

DRAFT NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE LOCAL PLAN 2020 - 2040

TOPIC PAPER - HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION



1 Introduction

- 1.1 The [National Planning Policy Framework \(2023\)](#) seeks a supply of housing that meets housing need and local planning authorities are to help maintain balanced communities (Para 60). Planning policies should therefore reflect the housing needs of different groups in the community, including affordable housing, families with children, older people and students. A House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) provides a form of accommodation that can meet specific housing needs.
- 1.2 A HMO is a property rented out by at least 3 people who are not from 1 'household', for example a family, but share facilities such as a bathroom and kitchen. There are two types of HMO:
- A small HMO is where there are between three and six unrelated people who comprise more than one household sharing basic amenities such as the kitchen. (C4 Use Class)
 - A large HMO is where there are more than 6 people unrelated people sharing (Sui Generis Use Class).
- 1.3 HMOs include properties occupied as shared houses, bedsits, households with lodgers and student houses. They provide a form of rented, affordable accommodation at a time when many people cannot afford to buy a property as well as a suitable form of accommodation for students and others who may only want to stay in the area on a temporary basis. Over recent years occupation of this form of accommodation has expanded to now include young professional and single workers.
- 1.4 In addition to meeting a need for private rented housing, there are other economic, social and environmental benefits associated with HMOs, for example, support for local services and facilities, skilled workforce and flexible labour, as well as providing opportunities for bringing properties back into use.
- 1.5 However, the provision of HMOs can have a negative impact on the provision of affordable and/or smaller housing stock for families as well as a loss of residents with a long-term stake in the community and an increase in a transient residential population. Where there are concentrations of students, the activity in an area can be noticeably different during term time and holidays. There are also a number of amenity impacts that can occur as a result of HMO development including impact on:
- The amenities of occupiers of nearby properties e.g. noise and disturbance as a result of the intensification of the use.
 - Impact on residential amenity, for example, loss of privacy and light and visual intrusion, particularly as a result of extensions to HMOs.
 - Impact on the appearance and character of the area.
 - The amenity and appearance of the property, including the provision of adequate refuse storage facilities and cycle storage facilities.
 - The amenity value and living standards of future occupants of the property (i.e. garden/amenity space, noise, outlook, light and privacy).

2 Planning Rules in Relation to HMOs

- 2.1 There are instances when planning permission is needed for a HMO, for example, planning permission will always be required to create a large HMO, regardless of the premises' existing use or location. Planning permission may also be needed to extend a HMO or increase the occupancy of the HMO.
- 2.2 However, planning legislation does allow for a family house (C3 Use) to change to a 'small HMO' (C4 Use) without the need for planning permission and vice versa.

3 HMOs in North West Leicestershire

- 3.1 Evidence shows there to be a larger concentration of HMOs in Kegworth compared to the rest of the district, largely as a result of the proximity of Kegworth to the Sutton Bonington campus, which is part of the University of Nottingham. Other pressures arise from the labour demands from the nearby Airport and the development that has taken place at East Midlands Gateway. It is likely that the demand for HMO properties will continue in the future, particularly with the increased intake in students at the Sutton Bonington campus.
- 3.2 Over a number of years, issues have been reported to the Council regarding the increasing number and concentration of HMOs within the village. Concerns have been raised over the negative impact on the housing profile and the social and physical character and amenity of Kegworth.
- 3.3 In response, the Council made an Article 4 Direction to the entire village of Kegworth, which withdraws permitted development rights for the change of use from dwelling houses to a small HMO. This came into effect on 19 February 2021. Therefore, planning permission is now required in Kegworth before a single-family dwelling house can be converted into a small house in multiple occupation (Class C4 Use).
- 3.4 Since the Article 4 Direction came into effect, we have undertaken further work to identify and map the existing distribution of HMOs, including student properties, in Kegworth. Sources of information used include Environmental Health and Council Tax Records, planning permissions and those properties that have been voluntarily declared as being in use as a HMO. At this point in time, we estimate a total of 262 HMO properties in the village. Taking into account the number of properties recorded in the 2021 Census (1800 properties) and the subsequent number of properties that have been built since and up to April 2023 (86 new homes), the identified HMO properties represents approximately 14.0% of all properties in Kegworth.
- 3.5 The 2021 Census also records that those aged between 20 -24 years comprised 18.5% of the population of Kegworth (compared to 5.5% of the population of the district) and 32.1% of the population of Kegworth identified as school children or full time students (compared to 17.9% across the district).
- 3.6 The HMOs are located throughout the village, and although not exhaustive, noticeable concentrations can be seen in the following areas:
- Station Road and Mill Lane Area
 - Wyvelle Crescent and Side Ley Area
 - Derby Road and Hollands Way Area
 - Ashby Road and Pleasant Place Area
 - Burley Rise Area
 - Thomas Road Area
- 3.7 HMO properties are also located at the newer developments of Howard Drive, Pritchard Drive and the former Slack and Parr site. Table 1 in Appendix 1 provides some additional information on where we understand HMOs are located within Kegworth (based on a number of data sources).
- 3.8 It is quite possible that the data used does not provide a comprehensive record of all HMOs, for example, there will be HMOs that do not require a licence or there will HMOs that were in existence prior to the Article 4. However, the evidence we have gathered does suggest that HMOs comprise a significant number of properties in Kegworth with areas of concentration of HMOs.

- 3.9 Looking elsewhere in the district, we are not aware of any evidence that suggests that there are further areas experiencing a high concentration of HMOs or the adverse impacts that can be associated with this type of use.

4 Existing Local Planning Policies

- 4.1 There is no reference to HMOs in the adopted [North West Leicestershire Local Plan](#) (March 2021). It does include a policy designed to protect the amenity of both and existing future residents (Policy D2- Amenity) which is currently used to consider the impact of a proposed HMO on residential amenity. However, there are no policies that address the more specific issues that can be experienced by the presence of HMOs.

5 Considerations for the New Local Plan

- 5.1 Whilst the district's stock of HMOs can address the needs of those wanting to rent smaller accommodation units and provide short term housing options, increased numbers of multiple occupancy properties have the potential to have negative impacts. Concentrations can lead to imbalanced communities with an increase in the transient population, which can lead to a loss of community spirit as well as damage to residential amenity and the character of surrounding areas.
- 5.2 This is particularly evident in Kegworth, and we recommend consideration be given to the inclusion of a specific policy within the new Local Plan, to provide the opportunity to manage the creation of HMOs in Kegworth and address the specific planning issues related to this type of development.
- 5.3 In light of no national approach detailing how Local Plan policy should address the impacts of HMOs, we have given consideration to examples of best practice and the circumstances faced by Kegworth, including the proportion and location of HMOs within the village.
- 5.4 A number of planning tools have been considered, including the application of a threshold which uses a ceiling approach to restrict the number of HMOs. A threshold approach could be applied across the entire village and once this threshold is exceeded no further HMOs would be permitted. However, this would not allow account to be taken of the individual characteristics of the proposal and its location within the village. Conversely, a threshold ceiling approach applied at street level would not necessarily allow the local context to be taken into account when determining an application. Therefore, a threshold ceiling approach, applied within an identified distance of the application sites, is proposed. This would provide a more balanced approach allowing consideration to be given to the local context and the site's characteristics. Policy also seeks to avoid a residential dwelling becoming situated between 2 HMOS as well as the management of other impacts such as parking issues and impacts on amenity.
- 5.5 Our preferred approach is detailed within the [Draft North West Leicestershire Local Plan \(2020 – 2040\) – Proposed Policies for Consultation](#).

Appendix A

Table 1: Estimated number of HMOs by street (Source: Planning Permissions, HMO Declarations and Licencing Data). (Please note this information has been provided within the context of the Data Protection Act, in terms of the data sources used and the information provided).

Street Name	Estimated Number of HMOs
Bedford Close	5
Borough Street	4
Borrowell	1
Bridgefields	3
Broadhill Road	1
Burley Rise	6
Church Gate	3
Derby Road	12
Dragwell	3
Frederick Avenue	2
Gerrard Crescent	1
Heafield Drive	2
High Street	10
Hillside	3
Hollands Way	5
Howard Drive	5
Hoyte Drive	3
Huffer Road	1
Kirk Avenue	2
Langley Drive	1
London Road	9
Long Lane	2
Market Place	3
Marriott Court	1
Mill Lane	6
Moore Avenue	1
Munnmoore Close	2
New Street	3
Nottingham Road	2
Oldershaw Avenue	1
Packington Hill	5
Pleasant Place	4
Pritchard Drive	10
Roberts Close	3
Shepherd Walk	4
Sideley	4
Springfield	2
St Andrews Rise	2
Staffords Acre	1
Station Road	20
Stonehills	1
Suthers Road	1
Sutton Road	7
The Croft	3
Thomas Road	2
Whatton Road	6
Windmill Way	2
Wyville Crescent	7