

Section 6.6 of the HMO SPD

6.6 Exceptional circumstances

6.6.1 There may be certain streets in the city where the vast majority of properties are already HMOs, with only a very small proportion of C3 dwellings remaining. The retention of 1 or 2 of the remaining C3 dwellings will have little affect on the balance and mix of households in a community which is already over dominated by the proportion of existing HMO households. Therefore, the conversion of the remaining C3 dwellings to a HMO would not further harm the character of the area.

6.6.2 There is no upper limit where the threshold ceases to have effect, though it is recognised that some owner occupiers or long term residents in this situation described above, being the last remaining residential property and wanting to leave the street, may struggle to sell their property for continued C3 use. Each application site will assessed on its own individual merits when considering where exceptional circumstances will be a material consideration and will be determined in accordance with the following criteria:

Where the vast majority of existing properties surrounding the application site within the defined area of impact are HMO dwellings, the applicant should submit a supporting statement with the planning application to demonstrate that there is no reasonable demand for the existing residential property as continued C3 use. No reasonable demand would be demonstrated by a period of at least six months on the property market offered at a reasonable price (based on an assessment of the property market in the local area) or rental level to be verified in writing by a qualified person in a relevant profession such as estate agent.

Web link to the Houses in Multiple Occupation Supplementary Planning Document:

<http://www.southampton.gov.uk/s-environment/policy/planningdocuments/hmo-spd.aspx>