

1. Student Accommodation

Introduction

- 1.1 This Supplementary Guidance seeks to ensure the provision of high quality student accommodation in appropriate locations whilst protecting the character and amenity of existing areas. It applies to all types of student accommodation developments, including new build, change of use and conversion.
- 1.2 Students make a significant contribution to the city's economy, social mix, vitality and vibrancy. The 2011 Census confirmed that there were approximately 130,000 students studying in Glasgow. Nearly half of these students lived inside the City's boundary. Traditionally, students have lived in halls of residence, at home, in Houses in Multiple Occupancy (HMO) or private rented accommodation. Over the past 15 years, purpose built student accommodation (PBSA) has become an increasingly popular development model which primarily attracts post-graduate and international students.
- 1.3 Student accommodation is defined as a managed primary residence for students studying in a further or higher education course. Unlike mainstream residential flats, there is a greater level of interaction between residents and a greater reliance on communal facilities and social space. This is due to the format of individual rooms/studios or cluster flats. The nature of this use, therefore, requires more active day-to-day management than mainstream residential flats in order to maintain a good living environment for the occupants.
- 1.4 Student accommodation is considered to be a quasi-residential use which falls outwith a specified Use Class. It is therefore classed as Sui Generis.
- 1.5 The Council expects purpose-built student accommodation to provide students with high quality accommodation which provides on-site amenity spaces and communal facilities. Similarly, the Council expects that student accommodation is designed to benefit its surroundings through enhancements to the public realm and public spaces which are accessible to the wider community.

Locational Criteria

- 1.6 High-quality purpose built student accommodation that is appropriately located can make a positive contribution to the local environment; supporting regeneration objectives through the renewal of vacant and derelict sites and boosting local populations to sustain facilities and amenities. However, the potential benefits of purpose built student accommodation must be balanced against any negative impacts arising from significant concentrations that might be harmful to the sustainability of residential communities.
- 1.7 Successful places rely on a strong relationship between the community and its locality. This relationship is strengthened as residents invest in their community and local facilities and services become a point of focus and contact over time. In contrast, because academic study is time-limited, students living in bespoke accommodation are less likely to establish strong relationships with a location. While Student Accommodation often brings positive impacts as described above, there is a risk that an increased concentration of student accommodation in a locality will lead to the erosion of the established community, harming the relationship between the community and place.
- 1.8 There is no single threshold or methodology to establish whether a concentration of student accommodation is too high and will be

harmful to maintaining a sustainable community. However there are factors that can be considered in assessing a community's capacity to absorb student accommodation without undermining its relationship with place. An area that has a high density residential population and a broad range of supporting uses, facilities and services is likely to generate a stronger relationship between community with a place as there are far more opportunities for social interaction and common points of interest that help define a shared community relationship. On this basis such an area is likely to have a greater capacity to absorb student accommodation without harming the community's cohesion.

- 1.9 Based upon this relationship between place and its capacity for student accommodation, applicants will be required to prepare an analysis of the locality to demonstrate to what extent these characteristics exist. The analysis will be based upon the area of 400 metre walking distance around the site (a typical five minute walking distance), which identifies:
- a) The pattern of density of residential population within the locality;
 - b) The cumulative effect their proposal will have upon the proportion of mainstream accommodation and student accommodation populations ([see map of Student Accommodation](#));
 - c) The range of local facilities and mix of uses within the locality, and;
 - d) What non-student accommodation facilities the proposed development will introduce to support community integration (see Design Criteria).
- 1.10 This information will serve to inform the assessment of whether the proposal will have a harmful impact on the maintenance of a sustainable community. Where it is deemed that there will be a harmful impact upon a community, applications will not be supported.

- 1.11 Where a proposal is part of a larger mixed use development or where it is an area of regeneration with no established residential community, these factors will be given due weight in the assessment of impact. Applications for development within these areas will be expected to include a proportion of mainstream residential development to help support the development of a sustainable community (see Areas of Change below).

Areas of Concentration

- 1.12 A careful balance must be struck between the regeneration aims of the city, maintaining residential amenity and promoting inclusive neighbourhood growth. While the areas in and adjacent to the city's universities and college campuses are sustainable options to accommodate student accommodation, the capacity to do so is not limitless. As such, the Council has identified two areas of the city where the volume of purpose built student accommodation has reached such a level that further development of purpose built student accommodation would likely undermine residential amenity in these areas. The maps of Student Accommodation illustrates the concentration of accommodation in each of the areas.

South Partick/Yorkhill

- 1.13 The area surrounding the University of Glasgow has a dense tenemental character which was built up around the same time as the Gilmorehill Campus in the late 19th century. In the past decade, purpose built student accommodation has primarily located around the area's southern fringes in South Partick and Yorkhill. Much of this land was formerly industrial which once supported the city's riverside economy. A careful balance must be struck between regenerating previously developed land, maintaining residential amenity and

promoting inclusive neighbourhood growth. This area reflects the characteristics of a locality which has a higher capacity to accommodate student accommodation. Nevertheless, this capacity is not limitless and a balance still must be struck to protect community cohesion. The volume of purpose built student accommodation in South Partick and Yorkhill has now reached such a level that further development of purpose built student accommodation would likely undermine residential amenity in these areas. Therefore, the Council will resist future applications for purpose built student accommodation in the designated area of over-concentration. See Map: AREA OF CONCENTRATION at the end of the guidance.

Townhead/Cowcaddens

- 1.14 Townhead is a neighbourhood to the east of Glasgow Caledonian University and to north of Strathclyde University. The area was subject to comprehensive redevelopment in the 1960s. In terms of land use, the neighbourhood has a well-defined residential area of modernist design with some services as well as a scattering of industrial and business uses. The Area of Concentration boundary extends west around Caledonian University Campus into Cowcaddens in response to the concentration of existing PBSA at the western end of Townhead. In the last decade, the area has seen significant new PBSA schemes introduced. Therefore a balance must be struck between aspirations to regenerate the area and protecting the established residential amenity of Townhead as well as the adjacent area of Cowcaddens. Therefore, the Council will resist future applications for purpose built student accommodation in the designated area. See Map: AREAS OF CONCENTRATION at the end of the guidance.

- 1.15 Where it is proposed to redevelop existing student accommodation within either Area of Concentration, the Council may consider the proposal acceptable if there is not a net increase in the number of beds in the development.

City-Wide Locational Criteria

- 1.16 Along with the assessment of concentration, the Council expects applications for purpose built student accommodation to be in locations with good access to university and college facilities by active travel routes and/or public transport and where the development:
- a) Will not undermine the character and amenity of the surrounding area;
 - b) Has good access to shops, services, healthcare, leisure and community facilities; and
 - c) Will not place unsustainable pressure on local amenities and facilities due to the density of accommodation proposed.
- 1.17 Proposals will also be encouraged where they provide an opportunity to support regeneration particularly in any of the Strategic Development Framework or Local Development Framework areas where they are located near good public transport networks with good connectivity to university and college facilities

Design Criteria

City-Wide

- 1.18 The design of purpose built student accommodation must respond to its local context and every effort should be made to integrate the layout and building design into the surrounding community. It should also enhance the character of the area. Proposals shall incorporate:
- a) Ground floor uses which are open to all members of the public, such as cafes and other footfall generating uses, subject to the nature of the local environment;
 - b) The provision of publicly usable open space, taking the form of enhanced public realm, civic space or parkland;
 - c) Built form that is sensitive to the local architectural vernacular and heritage in terms of the arrangement of buildings, their design, height, massing, and materiality;
 - d) High-density or high-rise developments will only be acceptable in locations where they are compatible with the existing townscape;
 - e) Utilising a whole life approach with flexible floorplates and building design to ensure there is scope and flexibility for adaptation to alternative future uses (which would be subject to permission).
- 1.19 Applicants are directed to additional guidance on flatted residential development, contained within SG 1: Placemaking which will be applied to all proposed student accommodation developments, in terms of design, privacy, sunlight and daylight. Where possible, opportunities to achieve dual aspects should be delivered. Applicants should also demonstrate how their proposal responds to the relevant disability and equalities legislation as well as using analysis of

potential demand for accessible accommodation to inform their proposal.

- 1.20 It is expected that applicants will demonstrate how they have engaged with local stakeholders and potential users to illustrate a holistic and responsive approach to the design of their development, as set out in SG1 Placemaking Part 1 The Placemaking Design Process (page 14).

Areas of Change: Strategic Development Frameworks and Local Development Frameworks

- 1.21 In addition to the City-Wide criteria, applicants in Areas of Change (Strategic Development Frameworks and Local Development Frameworks) as set out in City Development Plan Policy CDP2 Sustainable Spatial Strategy will be required to consider additional design opportunities. It is the Council's aspiration to reconnect and repopulate these areas of the city. In order to facilitate this growth, the Council invites applications for purpose built student accommodation which offer innovative solutions that can achieve the following outcomes:
- a) Upper floor conversions of vacant property in the City Centre;
 - b) Vertical mix of accommodation;
 - c) Affordable and key user accommodation;
 - d) Improvements to public spaces;
 - e) Providing new open space;
 - f) Supports and facilitates the long-term regeneration of an area

Mixed Tenure Detailed Guidance

- 1.22 In order to promote inclusive population growth and build sustainable communities, applications for student accommodation over certain thresholds will be required to deliver a proportion of mainstream residential accommodation as set out in the table below. As part of this requirement, a vertical mix of mainstream residential and PBSA will only be accepted where it can be demonstrated that the development design is such that there will be no conflict or harm to amenity between the different uses. The minimum proportion of mainstream accommodation required is scaled and will be dependent on location and the size of the site as set out in the table below:

Site/Development Threshold	Minimum proportion of mainstream residential* floor space within development
City Centre (City Centre SDF p14)	
2,000 sq. m – 4,999 sq. m building footprint (s)	25%
> 5,000 sq. m	40%
Rest of the City	
> Site area of greater than 0.3ha	40%

*Mainstream residential is not considered to include 'co-living' or similar high density managed living formats that feature a significant proportion of communal living space.

- 1.23 For the purpose of the mixed tenure guidance described above, the total site area is defined as the application site area, less any areas of existing road retained within the boundary.

Amenity Criteria

- 1.24 It is imperative that the amenity of student accommodation meets the needs of its users. While the average length of stay is less than that for mainstream accommodation, traditionally with a greater emphasis on shared amenity, this should not form a justification for an unacceptably reduced level of quality in individual living accommodation.
- 1.25 Proposals must demonstrate that:
- Depending on the size of the proposal, it provides a mix of accommodation types to meet the varying needs of students including cluster flats, studio accommodation and, where required, family accommodation with appropriate segregation between occupation types;
 - It will offer suitable, high quality communal facilities, amenity and social spaces along with adequate refuse and recycling facilities as set out in SG1 Placemaking.

- 1.26 Amenity standards for flatted dwellings, as set out in IPG 6 Greenspace and Green Network, will be applied to student accommodation developments.
- 1.27 In student accommodation developments, the provision of amenity space may be provided as a combination of internal and external amenity spaces. Internal amenity spaces may include study areas, gymnasiums, cinema rooms and social hubs. Unique and creative approaches to the provision of internal amenity spaces are welcomed for the approval of the Planning Authority.
- 1.28 Circulation and reception spaces will not be accepted as contributing to the required provision of amenity space within the development. Internal amenity spaces will only be acceptable where the proportions of the space are fit for communal use and the proposed or potential function and purpose of the space is fully set out to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority.
- 1.29 On-site communal facilities may include laundry, utility and mail facilities. On-site vehicle and cycle parking should be provided in accordance with SG 11: Sustainable Transport (Table 3.1).

Space standards

- 1.30 The Council recognises that Purpose Built Student Accommodation is delivered primarily by private sector commercial developers. Market competition in this sector has resulted in an increasing variety of room types available to students that range in size and amenity. In supporting this range of options, the Council aims to ensure that developers provide a reasonable standard of amenity with respect to

minimum room sizes. To achieve this, it is expected that no accommodation will fall below the following space standards:

- a) Study bedroom without ensuite: 10m²
- b) Study bedroom with ensuite: 13m²
- c) Studio room for one student with ensuite bathroom and kitchen: 18 m²

Management & Security Criteria

- 1.31 Effective security measures and an operational management plan will help to deliver a safe and secure environment for residents whilst proactively minimising potential adverse impacts on the local neighbourhood. Applications should be supported by a Management and Security Strategy which details:
- a) The general operations and maintenance of the building and site;
 - b) Consideration of how the impacts of conduct of occupants will be managed;
 - c) Detail of onsite security arrangements for all developments. Larger developments should detail how they will maintain a 24/hour staffing element;
 - d) Planned arrangements for the management of waste and how waste management facilities will be provided onsite, in accordance with the requirements in SG1: Placemaking;
 - e) Consideration for arrangements for the moving in and moving out of occupants;

- f) Consideration of arrangements to ensure the well-being of residents; and
- g) Evidence of accreditation with relevant bodies such as The Accreditation Network UK/Unipol Code of Standards for Larger Developments not managed or controlled by Educational Establishments.

Statement of Need

- 1.32 It is important that new student accommodation proposals do not lead to an oversupply which could lead to under-performing or vacant accommodation. Therefore, applicants will be required to provide a Statement of Need covering the following aspects:
- a) Evidence of the specific need for PBSA being addressed locally and at city-wide scale;
 - b) Information about prospective occupiers including academic status, any specific household requirements or accommodation needs and where appropriate the type of existing accommodation the potential student occupiers are likely to be drawn from;
 - c) A recorded increase in student numbers;
 - d) Institutional funding available to deliver the proposal; and
 - e) University or College support for the proposal.

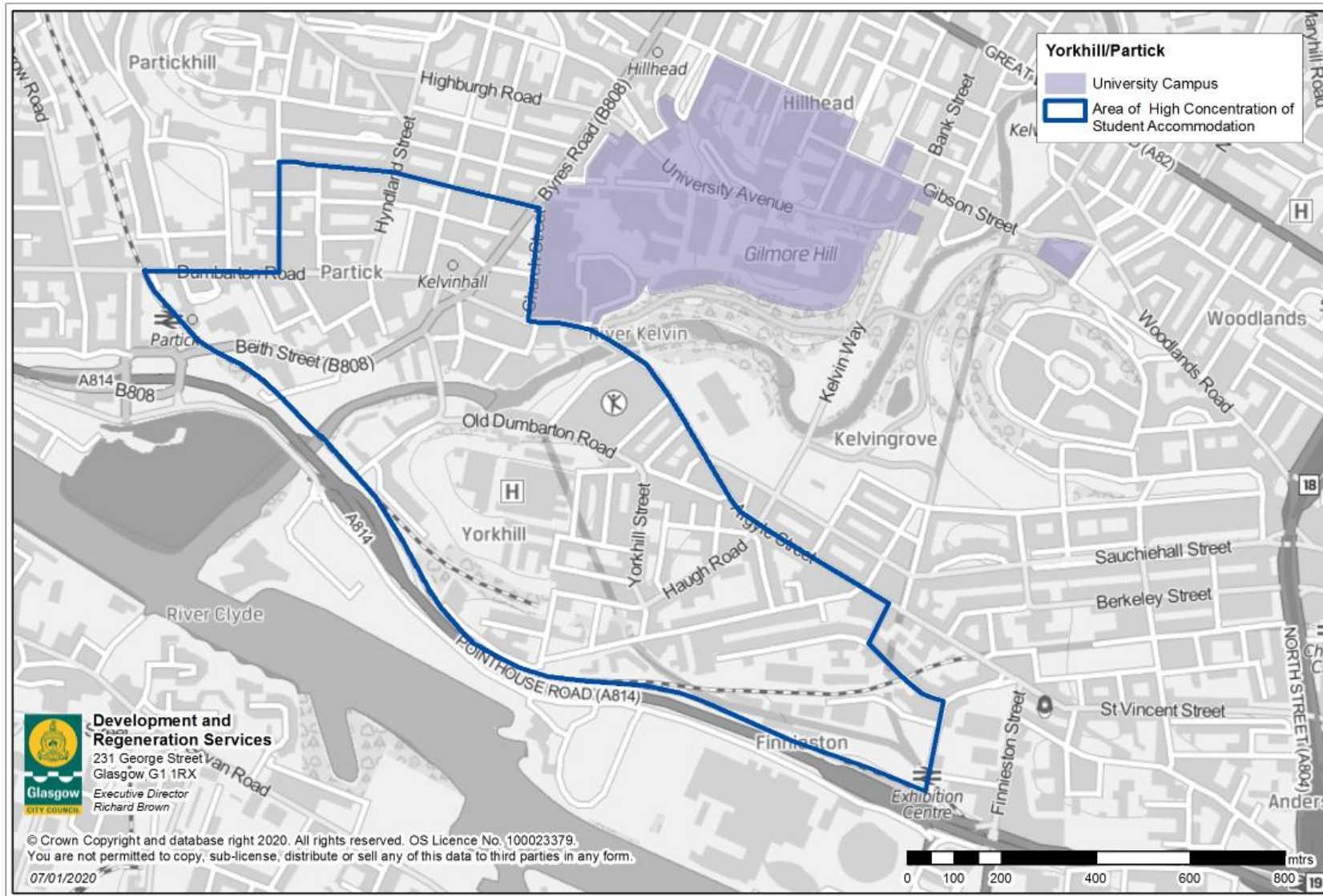
Legal Agreements

- 1.33 The Planning Authority may require a Section 75 Agreement to be signed as part of the planning consent to ensure the proposed development remains in use as student accommodation.

Temporary Use of Student Accommodation as Short-Stay Accommodation

- 1.34 Student accommodation and short-stay accommodation are two distinct *sui generis* planning uses. Recurring or temporary use of student accommodation as short-stay accommodation therefore requires planning permission. Such a use would only be permitted for specified periods when the development is not being operated as student accommodation (i.e. outwith term-time). Proposals will be assessed on an individual basis and will be subject to the same considerations as student accommodation developments. Details of the proposed use must be set out in the initial application submission. On-site vehicle and cycle parking should be provided in accordance with SG 11: Sustainable Transport (Table 3.1).

AREA OF OVER CONCENTRATION - PARTICK/YORKHILL



AREA OF CONCENTRATION - TOWNHEAD/COWCADDENS

