



# Houses in Multiple Occupation

Supplementary Planning Document (June 2026)

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# Section 1: Introduction

## Overview

Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) are properties that are rented out by at least three people who are not from one household (such as a family) but share facilities like a bathroom and/or kitchen. They are sometimes known as 'house shares'. HMOs typically fit within one of two main Use Classes<sup>1</sup>:

- **Use Class C4 HMO** - Small shared houses occupied by between three and six unrelated individuals, as their only or main residence, who share basic amenities such as a kitchen or bathroom.
- **'Sui Generis'**<sup>2</sup> - includes HMOs with more than six residents

Both the Stockton-on-Tees Plan and the Powering Our Future programme affirm the Council's commitment to driving economic growth to support community prosperity and well-being. The delivery of good quality, affordable housing in well-connected neighbourhoods is integral to this. Alongside this 'housing and the physical environment' is a main focus area within A Fairer Stockton-on-Tees which provides a strategic framework for tackling inequalities. HMOs form part of the borough's housing supply and contribute to residents housing choice by providing low-cost and flexible housing for residents whose housing options may be limited. They can be home to young professionals, students, people on low-incomes, and those on short-term work contracts.

Most HMOs within the Borough have been created through the conversion of existing properties that were previously in residential use (or other uses) which has seen their usage intensified. Whilst they are present across the borough there are concentrations within particular areas. Whilst there are few instances of this within the local area HMOs can also be purpose-built accommodation (i.e. new build). This document is equally relevant to conversions and new build HMOs.

The majority of HMOs within the borough are well managed and provide decent living standards for residents. However, the overconcentration of HMOs alongside poor design and management have the potential to lead to issues for both occupants and neighbours. Some of the most common concerns expressed in the borough in relation to HMOs relate to:

- Negative changes to the character of the area and the nature of the local community
- Negative impacts on the amenity of neighbours through the greater intensity of use of HMOs
- Pressure on parking provision
- Waste storage and litter
- Anti-social behaviour and crime
- Negative impacts on the physical environment and streetscape
- The provision of inadequate living accommodation for occupiers

The LA has two regulatory controls which can be applied that require landlords to effectively manage these types of properties. These are:

- **Mandatory HMO licencing** – which is a legal duty Housing Act 2004. Where a HMO is to be rented to five or more people who are not from the same household the owner, agent, or manager is required to obtain a licence from the Council.

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<sup>1</sup> The [Town and Country Planning \(Use Classes\) Order 1987 \(as amended\)](#) puts uses of land and buildings into various categories known as 'Use Classes'.

<sup>2</sup> 'Sui generis' is a Latin term that, in this context, means 'in a class of its own'.

- **Selective licencing** – three areas within the borough have been identified for selective licencing (central Stockton, North Thornaby, and Newtown). Selective Licencing was introduced on the basis that these areas are likely to become an area of low housing demand, has a high concentration of private rented properties (well above the national average) and is experiencing high levels of deprivation and or is experiencing significant and persistent problems caused by high levels of crime and anti-social behaviour. Within these areas all privately rented properties are required to have a selective licence. Under a licence several mandatory conditions will apply which could be supplemented by discretionary conditions. Not all properties requiring a selective licence will be an HMO.

This Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) has been produced ensure proposals contribute positively to making places better for people, improving standards of accommodation, and reducing detrimental impacts on neighbours. It assists in the interpretation of policies within the Stockton-on-Tees Local Plan and sets out guidance and good practice for planning applicants to enable the delivery of better planning outcomes.

The SPD will not be able to address issues in relation to existing HMOs, but it is an important material consideration in the determination of planning applications for new and expanded HMOs and is applicable throughout the borough. It applies to planning applications for:

- HMOs created through conversions
- Purpose-built HMOs
- The expansion of existing HMOs

This SPD does not consider applications for proposals that do not constitute a HMO for example self-contained flats (whether new build or conversion of an existing premises) unless their occupation would constitute classification as an HMO (i.e. occupied by at least three people who are not from one household but share facilities like a bathroom and/or kitchen. This is covered in more detail within the following section (see 'What isn't a HMO').

# Section 2: Background

## What is an HMO and what isn't?

### What is an HMO?

The full legal definition of an HMO is given under the Housing Act 2004. Types of living accommodation defined include:

*“One or more units of living accommodation within a building or part of a building not consisting of self-contained flats occupied by more than one household as their only or main residence with at least one person paying rent and two or more of the households sharing one or more basic amenities (or the building lacks an amenity) such as a bathroom, toilet or cooking facilities.*

*A self-contained flat within a building occupied by more than one household as their only or main residence with at least one person paying rent and two or more of the households sharing one or more basic amenities (or the building lacks an amenity) such as a bathroom, toilet or cooking facilities.*

*A converted building where new living accommodation has been created since its construction that is not a self-contained flat or flats and occupied by more than one household as their only or main residence with at least one person paying rent.*

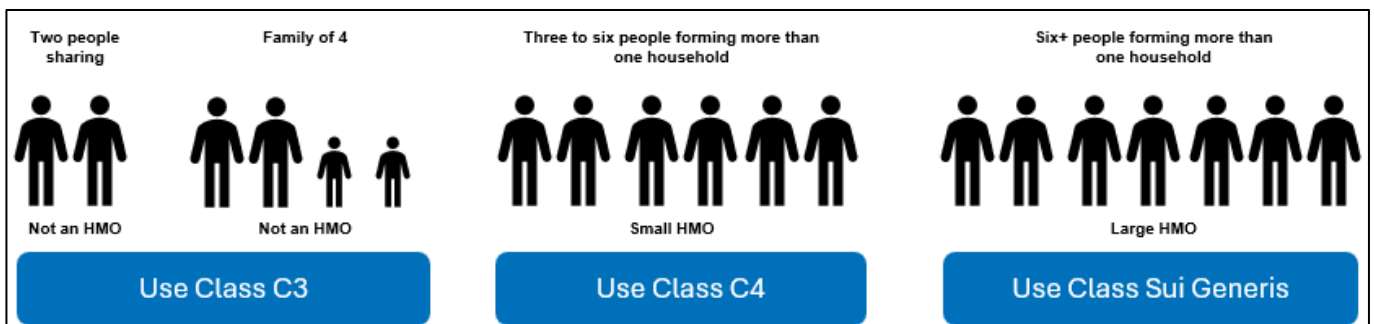
*A building or part of a building which has been converted into self-contained flats where the conversion works did not comply with 1991 Building Regulations and more than one third of the flats are not owner-occupied.”*

HMO's are generally defined as a property (house or flat) rented out by at least three people who do not form a single 'household' who share one or more basic amenities such as a kitchen and/or bathroom. They are often referred to as 'shared houses'.

The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) classifies HMOs as:

- **Use Class C4** – accommodating between 3 and 6 unrelated individuals, or;
- **'Sui Generis'** - accommodating 7 or more unrelated individuals.

Figure 1: HMO classification



## What isn't an HMO?

There is a popular misconception that flats are HMO, but where such a property is self-contained and is being used in accordance with Use Class C3 then this is not the case.

Within the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended), C4 HMOs have the same meaning as that given in the Housing Act 2004. Schedule 14 of this Act identifies buildings which are not considered to be HMOs often being referred to as 'exempt accommodation'. This includes buildings which are controlled or managed by:

- registered social landlords and housing associations
- educational establishments
- religious communities
- public bodies such as local authorities, health authorities and the police.

Any property falling into the above categories cannot be identified as an HMO and therefore cannot be considered as falling within the C4 Use Class described above. There are three possible Use Class categories defined within the Use Classes Order which the above properties can be identified within:

- C3(b) – for properties with no more than six residents living together as a single household and where care is provided for residents; or
- C3(c) – for properties with no more than six residents living together as a single household where no care is provided to residents; or
- Sui Generis, which is a category for any uses which do not fit within the other classes

There is no statutory definition of a single household. It has been established by case law that it is a matter of fact and degree, considering certain factors. It may be appropriate to consider 'exempt accommodation' when applying the measures within section 4 of the document, but this would be considered on a case-by-case basis taking into consideration local circumstances.

## Article 4 Directions and when planning consent is required?

### What is an Article 4 Direction?

The Council are in the process of introducing a borough-wide Article 4 Direction which when confirmed will mean that planning permission will be required for the change of use from a dwellinghouse (Use Class C3) to a small HMO (Use Class C4) (3-6 people). Until the Article 4 direction is confirmed planning permission for C3 to C4 will not be required as it remains permitted development.

The date for confirmation is scheduled to be 22nd March 2027. It should be noted that change of use in the opposite direction (C4 to C3) would be 'permitted development' not requiring planning permission.

### When is planning consent required?

The following provides the most likely circumstances where planning consent will be required for an HMO:

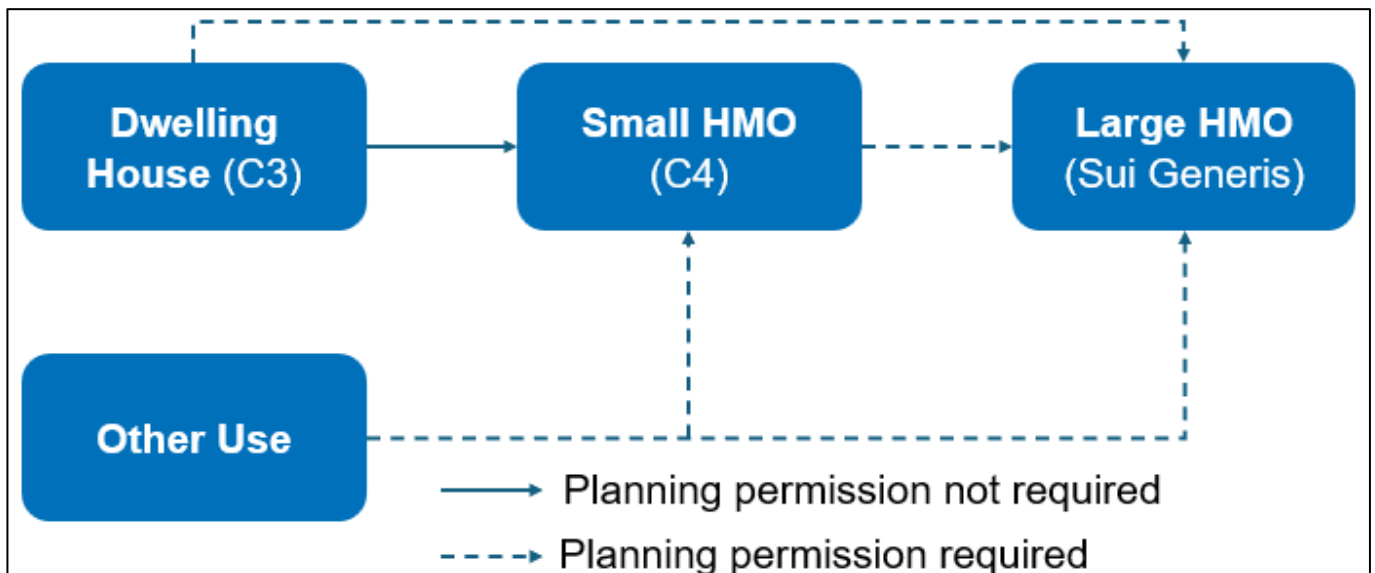
- Where a 'new build' HMO is proposed
- Change of use of a C3 property to a Sui Generis HMO (accommodating 7 or more unrelated individuals)
- Change of use of a C4 HMO to a Sui Generis HMO

As detailed in the above section change of use of a C3 property to a C4 HMO (accommodating between 3 and 6 unrelated individuals) will require planning consent following the confirmation of the borough-wide Article 4 Direction.

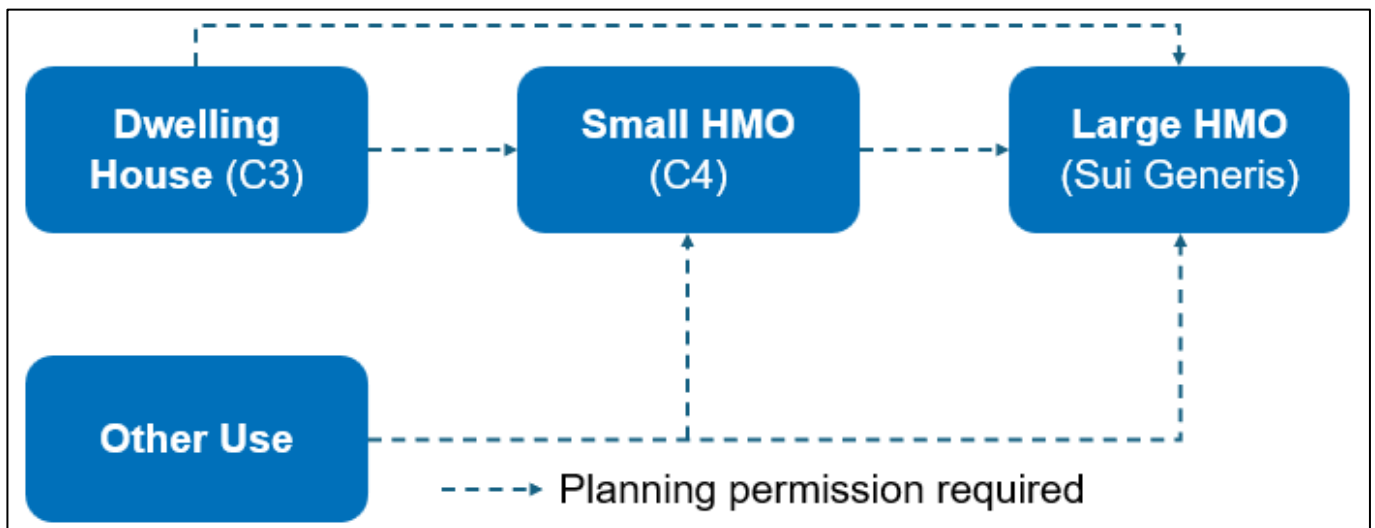
Where else might planning consent be required:

- Existing Sui Generis HMO for the occupation of further residents if the previous planning permission stated the number of residents within the application description, or there was a restrictive condition
- External alterations or extensions

**Figure 2: HMO Permitted Development and where planning permission is generally required (prior to Article 4 confirmation)**



**Figure 3: Requirement for HMO planning permission (following Article 4 confirmation)**



# Section 3: Policy Context

## National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2024) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. The Framework does not include any specific policies on HMOs but it does provide the following aspects which are of relevance:

- **Chapter 5 Delivering a sufficient supply of homes-** includes a range of policies covering general housing issues.
- **Chapter 8 Promoting healthy and safe communities-** advises that decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which can be achieved through promoting social interaction, ensuring places are safe and accessible (so that crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion), and enabling and supporting healthy lives.
- **Section 4 Decision Making-** covers the Use of Article 4 directions advising that they be limited to situations where, amongst other elements, are necessary to protect local amenity or the well-being of the area

The Framework is also supported by more detailed planning guidance set out in the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). However, there is no specific guidance on HMOs contained within the PPG.

A draft NPPF was published in December 2025 as part of a wider consultation on 'proposed reforms and other changes to the planning system'. The consultation concludes in March 2026 and following any necessary amendment it is the Government's intention to replace the current NPPF (2024). The draft NPPF contains the following elements:

- **DM10: Removal of national permitted development rights-** advises, amongst other, things the potential to utilise Article 4 directions where it would prevent an over-concentration of uses which could affect the quality of life or community cohesion.
- **DP3: Key principles for well-designed places-** support healthy, mixed, vibrant and integrated communities

## Stockton-on-Tees Local Plan (2019)

A range of policies from the Stockton-on-Tees Local Plan are used in the determination of applications for HMOs. This includes those set out below:

- Policy SD1 - Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development
- Policy SD2 – Strategic Development Needs
- Policy SD3 – Housing Strategy
- Policy SD8 – Sustainable Design Principles
- Policy H4 – Meeting Housing Needs
- Policy TI1 – Transport Infrastructure
- Policy ENV 1 – Energy Efficiency
- Policy ENV7 – Ground, Air, Water, Noise and Light Pollution
- Policy HE2 – Conserving and Enhancing Stockton's Heritage Assets

The most frequently used policies are SD8 'Sustainable Design Principles' and H4 'Meeting Housing Needs'. Key extracts from these policies are set out below:

*"...new development... to respond positively to the... Privacy and amenity of all existing and future occupants of land and buildings"*

*"New development should contribute positively to making places better for people. They should be inclusive and establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit."*

*"Sustainable residential communities will be created by requiring developers to provide a mix and balance of good quality housing of appropriate sizes, types and tenures which reflects local needs and demand, having regard to the Strategic Housing Market Assessment, its successor documents or appropriate supporting documents."*

Applicants for planning permission should demonstrate through their applications that they have had regard to all relevant Local Plan policies. Supplementary Planning Documents, including this one and the Local Design Guide SPD (March 2023), are also material considerations in the determination of applications.

# Section 4: Guidance

## Overview

Both the Stockton-on-Tees Plan and the Powering Our Future programme affirm the Councils commitment to driving economic growth to support community prosperity and well-being. The delivery of good quality, affordable housing in well-connected neighbourhoods is integral to this. HMO form part of the boroughs housing supply, contribute towards meeting housing needs, and can support the continued viable use or re-use of vacant buildings. However, they typically intensify the use of properties, often with more resident and visitor movements than a typical family home, and concentrations of them can impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties and the character of the local area.

To ensure mixed and balanced communities and to ensure that new development does not have an unacceptable adverse impact on local amenity and quality of life, this section of the document sets out guidelines to limit the concentration of HMOs and to manage their proximity to one another. This will contribute to retaining local character, help to ensure a mix of house types and tenures, and reduce potential residential amenity issues. To achieve this, the following measures (or tests) will be applied when assessing planning applications for HMOs:

- [Avoiding concentrations of HMOs](#)
- [Avoiding a grouping of HMOs](#)
- [Avoiding sandwiching](#)

The remainder of this section provides further detail on the application of these measures. It should be noted that these measures are not stand-alone. i.e. achieving a positive outcome to one measure would not mean that the other measures can be disregarded. **All the above measures would need to be applied cumulatively.**

There are areas within the borough where high concentrations of HMOs already exist. These concentrations are in areas typified by medium and large terraced residential properties which have seen the conversion or use of these properties for C4 and Sui Generis HMOs. Concentrations of HMOs have an alignment with the areas selected for selective licencing (Central Stockton, North Thornaby, and Newtown) where all privately rented properties are required to have a selective licence. The extent of selective licencing areas within the borough can be viewed at on the Council website (<https://www.stockton.gov.uk/article/14526/The-purpose-of-Selective-Licensing-and-who-it-applies-to>)

These areas currently experience high levels of crime and anti-social behaviour with the Ropner Ward currently a pilot for the Home Office “Clear, Hold, Build” initiative, under the localised name of ‘Project/Operation Harmony’; a multi-agency problem solving scheme undertaken by relevant local partner agencies, including Stockton Borough Council (SBC), to tackle crime and ASB.

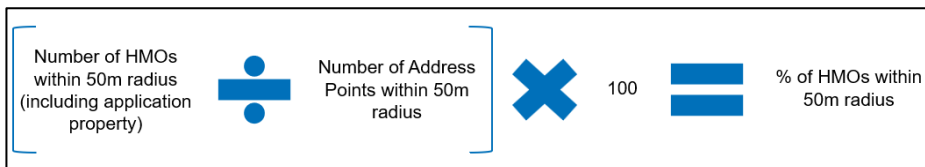
It is likely that consent for an HMO (or extensions to an existing one) will not be acceptable within many parts of our selective licencing areas and some other central locations owing to the ‘avoiding concentrations’ measure within this document.

## Avoiding concentrations of HMOs

Proposals for new HMOs or extensions to existing ones will not generally be permitted where the proportion of HMOs would exceed 10% of the residential properties within a 50-metre radius of the application property.

The 50m radius will be measured from the centre-point of the property (this being measured from the properties habitable external walls rather than the properties curtilage). All properties (residential and commercial) within this 50m radius will be counted towards the concentration calculation with the property the subject of the application being counted as being within its proposed use. An example calculation is presented below:

**Figure 4: Concentration Calculation**

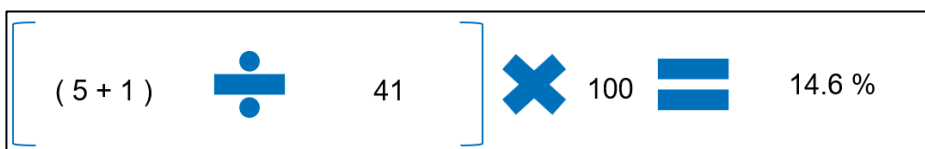


In our example below (see Figure 6):

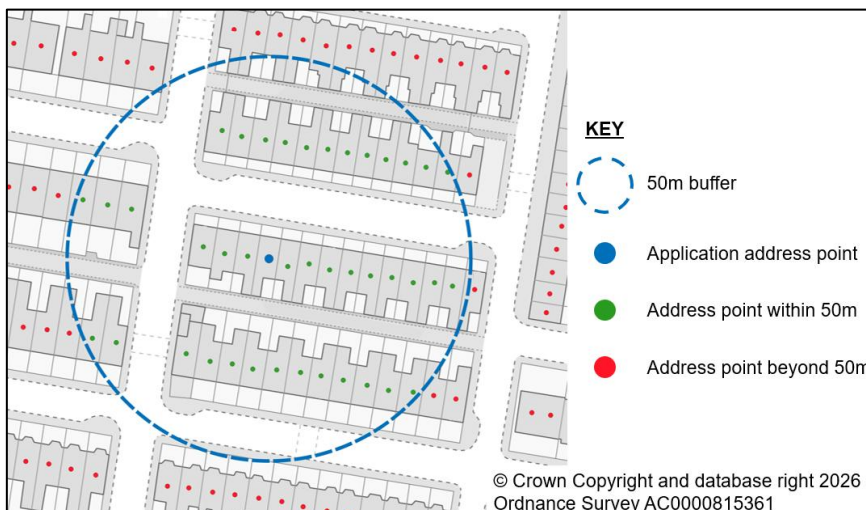
- An application has been made for the change of use of a residential property to a Sui Generis HMO (blue dot)
- There are 40 other properties (residential or commercial) within 50m radius (green dots)
- In total there are 41 properties within 50m radius (green and blue dots)
- There are already 5 HMOs within the 50m Radius (excluding the proposed HMO)

This would be calculated as follows which creates an outcome of 14.6% meaning an HMO proposal would not generally be permitted:

**Figure 5: Example Concentration Calculation**



**Figure 6- Example Concentration Mapping**



When calculating the number of residential properties within 50m of a proposal the following principles will be considered:

- **Residential Properties** – calculated based upon address points within the Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG). This will include all properties within ‘Use Class C’ and relevant ‘Sui Generis’ properties.
- **Flats** - existing properties that have been sub-divided into flats will be counted as single properties for the purposes of the calculation, as they represent the intensification of a property and some of the issues that can be associated with HMOs can also be associated with flat conversions (i.e. a terraced property converted to three flats will be counted as a single property for the purposes of this calculation). However, purpose-built flats will be counted on an individual basis (i.e. one flat counts as one property), as they are not subject to the same constraints as flat conversions and issues should have been fully addressed as part of the planning process.

Other considerations:

- **Physical barrier** – where there is a strong physical barrier such as a railway line with no crossing any properties separated from the application site may be removed from the calculation.
- **Less densely populated areas / more commercial areas** – there may be a particular circumstance where there is a limited number of residential properties within the 50-metre radius. This could present an inflated % outcome albeit an over concentration would not be present. This would need to be taken into consideration by the case officer when determining such an application.

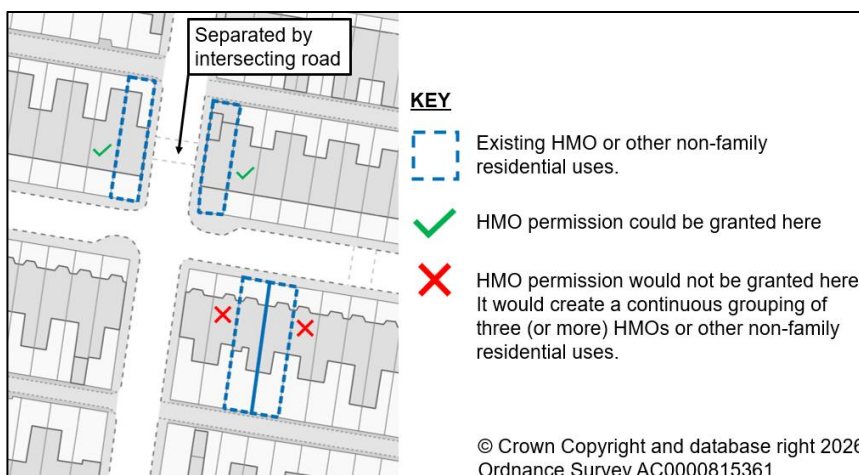
## Avoiding groupings

**Proposals for HMOs will not generally be permitted where this would lead to a block of three or more adjacent HMOs or other non-family residential uses.**

Figure 7 shows examples of three or more in a row being created and where planning permission would not generally be granted. This will not apply where properties are separated by a road (an ‘alleyway’ would not count as an intersecting road) or where properties have a back-to-back relationship in different streets. The case officer may consider flexibility of this measure in areas which are not predominantly residential subject to considerations of amenity.

For the purposes of this measure, ‘other non-family residential uses’ is defined as student accommodation, residential accommodation within C1 and C2 Use and self-contained flats as they present similar characteristics.

**Figure 7- Grouping Example**



## Avoiding sandwiching

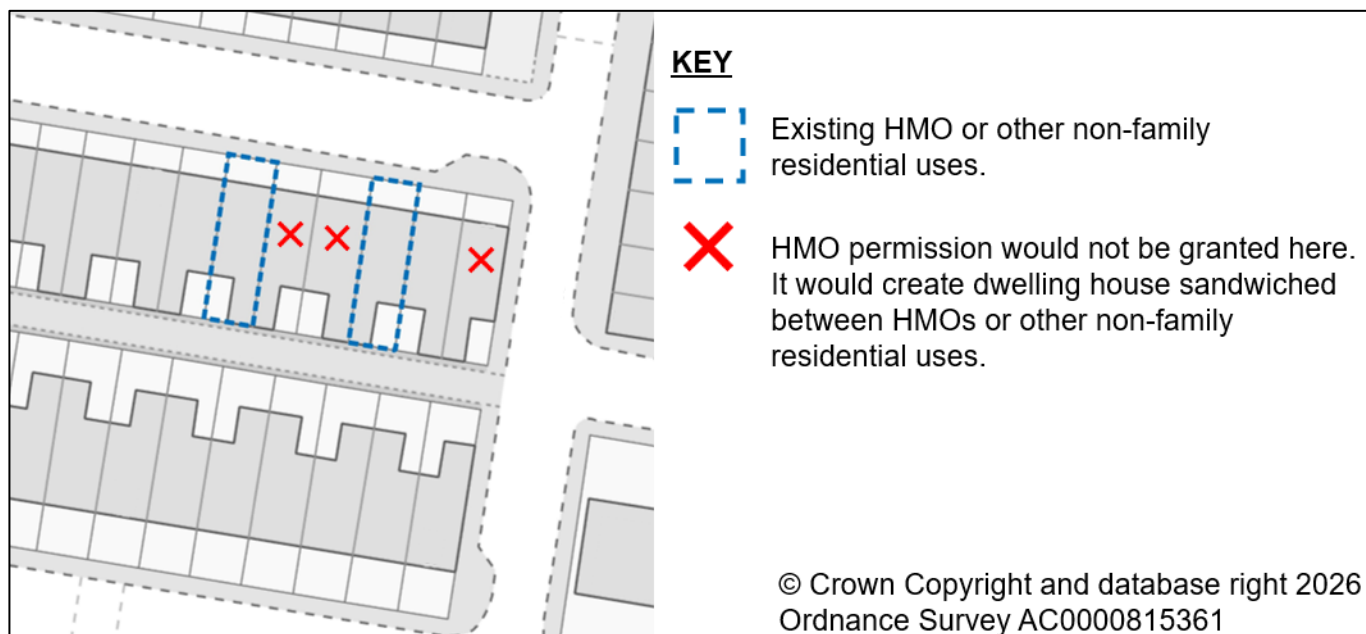
**Proposals for HMOs will not generally be permitted where this would result in a C3 family dwellinghouse being sandwiched between two HMOs or other non-family residential uses**

The sandwiching of a family house between two HMOs or non-family residential uses can have adverse impacts on the amenity of occupiers of the property that is hemmed in on both sides by such properties.

Non-family residential uses would refer to the same uses as detailed within the groupings measure.

Figure 8 below shows an example of 'sandwiching' and where planning permission would not normally be granted. As with the grouping example above this would not apply where the properties are separated by a road or where properties have a back-to-back relationship in different streets.

**Figure 8- Sandwiching Example**



# Section 5: Achieving good accommodation standards

## HMO Amenity Guidance

The Council's HMO Amenity Guidance provides various standards covering, room sizes and permitted occupation (bedrooms / communal rooms), washing facilities, heating, communal kitchens, kitchens provided within the unit of accommodation, fire precautionary facilities, lighting, water supply, refuse storage and disposal, and ventilation. It is not the purpose of this SPD to repeat information contained within the HMO Amenity Guidance. It is important that any proposals provide healthy living conditions for occupiers and the Council support the achievement of the highest possible amenity standards.

## Example residential dwelling to small HMO (C4)

On the next page we have provided an example property to provide some high-level information in relation to what may be acceptable in terms of amenity standards when being considered for a change of use to an HMO (see Figure 10). This does not replace guidance within the HMO Amenity Guidance. Our example property is a 2-bedroom residential dwelling (C3 Use Class) in a terraced street of similar properties. The owner is considering renting out the property (following internal amendments) and obtaining planning consent.

**Figure 9- Example C3 property being considered for a change of use to C4**



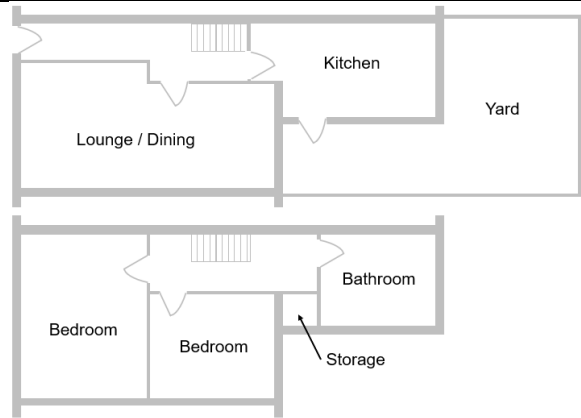
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**Figure 10- Example Layouts (C3 property being considered for a change of use to C4)**

**Original Two Bedroom Dwelling House**

Property includes:

- Large lounge/dining room
- Kitchen
- Two bedrooms
- Bathroom
- Rear yard



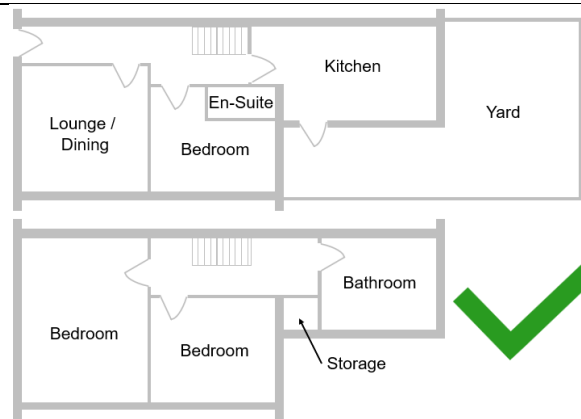
**Proposal to convert to a C4 HMO (3 Bedrooms)**

This is planned to be achieved through dividing the existing living / dining room into a smaller living / dining room and a bedroom (with En-Suite).

No amendments are made to the upper floors.

**This is likely to be acceptable\***

\*Subject to consideration against HMO Amenity Guidance



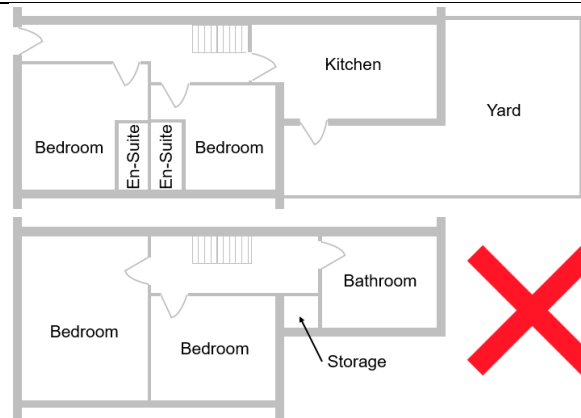
**Proposal to convert to a C4 HMO (4 Bedrooms)**

This is planned to be achieved through dividing the existing living / dining room into two bedrooms (both with En-Suites).

No amendments are made to the upper floors.

**This will not be acceptable**

Whilst bedrooms are likely of an acceptable size the kitchen area would serve as the only communal area. It would not be of a sufficient size for cooking, eating and socialising when considering HMO Amenity Guidance.

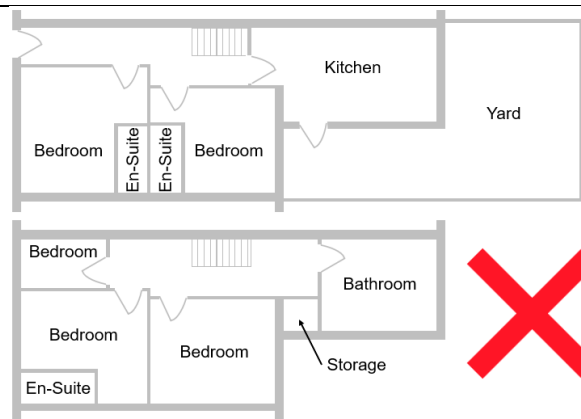


**Proposal to convert to a C4 HMO (5 Bedrooms)**

In addition to the amendments made in the above example the upstairs front bedroom is divided into two bedrooms (one with an En-Suite)

**This would not be acceptable**

This is for the same reasons as the above example albeit the position is exacerbated through the addition of another bedroom. In addition, one of the bedrooms created is evidently of a size which would provide insufficient living standards owing to its dimensions.



## Outdoor amenity space

Outdoor amenity space is important to help create a better-quality living environment and should be provided in addition to space used for functions such as drying clothes, refuse and recycling storage and cycle storage. Whilst there are no specific requirements for the quantum of outdoor amenity space that should be provided within an HMO as part of the Council's HMO Amenity Guidance document it should be provided within HMO proposals.

HMOs are often created through the conversion of existing properties and are often located in, or near to, town centres where outdoor space may be limited, so all applications will be assessed on a case-by-case basis, but applicants should aim to provide useable outdoor amenity space with an area for drying clothes, wherever possible. The area of amenity space should be identified on the application site plan alongside the elements which are to be used for refuse and recycling storage and cycle storage. All amenity space should be overlooked from within the property by habitable rooms.

## Lighting

All HMO proposals should provide healthy living conditions for occupiers and users. An important aspect of this is ensuring that all habitable rooms have adequate access to natural light.

## Energy Efficiency

The Stockton-on-Tees Plan and the Powering Our Future programme promote the delivery of good quality housing. In addition to this the Stockton-on-Tees Environmental Sustainability and Carbon Reduction Strategy (2022-2032) contains the aim to 'Achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions' and to achieve this a series of objectives have been identified including:

- Reduce energy demand wherever possible; and
- Accelerate the shift towards the use of sustainable energy

Where a new build HMO is proposed it will need to be delivered in accordance with building regulations which have seen increased standards introduced for energy efficiency. Where a proposal involves the conversion of an existing property this is the best time to make amendments to improve a property's energy performance. Energy efficiency is an important aspect of this with improved energy efficiency supporting reductions in utility bills and reducing inequality.

HMOs are also subject to the Domestic Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard (DMEES) relating to minimum energy performance ratings. This requires that all-domestic private rented properties must have an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) of at least band E. An EPC rating of a property is not all that's required - adequate heating and insulation must also be provided.

Landlords with properties that have an EPC rating of F or G cannot create or renew a tenancy until the property is improved. Non-compliance with Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) can lead to a penalty of up to £5,000. If a landlord is not able to improve the property, a valid exemption must be registered on the PRS national exemptions register.

There is government aim to raise energy performance standards across the private rented sector with as many privately rented homes as possible being upgraded to EPC band C. We support this ambition and future legislation which would enact these requirements. We support HMO proposals which go beyond minimum national requirements.

## Waste and recycling storage

The Councils HMO Amenity Guidance provides the following guidance in relation to refuse storage and disposal.

- Ensure that sufficient bins or other suitable containers are provided to meet the number of occupants within the HMO and that they are adequate for their requirements;
- All refuse containers shall be located on hard standings with suitable access for cleansing of the area and removal of containers. Such hard standings shall be located in an area away from habitable rooms and wherever practicable at the rear of the premises. If the hard standing has to be located at the front of the building or other exposed position it shall be provided with a suitable screen where practical. The hard standing shall be positioned so that the bins do not obscure natural lighting from windows below bin height; and
- Accessibility for collection of containers is a fundamental aspect and will need to be identified and demonstrated as accessible as part of the planning application process.

It is important that the location, design and size of external bin storage areas are suitable and that they do not have a negative impact on the amenity of HMO occupants or their neighbours, and do not detract from the general amenity and character of the area. Bins stored at the front of properties can look unsightly and clutter the street scene. Where possible they should be located to the side or rear of a property and screened from view to minimise their impact. Unless suitably screened, bins stored at the front of properties are unlikely to be acceptable. All waste and recycling storage areas should be clearly identified on plans submitted as part of the planning application.

## Car parking / cycle storage

HMOs are typically home to more adults than a standard residential property, which could lead to increased pressure for car parking spaces. Many HMOs are conversions of existing properties and the level of parking provision that is possible within the property is often restricted. Therefore, it is not possible to have a 'one size fits all' approach to parking that is suitable for all HMOs.

To reduce parking pressures on the street, provision for parking within the property curtilage should be provided if possible and appropriate. However, any in-curtilage parking provision must complement the residential character of the area and not detract from the entrance and approach to the building. A balance must also be made between the provision of space for car parking and other needs, such as waste storage, cycle storage and the provision of outdoor amenity space.

All applicants for HMOs should set out the parking provision that is proposed as part of their scheme at the planning application stage. The appropriate level of parking provision will need to be agreed with the council based upon:

- The availability and suitability of parking within the curtilage of the property;
- The sustainability of the site in relation to services and amenities;
- The availability of public transport and access to bus stops and cycle routes;
- The availability of existing parking provision in the surrounding locality; and
- Parking demand compared to the use of the building as a standard residential property.

The Parking Provision for Developments SPD provides standards for the quantum of parking and cycling provision within for C4 (small HMOs).

In relation to cycle storage the following key principles will apply:

- It should be secure (with natural surveillance) and covered

- Corridors or landings will not be considered as adequate provision for cycle storage and residents should not be expected to carry a cycle upstairs; and
- Sensitively designed and sited to reduce the impact on neighbouring residents or the street scene.

Provision for car and cycle parking must be identified on site plans.

## Entrance and approach

The entrance and approach to an HMO is an important part of how it functions in relation to its surroundings. The Local Design Guide SPD provides guidance in relation to entrances and approaches to properties advocating for active frontages to the street with front doors and windows of primary living spaces being located on this elevation to provide natural surveillance. Entrances to the side of properties will be discouraged as they create opportunities for hiding, increase feelings of insecurity amongst users and can cause other amenity issues for both neighbours and residents. Designing entrances to be visible from the street will mean that HMOs are more secure. HMOs should therefore normally be served by a main entrance at the front of the property.

## External alterations

We advocate that any HMO applications make as few changes as possible to the external parts of a property as possible to maintain the established character in the area and maximise the residential amenity of the property. However, we acknowledge that amendments and extensions to properties can be undertaken acceptably as is the case with other existing homes.

Care and attention are required where a proposal is located within a conservation area or is a listed building. Applicants will be required to ensure that proposals accord with policies on conserving and enhancing the historic environment. If a building is located within one of the Borough's 11 conservation areas, we encourage review of the Conservation Area and Historic Environment Folder (CAHEF) Supplementary Planning Document (which incorporates conservation area appraisals and management plans) for guidance on appropriate external alterations.

Where a building is listed, external and internal alterations require listed building consent. Such alterations are required to preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the building. It is important to consider this requirement when designing internal layouts, formulating energy efficiency measures and when considering any alterations to improve natural light, introduce entrance points and provide external storage.

## Supporting information

The Council will not specifically request management plans as part of an application for an HMO proposal. However, within planning statements we request that the applicant provide clarity to the Council in relation to matters which would traditionally be provided within a management plan as this provides the case officer, occupants/tenants, neighbours and other interested parties clarity in relation to how it is intended that the proposal will be operated and managed. The Council will seek further information and condition relevant elements where they are necessary to make proposals acceptable in planning terms.

Matters which we recommend to be covered through a planning statement include:

- **Occupancy Terms-** Clearly define the maximum number of residents allowed and demonstrating compliance with local standards. The maximum occupancy should also be outlined within the application description.
- **Maintenance-** process for regular property maintenance to ensure all facilities are in good condition (this includes all common areas and utilities).

- **Tenant Relations/Management-** This would primarily cover the approach to addressing and noise and annoyance caused by residents and any other relevant management procedures.
- **Waste management-** management proposals for the storage, transfer and collection of waste ensuring that appropriate arrangements and facilities are in place.
- **Security and safety-** detailing how proposals have considered safety and security measures including Secured by Design. ensuring all relevant facilities and measures are in place to ensure the safety of tenants is maintained (includes all aspects including fire safety).

This should not prove onerous for landlords and will allow them to highlight good management practices.

# Section 7: Further Information

The links below provide further information in relation to aspects of this SPD should you be considering an HMO proposal:

- [Stockton Council Information for Landlords \(https://www.stockton.gov.uk/landlords\)](https://www.stockton.gov.uk/landlords)
  - [House in Multiple Occupation \(HMO\) licences \(https://www.stockton.gov.uk/hmo-licence\)](https://www.stockton.gov.uk/hmo-licence)
  - [Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards \(MEES\) \(https://www.stockton.gov.uk/mees\)](https://www.stockton.gov.uk/mees)
  - [Houses in Multiple Occupation amenity guidance \(https://www.stockton.gov.uk/article/2055/foreword\)](https://www.stockton.gov.uk/article/2055/foreword)
- [Stockton Local Plan \(https://www.stockton.gov.uk/local-plan\)](https://www.stockton.gov.uk/local-plan)
- [Stockton Council Supplementary Planning Documents \(https://www.stockton.gov.uk/supplementary-planning-documents\)](https://www.stockton.gov.uk/supplementary-planning-documents)