

Beeston + District Civic Society

HMO SPD response

May 2022

Article 4 Direction (A4D) Area

While the Society SUPPORTS the general premise of the SPD, to prevent more of our streets not within the zones becoming "unsustainable communities" in the near future, the Society calls for either:

1. ANY change of use from Residential to HMO **within Beeston** to **require planning permission**.

OR

2. All of Beeston to be included in the A4D area, and the **current A4D area** to form the '**Cluster Area**'.

Over-concentrations of HMOs give rise to well-known, detrimental effects on the character of local communities and neighbourhoods – as acknowledged by Broxtowe in the need for an A4D in the area – and while the SPD *intends* to tackle this issue it will fail when *unknown* HMOs, and HMOs already granted license before it came into action in March, and HMOs outside the area proliferate. It will simply 'kick the can down the road'.

It is already too late for some areas.

Therefore, Society calls to Broxtowe to **prevent more of our streets not within the A4D becoming HMOs cluster areas in future**. Beeston requires affordable homes NOW – in rental and buyer sector – for young families, post graduates choosing to remain here, professionals, and local first time buyers moving out of their family home. We also need accommodation for older generations, and serviced accommodation for dementia care NOW.

Need for HMOs is overstated.

The *Iceni Report (February 2020)*, commissioned by Broxtowe, states:

"2.24 (...) the number of new licensed HMOs has grown year-on-year since 2007 in the Beeston area to reach a total of 142 licensed HMOs at as 2019. The numbers elsewhere in the Borough are modest. This data is drawn from the public register of licensable HMOs, which is maintained by the Council in accordance with Section 232 of the Housing Act. It points to rapid recent growth."

It goes on to illustrate that a "rapid growth" in student numbers **is not projected by UoN**,

"2.40 The results of this (...) indicating that total student numbers enrolling at the University for the first time is expected to grow at an average compound growth rate of 0.7% per annum or around 100 students per annum on average."

and that, with the Purpose Built Student Accommodation (PBSA) approved and/or completed since the report was published in 2020, student growth "over the next five years" is **LOWER** than the bed space available:

Student Growth (2020/21 – 2024/25) = 4,750 Students

PBSA Bedspaces (at 1st April 2019) = 5,850 Bedspaces

(Source: University of Nottingham and Iceni Analysis)

- A. The Society SUPPORTS the SPD's **encouragement of utilising pre-application advice service** in advance of making a formal application (page 4).
- B. The Society SUPPORTS the SPD's aims to **expand upon Part 2 Local Plan: Policy 17** in granting permission to developments which "*integrates into its surroundings*" and not lead to "*adverse impacts on the character of the area*" (page 7) and welcomes the recognition of the importance of conversions resulting in "*high-quality living environment for residents*" (page 8).

However, the Society is **concerned** that the guidance related to parking provision (pages 12-13) may **contradict** this, in that it will certainly lead to the loss of front gardens, hedges, and boundary treatments - sacrificed to meet targets of "*0.5 car parking spaces per bedroom*" – which will impact the street scene and character of the area.

The Society hopes that the promised **discouragement** referred to in the SPD will be delivered, and that proposals which seek to provide parking at the expense of front gardens, hedges, and boundary treatments which enhance the character of the street scene are refused.

- D. The Society SUPPORTS the SPD's **Preventing Clustering and Managing the Concentration of HMOs** measures:
- No more than 3 known consecutive HMOs on the same street or adjoining street (page 8)
 - No more than 2 known consecutive HMOs positioned opposite to 2 or more known consecutive HMO properties. (page 9)
 - The radius approach of 100m (page 10), and
 - The 10% cap within that radius (page 10)

QUESTION: What efforts to fully understand the number of HMOs (including unknown HMOs) there are in Beeston?

Is this data available currently?

What continued research is being done?

- E. The Society SUPPORTS the SPD's **encouragement and support of sustainable choices** in the form of Bicycle storage (page 13). However, again, with the caveat that this would not be at the expense of gardens, hedges, and boundary treatments which enhance the character of the area and the street scene, integrating a property into its surrounding.
- F. The Society WELCOMES and SUPPORTS the guidance **on Sound Reduction Measures** (page 12).