



Policy LP37 Sub-division and multi-occupation of dwellings within Lincoln Evidence Report

**Proposed Submission
April 2016**

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1. Introduction and Policy Context

Introduction

- 1.1 A joint Local Plan for the Central Lincolnshire area is being produced which will set the framework for how development will be considered across the districts of the City of Lincoln, North Kesteven and West Lindsey to 2036.
- 1.2 This Evidence Report (which is one of a collection) provides background information and justification for policy LP37, which relates to the sub-division and multi-occupation of dwellings within Lincoln.

National policy

- 1.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in March 2012 and the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) was introduced in 2014 which offers 'live' government guidance.
- 1.4 Paragraph 50 states that local planning authorities should "*deliver a wide choice of high quality homes, widen opportunities for home ownership and create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities*", whilst paragraph 58 seeks to ensure that developments "*will function well and add to the overall quality of the area*" and "*respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials*".
- 1.5 In the plan-making section, paragraph 153 also states that "*supplementary planning documents should be used where they can help applicants make successful applications or aid infrastructure delivery, and should not be used to add unnecessarily to the financial burdens on development*".
- 1.6 The above NPPF policy has been taken into account in preparing the Local Plan as a whole, and policy LP37 in particular.

2 Central Lincolnshire Context in Relation to Policy LP37

- 2.1 Lincoln's population has grown considerably in recent decades including inflows of students and migrant workers. It is important that the housing needs generated by these people are met, with shared accommodation often being a preferred choice for many, for a variety of reasons. Whilst such accommodation does meet a particular housing need, it can cause difficulties where there is a high concentration in a particular area. Problems mainly occur where there is a concentration of dwellings with a rapid turnover of residents or a concentration of converted dwellings in an established residential area causing an imbalance in those communities which can have negative effects. These effects can include an increase in parking pressures and a decreased demand for local shops and services which can lead to their closure.
- 2.2 It can also lead to a rise in anti-social behaviour and crime levels and put pressure on family housing as owner occupiers and buy to let landlords compete for similar properties and inflate rental prices. The insensitive conversion of buildings can also have a negative effect on the occupants and their neighbours with communal rooms and bedrooms sharing party walls. It is therefore felt necessary to control the location, design and management of

such properties in order to ensure that communities do not become imbalanced and that residential amenity is protected.

- 2.3 The City of Lincoln Council has produced an Article 4 direction to remove permitted development rights relating the houses in multiple occupation. From 1st March 2016, planning permission will be required for development comprising a change of use from a traditional dwelling house (Use Class C3) to a house in multiple occupation for between 3 and 6 unrelated people (Use Class C4). Further details can be found here: <http://www.lincoln.gov.uk/living-in-lincoln/planning-and-building/houses-in-multiple-occupation-hmos/>
- 2.4 The City of Lincoln Council (not the Central Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee) intends to adopt an SPD entitled 'Houses in Multiple Occupation Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)' which outlines how that Council intends to implement the Article 4 direction and manage the development of houses in multiple occupation. A draft SPD which sets out criteria that will be used in the determination of any planning application for the development of these properties within the City's administrative boundary was consulted upon in Sept – Oct 2015. Following consultation, an amended draft SPD was approved by Lincoln City's Executive committee in January 2016 as a material consideration when determining planning applications effective from 1st March 2016. See: <http://democratic.lincoln.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=123&MId=2064&Ver=4>
- 2.5 The needs of those requiring subdivided or multi-occupancy living can also be met through the development of purpose built accommodation which increases choice for those people and eases the pressure on existing residential areas. Therefore, purpose built accommodation that helps to meet this identified need is encouraged in appropriate locations, provided that it meets the criteria listed in policy LP37.

3 Local Plan Policy: Preliminary Draft

- 3.1 The Preliminary Draft version of the Local Plan (published for consultation in October – November 2014) included policy LP29 on houses in multiple occupation including student housing.
- 3.2 Comments received during the consultation on the Preliminary Draft version of the Local Plan included:
- the view that there were too many buildings in the City for students,
 - that developers should be brought in to build apartment style complexes,
 - that the best solution would be to have a licensing and accreditation scheme for landlords; and
 - support for a variety of good quality housing options for students.
- 3.3 In response, the number of students in the City has increased significantly in recent years and their housing needs as well as those for migrant workers and families need to be met within mixed, balanced communities. The policy (and supporting SPD) seeks to encourage a range of housing options for those having to or wanting to live in self-contained flats or

shared accommodation, including apartment style complexes, and ensuring that the amenities of the residents and neighbours of new or converted properties are protected.

4 Local Plan Policy: Further Draft

- 4.1 The policy and supporting text in the Further Draft version of the Local Plan were amended to make clear that it referred to all subdivision of dwellings and purpose built self-contained flats or shared accommodation and to reflect feedback to the emerging Houses in Multiple Occupation Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and wording. The Further Draft Local Plan was published for consultation in October – November 2015.
- 4.2 Various comments were received as part of the Further Draft Local Plan consultation in support of the policy including maintaining a social mix in parts of the City and providing a hook for any future policy initiatives by Lincoln City Council.

5 Local Plan Policy: Proposed Submission

- 5.1 Policy LP37 in the Proposed Submission Local Plan has been amended to make clear that it refers to purpose built “shared accommodation”.
- 5.2 The policy is supported by:
 - Draft HMO Supplementary Planning Document (2016)
 - Policy LP10: Meeting Accommodation Needs;
 - Policy LP26: Design and Amenity;
 - Policy LP32: Lincoln’s Universities and Colleges;
 - Policy LP33: Lincoln City Centre Primary Shopping Area and Central Mixed Use Area; and
 - Policy LP35: Regeneration and Opportunity Areas.

6 Alternative Reasonable Options

- 6.1 The following alternative options have been considered for this policy (**Option 1** is the preferred policy approach which has been included in the Proposed Submission version of the Local Plan).
- 6.2 **Option 2:** to have no specific houses in multiple occupation policy for Lincoln. However, it was thought to be important to respond to an identified issue within Lincoln by providing for housing need and promoting diverse, cohesive communities whilst preventing over concentrations of subdivided houses with transient residents. It was also felt to be most likely to help residents feel positive about the area that they live in and to promote communities where people feel safe, reduce levels of crime, fear of crime and antisocial behaviour and to protect residential amenity.

7 Conclusion

- 7.1 This Evidence Report demonstrates the rationale for the proposed policy as contained in the Proposed Submission Local Plan April 2016. We hope this helps demonstrate how we have responded to comments received during the Preliminary Draft and Further Draft

consultation, as well as how the latest evidence and national guidance has been taken into account.