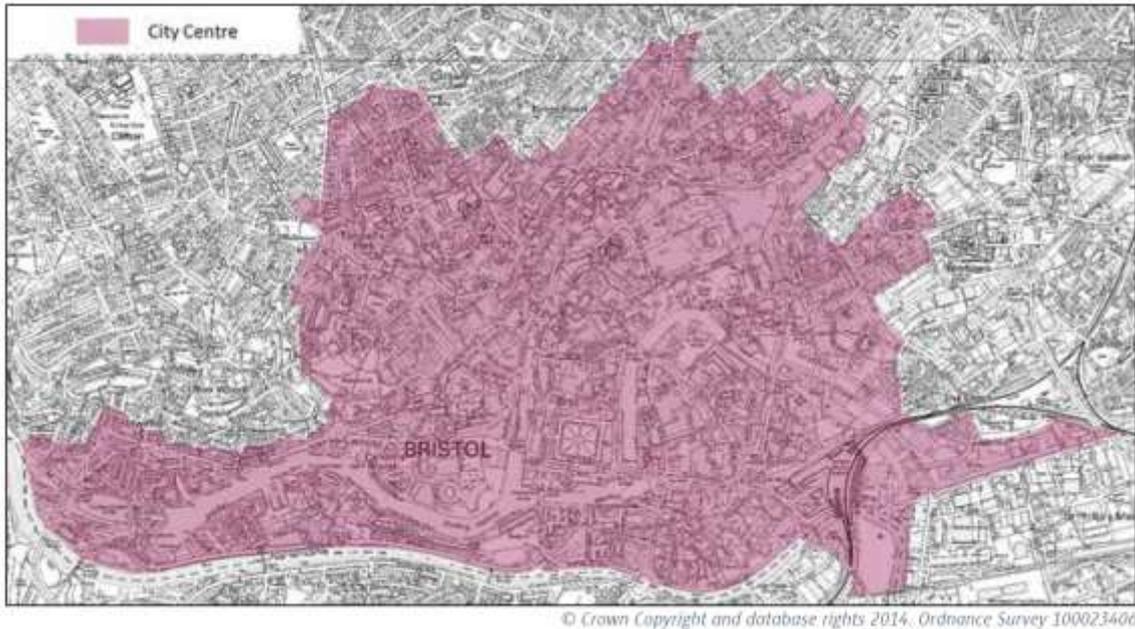
The expansion in higher education in recent years has increasingly seen the development of specialist student housing schemes. Much of this development has taken the form of managed residential accommodation comprising either 'cluster units' or individual small apartments (Cluster units are self-contained apartments each having a number of individual bedrooms/study units sharing communal facilities. The accommodation usually has an on-site management team). This type of housing can help to ease demand for student accommodation and relieve pressure on the local housing stock. Continuing provision of this type of accommodation is generally supported.

Bristol City Centre remains, in principle, an acceptable location for this type of development. Most parts of the city centre are within reasonable walking distance of the University of Bristol and good public transport connections exist to the University of the West of England. Student accommodation can help make a positive contribution to the mix of uses within the city centre and is less likely to result in harmful impacts on residential amenity. Further policy criteria are provided in the Bristol Central Area Plan. The definition of the city centre boundary is shown on Map 2 below. Other locations outside of the city centre may also be suitable provided development meets the policy's general criteria. No sites are specifically allocated for Student accommodation.

### Application Information

For major developments analysis should be undertaken of the type of housing in the area, including where relevant the number of..... HMOs or specialist student housing accommodation, at street, neighbourhood and ward levels. Data is available from the Census that corresponds to these geographies.

Map 2: Bristol City Centre boundary



*(Local Plan - Site Allocations and Development Management Policies - Adopted July 2014)*

### Policy BCAP4: Specialist student housing in Bristol City Centre

The expansion in higher education in recent years has increasingly seen the development of specialist student housing schemes in the city centre. In the last 15 years some four and a half thousand bed spaces have been created. These schemes have helped to ease demand for student housing, have helped to relieve pressure on the local housing stock and have made a positive contribution to the mix of uses in the city centre. Both the University of Bristol and the University of the West of England support in principle the delivery of managed student accommodation.

**Specialist student housing schemes that contribute to the diversity of uses within the local area will be acceptable within Bristol City Centre unless it would create or contribute to a harmful concentration of specialist student housing within any given area.**

When making assessments on new specialist student housing development, consideration will be given to the mix of uses delivered on any individual site. Consideration should also be given to the mix of housing within the local area and whether the development would result in concentrations of specialist student housing that would be harmful to residential amenity. When making assessments on residential amenity, consideration should be given to the particular qualities and characteristics of a residential area or residential uses that might contribute to it being an enjoyable or otherwise satisfactory place to live. These usually include generally quieter surroundings; a reasonable level of safe accessible and convenient car parking and a well maintained or visually attractive environment. Harmful concentrations are likely to arise when problems commonly associated with these uses cumulatively result in detrimental effects on these residential qualities and characteristics.

In areas with a strong residential context, such as St. Paul's, Old Market and parts of Harbourside, concentrations of student housing should be avoided. In other areas where there is little or no existing residential population, such as the Old City, Nelson Street and Newfoundland Way, some clustering of specialist student housing may be appropriate. While locations close to the University of Bristol may be desirable for specialist student housing, the need for such development must be balanced against the need to preserve the residential amenity of communities in the area.

## Appendix B: Relevant Local Plan Policies

Existing Local Plan policies in use July 2022	Equivalent new Local Plan policy
<b>Core Policies</b>	
DM2: Residential Sub-divisions, Shared and Specialist Housing	H6: Homes in multiple occupation and other shared housing H7: Managing the development of purpose-built student accommodation
BCAP4: Specialist student housing in Bristol City Centre	H7: Managing the development of purpose-built student accommodation DS1: Bristol City Centre
BCS18: Housing Type	H4: Housing type and mix DC1: Liveability in residential development including space standards
DM14: The Health Impacts of Development	<i>Existing Local Plan policy retained</i>
<b>Other Supporting Policies</b>	
BCS2: Bristol City Centre	DS1: Bristol City Centre
BCS5: Housing Provision	H1: Delivery of new homes
BCS8: Delivering a Thriving Economy	E2: Employment land strategy
BCS9: Green Infrastructure	<i>New policy proposed</i>
BCS13: Climate Change	CCS1: Climate change, sustainable design and construction CCS3: Adaptation to a changing climate
BCS14: Sustainable Energy	CCS2: Towards zero carbon development CCS5: Renewable energy development
BCS15: Sustainable Design and Construction	CCS1: Climate change, sustainable design and construction CCS4: Resource sufficient and low impact construction
BCS17: Affordable Housing Provision	<i>New policy proposed</i>
BCS21: Quality Urban Design	<i>Existing Local Plan policy retained</i>
BCS22: Conservation and the Historic Environment	<i>Existing Local Plan policy retained</i>
BCS23: Pollution	HW1: Pollution Control and Water Quality HW2: Air Quality
DM4: Wheelchair Accessible Housing	H9: Accessible homes
DM15: Green Infrastructure Provision	<i>New policy proposed</i>
DM17: Development Involving Green Infrastructure Provision	GI1: Local Green Space GI2: Reserved Open Space GI3: Incidental Open Spaces <i>New policy proposed</i>
DM19: Development and Nature Conservation	<i>New policy proposed</i>
DM22: Development Adjacent to Waterways	<i>New policy proposed</i>
DM23: Transport Development Management	<i>Existing Local Plan policy retained</i>
DM26: Local Character and Distinctiveness	DC3: Local Character and Distinctiveness
DM27: Layout and Form	<i>Existing Local Plan policy retained</i>
DM28: Public Realm	<i>Existing Local Plan policy retained</i>
DM29: Design of New Buildings	<i>Existing Local Plan policy retained</i>

	DC2: Tall buildings
DM30: Alterations to Existing Buildings	<i>Existing Local Plan policy retained</i>
DM31: Heritage Assets	<i>Existing Local Plan policy retained</i>
DM32: Recycling and Refuse Provision in New Development	<i>Existing Local Plan policy retained</i>
BCAP1: Mixed-use development in Bristol City Centre	DS1: Bristol City Centre H7: Managing the development of purpose-built student accommodation E7: New workspace within mixed use development
BCAP6: Delivery of employment space in Bristol City Centre	<i>Existing Local Plan policy retained</i> E7: New workspace within mixed use development
BCAP11: University and hospital development	<i>Existing Local Plan policy retained</i>
BCAP20: Sustainable Design Standards	CCS1: Climate change, sustainable design and construction  CCS4: Resource sufficient and low impact construction
BCAP21: Connection to Heat Networks	CCS2: Towards zero carbon development
BCAP22: Habitat Preservation, Enhancement and Creation on Waterways	<i>New policy proposed</i>
BCAP25: Green Infrastructure in City Centre Developments	<i>New policy proposed</i>
BCAP29: Car and cycle parking	<i>Existing Local Plan policy retained</i>
BCAP31: Active ground floor uses and active frontages in Bristol City Centre	<i>Existing Local Plan policy retained</i>
BCAP36: Bristol Shopping Quarter	<i>Existing Local Plan policy retained</i>
BCAP38: Nelson Street and Lewins Mead	<i>No equivalent policy</i>