



Subject:	The adoption of Belfast Local Development Plan, Plan Strategy and the associated implications for the approach to the assessment of concentrations of HMOs
Date:	20 September 2023
Reporting Officer:	Kevin Bloomfield, HMO Unit Manager
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Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	To update members on the adoption of Belfast Local Development Plan, Plan Strategy on the 2 May 2023 “2023 Strategy” and the associated implications for the approach to the assessment of concentrations of HMOs as previously set out in the Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) Subject Plan for Belfast City Council Area 2015 “2015 Plan”.
1.2	How for the purposes of section 8(2)(d) and section 12 of the Houses in Multiple Occupation Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 “2016 Act” when considering overprovision of HMOs in the locality in which the living accommodation is situated, account will be taken of the 2023 Strategy.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	Committee is asked to note the adoption of Belfast Local Development Plan (LDP)
3.0	Main report
	<u>Key Issues</u>
3.1	Belfast Local Development Plan, Plan Strategy was formally adopted on the 2 May 2023. The plan introduces Policy HOU10 – Housing Management Areas (HMAs)
3.2	The Housing Management Areas (HMAs) will be designated within the local policies plan. In advance of the local policies plan, policy HOU10 will be applied to the previously designated HMO policy areas outlined at designation HMO2 of the 2015 Plan.

3.3	HOU10 states - Within designated HMAs, planning permission will only be granted for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) and/or flats/apartments where the total number of HMOs and flats/apartments combined would not as a result exceed 20% of all dwelling units within an HMA.
3.4	HOU10 goes on to say - outside of designated HMAs planning permission will only be granted for HMOs where the number of HMOs would not as a result exceed 10% of all dwelling units on that road or street. Where such a street is in excess of 600 metres in length, the 10% threshold will be calculated on the basis of existing residential units within 300 metres of either side of the proposal on that street.
3.5	Pursuant to the Houses in Multiple Occupation Act (Northern Ireland) 2016, the Council may only grant a new HMO licence if it is satisfied that the granting of the licence will not result in overprovision of HMOs in the locality.
3.6	To ensure consistency as both a planning and licensing authority the HMAs as referenced in Policy HOU10 of the 2023 Strategy shall continue be used by the Council to define localities for the purposes of HMO licensing within the Council area.
3.7	<p>When considering whether the granting of a licence will result in overprovision in a locality the Council must have to regard to –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The number and capacity of licensed HMOs in the locality, b) The need for housing accommodation in the locality and the extent to which HMO accommodation is required to meet that need, and c) Such other matters as the Department may by regulation specify.
3.8	To inform the Council in its consideration of the above provisions, officers will take account of the 2023 Strategy. It is recognised that HMOs make an important contribution to the private rented sector, providing choice and assisting with meeting a range of community needs, however the location of HMOs must be carefully managed as the infrastructure within such areas was not designed to cope with the increased population enabled through these types of development, leading to a decline in residential amenity and difficulties relating to car parking, waste collection and noise and other disturbances.
3.9	Officers are developing, subject to permissions and licensing agreements with Land and Property Services (LPS) an online mapping viewer to make information on intensive forms of housing and licensed HMOs accessible to the public. Officers will keep members updated on future progress.
3.10	The initial percentage from July 2023 of licensed HMOs and intensive forms of housing within HMAs are included at Appendix 1 . This will be updated on a monthly basis with work ongoing in relation to data from mid-August.
	Financial and Resource Implications
3.11	None. The cost of assessing the application and officer inspections are provided for within existing budgets.
	Equality and Good Relations Implications
3.12	There are no equality or good relations issues associated with this report.
4.0	Appendices – Documents Attached

	Appendix 1 - The percentage of licensed HMOs and intensive forms of housing within HMA
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