

In my view the proposal would result in an over concentration of HMOs within the area, adversely affecting the character and amenity of the area, contrary to UDP Policy H2/4. It would create a cluster of these uses around the junction of Porter Street and Back Walmersley Road West. A lawful development certificate has been granted to convert the existing flats into 4 HMOs. Although the proposal is to retain 3 of the flats, as demonstrated by the lawful development certificate, these could also be converted into HMOs, resulting in a total of 5 separate HMOs within this property.

I note that in paragraph 2.5 of the Design and Access statement the applicant asserts that delivering 2 HMO's with a total of 15 bedrooms would deliver an equivalent of 8.3 dwellings. This is incorrect – the HDT result is based on the Housing Flows Reconciliation form submitted by Local Authorities. The guidance for this is clear that Houses in Multiple Occupation, if they were a house before, cannot be counted as a net additional dwelling. If an HMO is created by change of use from a non-residential building, then it can be counted as one net additional dwelling. The proposal results in an increase from 4 dwellings to 5, and would only be counted as 1 net additional dwelling for HDT purposes.