

City Development Plan - Development of Policy on housing for student accommodation – Progress noted.

5 There was submitted and noted a report by the Executive Director of Neighbourhoods, Regeneration and Sustainability regarding the development of a policy on housing for student accommodation, advising

- (1) that according to data published by the Higher Education Student Statistics UK (HESA), 87,215 students in 2023/24 had enrolled in the 5 Glasgow institutions with the number of students peaking to 92,430 in 2021/22, reducing to 90,035 in 2022/23 and that the number of students enrolled in 2023/24 was around 10,000 more than enrolled prior to the pandemic in 2019/20;
- (2) that in January 2025, the Council published an audit of managed student accommodation in Glasgow which identified 72 managed sites hosting a combined total of 20,218 beds and around half of the student accommodation was located in the city centre and a development pipeline of 16,280 further beds based on planning consents and pending planning applications had been identified, with around 64% of the proposed beds being located in the city centre;
- (3) that the City Development Plan (CDP) 2017, policy 10 for student accommodation supported new development where it would be clustered around an existing University campus or close to public transport nodes that had access to the campus and in the first 3 years of the plan this decision-making framework had delivered 4,425 additional beds;
- (4) that supplementary guidance to the CDP had identified Yorkhill/Partick and Townhead/Cowcaddens where further purpose-built student accommodation would be resisted and had also introduced other requirements such as integrating elements of mainstream housing into proposals in certain circumstances such as for larger sites and from March 2020 to January 2025 5,401 beds were approved and 1,256 additional student beds were delivered;
- (5) that the UK Collaborative Centre for Housing Evidence (CACHE) report for the Scottish Cross-Party Group on Housing calculated that there was a shortfall of 6,093 beds for the 2022/23 academic year to accommodate the 90,030 students at the Glasgow universities and that the complexity of the student accommodation market in Glasgow was not reflected in NPF4 policies and that a bespoke policy approach was likely to continue to be required for Glasgow, as detailed in the report;
- (6) that in March 2023, a Student Accommodation Steering Group was established to address the recommendations of the CACHE report and in June 2023, the Steering Group established a working group comprising of representatives from Glasgow Caledonian University, the Glasgow School of Art, the University of Glasgow, the University of Strathclyde, officers from the Housing and Planning Services, a developer and a market analysis company that specialised in student accommodation and the working group had fed into

the evidence report as well as having discussed data, international demand and affordability;

- (7) that the Student Accommodation Supplementary Guidance approved in 2021 continued to form the basis for assessing planning applications for student accommodation (PBSA) and a key aim of the guidance was to prevent an overconcentration of PBSA within a local area to ensure the level does not harm the overall sustainability of the community, as detailed in the report;
- (8) that the Planning guidance does not currently set a requirement for affordable provision, although it does state that proposals offering affordable options would be encouraged and the CACHE Evidence Report showed that affordability was a significant issue for future PBSA residents and in addition, weight was being given to cases where there was an opportunity to re-purpose existing buildings which contributed towards a positive response on embodied carbon. likewise, a more tolerant approach was being applied where a proposal presents an opportunity to re-purpose and retain a listed building;
- (9) that over time the appliance of the guidance was to afford sufficient flexibility to respond to these different factors as they emerge, as a result the guidance was considered to provide a robust framework for assessing proposals in a way that accommodates the range of market dynamics influencing wider trends in PBSA until reviewed in the new CDP; and
- (10) of the next steps.