

Self Contained Accommodation and Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO)

Background Paper
REVISED DEPOSIT PLAN June 2013

NEWPORT
LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN
2011-26



LOCAL
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NEWPORT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2011 – 2026

**SELF CONTAINED ACCOMMODATION
AND HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION**

June 2013

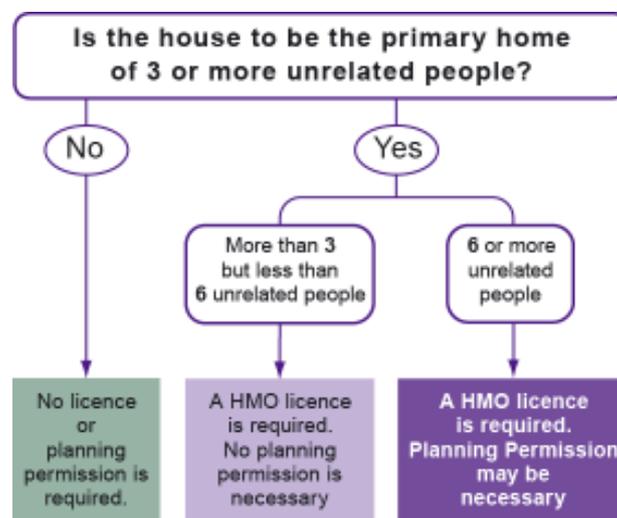


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1. IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICY H8

- 1.1 Planning permission for a change of use from Use Class C3 (The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended)) is required where a property is occupied by more than 6 residents not in a single family or household. Planning permission is also required for subdivision of a house into flats, flatlets, bedsits or maisonettes. Policy H8 of the Plan can be used to assess only those HMOs that require planning permission. It cannot be used to control HMOs that do not require planning permission, nor can it be taken into account for non-planning decisions, e.g. issuing licences under Housing legislation. As licensed HMOs are now plotted on the Council's online mapping system the existing (June 2009) SPG (supplementary planning guidance) will be updated to apply various thresholds across the city to limit numbers in particular post code locations.



NB. All HMOs are required by law, under Housing Act 2004, to be licensed.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In recent years Newport has seen a significant increase in the number of larger properties which have been subdivided into flats or HMOs (includes bedsits). The Council recognises that whilst this type of accommodation may meet a limited housing need in certain areas, the cumulative impact of a cluster or concentration of such uses may have an adverse impact on the existing residential character of the area. Policy H8 indicates that housing mix (stock) is an important factor in determining the character and amenity of an area, and that a certain amount of family housing should be provided in all areas. An updated SPG (from the one adopted in June 2006) could provide further guidance on how the policy will be applied. Research has been carried out looking at the various methods for avoiding clusters of a particular type of housing. There are various examples in Planning Policy across the UK. A group of students from Cardiff University came to Newport in spring 2009 to carry out a research project (Appendix 1) on the issue in the Stow Hill ward and methods available, and in more recent months Officers of the Council have looked at various examples of planning policy in England and Scotland.

3. POLICY IN THE DEPOSIT LDP

3.1 Policy H8 – Self-contained Accommodation and Houses in Multiple Occupation

H8 Self Contained Accommodation and Houses in Multiple Occupation

WITHIN THE DEFINED SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES, PROPOSALS TO SUBDIVIDE A PROPERTY INTO SELF CONTAINED ACCOMMODATION, BEDSITS OR A HOUSE IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION WILL BE ONLY PERMITTED IF:

- i) THE SCALE AND INTENSITY OF USE DOES NOT HARM THE CHARACTER OF THE BUILDING AND LOCALITY AND WILL NOT CAUSE AN UNACCEPTABLE REDUCTION IN THE AMENITY OF NEIGHBOURING OCCUPIERS OR RESULT IN ON STREET PARKING PROBLEMS;**
- ii) THE PROPOSAL DOES NOT CREATE AN OVER CONCENTRATION OF HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION IN ANY ONE AREA OF THE CITY WHICH WOULD CHANGE THE CHARACTER OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD OR CREATE AN IMBALANCE IN THE HOUSING STOCK;**
- iii) ADEQUATE NOISE INSULATION IS PROVIDED;**
- iv) ADEQUATE AMENITY FOR FUTURE OCCUPIERS.**

5.19 There are small pockets of Newport that have seen significant change to the housing mix and this situation will be monitored carefully upon receipt of planning applications for self contained units (apartments or flats) and for houses in multiple occupation. It should be noted that the planning system in Wales has limited control over proposals for houses in multiple occupation as many do not reach the threshold for requiring planning permission. Updated supplementary planning guidance will be provided in this regard.

5.20 Houses in multiple occupation (HIMO) only require planning permission if a dwelling house undergoes a material change of use to a HIMO. For this to occur it must be proven that more than 6 people are living together as a single household (not as a family). Planning permission is also required for the subdivision of a house into more than one unit, e.g. flats, flatlets, bedsits or maisonettes.

5.21 The general and other policies of this plan provide criteria relevant to this form of development. Specific detail on matters to be taken into account in flat conversions is found in the adopted Flat Conversions and Houses in Multiple Occupation Supplementary Planning Guidance, June 2006¹.

¹ Available at http://www.newport.gov.uk/stellent/groups/public/documents/plans_and_strategies/cont064549.pdf

4. APPENDIX 1

Studentification of the Stow Hill Ward, Newport. June 2009

STUDENTIFICATION OF THE STOW HILL WARD NEWPORT: A report on the extent of the issue and recommendations for managing its impacts



Student numbers:

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CPT795 – Live Project

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides a detailed investigation on whether there is an issue of studentification within the inner city Stow Hill ward of Newport, in order to establish an appropriate and robust planning policy for Newport City Council (NCC) in their emergent Newport Local Development Plan (NLDP).

The literature review examines the impact of '*studentification*' (the process of growing numbers of students within a locality) on the wider debate of sustainable communities. In order to be balanced, communities need to have some social mixing allowing the sharing of ideas and encouraging a sense of place, identity and belonging making people feel valued and welcomed. When an area becomes dominated by a single social group this can lead to feelings of exclusion and conflict creating social, economic and physical impacts, both positive and negative. This has implications for the Government's dual aims of encouraging sustainable balanced communities whilst increasing the numbers attending higher education.

The methodology chosen was a mixed methods approach, which combined qualitative and quantitative strategies; and primary and secondary data collection methods. Careful consideration was given to the methods chosen as it was recognized that by combining statistical data with words and images; and primary data from the Stow Hill ward with previous secondary research from other councils, a more complete overview of the research question could be achieved. The methods chosen were:

- Secondary data collection of: enforcement records relating to HMO and unsightly property complaints; environmental health records of HMOs; Council Tax exemption records; and 2001 Census statistics.
- Primary data collection through face to face questionnaires with the residents of the Stow Hill ward and the Stow Hill Echo community group. These will provide resident and community perceptions of studentification within the ward.
- A site survey of the Stow Hill ward through observation and photography.
- Telephone interviews with other councils in the UK, to provide an insight into existing policies that control the impact of studentification.

Following the mapping of the secondary data it became clear that there were certain areas within the ward that had a higher concentration of HMOs. Observational studies and questionnaires to gather resident perceptions were therefore focused in these areas of the ward, which were: York Place; Careau Road; Caroline Street; and Clytha Square. In particular the appearance of York Place had changed the character of the area, due to untidy and unkempt front gardens, bins along the public pavement and a plethora of letting signs on the front of properties. All these factors created a detrimental visual impact and potentially associated economic and social impacts with the downgrading of the area.

The analysis of the questionnaire data however, discovered that the majority of residents did not perceive there to be an issue of studentification within the Stow Hill ward although there was a perception that studentification could become an issue in the future, due to the ward's close location to the new university campus, the limited student accommodation available and the ward's mixed use character and housing tenure.

The research analysis also involved research collated from other university towns in the UK, namely Edinburgh, Newcastle, Leeds and Loughborough, which have been experiencing the effects of studentification forcing them to find innovative ways of dealing with the situation. From the research three methods were examined in depth noting their positive and negative attributes. One option is to continue with the existing policy NCC has when dealing with applications involving HMO. This would give flexibility to deal with individual cases on their merits but may not remain robust enough to deal with rising student numbers. An area of student restraint is simple to understand but may result in the problem being pushed elsewhere. Finally a threshold approach would set a limit on the amount of development and could be used city wide but requires high man hours to maintain. Due to the restrictions of the Use Classes Order (1987) these should be used in conjunction with other, integrated, approaches.

The report concludes that although there was limited evidence to establish a current issue of studentification within the Stow Hill ward, there is a potential for studentification to become a major issue in the future. This report therefore recommends that NCC adopt a threshold policy, which tackles some of the negative issues caused by studentification, whilst not being seen to discourage student accommodation. This should be done in conjunction with other approaches including lobbying the Government for changes to the Use Classes Order (1987).

Chapter 1:

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the Research

The research, undertaken on behalf of Newport City Council (NCC) by members of Cardiff University, aims to discover the extent to which students have populated an area of Newport and to offer solutions through the planning system to the problems that may arise.

NCC has been approached by local residents within the Stow Hill ward who are concerned that studentification is becoming an issue within the area. The research project therefore aims to establish whether studentification is an issue within the ward, and if so, recommend certain policies or strategies for the emerging Newport Local Development Plan (NLDP) in order to control or counteract any problems associated with studentification.

1.2 ‘Studentification’ and Balanced Communities

The Government’s utopian attempt to balance communities has been undermined by an equally powerful force of encouraging more people into higher education. The conflict begins where the growth in numbers of students attending university are no longer able to be solely housed in traditional university halls and spill out into private sector housing. Once these concentrations prove too great they can displace whole streets disrupting neighbourhoods and create student ghettos (Benjamin, 2001). This imbalance has been termed ‘*studentification*’ by Smith (2007) and is gaining greater media attention and raises wider issues of sustainable development and production and consumption models. The increased feeling of exclusion by certain groups has led to the rise in highly organised movements such as the National HMO Lobby.

Areas have experienced both positive and negative factors. These have been felt in terms of economic, social and environmental issues. The effects are seen on local services and business as well as the physical urban fabric of the locality. The results can lead to resentment by established communities towards students who themselves feel isolated and drawn to the safety of their own enclaves (Kenyon, 1997).

Although there is a growing appreciation of the impacts large numbers of students can have on an area by central government, the tools available to the planning system are often limited. Although in 2003 the then housing minister, Keith Hill MP, acknowledged studentification there has been a reluctance to use the term in official Government documentation (Kenyon

1999). The 2004 Housing Act set about defining Housing in Multiple Occupation (HMO) in which students reside. Powers were given to Local Authorities to capture information and regulate such properties in 2006. However planning powers have not been strengthened with greater interpretations of HMOs in England and Wales hindering their management and causing problems in creating balanced communities.

The area is one of predominately two and three storey housing. Additionally, there are a number of businesses located within the ward, such as public houses and small shops. The photographs below give a general indication of what the area looks like:

1.3 Case Studies

Newport is not alone searching for a solution to managing HMOs and studentification. A number of other university towns have similar, if not far greater issues of the number of students living amongst the existing population. Charnwood Borough Council has a particularly prominent problem which has created much local opposition and pressure to act. Research in the university town of Loughborough, part of the Charnwood Borough, revealed that the residential areas closest to the University and between the University and town centre have been the most popular locations with almost 7000 students living in private rented accommodation (Hubbard 2008). Local residents felt that the community cohesion of Loughborough has been seriously compromised by the seasonal student inhabitants and consequently Charnwood Borough Council initiated a consultation exercise to produce a new Supplementary Guidance Document (SPD) in order to effectively manage HMOs within the area. During the exercise they were presented with a list of options:

- No change, with planning applications relating to student housing continuing to be developed in line with the Charnwood Local Plan.
- The definition of an Area of Student Housing Restraint (ASHORE) within which strict enforcement is used to prevent planning permission being granted for any change likely to increase the number of students in the area.
- A modified ASHORE which would prevent any further development by preventing extension, rather than seeking to control student occupation levels
- A targeted approach, where two zones are identified on the basis of the proportion of student housing: a high occupancy zone subject to policies designed to control further

growth; and a lower outer zone having policies designed to encourage better management of student housing

- An annual targeted approach- a modification of the above with the designation of high and low occupancy zones to be reviewed annually
- A threshold approach, where no zones are defined but where planning applications are decided with reference to student occupancy in the immediate area.

These options have been developed and implemented by a number of Local Authorities with varying degrees of success in order to manage HMO growth within localities. The ideas of continuing with the current policy, use of an ASHORE and a threshold approach will be examined as part of this study with advantages and disadvantages of each outlined.

1.4 Aims and Objectives

The aim of the research is to establish whether studentification is an issue within the Stow Hill ward, and if so, whether an appropriate local planning policy can effectively help address this issue. The research objectives are therefore to:

- i. Establish whether studentification is an issue of within the Stow Hill ward;
- ii. If an issue exists, how extensive is it, and what problems does it create?
- iii. Identify existing policies and strategies by Local Planning Authorities throughout the United Kingdom in order to examine the methods used, and their effectiveness in controlling the issue of studentification;
- iv. To identify whether any of the issues discovered as a result of the study can be addressed by including an effective policy or strategy in the emerging NLDP.

The completed project will therefore be a valuable piece of research for Newport City Council to help inform and shape their policy or strategy for the emerging Local Development Plan in relation to student accommodation. The research will also be of interest to the residents of the Stow Hill ward who initially expressed concerns that studentification may be an issue within their ward. They will be able to gain a detailed understanding of the issue within the ward and more generally the extent of the problem throughout the United Kingdom, and take comfort in the fact the City Council is responding to their concerns and are looking for the best possible course of action to solve the problems which may exist.

1.7 Structure of the Report

- Chapter 2 provides a review of relevant literature and published research on wider issues associated with sustainable communities, production and consumption theory. The chapter will introduce the topic of studentification examining the rising phenomenon and its consequential impacts.
- Chapter 3 outlines the aims and objectives of the research in detail and discusses the methodology and methods used to collect data for the research project;
- Chapter 4 presents and analyses the findings of the research undertaken;
- Chapter 5 outlines the limitations of the study;
- Chapter 6 provides a conclusion for the research and will establish whether the aims and objectives have been achieved;
- Chapter 7 will outline a series of recommendations for Newport City Council.

Chapter 2:

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 The Wider Issue

There have been two ideals that a number of UK governments have attempted to pursue, with various amounts of vigour, which have served to contradict one another. The parallel aims of giving greater access to higher education and attaining balanced sustainable communities have come into conflict. A number of commentators have noted the effects of a phenomenon widely known as ‘*studentification*’ having both positive and (mainly) negative outcomes on a local population (Smith 2007). Concepts defining community are paramount in order to demonstrate how the report fits in with the wider debates.

2.2 Sustainable Communities

‘*Sustainable communities*’ has become a particularly significant political issue. This is a key aim of the New Labour Government who have evolved the concept since the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio 1992, when world leaders signed up to Agenda 21. The event focused on sustainable development the meaning of which was encapsulated by the Brundtland Report as:

‘development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs’

(Brundtland 1987, pp43)

There has been a resultant raft of measures that seek to work towards the idea. The Sustainable Communities Act 2007 aims to empower local communities to become economically thriving, socially inclusive, democratically active and protective of the environment (Communities and Local Government 2008). Through the planning system these ideas are reflected in such documents as Planning Policy Wales (Welsh Assembly Government 2002). Here a framework is set out dealing with various aspects of the land use planning system and is required to be incorporated within Local Development Plans. The chapter on housing highlights issues with significance to the current project with its objectives, amongst others, being to provide:

'homes that are in good condition, in safe neighbourhoods and sustainable communities; and a greater choice for people over the type of housing and the location they live in, recognising the needs of all.'

(Welsh Assembly Government 2002, pp98)

Although ideas of community attract a 'warm glow' with Politicians who use it in 'dubious policies', many analysts refrain from pinning down a definition (Warburton 1998 pp14). Some have understood it to be at a local perspective around 'actual social groups' where a certain relationship has been formed above that of society (Williams 1988, pp75-6 in Warburton 1998). Warburton (1998) feels that within the UK, local associations and affection remains important to many people. However it has been argued that the sense of community is changing due to globalisation, fragmentation and movement (Hall 1995 in Warburton 1998). These have created a web of transitory impersonal connections often based over wide distances (aided by new technologies and the internet) rendering the idea of time-honoured individual local relationship as obsolete. Hall (1995) therefore suggests a new meaning needs to be constructed.

The changing concept of community is still often emotionally charged. Warburton (1998, pp 18) feels the concept is an 'aspiration' and a 'dynamic process' as oppose to something to be discovered or returned to. It does not revolve around individuals but a relationship between people that creates a sense of place, identity and belonging (Mega 1996 in Warburton 1998). Socially mixed neighbourhoods give self confidence and mutual support to people from different backgrounds making them feel valued and welcomed (Holmes 1997). A shared interest can be had by those that inhabit an area however this can become unbalanced when there is an exclusion of difference and over concentration of particular groups or ideas leading to scenes of conflict and exclusion (Campbell 1994 and Taylor 1992 in Warbuton 1998).

Students can see themselves as a 'community within a community' similarly viewed by local residents (Kenyon 1997, pp287). Much involves the reputation, real and perceived, that students have in being able to change the social and physical fabric of neighbourhoods, angering residents who have invested in the area to make it 'home'. Images portrayed by these locations can extend beyond the immediate locality with the place being seen as a

student area. This leads to an '*erosion in feelings of stability, cohesiveness and confidence within the community*' (Kenyon 1997, pp 293).

The consequences can lead to what Smith and Williams (1986) term '*exclusionary displacement*' where a particular population snow-balls and dominates an area, discouraging other groups from encroaching on it. This has not been helped by universities traditionally being detached from their communities (Chatterton 2000). These ideas have come to be associated with the negative impacts of rapid studentification created by the Government's intension to increase the numbers attending further education.

2.3 Growth in Higher Education

Recent years have seen a significant rise in the number of students. Since the 1960s the population in higher education has gone from 100,000 to approximately 1.7 million (Blakey, 1994). This followed the Robbins Report (Her Majesty's Treasury 1963 in Blakey, 1994), which felt that it was both an economic necessity as well as a basic individual right with successive governments showing their commitment to the cause. The issue that arises is how to house the increasing numbers attending higher education.

The nature of student accommodation is changing. Traditionally '*town and gown*' universities have been able to house those attending in halls of residence. This was still partly bore out by the idea that universities were legally responsible for students under twenty-one. Since the phenomenal rise of those attending higher education the institutions have been unable to supply sufficient accommodation. The resulting effect was a rise in property offered by the privately rented market, where around half of all students live in HMOs (Kenyon 1997 and Rugg et al 2000).

The concentration of students in a particular area, who often reside in close proximity to the university campus, has resulted in areas of large numbers of HMOs. These HMOs are often located in a particular geographical area. The potential consequences and issues related to this effect (studentification) are well documented and will be further explored in this literature review.

2.4 Studentification

'The social and environmental changes caused by very large numbers of students living in particular areas of a town or city.'

(Macmillan 2007)

Studentification is linked to wider ideas of production and consumption particularly as students act as a gentrifying force (Chatterton 1999). Although students do not carry out *'production based activities'* they do assume *'production based consumption'* (Smith 2005, pp76). With the flight of capital and housing to the suburbs in the 1980s many inner-city areas fell into states of decay and neglect. A rent gap was then generated between the two locations leading Smith (1996) to note that if it was wide enough redevelopment could occur as rates were challenged elsewhere. This was compounded by problems in the property market in the early 1990s resulting in people renting out their properties rather than selling. The higher rents that students command, as oppose to families, and their need to live close to their higher education faculties means that they are an attractive target for landlords bringing an influx of capital to an area (Hubbard 2008).

The tendency of students to live in concentrated pockets has resulted in landlords purchasing properties in student areas that come into the owner occupied market. This is supported by Rugg et al (2000, pp19) who argued that the *'clear geographic definition to the student market, which means that landlords seeking to make an investment in student housing find it easy to pin-point the most appropriate locations in which to put property'*. In extreme cases, this can result in landlords purchasing all the properties in an entire street to rent out exclusively to the student market (Benjamin 2001). The impacts this can have on their host community can be dramatic.

2.5 The Effects of Studentification

'Students have officially been identified as the new scourge of Britain's towns and cities in a study blaming 'studentification' for a string of social evils ... They include destroying respectable neighbourhoods by driving out families, triggering rat infestations, causing vandalism and forcing the closure of corner shops in favour of tatty burger bars and cheap off-licences.'

(The Observer July 2002)

Studies have revealed that the inflow of students into a particular area can have social, economic and physical (environmental) impacts. These can both be positive and negative in challenging the established traditions of a locality.

2.5.1 Social

The demographic shift caused by an influx of student housing has some pronounced effects. The displacement of established residents by a younger population can lead to changes in infrastructure requirements. For example, loss of community based facilities, or fluctuations in the numbers of people using education or health services. Consumer habits are altered often forcing traditional businesses out to be replaced by a concentration of themed pubs, take-aways, letting agencies and discount food retailers. There are also greater perceived threats of burglary (as students leave houses uninhabited for long periods, creating implications for higher insurance premiums); flooding (through frozen pipes) and explosion (if appliances are unmaintained) (Kenyon 1997). These factors can lead to an alienation of the original population and lowering community cohesion and identity (Rugg et al 2000).

2.5.2 Physical (Environmental)

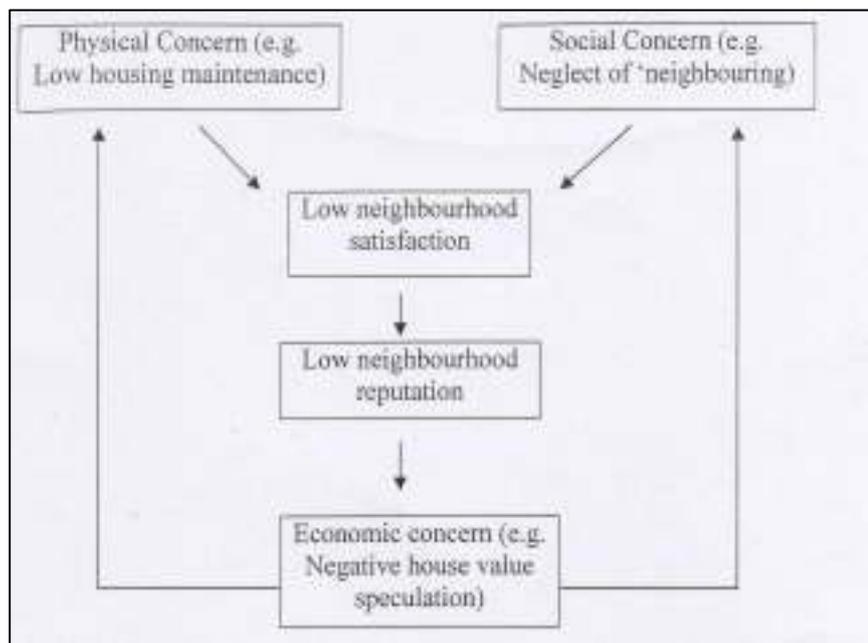
A detrimental effect on the environment has been documented in localities experiencing high numbers of HMOs. Areas tend to suffer a downgrading of the housing stock with Smith (2007) noting that private rented housing stock is often the poorest quality when compared to other tenures. This is believed, by home-owners, to devalue their properties and indeed those of the rented properties (Kenyon 1997). Associated problems also include parking issues and strains on local services such as refuse.

2.5.3 Economic

The demands and supply created by a student population can influence the local housing markets by inflating prices, which can result in housing being less affordable to the local community. Areas can gain notoriety as student enclaves which is believed to deter potential buyers (Kenyon 1997). Consequently the effect can '*marginalise the first-time buyer which is unable to compete in the market*' (Communities and Local Government 2008, pp14).

These factors lead Kenyon (1997) to draw what she describes as a ‘*spiral of anxiety*’ as demonstrated in Figure 1 .

Figure 1: Demonstrating the links between physical, social and economic concerns in creating a ‘*spiral of anxiety*’



Source (Kenyon 1997, pp296)

2.6 Positive Impacts

Despite these perceived negative impacts of studentification, ECOTEC (Communities and Local Government 2008) identify that there is evidence of positive impacts associated with concentrations of HMOs and students. In broad terms this can be as a result of universities being major employers which ‘*have a major effect on the local economy generating significant economic output and employment opportunities*’ (Communities and Local Government 2008, pp14). Additionally, it is also observed that a student population constitutes ‘*a flexible part-time labour force to undertake seasonally based employment and the goods and services purchased by students make a significant contribution to the local economy*’ (Communities and Local Government 2008, pp14).

Chatterton (2000, pp168) highlights a ‘*renewed interest in city-centre living, spearheaded by [amongst others] ...students.*’ The increased population creates demands that can alter the

range of goods and services, social and leisure attractions and public transport available. Demand for private rented accommodation, particularly in areas where there is an element of low demand, rises. This can help increase property prices in places where they have been historically low and bring capital to an area through rents being charged.

2.7 Problems for Planning

In attempting to manage HMOs and create a more sustainable community planning has a number of problems it must face. These include the definition of houses in multiple occupation and Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987.

2.7.1 Defining Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)

There has been a historical inability of institutional actors such as Environmental Health Officers, Housing Officers and Planners to intervene in the processes of studentification largely because the numbers of HMOs were unknown. The main cause was an absence of legislative requirement for recording, monitoring and regulating the distribution of these.

Recent legislation has given greater powers to Local Authorities to regulate and licence HMOs. In 2006 the licensing of HMOs became mandatory across England and Wales useful in terms of the Newport study in assessing whether the issue of studentification/ HMOs is a problem within the Stow Hill ward. This followed the 2004 Housing Act which defined HMOs as:

- An entire house or flat which is let to three or more tenants who form two or more households and who share a kitchen, bathroom or toilet;
- A house which has been converted entirely into bedsits or other non-self-contained accommodation and which is let to three or more tenants who form two or more households and who share kitchen, bathroom or toilet facilities;
- A converted house which contains one or more flats which are not wholly self-contained (i.e. the flat does not contain within it a kitchen, bathroom and toilet) and which is occupied by three or more tenants who form two or more households and;

- A building which is converted entirely into self contained flats if the conversion did not meet the standards of the 1991 Building Regulations and more than one third of the flats are let on short-term tenancies.

Whilst it is clear that a change in Housing Legislation through the 2004 Housing Act demonstrates an acknowledgement from central government as to the associated problems of HMOs, it is widely considered that the emergence of studentification is tied to the lack of planning powers to manage the process.

2.7.2 The Use Classes Order (1987)

The key regulatory framework, in which Planners operate, is that of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987. HMOs are unclassified by the Use Classes Order and are ‘*sui generis*’ (of its own class). Therefore, as a general rule, planning permission will only be required if a dwelling house undergoes a material change of use to a HMO. For this to occur it must be proven, by fact and degree, that more than six people are living together as either a family or a single household (Town & Country Planning, England and Wales, 1995). However the definition of a material change of use in these cases has been open to interpretation and frequently challenged at appeal by developers and landlords.

The tools available to Planning Authorities are therefore limited when attempting to manage the increasing challenges in areas where there is a demand from growing student populations. A point emphasised by the National HMO Lobby (2005, Sustainable Communities, para. 17):

‘We were very disappointed that the recent revision of the Use Classes Order did not include any new requirement for planning permission for HMOs (unlike the example set in Northern Ireland). It is this loophole in planning legislation which leaves thriving communities vulnerable to devastation by unrestricted growth of HMOs. ...’

Consequently it is considered that the current planning system is restricted in its ability to deal with the spatial distribution and concentration of particular social groups. Planning can only regulate land uses, via the granting of planning permission and is limited as to how it

can enforce and regulate the way in which buildings are occupied and by whom (Smith, 2007).

2.8 Conclusion

The literature review has demonstrated the problems faced by the Government's dual aims. It is suggested that at present the utopia is unattainable by current legislation and regulations. Communities are required to be well balanced and mixed in order to remain sustainable and various negative impacts can occur particularly if the numbers of student houses are allowed to dominate in an area. This is not to deter their development, as positive factors can be gained, but to manage them in the best way for the whole community. As demand for student residences outstrips supply and is set to worsen in the short term, new and innovative solutions will need to be found through existing regulations.

Chapter 3:

METHODOLOGY

3.1 The Core Concepts of Social Science

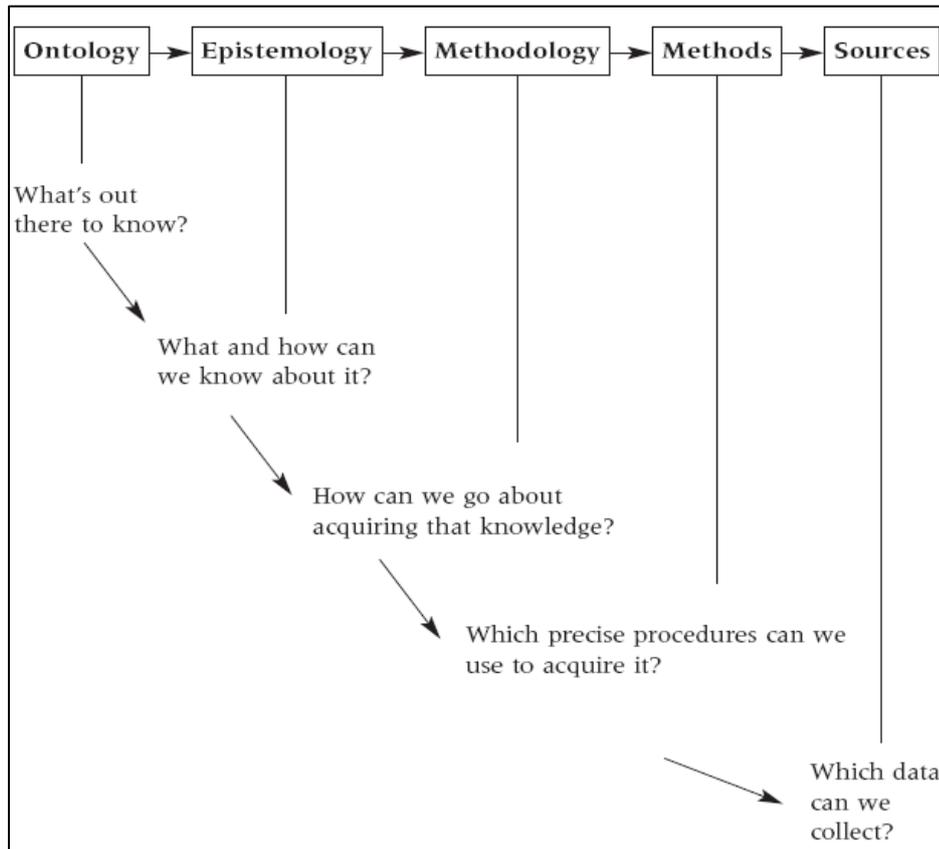
The philosophically well-established areas of ontology, epistemology and methodology are foundational to any research according to Love (n.d). These concepts will be briefly outlined to provide the basis for the structure of this chapter and a theoretical background to this investigation. Grix (2002) states that ontology is the starting point of all research, after which one's epistemological and methodological positions logically follow. Blaikie (2000 quoted in Grix 2002, pp177) describes ontology as *'claims and assumptions that are made about the nature of social reality, claims about what exists, what it looks like, what units make it up and how these units interact with each other. In short, ontological assumptions are concerned with what we believe constitutes social reality'*.

Grix (2002) explains that epistemology is concerned with the theory of knowledge, especially in regard to its methods, validation and the possible ways of gaining knowledge of social reality, whatever it is understood to be. Epistemology focuses on the knowledge gathering process and is concerned with developing new models or theories that are better than competing models or theories (Grix 2002). Therefore, to define the difference between the two, ontology asks, 'what is?' or 'what can be known?', where epistemology asks 'how do we know?' (Nel, 2007 pp2). Nel (2007, pp3) says *"we could say that ontology is 'the science of being', whereas epistemology is 'the science of the methods or grounds of knowledge' "*.

Hay (2002 cited in Grix 2002, pp178) states that *'ontology logically precedes epistemology which logically precedes methodology'*, this is how we go about acquiring the knowledge which exists. Grix (2002) explains that a researcher's methodological approach, which is underpinned by and reflects specific ontological and epistemological assumptions, represents a choice of approach and research methods adopted in a given study, as will be outlined in section 3.4. *"Methodology is concerned with the logic of scientific inquiry; in particular with investigating the potentialities and limitations of particular techniques or procedures. The term pertains to the science and study of methods and the assumptions about the ways in which knowledge is produced"* (Grix 2002, pp179). Methodology is logically linked to the research methods employed in a project; research methods are the *'techniques or procedures used to collate and analyse data'*, which will be discussed in section 3.5 (Blaikie 2000 quoted in Grix 2002, pp179). The methods chosen for a research project are inextricably linked to

the research questions posed and to the sources of data collected, as figure 2 shows. The figure is intended to show the directional relationship between key components of research as described above.

Figure 2: The Interrelationship between the building blocks of research



Source: (Grix 2008, pp181)

3.2 Epistemological Position of this Research

The epistemological position of this research is based on ‘*critical realism*’. Bryman (2004 pp13) explains that ‘*realism*’ is the belief that natural and the social sciences can and should apply the same kinds of approach to the collection of data and to explanation, and a commitment to the view that there is an external reality to which scientists direct their attention. There are two major forms of realism, ‘*empirical realism*’ and ‘*critical realism*’; the position of this research is however based on ‘*critical realism*’. Bhaskar (1989 quoted in Bryman 2004 pp13) states that critical realism is ‘*a specific form of realism whose manifesto is to recognize the reality of the natural order and the events and discourses of the social*

world and holds that 'we will only be able to understand – and so change – the social world if we identify the structures at work that generate those events and discourses. ... These structures are not spontaneously apparent in the observable pattern of events; they can only be identified through the practical and theoretical work of social sciences'. The research project will therefore attempt to uncover the mechanisms that exist (e.g. house composition / concentration of HMOs) which produce certain kinds of effects, namely studentification, and then suggest certain type of procedures and actions to change or control these effects, which will be in the form of a policy or strategy as explained below. The research project may conclude that studentification is not an issue within the Stow Hill ward, although critical realism would demand that a significant problem exists. Therefore a more intermediate level of theory that can be applied to the research is political economy.

Political economy is the study of the role of economic processes in shaping society and history. Political economy refers to different, but related, approaches to studying economic and political behaviours, ranging from the combining of economics with other fields, to the using of different, fundamental assumptions that challenge orthodox economic assumptions (O’Riordan and Voisey 1997). The theory is therefore concerned with explaining how political institutions, the political environment, and the economic system (capitalist / socialist) mixed with and influence each other (O’Riordan and Voisey 1997). When narrowly construed, it refers to applied topics in economics implicating public policy, such as sustainable communities, a broader theme of studentification identified in the literature review. This theory is therefore appropriate for the research as it will uncover the relationships between the economic system, in term of housing tenure and specifically how student houses and HMO are rented out for profit, and the political environment, in terms of national policies and legislation and local government policies relating to HMO and student accommodation, and the way both factors influence each other and trigger off certain reactions from both sides.

3.3 The Research Proposal

The literature review has shown that areas of student growth are occurring in many university towns within the United Kingdom, and as a result, produce cultural, economic, social and physical urban changes in such areas. This may be true for the Stow Hill ward in Newport as the City Council has been approached by local residents concerned that studentification may be becoming an issue within their ward. NCC therefore requires an assessment of the impact students housing / houses in multiple occupation have or are likely to have on the Stow Hill ward following requests generated at local neighbourhood meetings.

The project brief received from NCC is to establish whether studentification is an issue within the ward, and if so, whether an appropriate local planning policy can effectively help address this issue. The task therefore is to structure an appropriate policy or strategy for the emerging NLDP, which is currently being prepared in accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The NLDP will provide the development strategy and policy framework for Newport in order to guide and manage development, providing a basis by which planning applications can be determined consistently and appropriately. The literature review states that it is widely considered that the emergence of studentification is tied to the lack of planning powers to regulate the process and planning authorities are therefore faced with increasing challenges in areas where there is a demand from the growing student population. The research project therefore represents an opportunity to expose the issue of studentification and suggesting detailed policies or strategies in order to be able to successfully control the emergence of studentification at the local government level.

3.3.1 The Research Objectives

The literature review has highlighted the issues surrounding studentification and the limitations Local Authorities have in managing it. The aim of the study however is to establish the extent of the problems, if any, associated with studentification within the Stow Hill ward of Newport. The research objectives are therefore to:

- i. Establish whether studentification is an issue of within the Stow Hill ward;
- ii. If an issue exists, how extensive is it, and what problems does it create?

- iii. Identify existing policies and strategies by Local Planning Authorities throughout the United Kingdom in order to examine the methods used, and their effectiveness in controlling the issue of studentification;
- iv. To identify whether any of the issues discovered as a result of the study can be addressed by including an effective policy or strategy in the emerging Local Development Plan for Newport;

It is possible that, after conducting initial investigations, further areas of research may become apparent.

3.4 Research Design & Strategy

3.4.1 Research Design

A research design provides a framework for the collection and analysis of data. A choice of research design reflects the decision about the priority being given to a range of dimensions of the research process (Bryman 2004, pp27). The research design defines the overall structure and orientation of an investigation.

Kumar (1996 pp81) explains that research designs can be classified into three groups:

1. cross sectional studies;
2. before-and-after studies; and
3. longitudinal studies.

Cross-sectional studies are the most commonly used design in social sciences. *'This design is best suited to studies aimed at finding out the prevalence of a phenomenon, situation, problem, attitude or issue, by taking a cross-section of the population'* (Kumar 1996, pp81). This type of research design is useful in obtaining an overall *'picture'* as it stands at the time of the study. This kind of research design is the most appropriate for the research topic, as the research will be carried out at a single point in time. A *'before-and-after study'* can measure change in situation and is most appropriate design for measuring the impact or effectiveness of a program (Kumar 1996, pp83). In *'longitudinal studies'* the study population is studied at a number of times, which allows the researcher to measure the pattern of change (Kumar 1996, pp86).

The design of a cross-sectional study is straightforward. The aims and objectives of the research have been set, as outlined above, the study population have also been identified, which is the Stow Hill ward of Newport, and a sample of the populations has been identified to find out the required information. As the research will be carried out in the Stow Hill ward, a case study method will also be used. *'The case study method is an approach to studying a social phenomenon through a thorough analysis of an individual case. The case may be a person, group, episode, process, community, society or any other unit of social life'* (Kumar 1996, pp99). The case study area will therefore give a detailed insight into the impact studentification has on the community within the Stow Hill ward. *'This approach rests on the assumption that the case being studied is typical of cases of a certain type so that, through intensive analysis, generalisations may be made that will be applicable to other cases of the same type'* (Kumar 1996, pp99).

3.4.2 Research Strategy & Methodology

'The methodology specifies how the researcher may go about practically studying whatever he or she believes to be known' (Nel 2007, pp4). The research project will include a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods. Both quantitative and qualitative research can be viewed as exhibiting a set of distinctive but contrasting preoccupations. *'These preoccupations reflect epistemologically grounded beliefs about what constitutes acceptable knowledge'* according to Bryman (2004, pp75).

- **Quantitative research:**

Bryman (2004, pp19) states that quantitative research can be constructed as a research strategy that emphasizes quantification in the collection and analysis of data; *'it entails a deductive approach to the relationship between theory and research, in which the accent is placed on the testing of theories; has incorporated the practices and norms of the natural scientific model and the positivism in particular; and embodies a view of social reality as an external, objective reality'*. Denscombe (2003, pp236) explains that the use of quantitative data in social research carries with it an aura of respectability as *'it uses numbers and can present findings in the form of graphs and tables, it conveys a sense of solid, objective research'*. Statistical information will be collected such as census data etc, however

information collected from local residents could also be tabulated and presented in graphs to be clear and easy to analyse.

- **Qualitative research:**

Qualitative research can be constructed as a research strategy that usually emphasizes words rather than quantification in the collection and analysis of data (Bryman 2004, pp19-20). Denscombe (2003, pp268) explains that qualitative data, whether words or images, are the product of a process of interpretation. The data only becomes data when they are used as such. Bryman (2004, pp19-20) explains that *'it predominantly emphasizes and inductive approach to the relationship between theory and research, in which the emphasis is placed on the generation of theories; has rejected the practices and norms of the natural scientific model and of positivism in particular in preference for an emphasis on the ways in which individuals interpret their social world; and embodies a view of social reality as a constantly shifting emergent property of individuals' creation'*. The qualitative data collected for the research project should provide in-depth detailed data, which will provide detailed explanations of the results produced by the quantitative data.

3.5 Research Methods

Bryman (2004, pp27) explains that *'a research method is simply a technique for collecting data'*. This section will outline the mixed methods that will be used to gain data for the research project that will reflect the choice of research design. As already stated these will include a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods and the collection of primary and secondary data.

3.5.1 Primary Data

Primary sources provide first-hand information, they will include:

Observation: *'Observation is a purposeful, systematic and selective way of watching and listening to an interaction or phenomenon as it takes place'* (Kumar 1996, pp105). This type method will not be used to learn about the interaction or behavior of individuals or a community but simply to observed and analyze the built environment to see if the issue of studentification has a physical impact on a particular area. In order to obtain the data, on site field-work will have to be carried out. Photographs will be taken and used to illustrate the appearance of the streets within the ward and establish whether there has been a material

change in appearance of the properties in planning terms. An initial site survey will be carried out at an early stage of the project in order to become familiar with the area, and a more detailed site survey will be carried out mid-way through the research project as other research methods will help inform what areas may suffer from studentification and therefore to photograph.

A Sampling Technique: Due to a number of constraints, namely time and cost, it would not be possible to contact every resident within the Stow Hill Ward to get a comprehensive overview of the impact of studentification. Therefore, a sample will have to be chosen. Henn et al (2006 pp129) explain that traditional sampling for survey research is based on mathematical theory of probability in that it employs methods of random selection, which is usually referred to as probability sampling. However, for the research project a ‘systematic sampling design’ strategy will be used. This design has characteristics of both random and non-random sampling designs according to Kumar (1996, pp162). *‘In systematic sampling the sampling frame is divided into a number of segments, called intervals. Then, from the first interval, using the SRS (simple random sampling) technique, one element is selected. The selection of subsequent elements from other intervals is dependent upon the order of the elements selected in the first interval’* (Kumar 1996, pp162-163). In order to cover a large majority of the Stow Hill Ward during the on site research, every fourth dwelling will be approached to try and obtain information from the local residents, which will include the completion of questionnaires and interviews as described below. However, even using this technique it would not be possible to cover the whole of the ward, therefore should the initial research show that studentification is more of an issue within certain streets; the field work will be directed to these streets for more detailed research.

Questionnaires: The research is the result of requests generated by local community meeting therefore obtaining information from local residents is essential. As mentioned above a sampling strategy will be used to select the residents to complete a questionnaire. Questionnaires are at their most effective when used with large numbers of respondents in many locations and when what is required tends to be fairly straightforward information (Descombe 2003, pp145). Information from a large number of local residents can be obtained using this form of data collection. The questionnaire will include a mixture of ‘open’ and ‘closed’ questions. The closed questions will provide definite, standardized and uniform answers, which will be quantified and compared. The ‘open’ questions will then allow

respondents to elaborate by choosing their own words which will reflect the full richness and complexity of the views/opinion held by the respondent (Descombe 2003, pp156). The ‘*open*’ questions will be kept to minimum as an overload of these questions may reduce the willingness of people to complete the questionnaire. This form of research will be carried out mid way through the research and the aim of the group will be to get around 100 residents to complete a questionnaires.

It is anticipated that there will be a lack of willingness by local residents to complete questionnaires; therefore the Stow Hill Ward Community Group will also be sent a questionnaire. This Community Group represents the ward; therefore they will be able to provide a wealth of data and a definite opinion and stance on the issue of studentification within the ward. The questionnaire will therefore be semi-structure and longer than the resident’s questionnaire in order to obtain as much data as possible.

Interviews: Telephone interview will be carried with representatives from a number of Local Planning Authorities throughout the United Kingdom .Councils identified, from their Unitary Development Plans or Local Plans, as having innovative methods of dealing with studentification will be contacted. The interviews will be semi-structured in order to allow the respondents to talk more freely. However a clear list of issues, which will need to be addressed, will be prepared before the interview in order to ensure that the interview is steered in the correct direction and to provide a rough uniform of data, which will also assure the comparability of data. The interviews will provide an insight into existing policies and strategies at work throughout the United Kingdom in order to control studentification and reveal their effectiveness in controlling the issue. The intention is to approach and interview around six Local Planning Authorities after identifying the ones that have policies or strategies to control studentification.

Interviewing local Councilors, particularly the Ward Members, was identified as a key part of the research as they are the individuals who are able to talk on behalf on the whole community as they are informed of the issues by their constituents. However, it was suggested by the client that the focus of the research should be on analyzing the effects of studentification on the built environment and to concentrate on ways to counteract any problems, and therefore it was not advised to interview Councilors.

3.5.2 Secondary Data

Secondary sources provide second-hand data, these will include:

Document Research: This method of data collection can provide a wealth of information. Policy documents, guidance and official statistics produced by the government, previous research findings on similar topics, and relevant books and journals will be analysed in detail. Descombe (2003, pp212) explains that these can be treated '*as a source of data in their own right – in effect an alternative to questionnaires, interviews or observations*'. The data drawn from these sources will provide valuable background information and direction for further research. The document research will include:

Books/Journals: The main advantage is that the material published in books is usually important and of good quality, and the findings are '*integrated with other research to form a coherent body of knowledge*' (Martin 1985 quoted in Kumar 1996' pp29).

The Internet: Denscombe (2003, pp41) notes that the Internet offers some fabulous possibilities for research. '*It holds the prospect of gathering huge volumes of data, of operating at global levels, of getting information quickly –and doing so at relatively low cost*'.

Government Publications, Guidance and Legislation: A key objective of the research project is to examine and analyze planning policy guidance at the national level, and in more detail at the local government level, in order to establish what measures Local Planning Authorities have in place to control and tackle the issue of studentification. Once identified, the effectiveness of these measures will be analyzed in order to see whether they can be applied to the Stow Hill ward. The existing policy within Newport's local plan will therefore need to be examined in detail along with the Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) to see if they could be improved or a totally new strategy applied to the emerging LDP.

Previous Research: Identifying previous research studies will not only provide a valuable background to the issue of studentification across the United Kingdom, as already noted in the literature review, but will also be useful to compare and contrast the issues identified within the particular case studies with the issues identified within the Stow Hill ward. This will help expose the seriousness of the issue.

Data held by the Newport City Council – Much of the early part of the study will involve obtaining information from Newport City Council which should provide an early indication of the extent of the issue of studentification within the Stow Hill ward and provide direction for the next phase of research. The early research will involve collecting the following:

- The number of registered students living in Newport;
- The number of Environmental Health licence applications for HMO's;
- The number of planning enforcement complaints;
- The number of planning applications received;
- Council Tax information relating to Newport.

Once all this information has been collated, it will be possible to reach an informal conclusion, and it will also be possible to ensure that adequate data has been collected to ensure that a full and conclusive presentation and report can be delivered to the client.

3.6 Ethics in Social Research

Ethical issues arise at a variety of stages in social research and are a central part of maintaining the integrity, honesty and legitimacy of research practice. Barnes (1979 quoted in Henn et al 2006, pp67) explains that ethical decisions in research are those which *'arise when we try to decide between one course of action and another not in terms of expediency or efficiency but by reference to standards of what is morally right or wrong'*.

The British Sociological Association (BSA) (2002) has formulated codes of ethics. Cardiff University (CU, n.d) has also formulated codes of ethics and procedures, which will be followed throughout the process of the research project. The research participants will be able to consent freely to their involvement in the research, which Henn et al (2006, pp74) refer to as the doctrine of informed consent. Participants will not be under the impression that they are required to participate in a research project and they will not be deceived into doing so. Participants will be informed of the purpose and nature of the research and the potential consequences of participating in the research (i.e. physically, psychologically, legally and professionally), therefore they will have the opportunity to make a fully informed decision before committing to taking part in the research. The privacy and anonymity of the participants will also be respected and ensured, as those who participate in the research will remain nameless (see appendix D for the ethical approval form).

Chapter 4:

CONTEXT OF THE CASE STUDY AREA

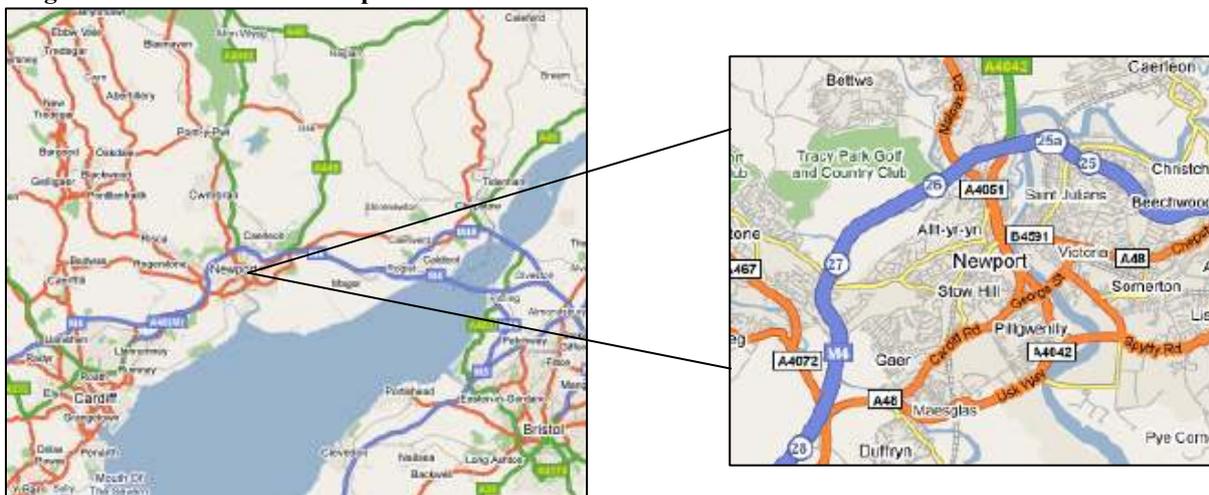
4.1 Newport

Newport is located in South Wales, Great Britain, between the major conurbations of Bristol and Cardiff on the prosperous M4 motorway. It is the third largest urban area in Wales, set on the Western bank of the Severn Estuary with the River Usk flowing through its centre. It has a population of approximately 139,000 people (ONS 2001) and the County borough covers 84 square miles (ONS 2001). In 2002 Newport was awarded City Status (Newport City Council 2009).

Newport's name means just that – a 'new' 'port' and its name has been synonymous with an industrial growth and success since the early nineteenth century. However since the de-industrialization process within the late 1980s and 1990s whereby production and manufacturing has been re-located overseas, Newport has suffered in terms of its economy and image.

This has led to Newport undergoing a massive change transforming itself from a previous industrial town to a post-industrial City. An Urban Regeneration Company, called Newport Unlimited has been set up to work in partnership with Newport's Local Authority and they are in the process of regenerating and re-imaging Newport City. This involves over 100 projects, including 1million ft² of new and refurbished retail space, 2 million ft² of office space, 10,000 new houses and a new City Centre university campus.

Figure 3: The location of Newport

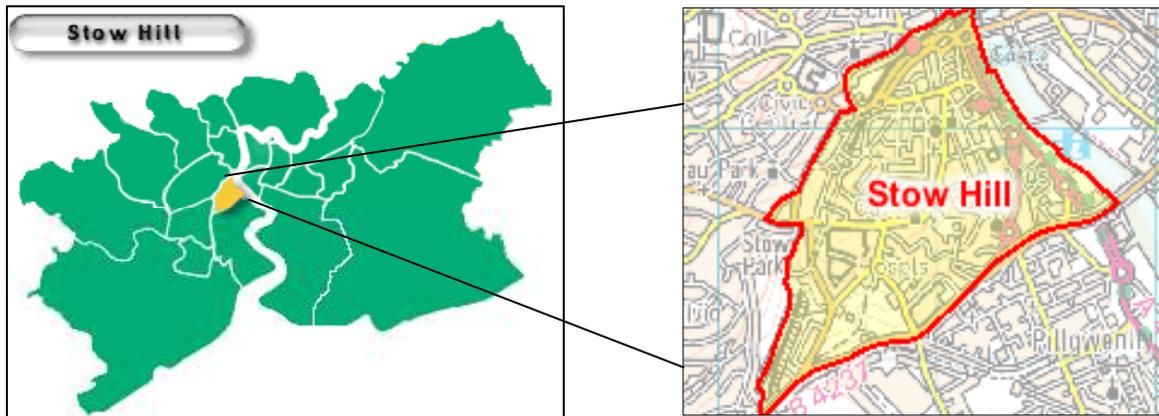


Source: (Google Maps, 2009)

4.2 The Stow Hill ward

The Stow Hill ward is one of Newport's inner city wards located on the west side of the City (see figure 4). It is a small ward in terms of its size but like many inner city wards, dense with development and has a resident population of 4453 people and 2366 dwellings. (ONS 2001).

Figure 4: Location of the Stow Hill Ward within Newport City



Source: (NCC,2009; Google maps, 2009).

Stow Hill is considered to have a mixed use, which is mainly residential, but also includes numerous pubs and eating establishments; guest houses and night lodges; small businesses, such as solicitors and estate agents; and voluntary organizations, such as Share and the Echo community group (see figure 5, which illustrates the mixed use of the area). It is considered a sustainable ward, which is in walking distance from the City Centre, leisure and entertainment facilities, work places and public transport, such as Newport's railway station and bus station.

Figure 5: Examples of the different uses within the Stow Hill ward

Takeaway restaurants



Voluntary organization



Night lodge



In terms of its resident composition the Stow Hill ward 2001 Census statistics provide data that shows that the largest population group is adults with no children, 31.2%, closely followed by adults with children, 29.9%, indicating that the Stow Hill ward is a family area. It is noted that there was only a 2.9% student population, which is a very small proportion of the total population (see figure 6). Interestingly, Hubbard's (2008) study on the social impacts of studentification noted the 2001 Census statistics for various university towns around the U.K. In comparison to Stow Hill's 2.9%, the ward of Cathays in Cardiff had a student population of 26.7%, the Dunkierk and Lenton ward in Nottingham a student population of 23.9% and the Headingley ward in Leeds a student population of approximately 20.7%. These are much higher student populations than that of Stow Hill. While according to the National HMO Lobby (2008, pp 9) there needs to be a student –resident ration of 20% to cause a 'tipping point' at which the character of an area changes as a result of the impacts of students.

Figure 6: Household composition of the Stow Hill ward

Household composition	%
Pensioner only	28.3
Lone parent	12.3
Children	29.9
No children	31.2
Student	2.9

Source (ONS, 2001)

It is important to note however that the 2001 Census data is extremely out of date and unlikely to provide a true representation of the population and household statistics. Since 2001 the University of Wales Newport has become more established when it became a full constitution in 2003. Moreover, the EU has expanded and immigration has increased and there have been significant changes in the strength of the economy, for instance, we are now in a period of economic downturn. These factors can all lead to a considerable change in the population composition of the Stow Hill ward.

In order to supplement 2001 Census population data, Council Tax records were sought, as students are not required to pay Council Tax and therefore records of the properties within the ward as student households is a possible way of identifying student populations. The Council Tax records for the year 2007/2008 however only showed that 39 properties out of the 2366 properties within the Stow Hill ward were exempt from paying their Council Tax, which is not a significant number and these might not even all be student properties, for instance properties that are empty are exempt from Council Tax payments.

4.3 The University of Wales Newport

The University of Wales Newport was established in 1914 as Caerleon College. It has since then grown and flourished into The University of Wales Newport and became a full constituent institution in 2003. The University has two campuses, a campus at Caerleon where there is available student accommodation and a campus in the Allt-yr-yn area of Newport. There is no accommodation available at the Allt-yr-yn campus. A new £35 million City Centre campus is currently being constructed on the banks of the River Usk, which is the first phase of the £50 million redevelopment plans for the University (see figure 7 for an artists impression of the City Centre campus). As well as the City Centre campus a new accommodation block along the bank of the River Usk, 200m away from the campus site has been constructed and completed in 2008. The accommodation was built by OPAL group, who specialize in building, owning and managing student accommodation and an agreement has been signed between The University of Wales Newport and the OPAL group to allocate 150 of its rooms as student accommodation. The City Centre university proposals are expected to double the existing size of the university and is prophesized by Newport City regeneration Officers to act as a *'hot house of creativity, innovation and entrepreneurial activity which will attract students from all over the world'* (Newport Unlimited 2009). (See figure 7 of images of the campus and accommodation a quote from Newport's regeneration team).

Figure 7: Proposed City Centre campus and the OPAL group accommodation block



‘The University has prepared a vision for Higher Education over the next 10 years which envisages doubling student numbers and developing a new campus in the City Centre. The School of Art, Media & Design; Computing and Engineering; and Business & Management are proposed to be relocated to the riverside site.’

Source: Newport Unlimited (2009)

At present 6500 students attend the University with approximately 3000 full time students, and approximately 3500 part-time students, approximately 100 students are international students. Despite there being 6500 students only 661 student rooms are provided at the Caerleon campus, which namely go to first year undergraduate and international students. It is noted that there is only enough student accommodation provided to cater for 10% of the student population. Although the newly built accommodation block in the City Centre does guarantee 150 rooms for students, the students will have to compete with the general public for the remainder of the 292 rooms within the block. Moreover, as it is anticipated that the university will double in size, this will add further pressure to provide student accommodation. The University’s position on accommodation students is that it is only responsible for its own accommodation, not that of the private rented sector. This limited responsibility means that the University has no control of the management of properties in the private rented sector. The limited student accommodation available means that the majority of students turn to the private housing sector for their student accommodation. This demand for student accommodation has a strong influence on the tenure structure of the local housing

market. This can be demonstrated by examining the household tenure and composition of the Stow Hill ward.

4.4 Household data

2001 Census statistics shows that the majority of properties within the Stow Hill Ward at 70.5% are owner occupied and that only a small proportion 4.8% are rented by private landlord (see figure 8). Again, however, 2001 Census statistics are unreliable and it is anticipated that, with the current recession and potential influx of students into Newport, more of the properties within the ward will become privately rented.

Figure 8: Household tenure statistics in the Stow Hill ward

Household tenure	%
Owner occupied	70.5
Rented Council	21.7
Rented landlord	4.8
Rented other	3

Source (ONS, 2001)

In the 1990s Blakey (1994) linked the recession with an increase in landlords desire for student accommodation in order to demand more rent. For instance, landlords are able to extract more rent from a 5 or 6 bedroomed student household than from a family renting the same accommodation and therefore landlords are likely to look for houses that can be converted to HMOs with the aim of attracting students (Hubbard 2008). It is therefore anticipated for landlords to do the same within the current recession and a knock on effect of this increase in rent- charges is that these properties are no longer affordable for family households and as a consequence an acceleration in the movement out of traditional family households.

In relation to dwelling type, Stow Hill has a high percentage of terraced properties, at 34.5 % this is the most common dwelling type within the ward, with the second most common dwelling type, semi- detached properties at 32.5% and only 17% for detached properties (see figure 9). It is this concentration of terraced housing and the relative simplicity to convert them to HMOs that make these properties ideal for student accommodation and therefore coupled with the recession, the higher rents that can be charged and an increase in student numbers, the number of HMOs is expected to increase within the Stow Hill ward

Figure 9: Dwelling type statistics in the Stow Hill ward

Dwelling type	%
Detached	17.3
Semi detached	32.5
Terraced	34.5
Flats	11.9
Converted accommodation	3.5
Caravan/temporary accommodation	0.3

Source (ONS, 2001)

4.5 Newport City Council (NCC)

NCC 's planning department is a key stakeholder in the provision and control of student accommodation, and it is the purpose of this research, set by NCC to determine whether there is a suitable planning policy to control the impact of studentification.

There are currently no specific policies relating the control of student accommodation within the Council's adopted Unitary Development Plan (UDP) 1996 -2011, although there is a specific policy and Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) relating to the conversion of HMOs. Policy H4 '*Conversions*' states the criteria for good practice for property conversion (see figure 18) , and SPG '*Flat conversions and Houses in Multiple Occupation*' sets out further detailed issues that need to be considered to gain planning permission such as amenity space, noise and parking arrangements (NCC, 2006b).

Policy H4 and SPG guidance however are centered on the design issues of HMOs and do not deal with the specific impact of studentification in particular locations. There is therefore a need to identify a strategic plan in order for Newport to be able to successfully accommodate students within the City and particularly in the Stow Hill ward, which is considered to receive the brunt of students with its close proximity to the new campus and with much of its housing tenure adaptable for student living. There is evidence that a strategy to deal with studentification is beginning to take place within the preparation of the NLDP whereby, one of the eight key strategic options is '*Housing for students and young people*'. No strategic plan has yet been put in place and it is the purpose of this investigation to establish the extent of studentification within the Stow Hill ward and formulate an effective policy to address an issue/potential issue of studentification with the Stow Hill ward.

4.6 Enforcement complaints

One of the main ways NCC can involve itself in monitoring possible impacts of studentification is from data collected the public complaints. Every complaint that is received is recorded and stored in the Council's records. As part of the analysis for this project enforcement complaints in relation to HMOs and complaints in relation to unsightly properties were marked onto streets a map to provide spatial analysis of this data and also to provide us of an indication of where there might be an issue of studentification within the Stow Hill ward (see appendix A for all the map recordings, which cover the different streets within the Stow Hill ward). It is noted that Environmental Health records of HMOs in the Stow Hill ward were also sought, however these could not be broken down into the individual wards of Newport and were therefore not appropriate to use for this project.

Figure 10: An example of an area within the Stow Hill ward, which maps the concentration of HMO and unsightly property complaints



Figure 10 of the mapping of enforcement complaints clearly shows that there is a concentration are HMOs and unsightly properties along York Place, therefore indicating that this is a street within the ward that could be inclined to the impact of studentification. It must be noted however, that just because there is a complaint regarding a HMO, this does not reflect the true situation. It is often the case that complaints are received regarding HMOs when in fact the properties are not HMOs. The enforcement data set was also limited due to its incomplete nature. For instance, although there were records of HMO complaints there were no reference to the specific issue of the complaint, such as was the complaint due to noise disturbance, appearance of the property, too many people living at the property, or something different.

Now that the context of the area and institutions involved has been established, the next section will go on to analyse data obtained from primary research in order to further establish one of the aims of this project on whether there is an issue of 'studentification' within the Stow Hill Ward. From the secondary statistics collated the numbers of students in the ward does not indicate there is an issue of studentification at present, although the housing structure and university expansion is a sign that there could be an issue in the future. In order to meet our aims it was important to collect primary research on resident and community perceptions to discover whether there was a perceived issue of studentification and to conduct a site survey of the area, to determine whether there are changes to the appearance of the ward.

Chapter 5:

ANALYSIS

5.1 The Analysis

The analysis section of this report consists of two parts – the first part of the analysis meets objectives (i) and (ii) of the research by exploring whether there is an issue of studentification in the Stow Hill ward, how extensive it is, and the problems it creates; and the second part of the analysis meets objective (iii) of the research by investigating how other councils in the UK with large student populations, namely: Edinburgh, Leeds, Newcastle, Glasgow, Sheffield and Loughborough, have controlled and managed the impact of studentification.

PART 1

5.2 The analysis of the Stow Hill ward

The first part of the analysis focuses on the areas identified by the HMO and unsightly property enforcement complaints. Although these areas cannot be specifically attributed to students, it was reasoned that as these were areas with a high concentration of HMOs and complaints for unsightly properties, these may be the streets/areas where the impact of studentification is most profound. The main aims of this research project, establishing whether there is an issue of studentification and if it exists what problems it creates, were therefore carried out by an observational site survey and conducting questionnaires with residents in these areas to gather their perceptions. Community perceptions were also sought from the Stow Hill ward Echo community group using a separate questionnaire (see appendix B and appendix C for copies of the questionnaires).

Two observational site surveys were carried out. The initial survey on the 17th February 2009 and a later more detailed survey on 21st April 2009. Photographs were taken and cross-referenced with street maps of the area as well as site notes recorded.

The questionnaires were conducted on Tuesday 21st April 2009 between 1pm and 5pm with face to face questionnaires. The team aimed to complete 20 each, resulting in a total of 100 questionnaires. Altogether only 53 questionnaires were completed due to the unwillingness of some residents not to take part in the survey and residents away from their homes. The following questionnaires were recorded from each street targeted:

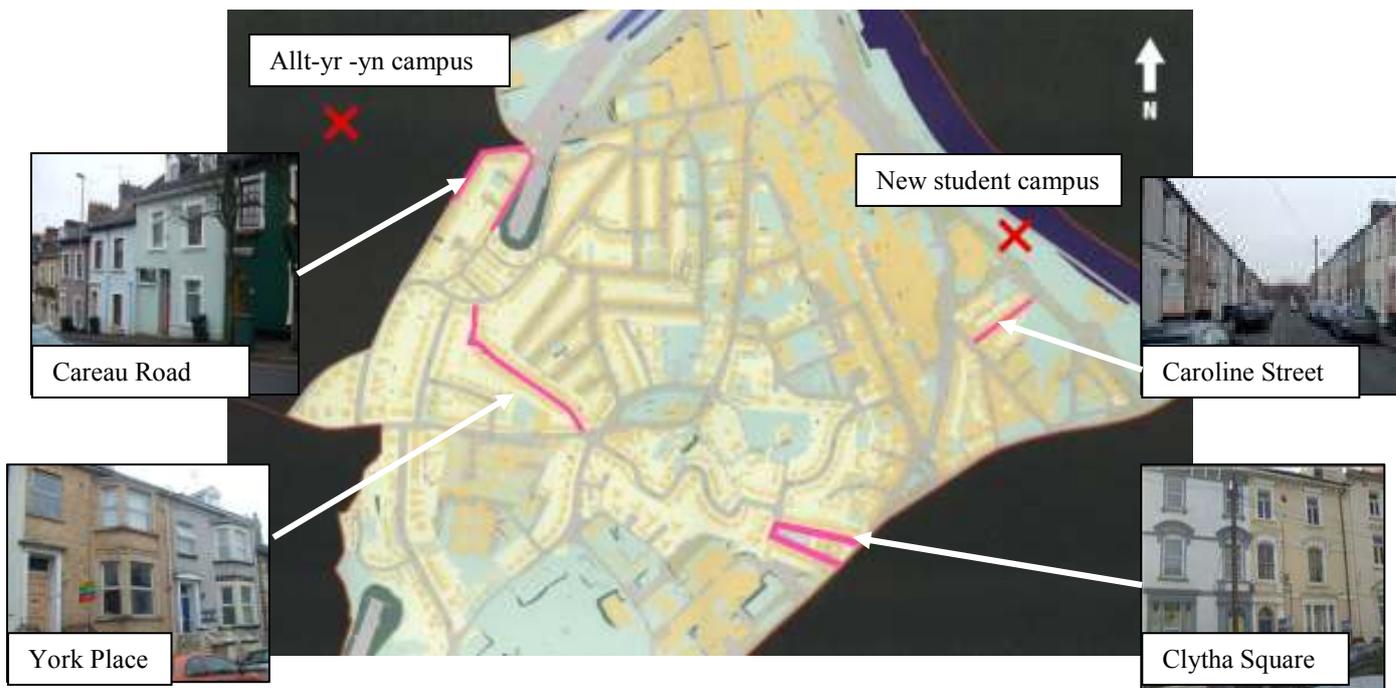
- 24 York Place
- 11 Careau Road
- 10 Caroline Street
- 8 Clytha Sqaure

Contact was also made with the Echo Community Group on the 21st April. A copy of the questionnaire was left with the Community Leader, Helen Patterson, and this returned by email at a later date.

5.3 Site Survey

The analysis of the HMO and unsightly properties complaints resulted in a definite concentration of four separate areas of Stow Hill. These were: York Place; Careau Road; Caroline Street; and Clytha square (see appendix A for marked maps). Unusually these streets are spread out throughout the ward and not clustered together in one specific area of the ward. See figure 11, which illustrates the location of these four streets within the ward.

Figure 11: The four areas of HMO and unsightly properties complaints



It is identified that Careau Road and York Place are in close proximity to the existing Alt-tyr-ryn campus. Caroline Street and Clytha Square are further away, but are closer to the new campus which is currently being built and proposed to be open in September 2010. A new accommodation block with 150 rooms provided for students has also been built adjacent to the city centre campus and when the new city campus opens, the existing Alt-yr-yn campus will be closed.

It is also noted that these streets identified had similar characteristics in terms of their appearance. These were:

- The majority of properties were terraced houses, either 2 or 3 storey, with narrow frontages.
- The properties front the street, directly onto the public pavement. There were either no or very small front gardens.
- There were limited dedicated off street parking areas, such as driveways and garage and parking was therefore along the street.

Out of the four areas analysed it was only York Place that appeared to have a change of character within the area. The changes that contributed to a change of the character of the street were

- Neglected front gardens
- Traffic congestion and parking problems
- The expansion of HMOs into the neighbourhood
- A plethora of letting boards
- Bins left out on the street pavement

Figure 12: Examples of the factors that lead to a change in character of York Place

Bins left out on the street



Unkempt front gardens



Plethora of letting signs



These changes in character to York Place are similar to the negative environmental impacts as identified in the literature review as a result of studentification. It is noted that not only is there the direct poor visual appearance of these properties, but this intangibly creates a knock-on social and economic impacts, such as the devaluation of homes and a poor reputation of an area (Kenyon 1997).

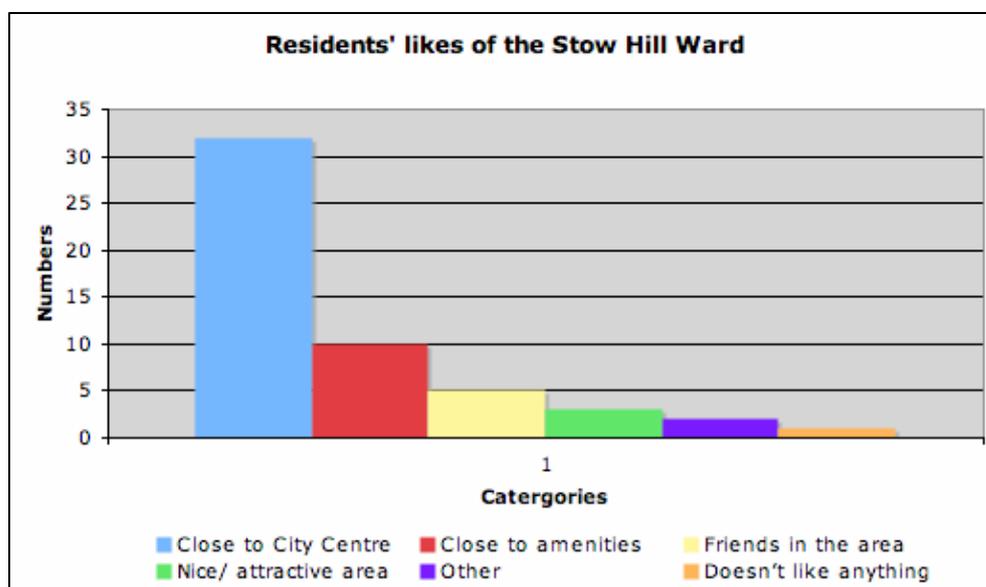
5.4 Resident perceptions

Following on from the site survey the next phase of the analysis was to gather residents perceptions of students from these four specific areas of the ward. As stated above, 53 surveys were conducted which consisted of a sample population of: 24 residents from York Place; 11 from Careau Road; 10 from Caroline Street; and 8 from Clytha Square.

5.4.1 Likes and dislikes with the neighbourhood

The first part of the questionnaire focused on residents' perceptions of their neighbourhood. One of the initial questions therefore asked residents what they liked and disliked about the Stow Hill Ward. This was to assess what they perceived was good and what attracted them to the Stow Hill Ward and there dislikes about the ward. The results show that the main benefit of living in the Stow Hill Ward was its location as it is in walking distance from the City Centre and local amenities (see figure 13).

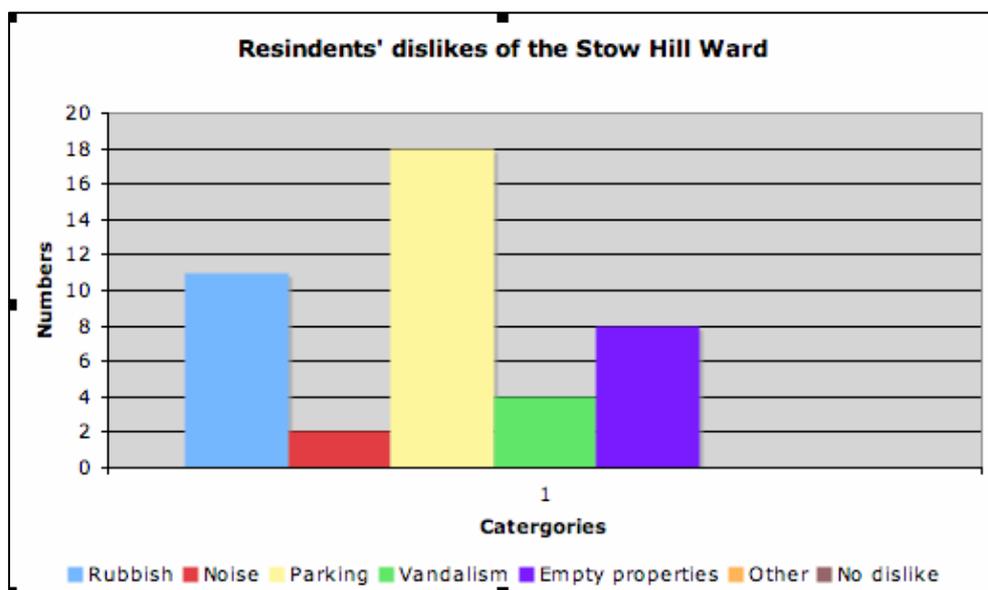
Figure 13 : A bar chart to illustrate the sample populations likes of the Stow Hill ward



The dislikes of the residents mainly centred on the rubbish and general state of the neighbourhood. Interestingly none of the residents of the sample population specifically named students as one of their dislikes about where they live. This indicated that residents do not blame students as a group for the dislikes in their neighbourhood. As one resident stated *‘one of the things that I don’t like is the vandalism you can get in this are... but I wouldn’t like to point the finger at students’*

As well as rubbish and vandalism, parking was a major dislike of the Stow Hill ward with 18 out of the 53 residents citing parking as a major dislike. It was generally felt that it was the concentration of HMOs that were too blame for the parking problems. As a resident of York Place stated *‘one of my only issues with living down this street is the parking, the street is always crammed with cars and although there are yellow lines no-one takes any notice and just parks there. I think that if there were less HMOs there would be more space or another way would be parking permits’*

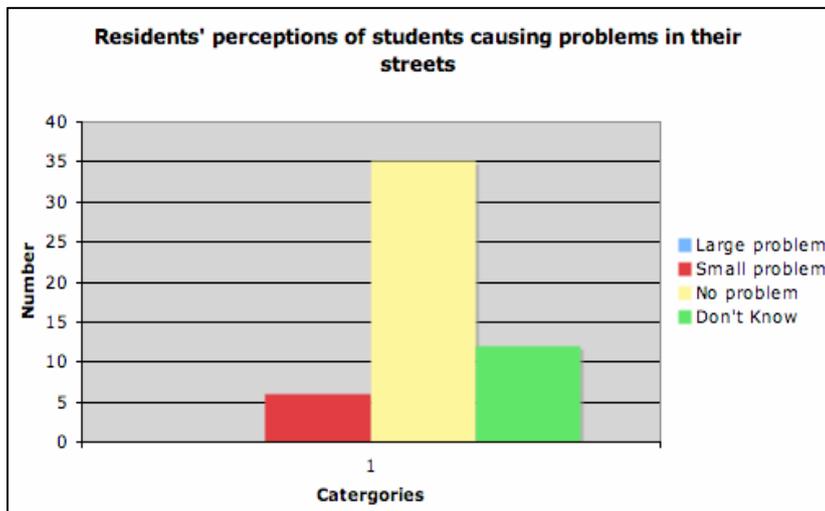
Figure 14 : A bar chart to illustrate the sample populations dislikes of the Stow Hill ward



5.4.2 The student population as a problem?

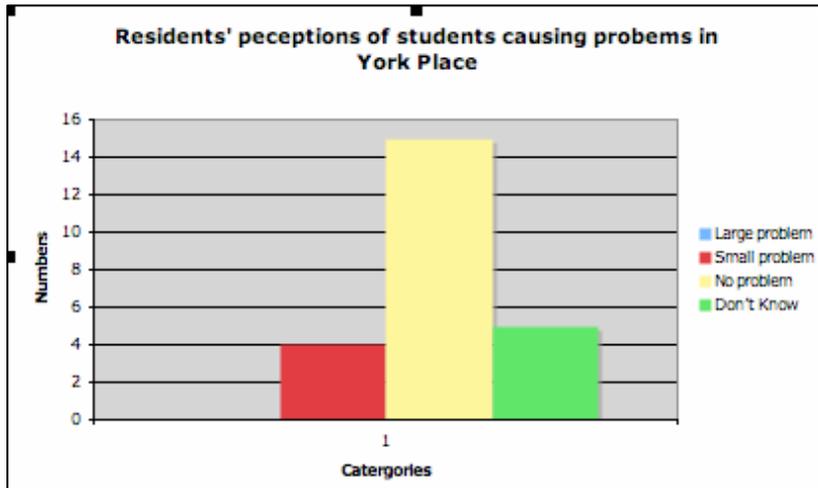
When asked specifically if students were causing problems in their area none of the residents surveyed thought there was a large problem with students in their area. A minority of 6 residents perceived student to be a small problem, however the majority of 35 residents perceived there to be no problem with students in their streets.

Figure 15: A bar chart to illustrate the sample populations perceptions of students as a problem in their streets



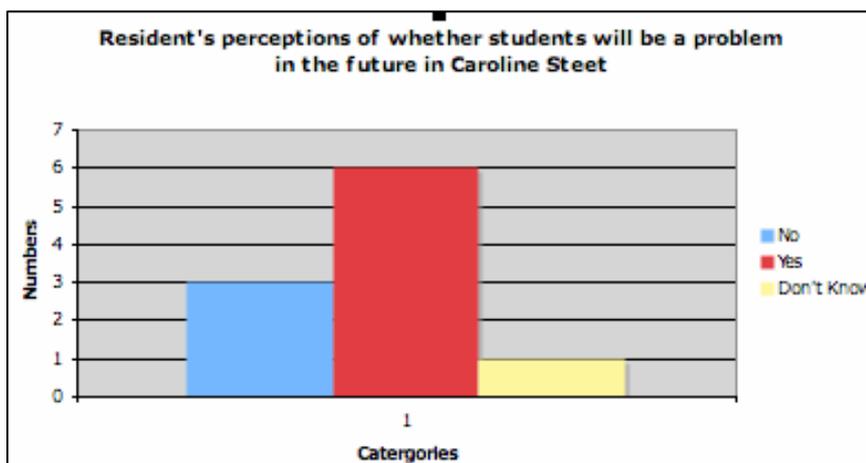
If the analysis is broken down into particular streets, York Place had the majority of 4 residents out of the 6 who thought there was a small problem with students, however compared to the 15 residents in York Place who thought that students caused no problems, this is not significant. 2 residents from Careau Street believed students were a small problem, which meant that none of the residents from Clytha square and Caroline Street thought students were a problem.

Figure 16: A bar chart to illustrate the residents of York Place perceptions of students as a problem in their street



None of the residents within Caroline street and Clytha Square thought there were no problems with students currently, however when asked whether they thought there would be a potential problem in the future, 6 out of the 10 residents in Caroline Street thought there would be a problem with students in their street in the future. When asked why they thought this, the reason in all the cases was due to the proximity of their street from the new student campus.

Figure 17: A bar chart to illustrate residents from Caroline Street perceptions of students as a future problem



5.5 Community perceptions

Studentification can have a social impact upon the community feeling of an area and it was therefore essential to this research to gather community perceptions of this issue. This was done by liaising with a prominent and active community group within the Stow Hill ward, the Echo community group. The Echo Stow Hill community group was formed in 2002 to address the needs of the Stow Hill community and to act as a coordinating body to represent the interests of residents, community groups and businesses in the area. This was in partnership with the Welsh Assembly Government, who recognized that the Stow Hill ward was one of the most deprived communities in Wales in terms of housing, employment, education and social mix (Echo Community Group 2007). Contact was made with the Echo community group on the 21st April 2009.

It was discovered that the Echo community group did not have a very good relationship with the students living within the ward. In particular, students were not felt to be a part of the local community because of the transient nature of the student population. As it was stated by the Echo group community leader *'If they are only living in a house for a year or two, there is no way they are going to be part of that community.'* There was the view that students did little to contribute to the community feeling of the ward, rather only being involved in anti-social behaviour, such as late night drinking, vandalism and keeping un-social hours. It was expressed that *'as they are only here for a year so have no thought for the residents or area.'* This view point therefore re-iterates findings from the literature review where Kenyon (1997, pp293) identifies students as *'a community within the community.'*

Interestingly the Echo community group, did not identify any particular streets/ areas within the Stow Hill Ward that were deemed to have a significant student problem rather having the view that *'the students just seemed to be everywhere.'* This finding therefore contradicted with HMO complaints, which concentrated HMOs in certain areas of the ward.

Furthermore, the Echo community group did not attribute the students for the poor appearance of some of the properties/streets as they cannot be held responsible for the maintenance or physical condition of their properties, which is the landlords role.

'that is just the nature of HMOs and rented properties, it is the landlords who are to blame'. However although students were not to blame for the deterioration of the properties it was still recognized that the appearance of properties particularly HMOs were poor.

5.6 Summary of whether studentification exists within the Stow Hill ward

It is concluded from the above analysis that there is little evidence of the impact of studentification within Stow Hill ward. The majority of residents did not perceive students to cause problems within the ward and there was limited evidence of environmental, economic and social impacts caused by students within the ward. However despite this residents did have a dissatisfaction with HMOs and in particular the affect these HMOs had on the appearance and character of the area. Particularly within York Place, where enforcement records showed a high percentage of HMO complaints and the character of the street certainly suggested that there were numerous HMOs present. A social conflict was also discovered between the Echo Stow Hill Ward community group and students, who perceived students to be anti-social and indifferent.

In reality, the number of students, approximately 6500, compared to Newport's population of 139,000 is minimal, and the resident student ratio in the Stow Hill ward, with students only representing 2.9% is not large enough for the impact of studentification to have a significantly adverse impact upon the area. Nevertheless, it is anticipated that with the regeneration of Newport City and the new City Centre campus the student population of the University of Wales Newport is prophesized to double in a very short amount of time . As shown in chapter 4: context of the study area, Stow Hill has characteristics favourable for students, being an inner city ward close to services, entertainment venues, and public transport. Furthermore, with the construction of the new campus, the ward will be even closer to the University. As well as attracting students, the ward will also attract landlords, as it contains a high proportion of houses, such as large terraced properties suitable for the conversion into HMOs. It is therefore vital for Newport City Council to prevent the potential impacts of studentification that the ward is beginning to experience and the spiraling out of control of HMOs before studentification does become a real problem.

PART 2

5.7 Case studies examining methods used by other Local Authorities to manage studentification

This part of the report will attempt to detail other councils' responses to the question of studentification. As examined in previous sections, the growing numbers in higher education bring both positive and negative impacts to their host communities. Planning is challenged with managing these in order to create balanced sustainable communities in line with Government requirements. The literature review section demonstrated planning's limited ability to act through the Use Classes Order (1987) which has brought a raft of local solutions. These include policies in Local Plans and Supplementary Planning Guidance. The following case studies highlight three possible routes that have been followed by other councils: continue with current policy, Areas of Student Restraint and the threshold approach. Finally it examines alternative routes that can be taken by planning as well as emphasising a need for an integrated approach.

5.8 Continue with current policy

This option is a '*business-as-usual*' argument where the current policies put into place are felt to adequately deal with the issues caused by the increased concentration of HMOs in a locality. Newport City Council, who already having a policy in the Unitary Development Plan (H4 as shown in figure 18) and a Supplementary Planning Guidance that deals with HMO conversion, could continue with their current set up as other council's have done.

Figure 18: Newport City Council Unitary Development Plan (Adopted 2006) Policy H4

Within the defined settlement Boundaries, proposals for the conversion of residential or other properties to self contained accommodation or to a house in multiple occupation, will be permitted subject to:

- i. Adequate car parking being provided for the type of use proposed;
- ii. The proposal not reducing the privacy or amenity of intended occupiers or nearby residents
- iii. The proposal not having a significant adverse effect on the character of the area;
- iv. Provision of appropriate amenity space;
- v. Design and environment policies of this plan not being compromised;
- vi. Adequate noise insulation being provided.

It is an idea which Edinburgh City Council stressed as effective in a 2004 report which sort to draw out the disadvantages of going down a threshold approach (The City of Edinburgh 2004). Figure 19 demonstrates policy HI0 used to judge applications for HMOs across the city with a population of around half a million and an unusually high number of students (around 62,000).

The Scottish Use Classes Order (1997) differs slightly from the English and Welsh system however the advantages of this course of action are considered to be similar. Applications are required for more than 5 unrelated people wishing to share a dwelling in the city (normally 6 under the English and Welsh system) (The City of Edinburgh 2004). A Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) further suggests that smaller accommodation can trigger an application with more than 4 unrelated people. Each proposal is judged on its merits where acceptability is not just dependent on the number of people proposing to share the accommodation. Attention is paid to the effects on residential amenities, especially where access to the property is via a common stair or shared entry and/or the proposal is likely to introduce increased levels of noise, traffic or other activity.

Figure 19 : Edinburgh City Local Plan (Adopted 2002) Policy HI 0

Multiple occupation proposals (HMOs) will only be acceptable where the Council is satisfied that:

- i. *the intensity of use proposed is not excessive in relation to property size;*
- ii. *there will be no loss of residential amenity in the neighboring area;*
- iii. *adequate supervision is provided and,*
- iv. *the proposal will not result in an excessive concentration of such uses in any one locality.*

Edinburgh's approach could be viewed as being flexible with each case assessed on its merits. This allows account to be taken of the size of the dwelling, character of the property and residential area and not restricted to quotas. As the number of people sharing is taken into account along with the size of the property, i.e. smaller size less people, this allows the Council to judge any '*material*' change of use to a HMO as a matter of '*fact and degree*.' A further advantage is that the council does not need to take enforcement action on many cases thereby saving resources and money.

Applications have historically been low within the city. Figures obtained for 2004 show that out of 3,917 applications received only 17 required planning (The City of Edinburgh 2004). In 2003 this was 10 and 2002 only 14 leading to few appeal cases being brought against the Council. The resulting decisions were not based entirely on Local Plan Policy or Supplementary Planning Guidance. At the time this view was taken the policies were considered to be sufficiently robust in order to cope with applications for HMOs.

Due to the rise in prominence of the city along with property prices, since the policies and SPG were introduced, the number of HMOs has steadily increased by 32% from 2004 to 2008 (The Journal 2009) 3,917 to 5,174 in real terms. With rises in anti-social behavior and poor upkeep of the front of houses, this has led inevitable to conflict between local residents and the student population with 80% being concentrated in three wards of the city. A new policy (Hou9, The City of Edinburgh Council 2008) that looks to set thresholds within particular areas of no more than 30% of all households being used as HMOs has been adopted. A member of the planning department in the Council stated:

'...we were receiving a lot of pressure from the councilors who felt that the 2002 City Local Plan Policy needed to be changed to exert more influence over the numbers and locations of HMOs.'

5.9 Area of Student Housing Restraint

An Area of Student Housing Restraint (ASHORE) is where development within a certain area relating to student accommodation will attempt to be restricted by the Local Authority. The concept was investigated in Leeds where local residents formed groups such as Headingley Against Landlordism which joined forces with others to form Leeds HMO Lobby (Leeds HMO Lobby 2007). This was a reaction to growing student numbers which increased from 20% of the population in Headingley Ward in 1991 to 61% by 2001. The total number of students within the city is now around 125,000 (Goliveit 2009). The Council's Planning Department reacted to local residents concerns by creating an ASHORE. Two key objectives were sort: to restrict the numbers of students in areas experiencing high concentrations and to increase distribution throughout the city.

In 2004 the Council was forced to defend their ASHORE at Public Inquiry. This was supported by local residents and the universities but opposed by Leeds Property Associates (Leeds HMO Lobby 2007). The idea was described as *'discriminatory in the way it would impose particular restrictions on one group within the general population'* by the Planning Inspector (Leeds UDP Review December 2005 pp. 3). This was redrafted under the Inspector's suggestion to have a more proactive approach creating an *'Area of Housing Mix'* so as not to discourage student housing. A policy H15 (figure 20) was designed to take account of this and allow the Council to manage the provision of student housing. This has been designed to maintain the diversification of the housing stock taking pressure off certain areas, which could become unbalanced.

Figure 20: Leeds UDP (Adopted July 2006) Policy H15:

Within the Area of Housing Mix Planning Permission will be granted for housing intended for occupation by students, or for the alteration, extension or redevelopment of accommodation currently so occupied where:

- i. The stock of the housing accommodation, including that available for family occupation, would not be unacceptably reduced in terms of quantity and variety;*
- ii. There would be no unacceptable effects on neighbors' living conditions including through increased activity, or noise and disturbance, either from the proposal itself or combined with existing similar accommodation;*
- iii. The scale and character of the proposal would be compatible with the surrounding area;*
- iv. Satisfactory provision would be made for car parking; and*
- v. The proposal would improve the quality or variety of the housing stock of student housing*

The idea of housing mix has also been taken up by Newcastle City Council Planning Department. The city plays host to two universities (with around 18,500 students at each) and a college of higher education which, although adding vibrancy to the area, has led to a concentration of HMOs in certain parts of the city (Newcastle City Council 2008). There has been very few change of use applications for HMOs however there has been an increase in the number to install roof lights. This allows the roof space to be converted as another room, making the property potentially more valuable and therefore outside the reach of many first time buyers. The preferred option was an Area of Housing Mix (figure 21) and a policy in the UDP (H1.5 Student Housing and SH POL 2, see figure 22) with a member of the council commenting:

'...we had a reasonable unique situation within the area of the upper Tyneside flats which were essentially two storey terrace housing but many of the roof spaces had been converted... the choice of an Area of Housing Mix allowed us to cover this area while being simple and robust. A threshold policy appeared too complicated...'

Figure 21: Defined Area of Housing Mix within the Newcastle UPD

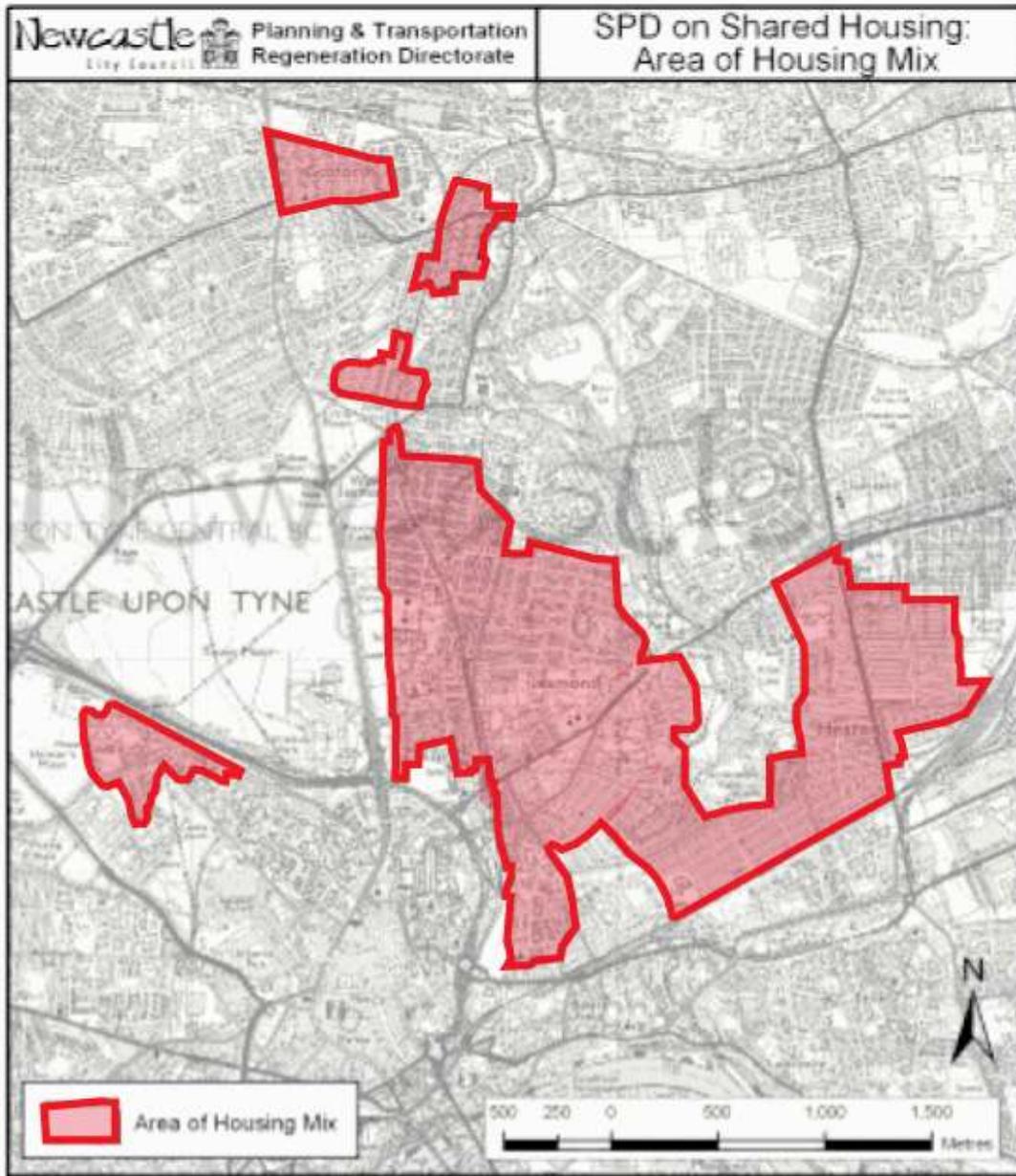


Figure 22: Policy H1.5, Student Housing, was saved in the Newcastle Unitary Development Plan after 28 September 2007

Applications for Planning permissions for student accommodation will be considered against the following criteria:

- i. Proximity of the site to the campus, or its suitable location within the city centre or district*
- ii. Satisfactory conversion or redevelopment of non-residential premises*
- iii. Suitable conversion and/or adaptation of local authority housing stock*
- iv. Convenient access to a good public transport service*

Policy SH POL 2

Within the Area of Housing Mix planning permission will be granted for the alteration, conversion or extension of the existing housing unless:

- i. It would facilitate the creation of additional habitable accommodation in the roof space of an upper Tyneside flat and so remove the dwelling from the stock of relatively affordable smaller housing units within the overall housing mix; or*
- ii. It would result in the loss of good quality, spacious and convenient accommodation suitable for occupation by a family and so remove the dwelling from the stock of units suitable for occupation by a family within the overall housing mix; or*
- iii. There would be unacceptable harm to the amenity of existing or future residents caused by reduced daylight, sunlight, outlook or privacy or additional activity with increased noise and disturbance; or*
- iv. The proposal by reason of scale, design or loss of existing features including trees and landscaping would be detrimental to the character and appearance of the locality or the existing building; or*
- v. The development would result in the introduction of such additional accesses, traffic or parking as would prejudice road safety or lead to unacceptable visual intrusion or impact on residential amenity; or*
- vi. There are other overriding planning reasons not covered in this SPD for not granting permission.*

The SPD was adopted on 28 February 2008. The initial question was where the boundary was to be drawn. To decide this, the Council drew up a number of criteria including: house price, tenure and proportion of students and student and shared household. Further questions arose as to whether this would simply push the problem elsewhere. It was felt that the current policies were robust enough to handle this and student numbers not as great in other locations. The SPD accepts that policy SH POL 2 will have most effect in reducing the expansion of the upper Tynside flats into roof spaces. The policy does not differentiate personal or family conversions from that of shared accommodation or define the point at which the expansion of a house becomes unsuitable, leaving it to individual cases. The SPD has not been used against many applications or tested at appeal but the officers using it and the policies were satisfied with it.

5.10 Threshold Approach

As identified in the introduction there are a number of target approaches that can be taken. Rather than working solely within a specific restraint area, a policy would apply to any area where student numbers are considered to be too high or at risk of getting too high for a balance neighborhood to exist. Areas subject to the policy would be determined within a defined area and a threshold would need to be set, above which the policy would come into force. The number of student houses in a neighborhood would be determined by Council Tax returns. Households occupied wholly by students are exempt from paying Council Tax under class N exemption. By looking at the distribution of class N exempt properties across the ward it is possible to ascertain where most students live.

One approach of using the threshold method is to have a blanket approach. Glasgow is an example of this where planning applications featuring HMOs within a given street or block should not exceed 10 per cent of the total number of dwellings comprising that unit. Policy RES13 aims to: *'strike a balance between the demand for multiple occupancy and the need to ensure that the stability of neighbourhoods and the residential amenity of properties and streets are not adversely affected by a concentration of multiple occupancies'* (Glasgow City Council 2003, see figure 23). The City Plan has identified areas where the density of flats described as HMOs has reached a level which will support no further applications. Thresholds have been set by the Council where planning permission is considered necessary if 3 or more unrelated people live together (4 or more in the City's West End).

The policy seeks to avoid excessive amounts of HMOs being created. From 1999-2004 Glasgow had 23 appeals for the refusal of planning permission, Enforcement Notices and Certificates of Lawful Development of which only 6 were allowed (half of this in areas where the 10 per cent threshold was exceeded) (The City of Edinburgh Council 2004). Reasons the appeals were allowed included: development of the property would not adversely affect impact on the character or the appearance of the conservation area; the dwelling was not considered conducive to family occupation and the change of use to HMO would not have an adverse impact on residential amenities. Furthermore the application percentage threshold has not been challenged in Glasgow.

Figure 23: Glasgow City Plan (Adopted 2003) Policy RES 13:

Planning applications for new multiple occupancies will be judged against the following criteria:

- i. there must be individual access to a lit street. (This would include main door flats and undivided terraced houses but would exclude most properties served by a tenement close and properties which have already been subdivided);*
- ii. there must be direct access to appropriate refuse collection and a drying area to the rear of the building. Bin stores should be provided in accordance with policy RES 16: Bin Stores;*
- iii. the need for car parking will be assessed in each case in accordance with policy TRANS 4: Vehicle Parking Guidelines (Table 1 section A); and*
- iv. within a given street or block (or other readily identifiable unit) the proportion of multiple occupancies should not exceed 5% of the total number of dwellings comprising that unit (10% in the West End). Exemptions from this rule may include properties that have become completely isolated from standard family accommodation. (The figures relating to the West End, both in terms of density and threshold, were determined as a result of a planning inquiry on the basis of the number and broad distribution of houses used in the area for multiple occupation, particularly for residents attending Glasgow University and other tertiary education facilities).*

There have been a number of criticisms of the Glasgow approach. The policy could be viewed as prescriptive with a number of criteria needing to be satisfied. The lowered threshold at which a planning application is triggered (3 unrelated people sharing or 4 in the West End) will naturally increase the number of HMOs in the area meaning that the 5 or 10 per cent threshold is passed quickly and areas are deemed as saturated allowing no further development. The Policy has been criticised at one appeal as being '*inflexible*' to cater for properties which may be suitable for HMOs (The City of Edinburgh Council 2004).

An alternative approach, taken by Charnwood Borough Council, is a rolling programme in relation to the threshold approach. The idea gathered momentum when an application for student accommodation along Ashby Road in Loughborough was refused at committee against officer's recommendation. This subsequently went to appeal where a large amount of local residents attended, with many asking to speak at the inquiry, demonstrating the dissatisfaction which existed with the current system and the disintegrations of the social norms. To the officer's '*surprise*' the case was dismissed resulting in an overview of the current practise and a consultation exercise was under gone with those living in the city. Results from a questionnaire further demonstrated local residents' frustrations with the issue of studentification and the need for it to be controlled city wide so that the problems did not simply spread to other areas.

The consultations showed that a threshold approach was favoured by local residents but this then led to questions of the best levels and scales for it to be set at. There is no definitive percentage of students that can be categorically said to be the '*tipping point*.' Estimations range from 10% of the population (HMO Lobby 2007) up to 30% being used by Edinburgh City Council (2008). With Charnwood Borough Council's consultations the majority of residents agreed that 20% was a reasonable figure. From this the decision had to be made at what distance from the site should the threshold be applied. Again this ranged from a street or block, to Census Output Data Areas or properties within a certain radius. Charnwood Borough Council felt it would compliment their Council Tax Department's records if the Census Output Data Areas were used.

These has subsequently been adopted by the Council's SPD and used on a number of change of use applications and extensions which involve student accommodation. This gives a proactive approach that can be used across the city to prevent concentrations of this type of use. It was though highlighted that there had been little opportunity to use it to judge applications for change of use to HMOs as relatively few of these types of applications had been received.

Generally the SPD is considered to aid Planning Officers in solving the problem of studentification however recent events have sought to question its effectiveness. A major landlord within the city challenged the Borough Council's decision (180 Ashby Road, Loughborough). At appeal the application for an extension was allowed and the Inspector commented:

'...the relevant elements of the SPD appear not to have any clear relationship to the policies of the development plan, and I consequently give the SPD little weight in my decision.'

This prompted the Planning Officer involved in the case to comment:

'Obviously this greatly wounded our ability to use the SPD and devalued its effectiveness. We'll just have to see how effective it is in the future...'

Sheffield City Council is an example where a policy has been adopted specifying a threshold. The Local Development Framework limits HMOs *'where more than 20% of residences within 200 metres of the application site are shared housing'* (Sheffield City Council 2009). The distance was felt to be equivalent to a residential zone in which such developments would affect their neighbours. There were issues with the policy that the Council were still required to address such as should planning permission current but not implemented would count towards the 20% threshold. However it was pointed out that, at the time of interview, the policy was only three weeks old and therefore untested.

5.11 Alternative Considerations

There are a number of alternative routes to solving the issues caused by studentification. Using policies to limit the number of HMOs is only one option available to local authorities and should be considered in association with others.

Various councils have sought to use the influx of students to their advantage. For example the work in Newcastle between the Council and a private organisation *Bridging NewcastleGateshead (housing Market Renewal Pathfinder)* which is investigating ways to regenerate areas where student housing could be used as a positive tool and create a better balance of students throughout the city (Newcastle City Council 2008). This is also observed in the housing strategy of the University of Leeds where there is encouragement to create purpose built student accommodation to aid run down areas of the city. Students could therefore be discouraged into entering privately rented accommodation.

This can be reflected in policies which seek to encourage purpose built student halls of residents. A number of UDPs and Local Plans such as Newcastle, Nottingham and Charnwood (figure 24) have introduced such policies. Leeds University has built a new business school away from their campus in Headingley in order to attract students out of the area and ease the problem. There are a number of issues faced by universities in costs (with managed accommodation being higher than privately rented) and find sufficient land for such developments. Also the students themselves may prefer to live in privately rented rather than halls.

Figure 24: Charnwood Borough Council Local Plan (Adopted 2007), Policy H/12, Student Halls of Residence

Planning permission will be granted for new buildings or the re-use of non-residential properties specifically for student accommodation at locations on, or readily accessible by cycle, public transport or on foot to, the university and college campuses.

Planning permission will be granted for developments which include reduced parking standards where it can be shown that there would be no adverse impact in the vicinity of the site.

Letting boards outside houses demonstrate the transitory nature of those living in an area which adds to the established communities problems. In order to limit this, Leeds City Council has sort to restrict their use through the Town and Country Planning (control of advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007, with a code of practice set up (Communities and Local Government 2008). Although popular with other councils the enforcement time needed to patrol the measures means that it is not always as effective as it was intended.

Research for the Communities and Local Government by ECOTEC has suggested that by altering the Use Classes Order (1987), planning will be afforded greater control of HMOs (Planning 2008). A common complaint amongst Local Authorities with Newcastle City Council and Charnwood Borough Council having sort to lobby the Government for such a change. This has sparked a debate in England for which, at the time of writing, the Government has put out to consultation (Communities and Local Government 2008). A suggestion put forward is for a new class, 'C4', to be created. Local authorities wishing to encourage HMOs in a particular area would be given the discretion to do so. Changes to the Use Classes Order (1987) would allow authorities to evoke an Article 4 Direction to remove the permitted development rights in certain areas for a house to change to a HMO. However this can be a costly route and those affected may attempt to claim compensation.

Northern Ireland has taken a similar approach in introducing changes to their Use Classes (2004) order with relation to the definition of an HMO (Communities and Local Government 2008). This had a direct relationship with the fact that in areas of Belfast nearest to Queens University students made up to half the resident population causing much tension. HMOs

were placed outside the Use Classes Order and redefined as more than two people who are not members of the same family occupying a dwelling. This followed a period of adjustment with the policies of the time not proving to be sufficiently robust. The current Plan has been through public enquiry and features areas where HMOs are to be encouraged and areas where they are to be discouraged. Although it is yet too early to tell how well the policies are coping, the main point raised where that planning is a long term solution rather than a short fix.

Section 106s could be used in order to prevent students taking up residence within certain developments. However there must be legal considerations made to this as to whether the decision will be able to stand up to scrutiny. This was a major concern cited by a number of councils who felt anxious about using them for this purpose.

Finally, it must be understood that planning is not sufficiently equipped to handle the situation alone with a number of places having found alternative solutions. In Leeds the Universities and Council have employed a community liaison officer who deals with local residents on concerns about student accommodation (Leeds HMO Lobby 2007). This allowed activities to be effectively co-ordinates internally and with stakeholders and residents (Communities and Local Government 2008). Certain universities have an accreditation scheme for landlord accommodation and can be upgraded so that only members of it can have student tenants. Therefore it is important that they outline a clear statement of their housing intent and accommodation needs setting out their commitment to the local community.

Chapter 6:

LIMITATIONS

6.1 Limitations of the Research Project

It is important to identify the limitations associated with this research project in order to understand what could not be achieved in this time, the reasons for this and ways to improve a similar study in the future. The following limitations of the investigation are outlined below.

Method techniques:

- The representation of the sample population, which was limited in size and scope due to time constraints. A larger population sample, which analysed the difference of perceptions between different genders, age, and status could provide insights into the types of residents that conflict with student populations.
- The researcher's position as a student extracting residents' views on students needs to be acknowledged as it is likely that residents may have been wary of complaining about students to a student researcher, which could affect the validity of the information collected.

Data collection

- The lack of accurate statistical data that was available. The majority of the Stow Hill ward data came from the 2001 Census statistics, which meant that the information obtained only gave us a '*snapshot*' of what the Stow Hill ward was like 8 years ago. This is considered to be out of date and therefore inaccurate, although a general picture could still be formulated.
- The inaccuracy of the enforcement data. The primary research stemmed from the enforcement complaints, however it needs to be realized that just because there is a complaint regarding an HMO, this does not reflect the true situation. It is often the case that complaints are received regarding HMOs when in fact the properties are not HMOs. The enforcement data set was also limited due to its incomplete nature. For instance, although there were records of HMO complaints there were no reference to the specific issue, such as was it due to noise, appearance, too many people living at

the property or something else. Moreover, the records did not inform whether the complaint has been resolved and therefore the data collected may not have been a true representation of the situation.

- Similarly data collected of HMO records from Newport's Environmental Health department was limited. Concentrations of HMOs for instance could have been plotted to identify areas within the ward that had large concentrations and therefore assist with our primary research and site surveys. Environmental Health data of these records however was not available at ward level and consequently this data was not suitable for our study,

Developing the study

- This project focuses on the Stow Hill ward because Newport City Council have received complaints regarding the impact of students. It is noticed from information collected however, that there are other wards within the Newport area that are in a similar situation as the Stow Hill ward, such as the St Julians, Caerleon and Pill wards. A study therefore, which examined the impact of students within Newport as a whole, would further assist the establishment of recommendation for a suitable strategy.
- Student perceptions of their neighborhood could have been used to provide an in-depth analysis of the social impact of students. A focus on student perceptions as well as residents would add an extra dimension to the study.

Chapter 7:

CONCLUSIONS

7.1 Conclusions

This chapter draws together the findings of the analysis of the previous chapters to address the aims and objectives of the study and presents a series of recommendations to Newport City Council based on extensive case studies of various Local Authorities and their approaches to dealing with a high concentration of student numbers.

The study has been unable to identify a particular student problem in the Stow Hill ward through an analysis of enforcement records, statistical information and questionnaires to residents and community groups. The research does not suggest that the student population out numbers the local residents within the Stow Hill ward. The research has revealed that there is not an intensive concentration of students within Stow Hill and therefore it has not been proven that there is an impact on the surrounding social structure.

The study has revealed that whilst studentification is not yet a significant problem in Newport, the characteristics of streets within Stow Hill and the property market gives certain areas potential for landlords to convert terraced housing into HMOs. Indeed the study has revealed that a concentration of HMOs in streets such as York Place has a detrimental visual impact upon the area in terms of parking, bin storage and untidy frontages. Furthermore an analysis of current policy and SPD for Newport City Council has revealed that this is planning guidance which to some extent controls the impact on the character and appearance of the area through House Conversion Guidance on issues such as design but that this policy fails to specifically exert any planning control over concentrations of student housing.

A review of relevant literature has revealed that studentification can have huge implications on the traditional fabric of neighbourhoods. The associated problems such as displacement and social exclusion can have serious consequences on the remaining communities left in such areas. Whilst studentification has not been identified as particular problem in Stow Hill it is acknowledged that a growing student population can have social, economic, cultural and political significance. Indeed Rugg et al (2002) argues that student demand can lead to substantial changes to the nature of a particular location where areas can become '*ghettos*' and drive up the local house prices.

With this in mind case studies have revealed that Local Authorities have introduced specific Local Plan policies which have had varying measures of success in dealing with HMOs and student dwellings. Newport City Council is in a fortunate position where studentification is not yet a significant problem. However the general characteristics and property market within the Stow Hill ward particularly the rows of terraced houses gives certain streets as identified on our site visits potential for landlords to convert to student housing. Case studies from towns and cities such as Loughborough and Newcastle have revealed that a pro-active approach is the best solution in tackling the problem at an early stage. From the research that has been undertaken it is clear that many approaches have been taken by various councils to try to deal with issues associated with high concentrations of HMO properties and there is much that can be learnt from this and taken forward by Newport City Council as good practice.

7.2 Options

Research has revealed that there are three options for Newport City Council to consider for the control of student housing in the Stow Hill ward. Each option is explained and discussed in detail including the advantages and disadvantages in figure 25 below.

Option 1- Do Nothing

Option 2- Area of Student Housing Restraint

Option 3- Threshold Approach

Figure 25: Outline of policy options

Options	Explanation	Advantages	Disadvantages
Do Nothing	<p>-No action taken to control the no student households in Stow Hill.</p> <p>-Planning applications for the conversion of HMOs and for extensions to dwellings would be determined on their own merits with no account taken of the fact that they were in student dominated areas.</p>	<p>-The council would not have to make resources available for enforcement action.</p> <p>-There would be greater flexibility in judging cases on their ability to be converted into HMOs.</p>	<p>-Student numbers in the streets identified in the Stow Hill ward would continue to grow and the current policy may not be sufficient enough to cope.</p> <p>-The upkeep and tidiness of student houses would not be improved.</p> <p>-Nothing would be done to tackle anti-social behaviour issues associated with students.</p> <p>-Concerns of residents and ward members will be ignored by the Council and local movements may grow creating future issues for the council.</p>
Area of Student Housing Restraint (ASHORE)	<p>-An area is designated where restraints are imposed on certain forms of development.</p> <p>-The restraint is on student housing including purpose built accommodation and student houses. Pioneered in Birmingham, Leeds, Sheffield and Newcastle.</p>	<p>-Clear boundaries would help with enforcement.</p> <p>-The Restraint Area would help to spread future student growth away from the worst affected areas helping to regenerate other parts of the city.</p>	<p>-Neighbourhoods beyond the Restraint Area would become more vulnerable to studentification.</p> <p>-The LPA may have difficulty justifying the size of Restraint Area in relation to the town.</p> <p>-Adopted by authorities with an existing student problem and should only be considered as an option to resist further development where there are already high concentrations of students.</p>

Options	Explanation	Advantages	Disadvantages
Threshold Approach	<p>-Policies apply to areas where student no's are considered high/at risk of for a balanced neighbourhood to exist.</p> <p>-Determined on a street by street basis.</p> <p>-Determined by Council Tax returns. By looking at the distribution of class N exempt properties across the ward it is possible to ascertain where most students live.</p>	<p>-Policy not tied to particular area. Apply to any part of the ward where the monitoring process showed a high percentage of students in a neighbourhood.</p> <p>-Protection afforded to any part of Newport and would avoid the concentration of students in particular areas. Robust enough to respond to changes in student settlement patterns should the university numbers expand.</p> <p>-Pro-active & preventative of concentrations of students developing in the first place.</p> <p>-Sets a definitive limit in which developers and landlords and planners can work within.</p>	<p>-In order to work efficiently a threshold policy would need to be updated on a yearly basis with new information from Council Tax records. This would require commitment from staff in both the revenue and planning departments.</p> <p>-There are no restraint areas identified so the location of student housing could not be specifically controlled.</p> <p>-Inflexible to deal with applications that are suitable for HMO conversion (i.e. once the target is passed no further development can occur).</p> <p>-Can be difficult in deciding what is to be taken into account when calculating whether the threshold has been passed e.g. should decisions permitted but not implemented be counted?</p>

Chapter 8:

RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Recommendations

The study recommends that a policy is designed based on a threshold approach. This allows a pro-active, specific and targeted approach to tackling the studentification which may become a greater issue for the city in the future. A Threshold Policy would not be tied to particular area and would apply to any part of the Stow Hill ward where the monitoring process of Council Tax records showed a high percentage of students in a neighbourhood. It is considered robust enough to respond to changes in student settlement patterns should the university numbers expand.

An example policy has been outlined in figure 26, drawing on other Local Authority's policies and experiences:

Figure 26: Example Policy recommended for NCC

<p>Planning permission will be granted for student accommodation where:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><i>I. less than 20% of residences within 200 metres of the application site are shared housing;</i><i>II. the development or maintenance of balanced communities is not prejudiced;</i><i>III. the City Council is satisfied that, where necessary, there will be management arrangements sufficient to integrate the scheme into the existing community;</i><i>IV. university facilities are readily accessible to the development by a choice of means of transport;</i><i>V. the location and scale of the development is appropriate;</i><i>VI. there must be direct access to appropriate refuse bin stores which will not cause a detrimental impact on the street scene;</i><i>VII. The proposal would improve the quality or variety of housing stock for student housing</i>
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The policy would aid the Council, complementing their current policies on residential conversions, in controlling problems of studentification whilst working towards the Government's aims of a sustainable community. A definitive figure, in this case 20% within 200 metres, would give a threshold for planners to work to and making an unambiguous framework for developers and landlords. The policy further seeks to address some of the evident problems associated with studentification such as untidy

front yards (bin storage requirements); parking (access to different modes of transport) and anti-social behaviour (suitable management arrangements). Student housing nevertheless is not to be discriminated against, otherwise the policy may be questioned at appeal, but it must be appropriate and beneficial to the area.

Although considered to be effective and robust the policy should not be treated as a magic bullet that will solve the issue of studentification. It may be possible to use elements of this policy when considering any application involving student accommodation such as extensions. However, as discussed in previous sections, planning is limited in its treatment of change of use applications due to the definition of HMOs in the Use Classes Order 1987. It is therefore vital that a number of alternative actions are taken in conjunction with this policy.

8.2 Further Actions

The interviews with selected councils have revealed that whilst a specific and targeted policy approach is necessary to deal with the issues of studentification it is also as important for councils to improve data collection methods and improve relationships between key stakeholders involved in the process. To this affect a series of actions have been designed to help and advice Newport City Council:

- Have a clear and accurate data collection system particularly with regard to Enforcement records and Council Tax exemption records on which to base the threshold otherwise the policy could be contested at appeal.
- To lobby central government for an amendment to the Town and Country Planning (use Classes) Order 1987 to bring within the control of the Local Planning Authority ‘changes of use’ between standard dwellings and houses let to students.
- Adopt an integrated approach with the university, community groups, student focus groups and council departments (e.g. environmental health, revenues etc) to ensure that all stakeholders are involved in the process and that the spirit of this policy approach is followed.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Map recordings of HMO and unsightly property enforcement complaints

APPENDIX B: Copy of the resident questionnaire

APPENDIX C: Copy of the Echo community group questions

APPENDIX D: Ethical approval form