Student Accommodation in Tower Hamlets

September 2009
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Student Accommodation in Tower Hamlets

1. Introduction

1.1. London is an international centre for the new knowledge economy and the creative industries. It is a world centre of academic excellence and providing research. It leads in providing skilled workers in a global economy. The city attracts students and scholars from all over the world. Tower Hamlets Council is keen to strengthen and grow its knowledge-based economy. The local universities are critical to increasing the highly skilled workforce through their teaching and research.

1.2. The Government white paper *The Future of Higher Education*, 2003 aspires to increase participation in higher education from 43% to 50% of all 18-30 year olds by 2010. This implies an increase in the intake of students, staff and the infrastructure and support services.

1.3. Spatial planning has a role to play in supporting the provision of university facilities including purpose-built student accommodation. There are potential economic and regeneration benefits associated with student accommodation through assisting and supporting the universities in attracting students into higher education. They also create demand for local businesses and assist in regeneration of areas.

1.4. In the last three years Tower Hamlets has experienced a significant increase in number of new student accommodation development. This increase has prompted further research, to understand what the need is for student accommodation in Tower Hamlets and where it is best located in the borough.

2. Background

2.1. The HESA data identified that there were 207,700 full time students in London in 2004/05 compared to 175,500 in 2000/01 (LDA, 2007).

2.2. Tower Hamlets had approximately 17,666 students in 2001 (census 2001). In 2007/08 it had grown to 20,785, a growth of 17.65% or 2.9% p.a. (HESA, 2008).

2.3. The main universities in Tower Hamlets are (Map 1)

- Queen Mary University of London
- London Metropolitan University (including colleges at Calcutta House, Central House, Goulston Street, and Whitechapel High Street)
- City University St. Bartholomew School of Nursing

2.4. Other universities located outside the borough, such as, University of the Arts, London School of Economics and Political Science (The City of London), Royal College of Nursing Institute and City University also have
a presence in the borough in terms of purpose built student accommodation allotted for its students within the borough (Appendix 1)

2.5. Tower Hamlets values the provision of student accommodation in the borough in so far as it supports the resident universities. Student accommodation is also considered to provide some regenerative benefits.

2.6. According to the Planning Register, Tower Hamlets currently has 4,125 purpose built student accommodation within the borough and a further 1,730 bed spaces in the planning pipeline out of which 1,336 bed spaces were under construction on 30 June 2009 (Appendix 2).

2.7. There is presently a steady market for student accommodation. The rental levels for student accommodation have risen at a much faster rate than those in the private rented sector. The weekly rents for student accommodation have been increasing by approximately 5-7% every year since 2003/04 (NUS, 2007). This is in comparison to the rentals in the private rented sector which have been increasing by only an estimated 2% per annum (NUS, 2007).

2.8. Currently more new developers are submitting applications, which is a sign of an expanding market. UNITE, Shaftesbury Housing Association, Cass & Claredale Housing Association and Nido London (funded by Blackstone, the largest private equity firm in the world) are some of the developers who have entered this field in Tower Hamlets.

2.9. The supply of student accommodation needs to be kept in perspective of other highly competing land requirements. In Tower Hamlets, land for housing (particular affordable housing) is its highest priority, along with local employment opportunities, land for open space and other social infrastructure. The result of the increased student housing provision has meant that in recent years, up to a third of the borough’s annual housing provision has been for student accommodation. Student accommodation is considered a specialist housing need by regional and local planning policy. Therefore currently it neither attracts affordable housing contributions nor does this housing specifically address Tower Hamlets significant housing need.

3. **Objectives of the study**

3.1. In addition to providing education, the Council wishes to provide accommodation for students as part of its housing and spatial planning policy frameworks. The Council is now looking at developing a better understanding of the demand and supply of student accommodation in the borough so that it can carefully manage competing land use demands within the borough.

3.2. The Council wishes to develop guidance for considering the applications for student accommodation, based on an understanding on student accommodation needs in the borough. Since it is hard to predict long term needs of student accommodation, this strategy looks to the short term
need. The need for student accommodation will continue to be monitored over the lifetime of the Core Strategy.

3.3. The study seeks to identify, in conjunction with the universities within the borough National and Regional policies:
- The existing provision of student accommodation in Tower Hamlets
- Future requirement (supply and demand) for student accommodation in the borough
- The preferred locations in which student accommodation should be delivered
- Characteristic of future provision, namely
- Impact of cost on student accommodation
- Issues of quality of life including the provision of amenity space, and design
- A mechanism to monitor student accommodation over time

4. **Methodology**

4.1. The methodology consists of desk research/ review of secondary data, including National, regional and local policies; Review of existing research reports from the LDA and any other organisations;

4.2. Gathering information on the quantity of purpose built students’ accommodation provided by:
- Private providers of student accommodation
- Universities such as Queen Mary University of London (QMUL) and London Metropolitan University (LMU)
- Tower Hamlets Planning Register showing list of planning applications with approvals, refusals and at pre-application stage;

4.3. Primary research was also carried out on local universities’ accommodation including their future requirements. Meetings were held with Queen Mary University of London (QMUL), London Metropolitan University (LMU) and private developers. Correspondence by e-mail was also held with officials from UNITE, Cass & Claredale Halls of Residence Association Ltd and King Sturge.

5. **Policies governing student accommodation**

5.1. Provision of student accommodation is governed by national, regional and local planning policies, namely

**National Policy Context**

5.2. Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing (2006) requires a strategic housing market survey to consider the demographic trends and profiles within the borough and identify the accommodation requirements of its population, including students.
London Policy Context

5.3 The *Draft London Housing Strategy*, 2009 recognises that housing of all tenures is needed to cater to the multiple needs of its population. It visualises London to provide social inclusivity to give all an opportunity of choices and mobility.

5.4 The Strategy considers counting student accommodation towards a measure of overall housing provision London.

5.5 *The London Plan Consolidated with Alterations since 2004*, 2008 requires the boroughs to ensure that “New developments offer a range of housing choices, in terms of the mix of housing sizes and types, taking account of the housing requirements of different groups” (Policy 3A.5 and13).

5.6 Para 3.39 says “Provision of purpose-built student accommodation adds to the overall supply of housing and may reduce pressure on the existing supply of market and affordable housing”.

5.7 Significantly, the London Plan (para 3.39) requires the provision of purpose-built student accommodation to be monitored separately from targets for social housing and intermediate provision, as these are targeted at different needs.

5.8 Also, Para 3.53 states that “Where a proposal for development relates solely to student accommodation, it will not normally be appropriate to apply a planning obligation for an element of social rent or intermediate housing”.

5.9 *The London Plan SPG on Housing* (2005) states in Para 16.1 that student accommodation should not be considered as social housing as it is not permanent housing and is only provided on the basis that an individual is a member of a specific educational institution.

5.10 It requires the monitoring of provision of purpose built student accommodation separately to the provision of social housing and intermediate provision and should not be counted against targets for either of these provision categories.

5.11 Para 17.7 requires that “Where, in conjunction with neighbouring authorities, a requirement for student housing provision is identified, a separate target for student provision may be set, either in proportionate or numerical terms, in addition to the overall affordable housing target”.

Local Context - Tower Hamlets Local Plans

5.12 *Tower Hamlets Community Plan 2008* aims to “*increase the overall supply of housing for local people*” under the priority theme: A Great Place to Live. It has no specific plans for students’ accommodation.
5.13 **The Tower Hamlets UDP (Adopted 1998 and Saved 2007)** Policy HSG 14 seeks to encourage the provision of housing for residents with special needs, including students.

5.14 The accompanying text (para 5.29) justifies additional provision of student accommodation as it would release dwellings elsewhere in the Borough in both the public and the private rented sector within the borough. It agrees to consider the provision of students housing in certain locations (the locations have not been demarcated) provided there is no loss of permanent housing.

5.15 **The Core Strategy Interim Planning Guidance** (IPG), 2007 (Policy CP 24) promotes Student accommodation in the campuses of Queen Mary University of London and in the proximity (5 minutes walking distance as per Para 5.30) of London Metropolitan University at Aldgate. To encourage specialist housing, which meets identified housing needs, the Council does not seek planning contributions for affordable housing. The Policy recognises that student accommodation does not contribute directly to meeting the Borough’s housing need.

5.16 The justification text (para 5.30) agrees that student accommodation supports the Borough’s universities, but it does not contribute to meeting the Borough’s housing need and, therefore, is not a preferred housing use throughout the borough.

5.17 The Core Strategy IPG resists proposals for purpose built student housing in other areas in the Borough in favour of housing that meets an identified Borough housing need including the provision of affordable housing.

6 **Existing types of student accommodation within Tower Hamlets**

6.1 The accommodation that students live in within the borough can be categorised into four different types of accommodation.

- **Halls of residence:**

6.2 Halls of residence are generally provided by the universities within their campuses. Such accommodation (hostels) is categorised by Uses class Order, 1987 (revised in 2005) as “sui generis”.

- **Purpose built student accommodation**

6.3 Purpose built student accommodation can include dwellings that are both non-self contained and self contained.

6.4 Non-self contained accommodation includes:

- **Single bed:** Such accommodation that is non-self contained and self catering single, but without attached toilets is considered as hostels and is classified as sui generis in the Use Classes Order, 1987 (revised in 2005).
- **En-suite accommodation**: Category of student accommodation with attached toilets but a common kitchen and are considered as en-suit, non-self contained accommodation.

6.5 Non self-contained household spaces at the same address are counted as a single dwelling. Provision of single or en-suite accommodation is categorised as hostels (sui generis uses) in the Use Class Order 1987 (revised in 2005).

6.6 The type of student accommodation recently approved in Tower Hamlets comprises of largely of non self contained accommodation (e.g. John Bell House).

6.7 Self-contained accommodation includes:

   - **Studio accommodation**: Category of accommodation that is self contained is called of studio accommodation i.e. en-suite rooms with attached kitchen. Such accommodation is considered as self-contained and categorised as C3 by Use Classes Order 1987 (revised in 2005).

6.8 According to the Census 2001, a self-contained unit must contain kitchen, WC and bathroom facilities behind a single door which only that household can use. Increasingly more and more studio accommodation is being built in London and the borough, in particular because of the higher rentals it fetches.

- **Private Rented Sector**:

6.9 This category includes students renting private accommodation or living in “Housing in Multiple Occupations” (HMO) or other all student household.

6.10 In terms of private student lets, the Housing Act 2004 covers any dwelling occupied by five or more people who form more than one household (This is being revised). Privately rented HMOs of three or more storeys require a mandatory license to operate. There is no separate Use Class Order for HMOs and are classed under Use Classes Order 1987 (revised in 2005) as C3.

6.11 HESA research (quoted in Savills report, 2008) estimates that 57% of the full time students within London live in HMO or ‘all student households’. However, there is currently limited evidence from Tower Hamlets records that identifies the proportion of these types of household in the borough.

- **Students living with parents/guardians**:

6.12 There are a significant proportion of students living with their parents/guardians. According to the UK census 2001, 24% of all students and 42% of students in London aged 19-24 choose to live at home (LDA, 2007). The proportion of students staying at home is higher (44% as per Census 2001) in Tower Hamlets.
7 Changes in the provision of student accommodation over time

7.1 The market for student accommodation has changed considerably over the last decade. According to the NUS/Unipol Accommodation Costs Survey, 2006, instead of providing student accommodation themselves, more and more universities are entering into arrangements with private providers for letting of the student accommodation for their students. The gap left by Universities is being filled by private providers who have taken advantage of the expanding and secure market for student accommodation.

7.2 Much of the older student accommodation stock in Tower Hamlets comprises the more traditional types of accommodation ‘Hall of Residence’ or single bed purpose built student accommodation. The majority of this is owned and managed by QMUL and is located in and around its campuses at Mile End and Whitechapel.

7.3 The main resident universities in Tower Hamlets have identified that it is not a priority to build large provisions of new student accommodation. Rather, they are primarily relying on private providers to bring forward new student accommodation.

7.4 In terms of changes in the type of accommodation, en-suite accommodation has replaced the single rooms. Currently, the private providers are looking to supply studio accommodation as well to cater to the higher end of the market. The NUS survey, 2006 estimates that 3% of new student accommodation being built is studio flats. Rahere Court, Mile End, and Rodwell House in the City Fringe are an example of this trend (Table 1).

7.5 The recent student accommodation developments have also been approved as part of mixed use development including retail/business uses, rather than single use developments. This is demonstrated in the table.

Table 1: Recent permitted mix of uses with student accommodation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site Name &amp; address</th>
<th>Area of site (ha)</th>
<th>Student Accommodation (rooms)</th>
<th>Permitted uses (other than student accommodation)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rahere Court, Mile End</td>
<td>0.128</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>36 studio apartments+ 152 non self contained rooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56 East India Dock Road</td>
<td>0.126</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>Teaching facilities &amp; ancillary cafe (Class D1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Bell House, King David Lane</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>132</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>249-253 Cambridge Heath Road</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>306</td>
<td>commercial uses, retail, offices, pub</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8 Requirements of student accommodation

Existing supply of student accommodation

8.1 The total student accommodation within London was about 48,000 beds (King Sturge, 2007), catering to about 19% of the full time students.

8.2 About a quarter of students in London study in the North East London sub-region. This includes HEIs such as QMUL, LMU, The City University and the University of East London.

8.3 It is estimated that about 6,100 student beds are currently available within the sub-region (King Sturge, 2007).

8.4 The current supply in Tower Hamlets of 3895 student beds (Appendix 1) caters for about 20,785 full time students studying within the HEIs (HESA 2008). According to the Planning Register there is a further 1700 bed spaces in the planning pipeline out of which 1306 bed spaces were under construction on 30 June 2009 (Appendix 2).

8.5 The supply has increased from about 2,107 student beds (supplied by QMUL on its campus) in 2003/04 (LDA, 2007) to 3895 in 2008/09, an increase of 85% or 17% per annum (Tower Hamlets Planning Register).

Demand in Tower Hamlets

8.6 It is difficult to assess the demand for student accommodation within London. Queen Mary University of London consider the “Core demand” as the basis of their demand for student accommodation. The Core demand generally includes the first year full time students of under-graduate courses and the International students. However in some instances it can be further restricted to exclude students living “close to the universities”. This definition of core demand is used for the purposes of this report.

8.7 Tower Hamlets has based its demand for student accommodation through discussions with London Metropolitan University and Queen Mary University of London in Tower Hamlets. The outcome of these discussions has been as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Beds</th>
<th>Uses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>41-65 Three Colts Lane</td>
<td>0.175</td>
<td>Commercial uses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rodwell House, Middlesex Street</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>Residential, commercial, retail, gym, community+ mix of student accommodation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific Court, Whitechapel Road</td>
<td>0.212</td>
<td>commercial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parmitter Street</td>
<td></td>
<td>Residential, commercial, cafe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Fieldgate Street, Whitechapel</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>Commercial, retail</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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8.8 LMU considers the provision of student accommodation vital for its success. A high proportion of its students are international students and the university will continue to attract these students with providing student accommodation. The university identified that increase in student accommodation was required over the next 5 years. It was estimated that approximately 4,000 additional units would be required for their campuses in Tower Hamlets and Islington. According to their Officer responsible for student accommodation, approximately 2,000 beds are required to support the City and Aldgate campus in Tower Hamlets. These findings were a result of a meeting held between Council officers and LMU on 21 February 2008.

8.9 Queen Mary University of London (Mile End Campus and Whitechapel) already accommodates about 2,100 students within its campus on Mile End Road, it identified that there were approximately 962 students on the waiting list as on September 2007. Queen Mary University of London (QMUL) identified their core demand for student accommodation to include first year undergraduates who live more than an hour from the campus and international students. To meet this demand, QMUL is considering options of increasing bed spaces on its Mile End campus by approximately 700 bed spaces. The QMUL School of Medicine and Dentistry, which is based at Whitechapel, may also require an increase in student accommodation for its undergraduates at Whitechapel.

8.10 In a meeting with officials of QMUL (dated 19 February 2008), it was identified that QMUL would require a total of 600-700 bed spaces within the next five year period for all its students. Furthermore officers identified that of its existing stock, approximately 632 were aging and were expected to be replaced in the short term.

8.11 Thus, based on the above, there is a total requirement of 2,700 student beds by the universities in Tower Hamlets. Out of these 1,730 are in planning pipeline. This requirement will be reviewed periodically.

**Competing demand from other uses**

8.12 The supply of student accommodation needs to be kept in the perspective that supply of land in Tower Hamlets is severely limited. It needs to balance the demand for employment and residential uses, particularly affordable housing. There is pressure on Tower Hamlets to provide housing for its residents.

8.13 While the Council is expected to provide 31,500 homes by 2017, the number of dwellings completed annually is continuing to fall. In the last five years, the net residential dwellings completed have been 11,581, at the rate of 2,316 dwellings per annum.

8.14 Moreover, student accommodation does not provide for affordable homes within the borough. Presently, the borough is providing for only 25% of
affordable homes (calculated by dwellings) (Annual Monitoring Report 2008), which is short of its target.

8.15 Thus, when considering applications for student accommodation, the Council needs to take into account the demand for other priority uses including land for housing (and affordable homes) and other employment and social infrastructure.

9 Location of student accommodation

Existing locations

9.1 The Council has permit student accommodation in locations in and around existing university campus of Queen Mary University of London and London Metropolitan University at Aldgate. The characteristics of most of these sites are that they are that they have been approved in locations where either they are within walking distance of the universities or the levels of public transport accessibility are high (see map 1).

9.2 Some of these locations that have been approved are:

- Westfield Student Village of QMUL
- Whitechapel Road, Mile End Road, Aldgate East and areas within easy access of QMUL and LMU
- Cambridge Heath Road, Three Colt's Lane, Birkbeck Street (Bethnal Green)
- Locations such as East India Dock Road/ Burdett Road crossing and John Bell House on The Highway, in Shadwell.

Proposed locations

9.3 One of the criteria that QMUL prefers to support for any development of student accommodation is that the distance of the student accommodation should be less than a mile from QMUL.

9.4 LMU supports a policy of providing student accommodation within 30 minutes provided it’s well connected by public transport. However, it prefers student housing within walking distance of its colleges.

9.5 These criteria are also supported by the Planning Inspectorate. In an Appeal decision (Number APP/E5900/ A/08/2077312 dated 5 December 2008) on proposal for student accommodation on land at Greenheath Business Centre, 31 Three Colt’s Lane, London E2 6JB, the Inspector considered that complementary land uses like student accommodation and education establishments should be close to each other to reduce the need to travel. It also accepted that sites where there is good provision of good public transport facilities at or near the site are acceptable for student accommodation.

9.6 The Council will thus continue to consider applications for student accommodation in locations that are either close to the universities or well connected by public transport to the universities (PTAL 4-6). The Council
will resist proposals for purpose built student accommodation in other areas in the borough in favour of priority requirements identified by the borough including housing and employment.

10 Impact on the character of an area

Studentification

10.1 The impact of “studentification” or the over-provision of student accommodation within an area has been of particular concern to authorities and the residents. There are concerns that excessive student accommodation built within a particular area may have a cumulative effect of over-concentration of students in the area and may undermine the character and function of the area. This would be dependant on the size and quantum of the student residents to the general population and would include students living in HMOs.

10.2 The Greenheath Business Centre Appeal decision also found it hard to identify “acceptable limits” of student population in an area or their impact on community cohesion, stability and quality of life. The Appeal decision considers that quantity of student accommodation in a location is no justification for refusing or permitting more purpose built student accommodation within the borough, even when it’s not proposed in areas in close proximity to the university campuses.

10.3 The LDA study (2007) too found that, given the mix of diverse communities, studentification was not an issue in London whereas it may be an issue in other parts of the country such as Leeds and Loughborough.

Character and quality of the area

10.4 More than the issue of studentification, the impact of a development on character and quality of the area causes concern. Issues of local character, scale, height, mass and bulk of the surrounding area and respecting the amenity of neighbouring occupants would need to be taken into account while assessing a proposal.

10.5 The Greenheath Business Centre Appeal also highlights the fact that any proposal for student accommodation should be assessed in the context of the character of the area. It has strongly recommended that proposals should be assessed in the wider context, in accordance with the London Plan Policy 4B.1 which seeks

“To ensure that developments respect local context and character and national policy in PPS1 which states that design which fails to take opportunities available for improving the character and quality of the area should not be accepted”.

"To ensure that developments respect local context and character and national policy in PPS1 which states that design which fails to take opportunities available for improving the character and quality of the area should not be accepted".
11 Characteristics of the supply of new student accommodation

Safe and secure environments

11.1 Most of the applications for private student accommodation in Tower Hamlets have been on land previously used for warehousing, storage and light industrial uses (B1/B8 uses), car park and service yards (sui generis uses) (Appendix 1). The sites that have been refused planning approval are far away from the universities, have low amenity value (e.g. near railway tracks), poor access and suffer from lack of safe environments. Such sites also suffer from vehicular access constraints, lack of amenity space and poor location (e.g. close to railway lines, on industrial land or in Fish Island etc). It is suggested that future developments would need to consider providing a safe and secure environment for its residents.

Amenity open space

11.2 Increasingly, student accommodation has had to cater to diverse student population including those with disabilities, different cultural, religious and national backgrounds. The facilities supplied within the student accommodation in London have improved to include common T.V. rooms, gymnasium and even a swimming pool. But the provision of communal open space has diminished at the expense of providing additional rooms and communal facilities. The need for soft landscaping to provide for sitting out spaces, ecological functions and circulation at street level cannot be under-estimated. The LDA study (2007) estimates that increasing the ground coverage of a site for student accommodation from 40% to 75% in inner London increases the amount developers can pay for land by almost six times.

11.3 However, there are currently no specific standards for amenity open space for student accommodation. The Council aims to develop its guidance for communal open amenity space for student accommodation.

Room Design standards

11.4 There are currently no minimum standards for design of single, en-suite or studio rooms for student accommodation. The LDA study (2007) suggests that a bedroom without a bathroom should be at least 10.50 sm and 12.80 sm with an en-suite shower/WC. A minimum requirement will be to contain a wardrobe, single bed, washbasin, bookshelf, chair and a desk.

11.5 The Mayors Draft Housing Design Guide, 2009 suggests a minimum of 8.40 sm for a single bed room.

11.6 The Council should consider using as guidance on room sizes for student accommodation, the LDA suggestions for en-suites and the Mayor’s recommendation for single bed room, where relevant. These will be reviewed as new guidance becomes available.
Parking spaces

11.7 Proximity and, most importantly, accessibility by sustainable modes of transport to University teaching facilities is an important consideration for the location of student accommodation. Since close proximity to universities or public transport reduces the need for cars and parking spaces, very limited car parking spaces (including on-street parking) for developments of student accommodation is required, except for provision of service, short term loading parking and disabled parking.

11.8 It is therefore expected that new student accommodation will be well connected by public transport and designed to encourage cycling and walking and will not require additional car parking provision.

Affordability

11.9 One of the key concerns identified by QMUL was the cost of student accommodation. It considered that the tenancy and cost of accommodation play an important part in the attractiveness of the university and well as the health and being of students and the interaction of students in university life.

11.10 However “affordability” is a difficult concept when the diversity of student is so wide, and student needs are similarly diverse. The cost of accommodation varies with location, type, length of tenancy and facilities provided. Unlike affordable housing, there is no definition or criteria of “affordability”. There is no criteria for acceptable levels of rent or type of bed spaces that may be acceptable as affordable student accommodation.

11.11 Census2001has found that about 24% of the students in London choose to stay at home. The Indices of Multiple Deprivation, 2007 ranks Tower Hamlets as the third most deprived borough in the country. The NUS survey (2007) suggests that a third of students living with parents are from low income households. It found that students from low income households stay at home to save money.

11.12 The Mayor’s Review of Higher Education (2004) found that students from Black & Asian Minority Ethnic (BME) households are also much likely to stay at home. In terms of ethnicity, the GLA Ethnic Group Projections, 2007 show that BME communities constitute about 50% of Tower Hamlets population. A high proportion of students belonging to BME group are also from low income households and therefore most likely to stay with their parents/ guardians.

11.13 These figures indicate that higher end student accommodation is unlikely to attract students from lower socio-economic backgrounds. The Council will look for new student accommodation in the borough to include more affordable rents and tenures, to cater to the diverse range of student accommodation.
12 Monitoring of student accommodation

12.1 The London Plan requires that the Councils monitor the provision of housing including non-self contained and self-contained dwellings. As the types of student accommodation being provided in Tower Hamlets falls within both categories, where is not a specific mechanism to monitor the total provision of student accommodation in the borough.

12.2 The provision of student accommodation and its location will now be monitored as a part of the Council’s Annual Monitoring Report.

12.3 The requirement for student accommodations, based on an up-to date understand on demand from the resident universities as well as the known supply, based on completions of student accommodation will be regularly reviewed.

13 Conclusions

13.1 There is no national or regional strategy to meet the accommodation needs of students although the Regional Authority recognises their contribution to a successful knowledge-based economy.

13.2 Student accommodation is not required to provide for affordable homes.

13.3 The current supply of student accommodation in Tower Hamlets is 4,125 bedspaces and another 1,730 are in the pipeline. Most of the current supply is en-suite student accommodation. Increasingly, more studio accommodation is being proposed to meet the higher end of the demand for student accommodation.

13.4 The future provision of student accommodation needs to be viewed in the context of needing to meet competing land needs including other housing priorities, such as affordable housing.

13.5 The estimates of future demand in Tower Hamlets from QMUL and LMU are pegged at 2,700 student beds. Out of these 1,730 are in the planning pipeline.

13.6 The locations for student accommodation will be determined by good transport accessibility levels and being within walking distance of universities in the borough.

13.7 Studentification is not an issue within London, though “character of an area” would be a material factor in determining planning applications for student accommodation.

13.8 New student accommodation need to provide for communal amenity open space that provides opportunities for social interaction, is safe and secure.
13.9 There is a need for “affordable” student accommodation. However, there is no definition of “affordability”. Levels of affordable rents or levels of mix of bed spaces for affordable student accommodation are also not defined.

13.10 There are currently no standards for room space or community amenity open land for student accommodation (unlike mainstream housing).

13.11 There will be regular monitoring of the supply of student accommodation through the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR).

14 Recommendations

14.1 After consulting with London Metropolitan University and Queen Mary University of London and some private providers, the following policy options are recommended:

- **Requirement for student accommodation:** Tower Hamlets will look to provide for the estimated demand of the Queen Mary University of London and London Metropolitan University. The total demand for student accommodation amounts to 2,700 bed spaces up to 2014. Out of these 1,730 bed spaces are under construction or have planning permission but not started construction. The applicants would need to submit a letter of support for student accommodation from the local universities along with the planning application.

- **Location:** The Council will consider applications for Student accommodation on locations that are safe and within walking distance of local universities or where public transport accessibility levels are high (PTAL 4-6).

- **The Council will also take into consideration the demand for other priority uses including land for housing (and affordable homes) and other employment and social infrastructure.**

- **Safe and secure environments:** The proposals for student accommodation will be required to provide safe and secure environments.

- **Parking:** Sites for student accommodation will need to be well connected by public transport and should be designed to encourage cycling and walking. Provision shall be made for service and short term loading parking and disabled parking.

- **Amenity open space:** New student accommodation will take into account provision for communal amenity open space that provides opportunities for social interaction.

- **Room sizes:** The Council should consider using as guidance on room sizes for student accommodation, the LDA suggestions for en-suites and the Mayor’s recommendation for single bed room, where relevant. These will be reviewed as new guidance becomes available.
o **Affordability:** The Council will look for new student accommodation in the borough to include more affordable rents and tenures, to cater to the diverse range of student accommodation.

o **Monitoring:** The Annual Monitoring Report will monitor the student accommodation applications that are approved, under construction and completed.
References

Department of Communities and Local Government, 2006, Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing


GLA Greater London Housing Needs Assessment DRAFT August 2008

GLA London Plan Consolidated with amendments since 2004, 2008

GLA Housing The London Plan Supplementary Planning Guidance

Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA); www.hesa.ac.uk

London Development Authority, 2007, London Student Accommodation Requirement Study


National Union of Students, 2007, Accommodation Costs Survey 2006/07

UK Census 2001

http://www.communities.gov.uk/housing/housingresearch/housingsurveys viewed on 2 Sept 09

http://www.scs.qmul.ac.uk/ viewed on 10 July 2008

http://www.cassandclaredale.co.uk viewed on 15 July 2008

http://www.lse.ac.uk viewed on 15 April 2008
### Appendix 1: Existing Student accommodation in Tower Hamlets

#### Queen Mary University of London

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of property</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Accommodation provided</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Albert Stern House</td>
<td>253 Mile End Road, E1 4BJ</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hatton House</td>
<td>1-6 Westfield Way, Mile End, E14PD</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ifor Evans Place</td>
<td>Mile End Road, E1 4BL</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lindop House</td>
<td>1-13 432 Mile End, E1 4PE</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Varey House</td>
<td>44-61 Westfield Way, E1 4PD</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maynard House</td>
<td>9-26 Westfield Way, E1 4PD</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapman, Chesney, Lodge &amp; Selincourt Houses</td>
<td>Westfield Way, E1 4PD</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stocks Court</td>
<td>4-54 Stayners Road, Mile End, E1 4AH</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beaumont Court</td>
<td>New Westfield Student Village</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creed Court</td>
<td>Westfield Way</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lynden House</td>
<td>Ward: Mile End and Globe Town</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maurice Court</td>
<td></td>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pooley House</td>
<td></td>
<td>378</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard Feilden House</td>
<td></td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France House</td>
<td></td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 smaller student houses on Alderney Road, Arbery Road &amp; Bancroft Road</td>
<td>Within 10 minute walk of Mile End campus</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Floyer House</td>
<td>Philpot Street E1 2DP</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sherren House</td>
<td>16 Nicholas Road, E1 4AF</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rahere Court</td>
<td>7-9 Solby Street, E14DN</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>2,176</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Queen Mary’s University of London; www.ccrs.qmul.ac.uk

#### London School of Economics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of property</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Accommodation provided</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lillian Knowles House (Sanctuary)</td>
<td>50 Crispin Street, E1 6HQ</td>
<td>365</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>365</td>
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</table>

Source: www.lse.ac.uk
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of property</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Accommodation provided</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Queen Mary University of London</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claredale House</td>
<td>Claredale Street, Cambridge Heath, E2 6PE Ward: Bethnal Green North</td>
<td>248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific Court</td>
<td>45-51 Redmans Road Ward: Whitechapel</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hive Student Residences Bethnal Green</td>
<td>41-65 Three Colts Lane Ward: Bethnal Green South</td>
<td>203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blithehale Court</td>
<td>249-253 Cambridge Heath Road Ward: Bethnal Green South</td>
<td>305</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>898</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source: <a href="http://www.cassandclaredale.co.uk">http://www.cassandclaredale.co.uk</a>, Unite, Hive Student Residences</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of property</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Accommodation provided</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>University of Arts</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walden Street</td>
<td>Walden Street Ward: Whitechapel</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunlight Apartments</td>
<td>Birkbeck Street Ward: Bethnal Green South</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sherren House</td>
<td>Nicholas Road, E1 4AF Ward: Bethnal Green South</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coopers Court</td>
<td>124 Eric Street, Mile End, E3 4SW Ward: Mile End East</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don Gratton House</td>
<td>Old Montague Street, E1 5NN Ward: Spitalfields and Banglatown</td>
<td>244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>466</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source: <a href="http://www.arts.ac.uk">www.arts.ac.uk</a>; <a href="http://www.sshl.org.uk">www.sshl.org.uk</a>; <a href="http://www.unite-group.co.uk">www.unite-group.co.uk</a></td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of property</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Accommodation provided</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Miscellaneous</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rahere Court</td>
<td>7-9 Solby Street, E14DN Ward: Mile End &amp; Globe Town</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Learning Centre</td>
<td>56 East India Dock Road, E14</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Grand Total: 4,125**
### Appendix 2: Not started/Under Construction as on 30 June 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of property</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Provider</th>
<th>Previous use</th>
<th>Accommodation provided</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>John Bell House PA/06/01759</td>
<td>10 King David Lane, E1 0EJ</td>
<td>UNITE for Metropolitan University</td>
<td>Student accommodation</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>Under construction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ward: Shadwell</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rodwell House PA/06/0432</td>
<td>100-106 Middlesex Street, E1</td>
<td>Nido</td>
<td>Car park and offices</td>
<td>1204</td>
<td>Under construction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ward: Spitalfields and Banglatown</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parmitter Industrial Estate PA/07/2294</td>
<td>Parmiter Street E2 9HZ</td>
<td>Work Space Group</td>
<td></td>
<td>54</td>
<td>Not started</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ward: Bethnal Green North</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Fieldgate Street and 7 To 9 Plumbers Row PA/08/00195</td>
<td>Fieldgate Street Ward: Whitechapel</td>
<td></td>
<td>Car storage/ retail</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>Not started</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total approved/ under construction</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>1,730</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Tower Hamlets Planning Register

### Summary:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student accommodation in Tower Hamlets</th>
<th>Existing</th>
<th>Under construction</th>
<th>Not started</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bed spaces</td>
<td>4,125</td>
<td>1,336</td>
<td>394</td>
<td>5,855</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Map 1: Student Accommodation in Tower Hamlets