

West Northamptonshire Council’s provisional response to DLUHC’s consultation on the introduction of a use class for short term lets and associated permitted development rights

Q.1 Do you agree that the planning system could be used to help to manage the increase in short term lets?

Yes. Whilst, in general there is not a proliferation of short term lets in West Northants, it has been noted that an increasing number of properties are being used for short term lets in West Northants, particularly in Northampton. It is possible that this a consequence of the withdrawal across Northampton of the permitted development right to convert Class A3 dwellings into Class C4 houses in multiple occupation for 3 to 6 people and the application of a 10% density limit within 50m metre’s radius.

Q.2 Do you agree with the introduction of a new use class for short term lets?

Yes, this seems the most appropriate mechanism by which the planning system could be used to help manage the increase in short term lets.

Q.3 Do you agree with the description and definition of a short term let for the purpose of the new use class?

Yes. This covers the range of types of short term let typically experienced in West Northants.

Q.4 Do you have any comments about how the new C5 short term let use class will operate?

No, but see answers to the other questions in this consultation response.

Q.5 Do you consider there should be specific arrangements for certain accommodation as a result of the short term let use class?

No

Q. 6 Do you agree that there should be a new permitted development right for the change of use from a C3 dwellinghouse to a C5 short term let (a)

Yes, provided local planning authorities have the right to remove the right by means of an Article 4 Direction in line with national policy.

Q.7 Do you agree that there should be a new permitted development right for the change of use from a C5 short term let to a C3 dwellinghouse (b)

Yes

Q.8 Do you agree that the permitted development rights should not be subject to any limitations or conditions?

Yes

Q.9 Do you agree that the local planning authority should be notified when either of the two permitted development rights for change of use to a short term let (a) or from a short term let (b) are used?

Yes. This will assist local planning authorities in monitoring numbers of dwellings in their areas and the impacts of these changes of use, including on housing supply.

Q.10 Do you have any comments about other potential planning approaches?

No – the suggestion of a new use class seems the most appropriate approach, provided short term lets are clearly defined.

Q.11 Do you agree that we should expressly provide a flexibility for homeowners to let out their homes (C3 dwellinghouses)?

Yes, flexibility should be allowed.

Q.12 If so, should this flexibility be for:

- i. 30 nights in a calendar year; or**
- ii. 60 nights in a calendar year; or**
- iii. 90 nights in a calendar year**

Thirty nights per year would be the most appropriate period, as this would minimise inconvenience to nearby residents while still allowing flexibility to homeowners.

Q.13 Should this flexibility be provided through:

- i) A permitted development right for use of a C3 dwellinghouse as temporary sleeping accommodation for up to a defined number of nights in a calendar year**
- ii) An amendment to the C3 dwellinghouse use class to allow them to be let for up to a defined number of nights in a calendar year.**

Option (i) would be preferable as this would allow the local planning authority to remove this right by way of an Article 4 direction, should there be any unintended consequences arising from this flexibility.

Q.14 Do you agree that a planning application fee equivalent to each new dwellinghouse should apply to applications for each new build short term let?

Yes.

Q.15 Do you agree with the proposed approach to the permitted development rights for dwellinghouses (Part 1) and minor operations (Part 2)?

Yes – this is consistent with the approach to Class C4 houses in multiple occupation for three to six persons.

Q.18 Do you think that the proposed introduction of the planning changes in respect of a short term let use class and permitted development rights could impact on:

- a) businesses**
- b) local planning authorities**
- c) communities?**

Yes, these proposals have the potential to have impacts on local homeowners and landlords who let properties on a short-term basis. The proposals could also have an impact on local communities, but where there are evidenced adverse impacts, these can to some extent be controlled by the proposed possibility of the local planning authority to introduce Article 4 Directions to take away the right to convert a dwellinghouse into a short term let. If implemented, these proposals are likely to have impacts on local planning authorities in terms of dealing with prior notifications of changes of use and collecting evidence should it be necessary to apply for an Article 4 Direction.