



Hostels



INTRODUCTION

The Council's Unitary Development Plan (UDP) is the statutory planning framework for the future of the Borough.

To help you when you apply for planning permission, and to give the background to both the UDP and other Council policies, the Planning Division has produced a number of Supplementary Planning Guidance Notes (SPGs).

Although not a formal part of the UDP, the guidance is a material consideration when the Council is dealing with planning applications.

This Guidance Note:

- Identifies the relevant UDP policy (for a full statement of the policy, the UDP itself should be consulted);
- Gives planning guidance on design and standards;
- Provides general advice as well as some information on non-town planning matters such as Building Regulations and Highways, which may need separate approvals from the Council.

This Guidance does not prescribe inflexible standards or standard solutions, but instead describes the design principles and performance criteria to be aimed for.

The word 'normally' is implied in much of what follows, but has been omitted to keep the text short.

Most design principles will be well known to architects and other qualified designers, who can use the document as a check list.

This Guidance has also been prepared as a practical tool to help those who submit planning applications.

This Guidance is updated more frequently than the Plan itself, and you are encouraged to discuss your proposals with planning staff before you make a formal application.

Please remember that this is Guidance only, and that your application will always be considered on its merits.

HOSTELS

Background

Please note that in addition to the requirements of the Planning Division, there are a significant number of other standards with which hostels must comply, particularly those of the Council's Environmental Health Division. Compliance with Planning requirements does not necessarily mean compliance with Environmental Health requirements and vice versa. This document indicates which matters are Planning requirements and which are requirements of Environmental Health and other Council services.

The Council recognises that hostels can provide accommodation for certain groups of people, particularly small households on low income, and that they are a part of the mixture of various types of residential uses in the Borough. However, there is a need to ensure a balance of such uses in the Borough and there will be instances where proposed hostel development may conflict with other objectives of the Council.

Circumstances under which development may be permitted are listed on page 2.

Purpose of Guidance Note

This Guidance note is intended to help you if you are thinking of constructing a hostel or changing the use of an existing building to a hostel. It will help you decide whether you need planning permission, and if you do, how the Council will assess your planning application.

This Guidance note should, however, only be taken as an introductory guide and if you require further information or assistance after reading it, please contact the Planning Service either in person or by telephone between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Please note that planning officers may not be available without a prior appointment. The address is:

The Environment Department
Development Control and Heritage
Newham Town Hall
East Ham, E6 2RP.

This Guidance note is one of a series produced by the Council. If you have not submitted a planning application before, you should also read Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 'Making a Planning Application'.

WHAT IS A HOSTEL?

A hostel falls within the definition of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) as included in the 1985 Housing Act (as amended by the Local Government and Housing Act 1989) i.e., 'a house which is occupied by persons who do not form a single household.'

The **Environmental Health Service** includes a variety of types of accommodation, including shared houses, bedsits, hostels, bed and breakfast facilities and guest houses, within this definition.

Hostels are considered by Environmental Health to provide accommodation for people with no other permanent place of residence, as distinct from premises which provide accommodation for temporary visitors to an area. This category would include establishments used by local authorities to house homeless families pending permanent placement and similar establishments which provide accommodation for people who would otherwise be homeless. It would also include bona fide hotels used for such purposes, even on a casual basis, and hotels housing a mixture of homeless households and visitors.

Please note that Environmental Health differentiates between hostels and other forms of houses in multiple occupation. Please refer to the SPG 'Houses in Multiple Occupation' for details.

The definition used by the **Planning Service** is as follows: 'Non self-contained residential accommodation with an element of supervision, but with no significant degree of care.' This definition does not include care homes, and non self-contained accommodation. It does include young peoples' homes.

Please note that the Planning Service has its own interpretation of HMOs, which differ from the definition of a hostel. Please refer to the SPG 'Houses in Multiple Occupation' for details.

If you are unsure as to whether or not your proposal is included in these definitions please contact a Planning officer or an Environmental Health officer, as appropriate - addresses and telephone numbers are listed in the 'Who Should You Contact?' section below.

PLANNING REQUIREMENTS

Hostels are primarily covered in the Council's Unitary Development Plan by Policies H21 and

CS11; other policies may apply, dependant upon the circumstances.

The sections below explain the requirements of the policies and also list other planning considerations that will need to be taken into account.

Criteria for Assessment of Planning Applications

The Council will not allow hostels:

1. In Forest Gate, Park and Upton Wards which are considered 'saturated' in terms of the number of existing hostels, and where further development would have a detrimental effect on local amenity.

Outside the 'Saturated' Wards:

2. Where the dwelling has an original gross floor area of less than 120m² (Please refer to Appendix 2 for the method of calculating floorspace).
3. Where the proposal would result in more than 50% of houses with four or more bedrooms in any one street being lost or having an unexpired consent for a change of use to hostels, flats or HMOs. Certain streets have already been identified in Plashet Ward, where a considerable number of houses with four or more bedrooms have been converted to HMOs, flats and hostels, where saturation level has been reached and no further hostels will be permitted. This list will be updated as necessary (Please refer to Appendix 3).
4. Where a proposal for a conversion to a hostel would be detrimental to the surrounding area's amenity, social character, etc, either individually or cumulatively, taking into account other such uses locally.
5. Where there is insufficient off-street capacity for one parking space for every four residents, one space for every two members of staff, and the proposed premises are situated in an area where there is insufficient on-street parking capacity (for further details please refer to the section below on Car Parking).
6. Within the Borough's Conservation Areas, where a proposal for a new conversion to a hostel would not preserve or enhance the historic or architectural character or appearance of the area.
7. Where the applicant cannot demonstrate that there is local need for such a use.

Other Planning Considerations

1. Room Size

The requirements of the Planning Service are the same as those for the Environmental Health Service. Please refer to Page 4.

2. Amenity Space

Wherever possible, residents living in a hostel should have access to a garden which should be a private area. When a dwelling house is to be converted the Council is concerned to ensure that the front and rear gardens are satisfactorily laid out and responsibility for their future maintenance allocated to the new occupants or the owner.

3. Car Parking

There should be sufficient off-street capacity for one parking space for every four residents and one space for every two members of staff. Exceptions to off-street parking requirements may be made where the Council considers the local road capacity is sufficient to reasonably accommodate on-street parking. Capacity of the street will be determined by the Council when assessing individual applications.

4. Refuse Disposal

Satisfactory arrangement must be made for the storage and collection of refuse. Refuse storage should normally be designed to accommodate one domestic 'wheelie bin' per unit, up to five, when it may be more suitable to provide a 'Eurobin'. The basic standard issue 'wheelie bin' store has the following dimensions: height 1200mm; clear width of 600mm; and a depth of 750mm. The 'Eurobin' has the following dimensions: height 1465mm; width 1360mm; depth 1070mm. The stores will also require a flush entrance so bins can be wheeled in and out. Since these bin stores will be significantly larger than normal dustbin stores, sensitive design and location of these structures will be important.

5. Facilities in Rooms

To ensure that the units do not become self-contained flats which do not meet the standards necessary for such accommodation, where ensuite bathroom facilities are provided, no kitchen furniture other than food cupboards and refrigerators should be incorporated into any of the bedrooms.

In other words, either kitchen or bathroom facilities can be provided, but not both.

6. External Staircases

External staircases are not normally favoured, as they generally tend to create daylighting, overlooking and aesthetic problems. However if an external staircase is required (for example, to conform with means of escape regulations, or to provide garden access, where alternative internal arrangements are not feasible) careful attention should be given to its siting and design, which could involve the erection of a screen in order to overcome the problems. Applicants are advised that under Part B of the Building Regulations 1991, an adequate means of escape will be required from any floor of any building sublet into separate accommodation. Planning permission will be required for any external staircase.

7. Other External Matters

Where any external work is carried out, special regard should be given to the original features of the house which gives the property its character. Where it is necessary to install new external pipework (i.e. ventilation pipes, overflow pipes etc.) this should be kept to a minimum and sited on the rear elevation of the property. The property should be kept in good order with regular painting, and external areas, including gardens, should be properly maintained.

For developments carried out in Conservation Areas a high standard of external design will be expected, in order to preserve and enhance the historic or architectural character of the area.

8. Noise Insulation

Conditions may be attached to a planning permission to ensure that adequate noise insulation is achieved.

9. Numbers of Occupants

The application form for planning consent should state the number of occupants proposed, including children.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH REQUIREMENTS

Overcrowding Standards for Rooms used as Sleeping Accommodation

1. Cooking Facilities Provided in a Separate Room:

Floor Area of Room	Maximum Occupancy
Less than 6.5m ² (70ft ²)	Nil persons
6.5m ² (70ft ²) or greater	1 person
10.2m ² (110ft ²) or greater	2 persons
14.9m ² (160ft ²) or greater	3 persons
19.6m ² (210ft ²) or greater	4 persons
24.2m ² (260 ft ²) or greater	5persons

2. Cooking Facilities Provided within the Room:

Floor Area of Room	Maximum Occupancy
Less than 10.2 m ² (110ft ²)	Nil persons
10.2m ² (110ft ²) or greater	1 person
13.9m ² (150ft ²) or greater	2 persons
18.6m ² (200ft ²) or greater	3 persons
23.2m ² (250 ft ²) or greater	4 persons
27.9m ² (300ft ²) or greater	5 persons

3. No persons over the age of twelve years of the opposite sex other than those living together as man and wife or co-habitees may occupy the same room.

4. All rooms used as sleeping accommodation shall have a ceiling height of not less than 2.14m over at least 75% of the room area. Any floor area where the ceiling height is less than 1.53m shall be disregarded.

5. Irrespective of the floor area, consideration will be given to the shape and useable living space within the room when determining whether or not it is suitable for occupation.

6. The overcrowding standard is to be applied irrespective of age of the occupants.

7. Where provided, rooms with separate kitchen facilities will have a minimum size of 5.5m² (60ft²).

8. Sharing of rooms shall be avoided unless individuals consent to such an arrangement.

9. No more than five persons shall be allowed to share one room.

10. In each room used for sleeping accommodation there should be prominently displayed a legible notice in the following prescribed form:

“(Location and Room Number)
this room is not to be used for sleeping purposes by more than (number) persons”.

Where rooms are used by persons whose first language is not English, then the appropriate language in common use shall be used in addition to the statement in English.

Facilities for the Storage, Preparation and Cooking of Food

1. Wherever practicable each household shall have exclusive use of a full set of kitchen facilities provided in a separate kitchen of minimum size 5.5m².

2. In circumstances where the local authority is satisfied that the provision of kitchen facilities for exclusive use is not practicable or appropriate, shared kitchens will be allowed up to a maximum ratio of one kitchen for every five persons.

3. Kitchens (shared or for exclusive use) should not, where practicable, be more than one floor distant from any room(s) occupied by the person(s) for whom they are provided. Where this is not practicable, shared kitchens shall be provided in association with a suitable dining room of adequate size, calculated on the basis of 1m² per bedspace including one area of at least 15m².

4. Each set of cooking facilities shall be provided in a kitchen with a minimum of 5.5m² provided for each set of facilities. No more than two sets of cooking facilities shall be provided in any one kitchen. For two sets of facilities the minimum floor area shall be 11m². Kitchens should be a minimum of 1.8m wide to allow for the safe circulation of occupants within

the room. Cookers should not be located near doorways and there should be enough floorspace for items to be safely retrieved from the oven.

5. Kitchens shall be made available for use 24 hours per day.
6. Where any meals are provided, facilities for the preparation, cooking and serving of food shall comply with the Food Safety Act 1990. Where it can be shown to the satisfaction of the local authority that, either by virtue of the scale of the meals provided or the manner in which the premises are occupied, provision of kitchen facilities as described above would be excessive, then a lesser standard may be applied.
7. A set of cooking facilities shall comprise:
 - A cooker with four burners, oven and grill (in single room lettings a cooker with a minimum of two burners, oven and grill is permissible).
 - A stainless steel sink and integral drainer (minimum size 1000mm x 500mm) set on a base unit. The sink is to be provided with constant and adequate supplies of hot and cold mains water and properly connected to the drainage system. A tiled splash-back (minimum 300mm high) shall be provided to the sink and drainer.
 - A storage cupboard, minimum capacity 0.12m³ (4.2ft³).
 - A refrigerator, minimum capacity 0.2 m³ (7 ft³).
 - Two double 13 amp electric power sockets situated at worktop height. These are in addition to electrical power sockets provided elsewhere in the letting.
 - A suitable worktop (minimum surface area 1000mm x 600mm).
8. Where there are shared kitchens, the storage cupboard, and the refrigerator referred to in paragraph 7 above, should be provided within the bedroom, or within the total accommodation occupied by each household. In addition a lockable storage cupboard of the same capacity should be provided in the shared kitchen for each bedroom whose occupants have use of it.

9. Where cooking facilities are provided in hotel or hostel bedrooms the fire safety standards set out below are to be achieved:

- a) Cooking is to be by electricity only.
- b) The cooking appliance must be sited remote from the room exit, against a wall/partition enclosing the room and away from draughts.
- c) No furniture, bedding, curtains etc. shall be within 600mm of the cooker. To ensure this is obtained, screens finished with non-combustible materials or plasterboard shall be provided as follows:

To the sides of the cooking appliance to the height of:

- (i) Not less than 1.6m where provided less than 400mm from the appliance,
- or
- (ii) Not less than 850mm otherwise.

- d) No drapes or curtains shall be provided within the area of the cubicle containing the cooking appliance.
- e) Deep fat frying should not be permitted and a notice to that effect should be displayed in the cubicle containing the cooking appliance in English and such other languages as are considered appropriate.
- f) The walls/partitions enclosing the room containing the cooking appliance shall be to a standard of fire resistance of not less than 30 minutes. Any door therein shall be fire resisting and rendered effectively self-closing.

Personal Washing Facilities

1. Each bedroom shall be provided with a wash hand basin (minimum dimensions 500mm x 400mm) together with constant and adequate supplies of hot and cold running water. A tiled splashback (minimum 300mm high) is to be provided to the wash hand basin. If an en-suite shower room/bathroom is available, the wash hand basin may be provided in that bathroom/shower room.
2. If practicable, a bath or shower shall be provided for the exclusive use of each letting. Where this is the case, and the operator chooses to provide showers for the majority

of households, then a minimum of one communal bath (minimum dimensions 1700mm x 700mm) should be provided for every 20 persons. Where this is not possible, one bath (minimum dimensions 1700mm x 700mm) or one shower (minimum dimensions 800mm x 800mm) shall be provided for every five persons, irrespective of age. These facilities shall be situated within one floor of the letting. Not less than half of these facilities shall be baths, and a minimum of one bath shall be provided in every case.

3. Each bath shall be situated in a separate bathroom of an adequate size. Each shower shall be situated in a suitable shower room (minimum dimensions 1600mm x 900mm).
4. Each bath and shower shall be provided with a constant, adequate and freely available supply of hot and cold water.
5. A tiled splashback (minimum 300mm high), shall be provided to all baths. Shower cubicles shall have fully tiled walls. Showers to be provided with a suitable water resistant shower curtain or door to the cubicle.
6. Each separate water closet compartment and bathroom shall be provided with a wash hand basin (minimum dimensions 500mm x 400mm), together with constant supplies of hot and cold running water. A tiled splashback (minimum 300mm high) is to be provided to each wash hand basin.

Sanitary Conveniences

1. Where practicable each separate letting shall be provided with a water closet for the sole use of the occupants.
2. Where exclusive use is not practicable one water closet shall be provided for every five persons irrespective of age. Water closets shall be situated within one floor of the letting. Where there are more than five persons in occupation at least half of the water closets shall be provided in a separate compartment, and not in a bathroom or shower room.
3. Shared amenities are to be accessible from a common area.
4. All water closets shall be properly connected to the drainage system.
5. Where water closets are provided in separate compartments these should have a minimum dimension of 1300mm x 800mm.

Means of Escape from Fire and Other Fire Precautions

The means of escape from fire and other fire precautions should meet with current London Borough of Newham and London Fire and Civil Defence Authority (LFCDA) requirements.

OTHER REQUIREMENTS

Building Regulations

You will need to comply with the relevant provisions of the Building Regulations. Further advice should be sought from the Council's Building Control Service.

WHO ELSE SHOULD YOU TALK TO?

Newham Planning

For further advice on submitting a planning application, the suitability of premises for conversion to a hostel, or for information on saturated streets, please contact:

The Environment Department
Development Control and Heritage
Newham Town Hall
East Ham E6 2RP

Telephone: 020-8472 1430 ext. 22282

Newham Environmental Health

Advice and direction on the following matters can be obtained from the Council's Environmental Health Service:

- noise transmission and effects;
- natural lighting and ventilation;
- artificial lighting and space heating where required;
- bathroom and kitchen facilities;
- fire precautions and means of escape from fire;
- general standard of fitness (Housing Act, 1985); and
- registration of premises.

Environmental Health Service
Alice Billings House
2-12 West Ham Lane
Stratford E15 4SF

Telephone: 020 8430 3790

Newham Building Control

The Building Control Service should be contacted for advice on the following matters:

- new partitions;
- noise transmission and effects;
- natural lighting and ventilation;
- external staircases; and
- provision of rooms within roof voids.

Other building works and some changes of use require approval under the Building Regulations. For advice and information contact:

The Environment Department
Development Control and Heritage
Newham Town Hall
East Ham E6 2RP

Telephone: 020 8430 2000 (ask for Building Control Reception).

Newham Refuse Disposal

For enquiries on refuse disposal matters please contact:

The Environment Department
Central Depot
Folkestone Road
East Ham E6 4BX

Telephone: 020 8430 2000 (ask for Refuse Disposal)

APPENDIX 1

REVISED UDP POLICY ON HOSTELS

In November 1998 the Council's Environment Committee agreed to amend Policy H7 of the UDP to CS11. This policy covers 'supported accommodation,' which includes hostels.

'POLICY CS11: IN ASSESSING PROPOSALS FOR SUPPORTED ACCOMMODATION, THE COUNCIL MAY FAVOURABLY CONSIDER LOCATIONS THAT BENEFIT FROM GOOD ACCESS TO PUBLIC TRANSPORT LINKS AND SUPPORT SERVICES AND WHERE APPLICABLE, THE ABILITY TO CATER SATISFACTORILY FOR THE MOVEMENT OF MINIBUSES OR COACHES, PROVIDED THAT:

1. THE PROPOSAL IS LOCATED WITHIN AN AREA NOT IDENTIFIED AS A SATURATED WARD;
2. THE PROPOSAL DOES NOT CONFLICT WITH POLICIES H2 AND H19 OF THE HOUSING CHAPTER;
3. THERE IS A DEMONSTRATED LOCAL NEED FOR THE PROPOSAL;
4. THE ACCOMMODATION IS OF A SATISFACTORY STANDARD; AND
5. THE PROPOSAL IS COMPATIBLE WITH THE COUNCIL'S REGENERATION OBJECTIVES, INCLUDING THE AVOIDANCE OF THE CONCENTRATION, OR FURTHER CONCENTRATION, OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEPRIVATION.

THE PROPOSALS WILL BE CONSIDERED IN THE CONTEXT OF THEIR INDIVIDUAL OR CUMULATIVE EFFECT ON THE RESIDENTIAL CHARACTER OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD.'

APPENDIX 2

MEANS OF CALCULATING FLOOR AREA

The gross internal floor space of a dwelling house as originally constructed shall be interpreted as the space between the internal faces of the external/party wall. It includes all internal walls, partitions between rooms, columns, piers, chimney breasts, staircases and stairwells, but excludes the following:

1. the thickness of any external/party wall;
2. any basement or loft which it can be shown originally formed part of the habitable accommodation within the dwelling;
3. any outhouse, shed, lean-to, conservatory, porch, covered passageway, or WC originally externally accessed;
4. any cupboard not directly accessed from within the original dwelling; and any area of floorspace which has a floor to ceiling height of less than 1.5m (5ft).

APPENDIX 3

This is a schedule of streets outside the wards of Forest Gate, Park and Upton which have been classified as 'saturated' in terms of hostel provision. which already have more than 50% of large single family houses (4 or more bedrooms) converted into flats, bedsits, hostels, guest houses and/or hotels, or have an unexpired consent for change of use. No further conversions will therefore be allowed. This list will be reviewed as necessary.

PLASHET WARD

- | | |
|------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Cecil Road | 9. Plashet Road |
| 2. Claude Road | (Nos.2-176 even |
| 3. Crescent Road | nos. only) |
| 4. East Road | 10. Portway (evens) |
| 5. Harold Road | 11. Selwyn Road |
| 6. Lawrence Road | 12. Stopford Road |
| 7. Maud Road | 13. Stratford Road |
| 8. Park Road | 14. Terrace Road |

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LB Newham LA 086517 2002.*

Published by the;
ENVIRONMENT & REGENERATION DEPARTMENT
Malcolm Smith
Director of Environment Department

Produced by Environment Graphics
January 2003