



Glasgow City Council

**Neighbourhoods, Housing and Public Realm
City Policy Committee**

**Report by Executive Director of
Neighbourhoods, Regeneration and Sustainability**

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Item 2

1st June 2021

**CITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN STUDENT ACCOMMODATION
SUPPLEMENTARY GUIDANCE**

Purpose of Report:

To present post-consultation supplementary guidance on Student Accommodation revising Section 2 of Supplementary Guidance 10 'Meeting Housing Needs'.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that Committee:

- (1) Considers the post-consultation amendments to the Supplementary Guidance.
- (2) Agrees to refer the revised guidance to the City Administration Committee for approval prior to submission to Scottish Ministers.

Ward No(s):

Citywide: ✓

Local member(s) advised: Yes No consulted: Yes No

1 Background

- 1.1 Members may recall proposed Purpose Built Student Accommodation (PBSA) guidance was presented to [Committee in January 2020](#) with a view to going out to public consultation later that year. The consultation exercise was postponed as a result of the pandemic. However, the decision was taken to progress with an online consultation which commenced on 20th November 2020 and ran until 22nd January this year.
- 1.2 The guidance being presented represents the conclusion of an extensive preparation exercise following instruction from this Committee to review the content and approach of existing Student Accommodation Supplementary Guidance. This exercise has included an evidence gathering event which informed the key elements that the guidance now covers, extensive research into best practice throughout the UK and Europe and desk based analysis on existing provision of PBSA and the evolution and effect of student population in Glasgow. This work has now been augmented by the consultation exercise that has attracted a high volume of comments as described below.

2 Consultation

- 2.1 The consultation generated a total of 110 individual responses from a wide range of stakeholders including students, the general public, Community Councils, elected officials, the city's universities, student accommodation providers and land owners. These responses equated to approximately 500 individual comments to be considered.
- 2.2 The consultation focused upon the key changes being proposed in the guidance and conducted polls to gauge reaction on the key themes listed below:
 - new locational criteria to assess a potential over-concentration of student accommodation in a vicinity,
 - the introduction of two areas of concentration where no new student accommodation will be supported,
 - updated design criteria including a requirement for publically accessible ground floor uses,
 - the introduction of a mixed tenure requirement for developments over a certain development site threshold
 - the introduction of new guidance relating to a statement of need,
 - a requirement for minimum space standards; and
 - submission of a management plan.
- 2.3 For each of these elements of the guidance, the significant majority of respondents confirmed their support for the changes. However, this broad support masks a clear distinction between local communities and residents who were generally more supportive of the changes while those representing student accommodation providers who were less supportive.

- 2.4 In addition to these high level polls there were opportunities for respondents to set out their comments on each section of the guidance in detail. Each of the representations have been recorded and summarised in tables available in the following link <https://glasgow.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=53357> . The tables also include the Council's response to each comment and whether it results in any change to the guidance and an explanation why. Two tables are included, one of which contains responses on the consultation questionnaire via the Council's Consultation hub and another reflecting direct correspondence on the consultation.

3 Summary of Changes

- 3.1 Reflecting the broad support for the consultation draft, the overall scope and principles of the guidance remain with minor changes and additions made following the review from the public consultation. The most significant changes to the guidance are described below.
- 3.2 The Areas of Concentration section has been reworded to aid understanding of the rationale behind the guidance intention. Specifically, the guiding principle that no one area has a limitless capacity to absorb student accommodation has been made more prominent in the text.
- 3.3 With respect to the boundaries of the Areas of Concentration, an amendment has been made to remove the Glasgow Caledonian University campus from the Townhead/Cowcaddens area of concentration. Further suggestions for restriction areas were made however, these did not match the level of concentration in the two areas identified at South Partick/Yorkhill and Townhead/Cowcaddens. Nevertheless, the guidance content still allows for a judgement to be made should a new proposal be considered to cumulatively exceed an area's capacity to accommodate new PBSA.
- 3.4 The Design Criteria has been modified to include language that reinforces the importance of considering built heritage in the design process. Additionally, the section relating to flexible floor plates has been amended to reinforce the importance of future flexibility and scope to accommodate new uses to support the circular economy. Additional text has been added to direct applicants to demonstrate how a proposal accommodates expectations from relevant disability and equalities legislation.
- 3.5 Perhaps the most significant change relates to the Mixed Tenure Guidance section requiring the inclusion of mainstream residential development which has seen three changes. Firstly, there has been clarification that a vertical mix of uses will only be acceptable where the applicant can demonstrate that any conflict between uses will be mitigated through the development design. The second change relates to where the mixed tenure guidance applies in the city. Initially this was focused upon only the city centre and Development Frameworks areas which are the regeneration areas identified in the [City Development Plan](#). However, the guidance has been revised so that the mixed tenure requirement is now expected in all sites over 0.3 hectares

throughout the entire city outwith the city centre. This is in response to a potential risk that applicants seeking to avoid the mixed tenure requirement could be attracted to divert new development to sites outwith the city's regeneration areas which would be counterproductive to the overall City Development Plan ambitions.

- 3.6 The final change relates to the threshold for mixed tenure in the city centre. This has been revised from 0.3 hectares total site area to a building footprint or footprints of greater than 2,000sq m (or 0.2ha). This responds to the differing nature of built environment in the city centre and the need to balance delivering amenity space on potentially tighter and higher density sites. The threshold has not been altered for outwith the city centre however, as there are concerns around the viability of achieving sufficiently separated uses without generating amenity concerns.
- 3.7 The statement of need requirements have also been updated to provide more specific expectations in terms of detail although its status in terms of the overall assessment of proposals remains unchanged despite representations arguing that it should be given enhanced weight over the Locational considerations.

4 The Revised Guidance and Next Steps

- 4.1 The post consultation guidance can be viewed via this link <https://glasgow.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=53358> This reflects the revised guidance including all of the changes made following the consultation process. This is the version of the guidance that is proposed to be submitted to the Scottish Government for ratification before adoption.
- 4.2 Should members agree that the guidance should proceed in its current form then it will be presented to City Administration Committee for approval with a recommendation to be submitted to the Scottish Government who will review the revised guidance to ensure there has been an appropriate public consultation exercise and that the guidance is suitably linked to the provisions of the City Development Plan.
- 4.3 If the Scottish Government are satisfied that the guidance is able to proceed towards adoption then the established protocol would be proposed whereby the guidance is adopted unless the Government recommend any material changes to the guidance. As this revision relates to only part of Supplementary Guidance *SG10 Meeting Housing Needs* it is intended to insert the revised student accommodation guidance within the existing guidance content.

5 Policy and Resource Implications

Resource Implications:

<i>Financial:</i>	None.
<i>Legal:</i>	None, the draft guidance does not revise the existing legal agreement arrangements.
<i>Personnel:</i>	None.
<i>Procurement:</i>	None.

Council Strategic Plan:	The guidance supports: Priority 82 Implement the City Development Plan and review planning regulations with the Scottish Government to ensure we deliver the best outcomes for Glasgow Priority 83 Ensure that Glasgow's developments, both residential and public realm, are of a high international standard and deliver clean, social, accessible and safe neighbourhoods and public spaces.
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Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:

<i>Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2017-21</i>	No.
<i>What are the potential equality impacts as a result of this report?</i>	The original guidance was supported by this EQIA Screening Report covering the City Development Plan and associated Supplementary Guidance and this remains applicable to the revised guidance.
<i>Please highlight if the policy/proposal will help address socio economic disadvantage.</i>	N/A

Sustainability Impacts:

Environmental: The scope of the changes to guidance mean that environmental performance is unlikely to be detrimental. Proposals will continue to be subject to relevant environmental performance guidance in other sections of the CDP.

Social, including opportunities under Article 20 of the European Public Procurement Directive: The key driver behind the guidance is to improve the balance of sustainable communities and support new student accommodation to have a more positive impact either in integrating within existing communities or supporting the creation of new communities.

Economic: Student accommodation plays a role in supporting the learning and knowledge economy by making Glasgow an attractive proposition to potential students. The revised guidance is intended to improve the overall experiences for all those living in and affected by student accommodation.

Privacy and Data Protection impacts: None.

6 Recommendations

It is recommended that Committee:

- (1) Considers the post-consultation amendments to the Supplementary Guidance.
- (2) Agrees to refer the revised guidance to the City Administration Committee for approval prior to submission to Scottish Ministers.