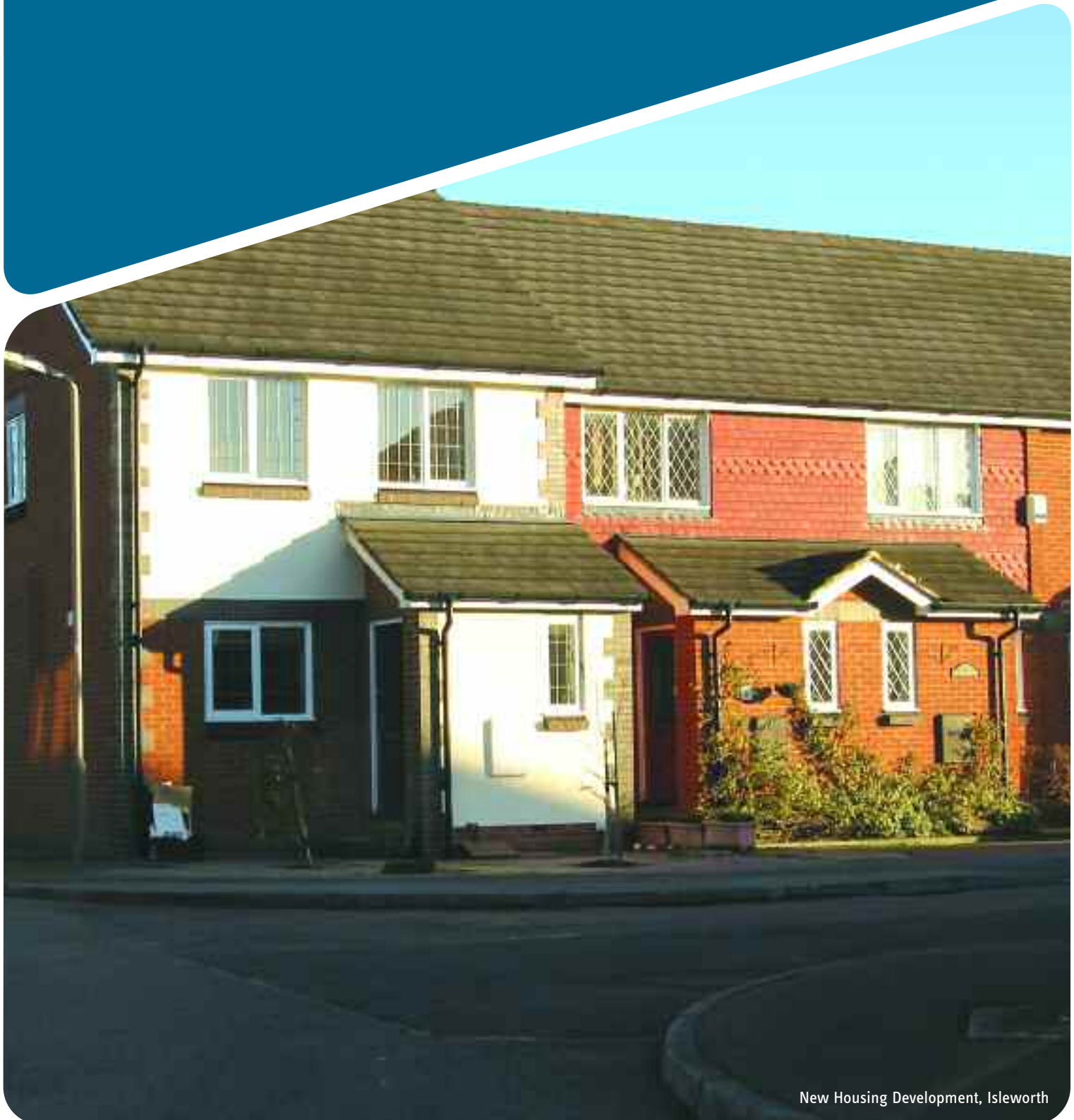


HOUSING

**London Borough of Hounslow
Unitary Development Plan Adopted December 2003**







HOUSING INTRODUCTION

1.0 EXISTING SITUATION

1.1

There are over 83,000 households in the Borough (2001 Census). Over 6,000 new dwellings have been built between 1992 and the end of 2002. 62% of households live in houses, of which semi-detached is the most popular form, with 38% living in purpose built flats or maisonettes. Owner occupation continues to increase, representing 61% of all households. Local authority tenure is 17% and housing associations represent about 6%. The poorer housing conditions are concentrated among the older properties, which are often occupied by elderly households. Also significant is the need to maintain and repair the Council's post-war 'system-built' stock.

1.2

The 2001 Housing Needs Survey identified a serious imbalance in the housing available in the Borough and households' ability to pay. The issue of affordable housing has been compounded by changes in tenure, steep house price increases, certain demographic changes, such as an increase in the number of small households, and an increased demand for supported housing. The continuing rise in house prices is likely to exacerbate the situation.

1.3

The size of households has been steadily decreasing so that the majority of residents live in 1 or 2 person households. The 2001 Census showed that 30% of households are now single person. Car ownership is closely linked to tenure. While 29% of all households in the Borough do not own a car, only 16% of owner occupiers do not own a car compared to over 50% of households who are council and housing association tenants. 46% of all households own one car and a further 25% own 2 or more cars.

2.0 DEVELOPMENT PRESSURES

2.1

Projections show that the number of households are expected to increase over the period to 2016. Strategic Guidance (RPG3) requires local authorities to set out strategic policies for increasing housing provision in their area and to show how they propose to exceed the minimum net additional dwelling figure, which is 6,100 completed dwellings for the period 1992 to 2006. Analysis of planning permissions and housing completions show over 6,000 dwellings were built between 1992 and the end of 2002. As at the 31st March 2003, over 2,000 dwellings were under construction and approximately 1,000 have an outstanding planning permission. In addition further dwellings are likely to come forward through 'windfall' sites.

2.2

A housing capacity study was carried out by the Borough for LPAC in 1998/9. This capacity study sought to maximise housing provision in the Borough and investigated the potential for additional housing from large and small sites, from surplus office sites and other conversions. The study estimated a Housing Capacity Guideline figure of 8,250 additional dwellings between 1997 and 2016. This figure is based on an estimated supply of 3,670 additional dwellings from identified sites, 2,300 from windfall sites and nearly 1,000 additional dwellings from small sites of less than 10 dwellings. The potential for additional accommodation from non-self-contained units such as hostels and the return to use of vacant dwellings was also investigated, but the additional dwellings from these sources was not included in the Housing Capacity Guideline figure.

2.3

The market for housing has been and is expected to remain fairly buoyant in Hounslow. Many of the housing sites identified in the adopted UDP have now been developed. The review highlights that there are now fewer available large housing sites in the Borough with supply increasingly coming from windfall sites, conversions/change of use, from industrial or commercial uses, or within mixed use developments. At present there are sufficient opportunities to provide more than the minimum 6,100 additional completed dwelling figure. In view of this, it is considered that it has not been necessary to identify additional sites for housing as part of the UDP Review process.

2.4

The Council is however concerned that new housing provision is appropriately located in relation to the transport network and to other uses and facilities such as places of employment or education. Similarly new housing should not have an adverse impact on the character or openness of the environment.

3.0 SOCIAL NEEDS

3.1

Although housing developers have responded to the trend towards smaller households, this has made little impact on the pressing housing needs in Hounslow. Recently the price of housing has soared in relation to disposable household income, making home ownership beyond the resources of many households.

3.2

At the same time the size of the local authority's housing stock has contracted due to Right to Buy sales and the tailing off of the Council's own building programme. Although through the Council's enabling role, Registered Social Landlords have been able to build an average of 150 units of affordable housing per annum in the Borough since 1992, there is still clear evidence of housing need. The 2001 Housing Needs Survey estimates that for the 5 year period from 2001 there is a shortfall of affordable housing in the Borough of 2,041 homes per year. In London as a whole the total need for affordable housing is 25,700 per year to 2016 (Draft London Plan 2002).

3.3

For many households in the Borough, the supply of market housing is irrelevant because they do not have enough income to afford the housing that they require. Subsidised public or voluntary sector housing is the only option to households on low incomes and the issue of affordability is as important as housing availability. The Council recognises the importance that affordable housing plays in creating mixed and sustainable communities. It will therefore seek to provide an element of affordable housing as part of mixed developments and urban regeneration initiatives.

3.4

The demands of the growing number of smaller households must be balanced against the requirements of large families. The Council has encouraged retention of family houses and allowed a substantial number of extensions and adaptations to houses, many of which help meet the requirements for extended families. The Council recognises that certain groups have suffered discrimination in access to housing due to their gender, race or ethnic origin.

3.5

The Council recognises that the special needs of different client groups often require provision of specially designed or adapted housing, e.g. wheelchair housing for people with disabilities or accommodation with additional support for people with learning difficulties. The policy of community care has led to an increased demand for special needs housing by older people because the aim is to enable more of them to remain in the community for longer without need for residential care. In April 2000 80 households were on the Housing Register requiring specialised dwellings. Adaptations to existing dwellings can improve facilities and reduce risks for many people with disabilities and allow them to live independently. However the need also exists for units of specially designed housing for older and disabled people, as well as improved mobility standards in housing generally.

3.6

Care in the Community has meant the closure of most long-stay hospitals for people with mental health problems or learning disabilities and a programme of resettlement into different kinds of small scale specialist accommodation suitable for individual needs. Further provision will be required, both in adapted dwellings and new-build properties, to meet demand from local residents who previously would have been offered a long term hospital place.

4.0 STRATEGIC MATTERS

Strategic Guidance for London Planning Authorities (RPG3)

4.1

The Secretary of State's Strategic Guidance for London Planning Authorities (RPG3) together with PPG1, 3 and 12 sets out the broad policy framework for housing policies in the UDP. Strategic Guidance defines the Borough's minimum housing target of an additional 6,100 completed dwellings for the period 1992 to 2006. Because of the pressing demand for housing, the Council will resist the loss of existing housing. At the same time new development will need to have regard to the character of established residential areas and the need to protect the environment, the Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land. Guidance wants UDPs to recognise the contribution that dwelling conversions can make to increasing the housing stock, particularly as a means of providing low-cost housing. The role of housing in enabling regeneration and contributing to good quality mixed use development in town centres is also recognised.

Regional Planning Guidance for the South East (RPG9)

4.2

The Secretary of State's Regional Planning Guidance for the South East (RPG9) was published in 2001. RPG9 distributes the annual housing requirement across the region and identifies a target for London to accommodate 23,000 additional households per year. The RPG9 housing distribution applies to the period 2001 to 2006 and is subject to review before 2006 in the light of monitoring and the findings of urban capacity studies, and studies of potential growth areas.

PPG3 Housing

4.3

Key Objectives of PPG3:

- Plan, monitor and manage housing requirement and provision.
- Plan to meet the housing requirements of the whole community, including those in need of affordable and special needs housing.
- Provide wider housing opportunity and choice and better mix in the size, type and location of housing, seek to create mixed communities.
- Make more efficient use of urban land.

LPAC's Strategic Advice

4.4

LPAC acknowledges the need to provide for new dwellings, and highlights the worsening problems of access to satisfactory housing. In London there must be a concerted attempt to provide for low cost housing through housing and planning policies. Local authorities should include in their UDPs an assessment of the need for affordable accommodation, enter into planning agreements and ensure that publicly owned land where appropriate, is used for social housing.

4.5

Boroughs will need to examine the present and future housing requirements of their populations and ensure that there is a sufficient supply of housing land to meet future requirements.

Draft London Plan

4.6

The Draft London Plan seeks to ensure that future residential development is located so as to maximise use of the scarce supply of land and ensure ease of access to jobs, schools, shops and public transport. It aims to increase the supply of housing through higher residential densities, particularly in locations with good public transport accessibility, and in particular, deliver increased provision of affordable housing.

4.7

The Draft London Plan incorporates the housing allocation established in RPG9 as a minimum target and sets a target for Hounslow of 9,450 additional dwellings between 1997 and 2016.

5.0 KEY ISSUES

5.1

New residential development should be located with regard to local facilities and to the existing public transport network in order to reduce the need to travel and reliance on the private car. A systematic sustainable approach is applied to the selection of land for development giving preference to those sites which focus new development in town centres and regeneration areas, recycle brownfield sites, re-use buildings, are located near to and/or are accessible by public transport, and sites which utilise the capacity of existing infrastructure. The demand for new housing can place pressure on existing social infrastructure and it is important that provision of new facilities associated with new residential development is planned for and carried out.

5.2

The promotion of new development will be qualified by the need to have regard to environmental consequences such as protection of the Green Belt, Metropolitan Open Land, other public and private open spaces and the protection of the character of existing residential areas, for example through the application of density standards and high quality urban design.

5.3

Whilst private sector housing meets the upper and middle housing markets, the housing market is not meeting the housing needs of the poorest members of the Borough's population at a time when the resources of both the public and voluntary sector have been seriously restrained. Therefore the Council must look increasingly to the private sector to contribute to the provision of affordable housing, supported housing and housing improvements through planning briefs and planning agreements.

5.4

The formation of new households of one or two people will place emphasis on the provision of smaller units but this should not be at the expense of family sized accommodation. Conversions, both of existing housing stock and former employment uses can play a role in meeting the demand for smaller units but greater contributions are likely through mixed use or higher density schemes in appropriate locations.

6.0 OBJECTIVES

6.1

To ensure the provision of a minimum net additional 6100 completed dwellings between 1992 and 2006 and 8250 between 1997 and 2016, representing the Borough's contribution to RPG 9's annual target of an additional 23,000 dwellings in London, whilst taking account of any future requirements contained within the Mayor's Spatial Development Strategy. New housing should be appropriately located in relation to employment opportunities, community, social and leisure uses, to shops and to transport facilities.

6.2

To promote the provision of affordable housing by the Council, the private sector and Registered Social Landlords, using partnership arrangements and legal agreements where necessary.

6.3

To resist the loss of land or buildings in or designated for residential use and maximise efficient use of existing housing stock.

6.4

To allow for new housing development within existing residential areas and on suitable brownfield sites close to facilities and which are or capable of being served by good public transport and to encourage housing in mixed use developments.

6.5

To ensure that where practical housing is physically accessible to people with impaired mobility.

6.6

To protect and enhance the environmental quality of existing residential areas, and to promote the improvement of existing residential properties and associated community facilities.

6.7

To promote the provision of supported housing and other types of housing development where necessary.



HOUSING POLICIES

OBJECTIVE H.1

To ensure the provision of a minimum net additional 6,100 completed dwellings between 1992 and 2006 and 8,250 between 1997 and 2016, representing the Borough's contribution to RPG 9's annual target of an additional 23,000 dwellings in London, whilst taking account of any future requirements contained within the Mayor's Spatial Development Strategy. New housing should be appropriately located in relation to employment opportunities, community, social and leisure uses, to shops and to transport facilities.

Policy not saved & cannot be used from 28th Sept 2007

POLICY H.1.1 LOCATION OF NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

The Council acknowledges the Secretary of State's minimum housing figure of 6,100 net additional dwellings to be completed between 1992 and 2006 and 8,250 between 1997 and 2016. Provision is made in the UDP to exceed this figure through the designation of housing sites and the encouragement of conversions and mixed use developments. The Council will also aim to meet the GLA Housing Capacity Guideline figure of 8250 additional dwellings and the Draft London Plan target of an additional 9,450 homes (including non-self-contained accommodation) between 1997 and 2016, extending beyond the Plan period.

A systematic sustainable approach will be applied to the consideration of land for development giving preference to those sites which focus new development in town centres and regeneration areas, recycle brownfield sites, re-use buildings, are located near to and/or are accessible by public transport and sites which utilise the capacity of existing infrastructure.

New housing should be located in accordance with the Council's framework for sustainable development and regeneration set out in the Implementation chapter of the UDP. When considering new housing proposals the Council will seek to promote sustainable patterns of development and allow for new housing development provided it is consistent with all other policies within the UDP and can be achieved within a high quality environment for new and existing residents.

Reasons

8.1

The Secretary of State's housing figure for the Borough, as laid down in Strategic Guidance is a minimum 6,100 net additional dwellings completed for the period 1992-2006. The Council is satisfied that sufficient sites have been identified to meet the strategic figure (See Housing Monitoring Report Sept 1999) and that the existing infrastructure is in place to support development, but due to uncertain factors affecting housing development the level of new housing provision will be closely monitored. The Strategic Guidance figure is neither prescriptive nor inflexible and will not be used to restrain arbitrarily housing development on sites where the policies and standards set out in this Plan are met. The GLA Housing Capacity Study identifies a potential for about 8,250 additional dwellings in the Borough between 1997 and 2016. The sites identified in that Study will be subject to detailed appraisal before further allocations are made in the next Review of the UDP to ensure compliance with criteria in recent Government Guidance.

8.2

The Council is keen that land which is currently vacant or underused, particularly land in a town centre or part of a wider regeneration strategy, is considered and developed ahead of less

accessible sites. The Council will therefore seek to encourage new housing developments on brownfield sites in order to protect greenfield sites.

OBJECTIVE H.2

To promote the provision of affordable housing by the Council, the private sector and Registered Social Landlords, using partnership arrangements and legal agreements where necessary.

Policy not saved & cannot be used from 28th Sept 2007

POLICY H.2.1 AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The Council will negotiate with developers to secure the highest achievable provision of affordable housing on every suitable site, having regard to the specific local need for affordable housing, including the need to achieve a target of 300 additional affordable dwellings a year, site circumstances, the economics of provision and the need to achieve a successful development. The target will be reviewed each year and published in the Borough's Housing Strategy Statement. The target of 300 affordable dwellings a year represents about 50% of the current net dwelling completion rate.

All housing developments in the Borough capable of providing 20 or more dwellings, and/or residential sites of 0.75 hectare or more (irrespective of the number of dwellings) should make provision for on-site affordable housing.

Affordable housing should only be occupied by households identified as being in local housing need and it should remain available in perpetuity.

Where sites and buildings are, or have previously been in an employment use, housing may be acceptable in accordance with other policies of the plan (in particular Policies E.1.5 and H.3.5). Mixed use development sites may be particularly suitable for providing a high proportion of affordable dwellings, including key worker housing.

The Council will seek to secure a mix of housing types and sizes for affordable housing, having regard to priority need as identified in the Housing Investment Programme (HIP) report, local circumstances and site characteristics. The affordability of different elements of a scheme should not be apparent from the siting, design or layout.

Reasons

8.3-

In Hounslow, there is a serious imbalance in the housing available in the Borough and households' ability to pay. Entry level costs of market housing in the Borough, based on the cheapest property prices in 2000/01, require a gross annual household income of approximately £26,500 for a one bedroom property and up to nearly £43,000 for a three bedroom property. The 2001 Housing Needs Survey estimated that there is a need for about 2,000 additional affordable dwellings a year, over the 5 years up to 2006.

8.4-

The lack of affordable housing in Hounslow is clearly demonstrated by the numbers of households on the Council's Housing Register and by the number of homeless households. Nearly 1,000 households a year are accepted as homeless in Hounslow and at the 1st April 2002 there were over 6,350 households on the Housing Register. Despite efforts to reduce the number of households in bed and breakfast accommodation, over 200 homeless households were in this accommodation at the end of March 2002.

8.5

Approximately 70% of households in housing need in the Borough cannot afford social rented housing without some form of financial assistance, such as housing benefit. 36% of households have no earned income. About 30% of households in housing need are likely to be able to afford housing at rents or mortgage payments above the Housing Corporation rent cap levels. No households in housing need are able to afford at 2000/01 prices weekly outgoings of more than £112 per week for 1 bedroom accommodation. For 2 bedroom accommodation the maximum cost is £137 and for 3 or more bedrooms the maximum cost is £162 (Hounslow's Housing Needs Survey 2001).

8.6

Affordable housing is required not only to meet the needs of the homeless and other households in unsuitable accommodation who are unable to afford open market housing, but it is also needed to meet the needs of key workers, single people and childless households on low to middle incomes. The annual salaries of many key workers, such as teachers, nurses, emergency service and transport workers are less than £25,000 a year, below the minimum salary to enable a household to purchase or rent a one bedroom dwelling in Hounslow. This lack of accommodation for key workers in London and particularly in West London is having a major impact on the recruitment and retention of staff in key service sectors.

8.7

Between 1992 and 2002, approximately 6,000 new dwellings were completed in Hounslow; nearly 600 additional dwellings per year. Of these, approximately 150 additional dwellings per year were affordable. The 1999 GLA Housing Capacity study estimated that less than 2,500 affordable units, 30% of the total capacity will be provided in the 20 years between 1997 and 2016, approximately 125 per annum. This will result in a substantial shortfall in meeting the estimated need for over 2000 additional affordable dwellings per year. It is therefore essential that additional opportunities should be maximised to meet affordable housing need.

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8.8

The provision of additional dwellings as a result of new build, conversions and change of use can contribute to meeting the need for affordable housing. Local planning authorities that are able to demonstrate a lack of affordable housing to meet local needs should include in the plan a policy for seeking an element of affordable housing on suitable sites (Circular 6/98). The Council recognises that only a small proportion of the identified need for about 2,000 additional affordable dwellings a year can be met as part of the increase in the Borough's dwelling stock. Given the scale of the need, the Council will therefore seek to secure the highest achievable provision of affordable housing and will negotiate the provision of up to half of all new housing as affordable dwellings on suitable residential

sites, taking into account the suitability of the site, the economics of provision and the need to achieve a successful housing development.

8.9

Affordable Housing is defined as housing that will be available to people who cannot afford to rent or buy houses generally available on the open market, provided that it will contribute to satisfying the local need for affordable housing as demonstrated by the Council's Housing Needs Survey 2001. The definition includes both subsidised and low cost market housing. Subsidised housing is housing provided at a cost that meets the needs of households who cannot afford without a public or private subsidy to rent or buy open market housing generally available in the Borough. Low cost market housing is defined as housing that does not exceed the cost of the cheapest 5% of dwellings in the Borough. The 2001 Housing Needs Survey would indicate that the rent or mortgage repayments for low cost market housing should not exceed £133 per week.

8.10

Circular 6/98 states housing developments of 25 or more dwellings or residential sites of 1.0 ha should make provision of affordable housing. Where a local authority is able to demonstrate exceptional local circumstances through the planning process the threshold can be lowered. Due to the high level of need in Hounslow, affordable housing should be sought on all sites with a capacity for 20 or more dwellings or over 0.75ha. Even if 50% of the housing on all residential sites of 20 or more dwellings is affordable the estimated need for affordable housing is unlikely to be met.

8.11

The size and type of affordable dwellings within any residential scheme should reflect local housing need as well as the suitability of an individual site. The Council's Housing Strategy Statement and the Housing Register, as well as the Housing Needs Survey will therefore be material in determining a suitable mix of size and type of dwellings. This is particularly important as only a small proportion of the total need for affordable housing is likely to be met and the Council wishes to ensure that the affordable housing that is provided will meet the needs of local households in greatest need.

8.12

Where a change to residential is in accordance with other policies in the Plan, including Policies E.1.5 and H.3.5, a high proportion of affordable housing, including key worker housing may be particularly appropriate in mixed-use developments where residential use is a subsidiary element to the main commercial or employment use.

8.13

The threshold is expressed in terms of the capacity of the site, in order to overcome attempts to evade thresholds, either by lowering densities, or by failing to provide a mix of units, or by phasing development, or by submitting subsequent applications on the same site or adjoining sites.

8.14

Where affordable housing is required it should be provided on-site. Only in exceptional circumstances should provision be made on another site. Where a cash-in-lieu sum is deemed appropriate by the Borough, the amount will be determined after taking account of the fact that as all units will be general market units on the host site, a similar ratio of market to affordable housing should be achieved as if the units were provided on-site (SPG Affordable Housing). The Council will continue to monitor the provision of affordable housing.

8.15

Where housing is provided with either public or private subsidy, this discount should remain available in perpetuity to people identified as being in housing need. Appropriate arrangements to ensure this could include planning agreements, or the land being either developed by Registered Social Landlords, the local authority or a housing co-operative, or alternatively the houses could be built by the developer and managed by one of these organisations. In order to ensure that low-cost market housing provided without a subsidy meets and continues to meet the local need for affordable housing, the housing should only be occupied, both initially and subsequently, by households in housing need.

8.16

In order to promote mixed and balanced communities on larger sites the Council will negotiate with developers to ensure that the

affordable housing is well integrated within the whole development.

8.17

The Government is currently consulting on a proposed change to PPG3, which when published will also replace Circular 6/98. The Consultation Paper 'Influencing the size, type and affordability of housing' seeks to reduce the affordable housing threshold to housing developments of 15 or more dwellings or residential sites of over 0.5 ha. The Council intends to review Policy H.2.1 Affordable Housing at the earliest opportunity once the Government publishes the proposed change.



New Housing in Isleworth

OBJECTIVE H.3

To resist the loss of land or buildings in or designated for residential use and maximise efficient use of existing housing stock.

POLICY H.3.1 PRESUMPTION AGAINST LOSS OF RESIDENTIAL

The Council will resist the loss of residential, or part of residential, land or accommodation to other uses.

Reasons

8.18

The aim is to maintain the existing stock of housing and conserve the potential for future housing development. Current Guidance sets a minimum net additional dwelling requirement of 6,100 dwellings for the period 1992 to 2006 and 8,250 between 1997 and 2016. Demographic trends and projections however suggest there will continue to be a shortage of housing at borough level and across London as

a whole which consequently will result in continuing demands for new housing development. While most of net additional dwellings will be provided through the development of housing sites in the Borough these are becoming smaller and fewer. Therefore in addition to seeking to provide more dwellings there is a need to resist the loss of buildings in residential use. The Council will assume a presumption against the loss of residential use, including existing permanent houseboat moorings which have planning permission because of the present London-wide shortage of housing and projected housing demand.

POLICY H.3.2 REPLACEMENT ACCOMMODATION

The Council will require the replacement of any residential accommodation within non-residential redevelopment schemes.

Reasons

8.19

Loss of residential accommodation due to commercial redevelopment, though not particularly obvious on a site-to-site basis, can add up over the years and cancel out gains achieved on new residential sites.

POLICY H.3.3 THE USE OF UPPER FLOORS ABOVE SHOPS AND IN TOWN CENTRES

The Council will encourage renewed or continued residential use above shops. The Council will also resist the loss of residential use of upper floors above shops and in town centres. Planning permission will not be granted for the change of use of upper floors of premises within shopping streets and parades from residential uses, except in the following special circumstances:

- (i) self-contained accommodation with separate access to the street cannot be achieved;
- (ii) the external environment is so poor as to be unsuitable for residential use.

When the unit above a shop becomes vacant there will be a presumption in favour of a change to residential use.

Reasons

8.20

In this Policy the term “shop” refers to all uses within a shopping street or parade. Residential units above shops are often left vacant or are under pressure from commercial development. Such accommodation is a useful source of additional housing due to its proximity to facilities and public transport, and in town centres it contributes to the vitality of the retail centres. The Council will seek initiatives to bring units above shops back into residential use. Separate access to upper floors needs to be retained or provided in the interests of personal safety and security. (See Shopping Policy S.4.7 and Guidelines on Safety and Security (SPG)). In seeking the provision of separate access to the upper floors above shops, the Council will have regard to the practicality of implementing such a development, e.g. whether the reduction of floorspace in the ground floor unit would be reduced to a level which would threaten the unit’s viability. In exceptional circumstances, exceptions may be made where the accommodation is required for purposes directly related to the established ground floor use, where that use is suitable within that shopping street or parade, and it can be shown that there is no other reasonable alternative. The policy does not preclude Class C uses from reverting back to A1 or A2 uses.



Flats above local shops

Policy not saved & cannot be used from 28th Sept 2007

POLICY H.3.4A HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION

The Council will seek to protect residential properties in multiple occupation which meet

~~a known and established need for such accommodation and which accord with or are capable of satisfying the standards under the Housing Acts.~~

Reasons

8.21

~~The reduction in private rented accommodation has seriously hindered access to affordable housing for many households. The council seeks to retain such accommodation which meets a known and established need, such as bed-sitters, so long as the property provides or is capable of providing a reasonable standard of accommodation. (See also Policy H.3.4 Conversions of Houses to Flats).~~

POLICY H.3.4 CONVERSIONS OF HOUSES TO FLATS

The Council will resist the sub-division of small houses suitable for single family occupation and will normally only allow the conversion of larger dwellings to flats provided the following criteria are met:

- (i) properties considered suitable for conversion have a minimum original net internal floor area of 120sq.m (1,300sq.ft) except in situations not suitable for families;
- (ii) the converted property must provide at least one family size unit (3 bedspaces), preferably at ground floor, except in situations not suitable for families;
- (iii) provision on-site for car and cycle parking in accordance with the standard residential requirement for each unit arising. Relaxation from this requirement will be considered where it is not appropriate to provide parking on-site and where there is assessed to be a sufficient local on-street capacity to accommodate any proposed shortfall in the on-site provision;
- (iv) the converted property should have regard to the Council's guidelines for amenity space and minimum room sizes in conversions (see SPG);
- (v) there shall be no undue loss of amenity for neighbouring occupiers or the

surrounding area; and
(vi) where possible, converted property should have regard to the access standards for people with disabilities (see SPG 'Think Access').

Reasons

8.22

Although there has been pressure to convert Victorian and Edwardian houses, in general there is only limited scope for house conversions in the Borough. The majority of the Borough's houses are two-storey three bedroomed semi-detached properties, designed for single household occupation. The cumulative effect of their sub-division would have an adverse impact on the character of existing residential areas and result in a less flexible use of the Borough's housing stock. The Council will seek to retain a balance between houses and converted properties to ensure an adequate stock of family accommodation and to safeguard the character of established residential areas.

8.23

Where properties are of a sufficient size to sub-divide (120sq.m minimum), at least one family size unit is required in order to retain a minimal level of family housing. The Council will seek to ensure that all proposed conversions provide a satisfactory standard of accommodation as well as on-site car parking provided that this does not result in an adverse impact on gardens. Provision of on-site parking often results in a loss of an on-street parking space due to the creation of a cross-over and to the loss of garden space at the front, side or rear of the dwelling. The Council will seek to ensure that the parking provision is designed sensitively and does not detract from the street scene. The provision of on-site parking will be considered on its merits in accordance with the criteria listed in Appendix 3.

8.24

While the amount of housing designed for people with disabilities remains inadequate, the Council will look to the private sector to help redress the balance. Existing housing is less easily adapted to wheelchair standard, however it is quite feasible to achieve the basic standard of mobility housing and need cost no more to construct.

The particular design features of mobility housing are convenient for any potential occupier, not just people with disabilities. The Council also promotes the principle of visitability, allowing people with disabilities to visit at other people's homes.

POLICY H.3.5 RELEASE OF EMPLOYMENT USES TO RESIDENTIAL

Where a proposal to redevelop or change the use of land or buildings from employment use to residential use would in principle be acceptable having regard to Policy E.1.5 the Council will seek to ensure the following criteria are taken into account :

- (i) the proposed development is well located in relation to other employment opportunities, community, health, education, leisure and retail uses;
- (ii) each suitable site should contribute the maximum achievable provision of affordable housing, having regard to the Borough target, specific local need and site circumstances;
- (iii) key worker housing will be favourably considered as an adjunct to an existing employment use, or as part of a mixed use redevelopment proposal on suitable employment sites;
- (iv) the location is considered appropriate in terms of amenity for residential accommodation;
- (v) adequate provision is made on-site for car and cycle parking in accordance with the standard residential requirement for each unit arising except in car free developments or developments where car parking provision is reduced such as developments within town centre locations served by public transport links;
- (vi) the site is or could be made capable of being well served by a choice of means of travel;

- (vii) the proposed development should have regard to the Council's guidelines for amenity space and minimum room sizes in conversions (see SPG);
- (viii) there shall be no undue loss of amenity for adjacent residential uses or the surrounding area;
- (ix) the proposed development should have regard to the access standards for people with disabilities. (See SPG 'Think Access').

Reasons

8.25

In common with other windfall sites, employment sites that become available for residential redevelopment in accordance with Policy E.1.5, should make the maximum contribution to meeting the need for affordable housing in the Borough. Sites that have been allocated for residential use will not be able to meet the identified need for affordable housing. The amount of affordable housing to be provided on these employment release sites will depend on site conditions and the proposed mix of uses. It may be appropriate, particularly where the residential use is a subsidiary element to the main commercial and employment use, for up to 100% of the new housing to be affordable, subject to site suitability, economics of provision and the need to achieve a successful housing development.

8.26

Where the proposed development is considered acceptable having regard to Policy E.1.5 it is important to ensure that the resulting residential accommodation is also acceptable in terms of the Council's housing standards in Policy H.4.1 and is well located in relation to associated facilities (Policy H.4.5) and to public transport. This will help foster more sustainable communities where people have good access to facilities and will help reduce the need to travel. It is also important that the proposed residential use will not result in a loss of amenity, such as visual impact, overlooking, traffic generation, to any adjoining residential uses.

OBJECTIVE H.4

To allow for new housing development and conversions within existing residential areas and on suitable brownfield sites close to facilities and which are or capable of being served by good public transport and to encourage housing in mixed use developments.

POLICY H.4.1. HOUSING STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

The Council will allow new residential development within existing residential areas and on suitable brownfield sites, which are or capable of being served by a choice of means of travel and community services. Proposals should have regard to the Council's current standards and guidelines for:

form and design;
daylight and sunlight;
privacy and spacing between buildings (see Appendix 1);
private amenity space;
roads, footpaths, parking and servicing (see Appendix 3);
recycling and composting (see Appendix 2);
refuse storage and collection (see Appendix 2);
noise (see SPG);
residential extensions;
and to the proposed residential design guide.

The Council will encourage developers to have regard to guidelines for internal space arrangements, housing for people with disabilities, energy efficiency measures (Policy ENV-P.2.5), and recycling facilities in new developments (Policy ENV-P.2.4). Affordable housing built with a Social Housing Grant for a Registered Social Landlord will be expected to comply with the Housing Corporation "Scheme Development Standards" included in Supplementary Planning Guidance.

The standards and guidelines will be applied flexibly to ensure that development relates well to the surrounding area, respecting the predominant character and density and not damaging the amenities of adjacent properties. (See also Policy ENV-B 1.1).

Reasons

8.27

Growth and changes in the household population will place continuing demands on the Borough's housing stock. The bulk of new provision will be by the private sector, mainly on sites designated on the Proposals Map; elsewhere on windfall sites and in-fill schemes. In guiding development the Council will require that proposals are consistent with Council standards and guidelines in order to protect the amenity of existing residential areas and ensure a satisfactory standard for new housing.

8.28

Residential development guidelines will be published separately as Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG). See also Policy ENV-B.1.1 and Appendices 1-4.

8.29

Car parking standards and open space provision may be reduced where sites are located in town centres and where there are good transport links and access to public open space. A lower car parking provision may be appropriate in circumstances where public transport accessibility is high, car ownership levels are proven to be low and the site is within a controlled parking zone. Car free developments will be considered with regard to this criteria and subject to a S.106 agreement which would restrict potential occupiers from taking part in residents car parking schemes. A reduced open space provision may be appropriate where improvements can be made to local access to public open space.



New Housing Development, Brentford

POLICY H.4.2-

RESIDENTIAL DENSITY-

Density standards are a useful tool for house development in order to protect local character and to assist developers in preparing their proposals. However density will be of secondary importance after taking account of the individual requirements of each site and the merits of each scheme. Residential density in new developments should take account of the established density of the surrounding areas and should normally not be less than 150 habitable rooms per hectare (HRHA) (60 habitable rooms per acre (HRA)) nor exceed 250 HRHA (100 HRA). Provided it can be achieved within a high quality environment higher densities for predominantly non-family accommodation will be considered in town centre locations, areas of good public transport accessibility or in locations where there is no established residential character and the proposal conforms to the criteria referred to in Policy H.4.1. and ENV B.1.1. Housing schemes for predominantly family accommodation (3 bedspace units) should normally be within the range of 150–210 HRHA (60–85 HRA).

Reasons

8.30

The Council sets a range of densities to guide and control residential development. A minimum density is appropriate in order to ensure the best use of urban land. Much of the Borough is suburban in character and new development should reflect this, but higher densities (i.e. above the normal density range of 150-250 HRHA) may be acceptable in appropriate locations, such as conversions of offices to residential and in town centres where there is good public transport provision and where car parking provision can be reduced in accordance with parking standards in Appendix 3, and provided it can be achieved within a high quality environment for new and existing residents. Although the density range is within the density guidelines in LPAC's Strategic Advice, LPAC, now part of the Greater London Authority has revised their advice. Sustainable Residential Quality Interim Advice seeks to optimise the housing potential of sites whilst improving the environmental quality of

new residential development. The approach to density is consistent with Policy 4B.3 and the density location and parking matrix set out in Table 4B.1 of the draft London Plan.

8.31

Net residential density is calculated as the number of habitable rooms per hectare (HRHA) or per acre (HRA). The site area for density purposes is the net area of a site plus the area of half the width (up to a maximum of 6m) of the highway adjoining the longest boundary with the site and excluding any adjoining river, canal or public open space. This calculation may be inappropriate to use in the case of corner sites or small sites and in this instance the site will be considered on its own merits. The definition of habitable room includes all rooms normally used for living or sleeping, and kitchens having a floor area 11 sq. m. or over. Small kitchens, halls, bathrooms and WCs are excluded. Large rooms over 20 sq. m. which are readily capable of division will be counted as two rooms.

POLICY H.4.3- RESIDENTIAL MIX

The Council in considering residential schemes will have regard to whether the development incorporates a reasonable mix of housing types. In schemes of 20 or more units there should normally be a mix of family and non-family units. The Council will encourage the provision of a range of housing to meet the needs of a diverse work force and population and create genuine mixed communities.

Reasons

8.32

The Council will endeavour to ensure that future housing meets the needs of a variety of households. In view of the needs of extended families, large families and low paid workers, the Council will seek to encourage developers to provide accommodation for a mix of housing types ranging from general market through to affordable housing with regard to need in a particular area. In London as a whole it is estimated that most of the increase in households up to 2016 will be single person households, although the priority need in Hounslow is for larger family size dwellings.

POLICY H.4.4 PROVISION FOR CHILDREN'S PLAY IN HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS

In addition to private amenity space, the Council will normally require that children's formal and informal playspace is provided which is reasonably related to the scale of the proposed residential development. (See Appendix 4 Standards for Formal and Informal Sport and Recreation).

Reasons

8.33

Consideration for playspace for children is essential in all residential developments catering for families. Provision of playspace in the locality may be taken into account, but on the other hand developments should not compound any deficiencies in playspace in a locality and the Council may wish for these deficiencies as defined in the Council's Play Strategy to be taken into account when development opportunities occur.

8.34

Although gardens are provided, children still need to mix together in communal areas. The opportunities for informal play are as important as formal play. The entire housing development must be regarded as a potential play area and designed to facilitate safe play (including roads and areas near to roads) while minimising nuisance to other residents. The Council expects developers to take account of the guidelines of the National Playing Fields Association and make reference to British Standard BS EN1176 for guidance on safe play equipment. Play areas for young children should be visible and accessible from adjacent housing if possible.

POLICY H.4.5 ASSOCIATED FACILITIES FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS

In considering new housing development, the Council will seek where appropriate, in accordance with Policy IMP.6.1, the provision of new community facilities, health facilities (if required), educational facilities, recreational

open space and contributions to the improvement of public transport which is physically accessible to all, if existing public transport is not within easy walking distance (See Policies C.2.1, C.3.2, T.1.2 and IMP.6.1).

Reasons

8.35

New housing developments can put considerable strain on the existing local infrastructure and services. It is reasonable, therefore, to consider the overall impact of the development in the area. Where problems or shortfalls in provision can be identified such developments should contribute to the provision of extra facilities to meet the needs of the new residents which are fairly and reasonably related to the proposed development in scale and kind.

8.36

In particular the Council is concerned about the considerable strain new residential development can place on the provision of primary and secondary education. Where shortages are identified the Council will expect developers to make a contribution through a legal agreement towards necessary educational provision arising from the development.

OBJECTIVE H.5

To ensure that where practical housing is physically accessible to people with impaired mobility.

Policy not saved & cannot be used from 28th Sept 2007

~~POLICY H.5.1 HOUSING FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES~~

~~New housing, provided by new build, change of use or conversion should normally be built to include housing for people with disabilities. The Council will seek through negotiation to secure on suitable sites units designed to the standards for mobility housing. Where there is an identified need, wheelchair housing should be provided in larger residential schemes, normally over 20 units. All residential schemes would be expected to provide parking suitable for people with disabilities (See Appendix 3 Parking Standards).~~

Reasons (Applicable to Policy H.5.1)

8.37

A national survey by OPCS (Prevalence of Disability amongst Adults, Report HMSO, 1988) found that 14% of adults nationwide have at least one form of disability. Temporary or permanent disability potentially affects everyone at some stage in his or her life. The intention of these policies is to ensure that, as far as is reasonable through the planning system, new housing will contribute to meeting the needs of people with disabilities and enable them to live as independently as possible in the community. Part M of the Building Regulations ensures that new build housing is built to mobility standards but it is important to also ensure that wherever possible additional residential units resulting from conversions and change of use should also be built to mobility standards. All housing built to mobility standards should accord with the Council's supplementary planning guidance "Think Access". To meet the needs of people confined to a wheelchair, 10% of units in larger housing schemes (20 or more units) should be built to wheelchair standards. In this Borough much of the need for wheelchair housing is for larger family sized units. Suitable sites for consideration will include those which are level or gently sloped and where the layout can be designed to provide easy access to special parking spaces.

OBJECTIVE H.6

To protect and enhance the environmental quality of existing residential areas, and to promote the improvement of existing residential properties and associated community facilities.

Policy not saved & cannot be used from 28th Sept 2007

~~POLICY H.6.1 HOUSING IMPROVEMENTS~~

~~The Council will seek to maintain and improve the condition and quality of existing housing areas, both in terms of the physical buildings and their surrounding environment (See IMP.3.4 Housing Estate Regeneration).~~

Reasons

8.38

The Council is concerned about the condition and quality of some existing housing areas. The worst housing, the least attractive residential environments and the greatest social deprivation tend to occur together. Rehabilitation is usually preferable to redevelopment as it minimises the disruption to existing communities. It is of considerable concern, however, that without adequate resources to carry out repairs, redevelopment may become the only economic option in some areas. To this end, the Council will continue to survey existing residential accommodation, particularly that which is in multiple lettings and in need of improvement; to encourage participation and consult with owners and tenants, with a view to bringing about better utilisation of properties, repairs and provision of basic amenities, private open space and areas for children's play (See also Policy IMP.3.4).

POLICY H.6.2 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS IN RESIDENTIAL AREAS

The Council will encourage measures which enhance the environment of residential areas such as traffic management schemes, improvements and enhancements of existing, and where possible provision of amenity space and play space, landscaping and tree protection and designation of Conservation Areas. The Council supports the implementation of Neighbourhood Renewal Areas and the associated environmental improvements.

Reasons

8.39

The Hounslow Household Survey (1990) revealed that residents place high importance on the appearance of the local environment and the issue of through traffic, however very low levels of satisfaction were reported (only 7% were very satisfied with through traffic and 3% with appearance of area). Traffic management schemes discourage non-local traffic and increase road safety (See Policy T.5.2.) while safeguarding the residential character of local areas.

The quality of residential areas is also adversely affected by the impact of loss of front gardens to provide parking spaces.

8.40

Measures to maintain and enhance the greenness of residential streets will be pursued through designation of conservation areas and other appropriate measures. These measures should include the enhancement of amenity space and play space, wildlife enhancement measures, tree preservation orders, landscaping conditions on planning permissions and, wherever feasible, the use of planning agreements, small environmental improvements, and the Council's published prioritised programme of environmental improvement schemes (See Policies ENV- B.2.2, ENV-B.1.5 and ENV-N.2.7). The Council will encourage community involvement through consultation and participation where appropriate.

8.41

Neighbourhood Renewal aims to prevent the decline of deprived neighbourhoods by producing environmental improvements and reducing environmental crime by building community confidence.

Policy not saved & cannot be used from 28th Sept 2007

~~POLICY H.6.3~~

~~BACKLAND DEVELOPMENT / INFILL DEVELOPMENT~~

~~The Council will strongly resist backland (development of land locked sites) development in residential areas which:-~~

- ~~(i) would result in the unacceptable loss of back gardens or other amenity spaces which contribute to the character and nature conservation of the immediate or wider residential area and;~~
- ~~(ii) does not take account of the existing density, nature and character of the surrounding residential area;~~
- ~~(iii) would result in a loss of amenity in terms of outlook, open aspect and overlooking;~~
- ~~(iv) would result in unsatisfactory vehicular and pedestrian access; and~~
- ~~(v) does not take account of the criteria in Policy H.4.1. Small infill residential~~

~~developments may be acceptable, providing the proposed development would not result in adverse impacts, as listed in criteria (i) to (v) above.~~

~~Reasons~~

~~8.42~~

~~In Hounslow the pressure for new residential development has resulted in development of land not previously in residential use such as "backland" development schemes with consequent loss of amenity in terms of outlook and open aspect as well as loss of a range of habitats, often with mature trees, and valuable breeding and feeding areas for local wildlife. "Backland" development, involving the development of land locked rear gardens poses particular problems of access, overlooking and loss of private amenity space and to be acceptable requires both sensitive and comprehensive treatment. Some infill schemes can be on sites with similar characteristics to "backland" sites, but other sites can be underused sites within residential areas and their development for housing can provide additional residential units without a significant adverse impact on local amenity.~~

POLICY H.6.4 EXTENSIONS AND ALTERATIONS

Proposed extensions and alterations should complement the original building, harmonise with adjoining properties and maintain the general street scene. The Council will have regard to special housing needs, such as the housing needs of extended families and people with disabilities, but the extension or alteration must not have an undue adverse impact on neighbouring properties. Extensions should normally be consistent with the Council's guidelines on house extensions and meet the following criteria;

- (i) proportion: The extension should have proportion and balance and must not over-develop the site in terms of mass or density. It must fit in with the shape of the property;
- (ii) Position: Extensions should respect property boundaries and be positioned to avoid loss of light to adjoining properties. Side extensions should be set back one metre from the front elevation, and on corner sites, one metre from the side boundary. Roof extensions should generally be restricted to the main roof slope to the rear of properties;
- (iii) Materials: Proposals should aim to match the type of materials and colour to both the existing building and the surrounding area;
- (iv) Details: Attention should be paid to design details, such as position and style of windows and doors and must complement the existing building and respect the character of the area.

Reasons

8.43

There has been tremendous pressure for house extensions in the Borough over the past decade. It is recognised that extensions allow householders to make better use of their properties, but this must always be constrained by the need to respect the design of the existing building, the amenity to existing residents in surrounding properties, and the character of the residential area. The Council's Guidelines on House Extensions set out good practice to be followed.

OBJECTIVE H.7

To promote the provision of supported and other types of housing development where necessary.

POLICY H.7.1 SUPPORTED HOUSING

The Council will where appropriate, including in new large developments, seek to facilitate and increase the provision of a variety of supported accommodation for people with special needs, from residential care homes to small scale 'ordinary living' housing. The following criteria will be taken into account:

- (i) the current or designated use of the site;
- (ii) the proposal should meet a local need for that type of supported accommodation and be located within the residential area it is intended to serve, unless the scale of the accommodation is inappropriate for a residential setting;
- (iii) there should not be an over-concentration of provision locally;
- (iv) the effect of the proposed use on the environment, the amenity of adjoining occupiers and on access and highway considerations;
- (v) the location is near shops, appropriate supporting services and public transport;
- (vi) residential care homes should have regard to the Council's standards for registered homes and nursing homes should meet the Health Authority's registration requirements ;
- (vii) the proposal should have regard to the Council's access guidelines for people with disabilities "Think Access".

Reasons

8.44

The Council recognises the particular housing needs of elderly people, people with disabilities and other special needs groups such as students, young single people, rough sleepers and victims of domestic violence and the

increased demand for special hostel accommodation resulting from Community Care Policy, which encourages more people to live independently rather than in institutional care. It is recognised that residential areas are the most appropriate locations for special needs housing particularly where there is easy access to public transport, local shops and appropriate supporting services. On the other hand a flexible approach is necessary to ensure that there is not an over concentration of special needs accommodation in any locality sufficient to change its character. Appropriate sites will be identified for future development, including the option of supported housing units in large housing developments through planning agreements. The Council will produce further advice in the form of guidelines for the design and layout of housing for elderly people.

8.45

While the number of residential care homes has not risen in the past few years, the supply of nursing home places has increased significantly from 76 in 1994 to 419 beds by the end of 2000 and a further 100 beds with planning approval. Local demand is difficult to quantify but indications are that there is already an over-supply of nursing homes in the Borough. This raises concern over the proper allocation of scarce urban land and also about the future viability of certain nursing homes and the limited conversion potential of such specialist accommodation. A further problem is that all the new nursing homes are large, with a minimum of 50 beds. New build developments on this scale can change a locality's character, particularly if they are in a residential area. The policy seeks to control the future supply of nursing homes in terms of locational criteria, whether it meets a local need for that type of accommodation and the scheme's impact on the existing character of the location.

POLICY H.7.3 TRAVELLERS

The Council will seek to retain and improve provision for the needs of travellers on appropriate sites. Sites should be provided with basic amenities and services such as water, lighting and refuse collection.

Where there is a proven need for additional sites, applications to provide sites for the purpose of accommodation for Travellers will be considered in the light of the following criteria:

- (i) the suitability of land for mixed residential, business and storage use;
- (ii) the appropriate provision of facilities related to the various functions of sites as places of transit, temporary stops and places of settled occupation (permanent sites);
- (iii) suitability of access to the site and the adequate and satisfactory provision of parking, turning and servicing;
- (iv) the satisfactory provision for drainage on-site;
- (v) acceptable provision for waste storage and regular waste collection from the site;
- (vi) the provision of landscaping, planting and designation of an amenity area within the site;
- (vii) compatibility with the existing and proposed uses in the area, in particular in relation to environmental amenity in residential areas and the presumption against inappropriate development on Green Belt land, Metropolitan Open Land, public open space, urban green space.

Reasons

8.46

The Council recognises the need for Gypsies and Travellers' accommodation to be met. The Council provides a permanent site, the Hartlands site which currently provides 17 pitches. The number of caravans does not fluctuate on this authorised site but the number of caravans in unauthorised encampments varies from none during 1995 and 1996 to up to 165 in July 1999. Over the last few years there have been 40 to 50 caravans in January in unauthorised encampments but over 100 during July.

Other established sites for travellers residing in the Borough are privately owned and managed and are expected to meet basic standards of facilities and management.

POLICY H.7.4 BED AND BREAKFAST ACCOMMODATION

Planning permission for a proposed change of use from residential use to hotels, hostels, bed and breakfast accommodation, boarding or guest houses will normally be granted only where:

- (i) the accommodation is located near a town centre close to public transport and a range of social and community facilities;
- (ii) the proposal has regard to the Council's advisory standards for houses let as bed and breakfast hotels in accordance with BABIE gradings;
- (iii) the proposal satisfies as far as possible the Council's standards for car parking and access for people with disabilities; and
- (iv) the proposal does not result in an over-concentration of hotel-type accommodation in one locality;
- (v) the proposal does not have an adverse impact on the amenity of adjoining residents or the immediate residential locality;
- (vi) the accommodation is not a small house suitable for single family occupation, defined as 120sq.m or less net internal floor area;
- (vii) the accommodation is not a house in multiple occupation for which there is an established and recognised need.

Reasons

8.47

The Council recognises that for the foreseeable future there will be a demand for temporary accommodation for homeless households. Such accommodation is distinct from visitor accommodation in the following ways:

Bed and Breakfast

No other residence

Borough resident
Activity more like residential

Visitor Accommodation

Temporarily away from home
Non-Borough resident
More comings and goings

(See also Policy E.5.1 Visitor Accommodation).

8.48

Therefore bed and breakfast accommodation is seen as appropriate in or near to residential areas as long as the proposed use meets the above criteria aimed at protecting residential amenity. The policy seeks to protect single family dwellings as well as houses in multiple occupation which are meeting recognised housing needs. The types of properties most suitable for change of use to bed and breakfast and hostel accommodation are large detached houses or pairs of large semi-detached houses typically located in or near one of the town centres and close to public transport.



Odeon Parade, Isleworth

