



**Coventry Local Plan 2011-2031:
Homes in Multiple Occupation (HMO)
Development Plan Document (DPD)
Proposed Main Modifications (MMs)**

**Sustainability Appraisal (SA)
incorporating
Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)
& Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)**

**Addendum Note
March 2024**

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Sustainability Appraisal (SA) incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) & Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

Addendum Note March 2024

<i>date:</i>	March 2024	
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Coventry Homes in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Development Plan Document (DPD): Submission & Examination

- 1.1 The draft Coventry Homes in Multiple Occupation (HMO) DPD¹ was submitted to the Secretary of State on 25 August 2023 for independent examination by a Planning Inspector. The examination hearings were held on 23 January 2024². The Inspector raised certain Matters, Issues & Questions [November 2023, ID2] prior to the hearing sessions and these included queries regarding the SA/SEA and HRA for Matter 1 Legal & Procedural Requirements. The Council prepared a written statement [December 2023, CCC2] that responded to queries relating to these assessments. The SA and HRA were discussed during the first session on the morning of 23 January 2024. There were no representations received on the SA/SEA and HRA, including from the statutory consultation bodies (Environment Agency, Historic England, Natural England).
- 1.2 During post-hearing discussions, the Inspector advised that certain main modifications (MMs) to the submission DPD would be required to be made for reasons of soundness. She did not raise any concerns regarding the SA/SEA and HRA. It is necessary that the Council should consider whether any updates to the SA and/or HRA were required as a result of the proposed modifications identified. If so, they would need to be included in the consultation on the Proposed Modifications.

Purpose & Method for the SA & HRA Addendum Note

- 1.3 This SA Addendum Note constitutes part of the SA/SEA report (December, 2022) submitted on 25 August 2023 for the purposes of compliance with SA and SEA requirements. This Addendum Note only addresses the implications for the assessments with regard to the proposed MMs; it does not reconsider any other aspects of the DPD. Thus, the purpose of the SA Addendum is to consider whether any of the proposed MMs are likely to have significant effects, and to demonstrate that the requirements for SA, SEA and HRA have been met.
- 1.4 Government planning guidance³ advises that amendments to the SA should be appropriate and proportionate to the level of change being made to the plan. A change is likely to be significant if it substantially alters the plan and/or is likely to give rise to significant effects. An appropriate and proportionate approach has been taken and the proposed MMs have been screened using professional judgment to assess their likely significance with regard to SA/SEA and HRA. Any MMs that might be significant would have to be further

¹ <https://www.coventry.gov.uk/downloads/file/40740/hmo-dpd-submission-version-2023>

² <https://www.hwa.uk.com/projects/coventry-city-council-hmo-dpd/>

³ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/strategic-environmental-assessment-and-sustainability-appraisal>

assessed using the same method with SA Framework of Objectives (Table 2.1 SA Report, 2022) and the implications for the previous findings considered.

2.0 SCREENING THE PROPOSED MAIN MODIFICATIONS (MMs) FOR SA & HRA SIGNIFICANCE

2.1 The proposed MMs were screened for their significance with regard to SA, SEA and HRA, as set out in the following Table 2.1:

Table 2.1: Screening the Proposed MMs for SA/SEA & HRA Significance

MM No.	DPD Ref.	Summary of Change	Significant for SA/SEA or HRA?
01	Para 3.10	Amended text to ensure clarity - ... <i>"an assessment must be made as to whether a material change of use from the prior lawful use has occurred and, if it is determined that it has, then planning permission is required."</i>	No
02	Policy HMO1	<i>"All proposals for the conversion to or construction of HMO accommodation or the intensification of an existing HMO above its permitted occupancy threshold - provision of HMOs will be required to demonstrate..."</i> Delete existing criterion (b) to address unnecessary overlap with another consent regime and difficulties in practical application; replace with new criterion - <i>"there will be sufficient capacity either off street or on street to meet the parking requirements of the proposed development."</i> Changes to improve clarity, effectiveness and avoid duplication between policies HMO1 and HMO4.	No
03	Justification Para 5.7	New paragraph at beginning - to ensure long term resilience, clarity and effectiveness of the policies. The policy must be read in conjunction with the adopted Local Plan; acceptable levels of accessibility will be determined through the adopted Transport Strategy and the liveable neighbourhoods approach.	No
04	Policy HMO2	Amendments to text to ensure clarity and effectiveness and to avoid duplication. ... <i>"HMO applications will not be supported permitted."</i> ... <i>"HMO applications will be considered against the other Policies in this DPD and all other relevant development plan policies."</i>	No
05	Justification Para 5.9	Additional text to ensure clarity & effectiveness of policy - <i>"Overconcentration of HMOs can cause imbalance, leading to the problems identified in section 4. This includes increased</i>	No

		<p>levels of anti-social behaviour and noise within their immediate vicinity and on routes linking them with the city centre. This policy seeks to ensure that potentially harmful concentrations do not arise and that existing living conditions of residents in the vicinity of the proposed site and along those connecting routes are maintained."</p>	
06	Policy HMO3	<p>Amendments to ensure clarity & effectiveness of policy: ...three single residential properties dwellings... ...and or...</p>	No
07	Justification Para 5.12	<p>Additional text to provide clarity on the scope of the calculation in respect of interpretation of HMO3.</p>	No
08	Policy HMO4	<p>To ensure consistency between HMO4 & HMO1; to manage heritage, living conditions & flood risk consistent with the NPPF; & to provide sufficient certainty in the interests of the effectiveness of the policy:</p> <p>"All proposals for the conversion to or construction of HMO accommodation or the intensification of an existing HMO above its permitted occupancy threshold provision of HMOs will be assessed against must meet the following criteria:"</p> <p>b) ... "on the amenity of the occupants of neighbouring properties" ... or disturbance arising from the proposal:</p> <p>c) "the proposal does not affect a designated or non-designated historic heritage asset assets or its setting in a manner which would represent unjustified harm to its significance;</p> <p>All proposals will be expected to demonstrate</p> <p>h) how the relevant 'Secured By Design' standards principles have been met including the preparation of a management plan to demonstrate how the crime prevention measures will be maintained, and</p> <p>i) how, in areas at risk of flooding, the safety of those sleeping in any ground floor accommodation will be secured;"</p>	No
09	Justification Para 5.15	<p>New sentence for clarity at end of para – "The minimum room size requirements are based on figures set out within the Councils HMO licensing standards – to ensure clarity & effectiveness of policy."</p>	No

10	Justification Para 5.16	To ensure clarity & assist in interpretation of policy to manage flood risk consistent with the NPPF: <i>“HMOs often have ground-floor sleeping accommodation which puts those on the ground floor at the highest risk of flooding. Criteria (i) requires the applicant to demonstrate how any identified potential flood risk would be addressed. This may include the incorporation of appropriate site specific mitigation such as raising floor levels, flood resistant construction and the preparation of a Water Exclusion Strategy.”</i>	No
11	Section 6, Stage 3	New sentence added to ensure clarity and effectiveness of the calculations based upon the most up-to-date available data: <i>“In calculating the 10% concentration level, this will be determined for extant permissions based on data derived from Coventry’s Council tax data and other appropriate data sources during the planning application determination period.”</i>	No
12	New section Monitoring	New section identified a range of monitoring requirements linked to the policies of the DPD & progressed through the Council’s AMR process. An indicator is set out for each of the four HMO policies HMO1-4.	No

2.2 There are no proposed changes to the DPD that would substantially alter the plan. Most of the proposed main modifications are to provide greater clarity, correction, avoid repetition, for consistency, and for updating, and to ensure the effectiveness of the policies. As such, these changes are not significant for the findings of the assessment processes.

2.3 There are some proposed changes to policy wording and these might have been of significance to the assessment processes. MM02 includes changes to Policy **HMO1** Homes in Multiple Occupation (HMOs). Additional text for the first sentence beginning *“All proposals... provides sufficient certainty to the reader about the policy requirements. The deletion of criterion b) on Accessible Homes standards and the new criterion b) on parking requirements avoids duplication between policies HMO1 and HMO4. These changes are not significant for the findings of the assessment processes.*

2.4 Policy **HMO2** Concentrations and Thresholds includes a change from *“will not be supported”* to *“will not be **permitted**”* and this strengthens the policy, ensuring further clarity and effectiveness. Text amended to clarify that each application will be considered in accordance with the adopted plan – to avoid duplication. Policy **HMO3** Sandwiching includes one change *“three single residential properties **dwellings**”* and two from *“and”* to *“**or**”* – again for

clarity and effectiveness. These changes are not significant for the findings of the assessment processes.

- 2.5 Policy **HMO4** Amenity and Design now requires that all proposals “**must meet**” the criteria – and this will strengthen the policy. Criterion b) makes explicit that there should be no adverse impact on the amenity “*of the occupants*” thus providing more clarity. Criterion c) includes additional wording for clarification to make explicit that the proposal does not affect a heritage assets (both designated and non-designated), or its setting, in a manner that would represent unjustified harm to its significance. This will strengthen the mitigation measures provided through such policy wording and as assessed with SA Objective No 8 that aims to protect and enhance the historic environment and the setting of heritage assets. The SA findings for overall neutral effects are confirmed. Criterion h) requires preparation of a management plan to demonstrate how the crime prevention measures will be maintained – ensuring that the mitigation measures through policy wording will be implemented and maintained. These changes ensure that heritage, living conditions & design will be managed consistently with the NPPF. As such, the findings of the SA are not affected.
- 2.6 Criterion i) addresses ensuring safety from flood risk of those sleeping in any ground floor accommodation – thus, strengthening the policy. This matter arose from discussions with the Environment Agency. The additional criterion makes explicit the mitigation measure through policy wording for risk to health through ground floor flooding. Flood risk and climate change had been scoped out of the SA/SEA (and agreed through scoping consultation with the statutory environmental bodies) since it was considered that all development proposals would have to comply with national requirements regarding flood risk and the adopted local plan. This additional criterion ensures that the management of flood risk is consistent with the NPPF - and thus will support the findings of the SA including SA Objective No 12 Flood Risk and SA Objective No 4 Health. Policies provide sufficient mitigation measures to ensure that there are no significant negative effects associated with flood risk.
- 2.7 The proposed MMs include a new section 7 **Monitoring** that clearly explains the monitoring requirements and how they link to the Council's annual Monitoring Report. A specific indicator is provided for each of the four policies. The SA (December 2022) had considered that the Coventry monitoring strategy for the Local Plan is considered satisfactory for the requirements from the SA process. The provision of specific indicators for the HMO policies will further ensure that the effects of the DPD and the predictions of the SA will be more clearly monitored.
- 2.8 The submitted SA Report (December 2022) that was examined alongside the draft HMO DPD found that overall, the implementation of the DPD is likely to have positive effects for housing, balanced communities, and health and wellbeing. The provision of concentrations and thresholds will better ensure that the intentions are deliverable and that mitigation measures are implemented. This will resolve existing sustainability problems, and avoid exacerbation of further cumulative negative effects such that overall positive effects are indicated.

- 2.9 The SA had found that there was strong mitigation provided through HMO policy requirements to mitigate potential negative effects for amenity and character of Coventry areas. This included consideration of avoiding/reducing likely cumulative effects for social isolation, anti-social behaviour, amenity and visual impacts, poor air quality and traffic/parking, nuisance noise, and poor waste management. The proposed MMs to the HMO DPD ensure further clarity and effectiveness of the policies. With such further strengthening of the mitigation provided through policy wording, the findings of the SA are still relevant and further confirmed. There are no negative effects indicated.
- 2.10 There are no negative effects indicated and there are no implications for the **HRA** findings. An updated HRA screening (April 2022) was undertaken in respect of the emerging HMO DPD. This concluded that there would be no likely significant effects (LSEs) on the integrity of identified nearby designated sites, alone or in-combination. During the consultation of the SA scoping and HRA screening, Natural England advised that they agreed with the conclusions reached.

3.0 SUMMARY & NEXT STEPS

- 3.1 The implications of the proposed MMs on the findings of the previous SA/SEA and HRA have been investigated. The MMs were screened for their significance with regard to the assessment processes. Most amendments are to provide further clarity, ensure effectiveness of the policies, and the changes do not substantially alter the plan. Overall, the previous findings of the SA/SEA remain relevant and valid. Proposed changes to Policies HMO1-4 ensure better clarity and the effectiveness of the policies such that the mitigation measures provided through the policy wording are also strengthened. The findings of the SA are confirmed – positive effects are enhanced through clarity and removal of any uncertainty. There will be no significant negative effects. The previous findings of the HRA remain relevant and valid - the Coventry HMO DPD will not have adverse effects on the integrity of protected sites, alone or in combination.
- 3.2 The proposed MMs will be subject to public consultation commencing as soon as reasonably practicable but will be post the May 2024 local election period, including this SA Addendum Note. The Inspector will consider any representations made and then her final report is anticipated later in 2024. Upon adoption of the modified Plan, an SA Adoption Statement will also be prepared and published, in accordance with regulatory requirements.