



**Hinckley & Bosworth
Borough Council**

Forward timetable of consultation and decision making

Executive

9 February 2026

Wards affected:

Hinckley Castle and Hinckley De Montfort

Proposal to consult - Article 4 Direction

Report of Director (Community Services)

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To seek Executive approval to undertake statutory consultation on a proposed immediate Article 4 Direction covering a defined area of Hinckley town centre, as set out in Appendix A, in response to emerging evidence of increasing concentrations of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) and associated impacts on residential amenity, community balance and local infrastructure.
- 1.2 The report further seeks agreement that, following the statutory consultation period, a subsequent report will be brought back to the Executive to enable Members to determine whether to confirm an immediate Article 4 Direction for the defined area.
- 1.3 The area proposed for inclusion encompasses a defined area of Hinckley town centre, together with surrounding streets where officers have identified early signs of HMO clustering and cumulative impact (full boundary shown in Appendix A).

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That Members note the emerging evidence of increased HMO concentration and associated impacts within parts of Hinckley town centre, and adjacent streets.
- 2.2 That the Executive approve the commencement of a statutory public consultation on a proposed immediate Article 4 Direction to remove permitted development rights for change of use from Class C3 (dwelling houses) to Class C4 (small HMOs) within the area outlined in Appendix A.

- 2.3 That Members agree that a further report be brought back to the Executive following the close of the consultation period, setting out representations received, officer analysis, and seeking a decision on whether to confirm, amend, or withdraw the immediate Article 4 Direction.

3. Background to the Report

- 3.1 HMOs play a valuable role in meeting the needs of single people, young workers and those unable to access self-contained housing. However, where conversions occur rapidly or cluster within a small area, cumulative effects can start to impact neighbourhood character, service demand and the quality of the local environment.
- 3.2 Monitoring shows these patterns beginning to emerge around residential areas in and around Hinckley town centre where multiple conversions, each acceptable in isolation, are now collectively reshaping the residential character of the area.
- 3.3 Residents have started to report issues such as noise, parking pressures, refuse management and concerns about neighbourhood stability. These early indicators mirror those seen in other local authorities before introducing Article 4 controls.
- 3.4 The intention behind the proposed Article 4 Direction is therefore preventative, ensuring future HMO growth in this area can be properly assessed and managed before impacts become established.

3.5 Article 4 Directions

An Article 4 Direction removes permitted development rights for changes of use from Class C3 to Class C4, meaning that planning permission is required for new small HMOs. This does not prevent HMOs but ensures that future proposals are assessed on their individual and cumulative impacts.

- 3.5.1 The proposed Direction would enable the Council to:
- Assess HMO proposals in the context of local saturation levels
 - Manage clustering and over-concentration
 - Protect residential amenity and neighbourhood character
 - Align future change with wider housing and community objectives

An immediate Direction is recommended due to the pace of recent conversions within the identified area and the risk of further intensification if no action is taken during the consultation period. The approach is consistent with national guidance, which permits immediate Directions where evidence shows existing or imminent harm.

3.5.2 Evidence-Led and Proportionate Approach

Government guidance requires Article 4 Directions to be justified by clear, localised evidence and applied in a proportionate manner. In Hinckley and

Bosworth, analysis of licensed HMOs, council tax data, service demand, and complaint patterns demonstrates that while borough-wide impacts remain limited, specific residential streets within and around Hinckley town centre are experiencing accelerated change.

3.5.3 The proposed Direction is therefore targeted, focusing on defined areas where evidence demonstrates emerging risk, rather than applying a blanket borough-wide restriction. This approach balances the continued need for HMO accommodation with the protection of residential amenity in areas experiencing the greatest pressure.

3.5.4 While Hinckley and Bosworth Borough does not currently experience widespread HMO concentration, clear evidence is emerging of localised saturation and increasing resident impact. Left unmanaged, these pressures are likely to intensify, reducing the Council's ability to shape outcomes and respond effectively.

3.5.5 The introduction of a targeted Article 4 Direction represents a measured, proportionate, and preventative response, allowing the Council to retain control over future change while continuing to support a balanced housing market. Supported by ongoing multi-service monitoring and public consultation, this approach ensures flexibility, transparency, and alignment with national policy.

3.5.6 Approval of the proposed Article 4 Direction will place the Council in a stronger position to manage emerging pressures, safeguard residential amenity, and respond to future change in a way that reflects both local evidence and community priorities.

3.6 Next Steps

3.6.1 Subject to Executive approval:

- A statutory consultation period of at least 21 days will be undertaken.
- All consultation responses will be reviewed and assessed by officers.
- An Equality Impact assessment will be undertaken.
- A further report will be brought back to the Executive with analysis and a clear recommendation on whether the Direction should be confirmed, amended or withdrawn.
- If confirmed, the Direction will remain in force in accordance with the relevant statutory timeframes.
- The Secretary of State will be notified.

4. **Exemptions in accordance with the Access to Information procedure rules**

4.1 Open

5. **Financial implications [ST]**

5.1 Further legal implications to be set out in the final report.

6. **Legal implications [AW]**

6.1 None.

7. **Corporate Plan implications**

7.1 The objectives of this report align to the following Corporate Plan objective
People: Reduce crime and anti-social behaviour.

8. **Consultation**

8.1 Statutory Consultation period required, following approval of this report.

9. **Risk implications**

Management of significant (Net Red) risks

Risk description	Mitigating actions	Owner
Unintended concentration of HMOs in specific areas, leading to localised pressures on services and community cohesion.	Establishment of multi-service working group to regularly monitor HMO distribution, use mapping tools to identify emerging clusters, and report findings to Members for timely intervention.	Director of Community Services
Increased workload and resource pressures if an Article 4 Direction is introduced, including planning applications and enforcement.	Plan for resource allocation in advance, develop clear decision-making criteria and policy guidance, and consider phased or targeted implementation to manage demand.	Director of Community Services
Legal and financial exposure from compensation claims if an immediate Article 4 Direction is used and planning permission is refused.	Ensure any Article 4 Direction is evidence-based and proportionate, seek legal advice before implementation, and consider using non-	Director of Community Services

	immediate Directions where appropriate	
Community and stakeholder tensions, including opposition from landlords or concerns from residents	Conduct thorough public consultation and engagement, provide clear communication about the rationale and scope of any changes, and address concerns transparently.	Director of Community Services
Impact on housing supply for vulnerable groups if HMO growth is restricted without alternatives.	Align any new controls with the Council's housing and homelessness strategies, and work with partners to develop alternative accommodation options where needed.	Director of Community Services

10. Knowing your community – equality and rural implications

- 10.1 This decision will be informed by data on the distribution of HMOs, demographic information, and feedback from consultation to ensure all community groups are considered. The potential impact on vulnerable groups such as low-income households, single people, and those requiring supported accommodation will be assessed, as HMOs often provide essential housing for these residents. The implications for rural areas and parish councils will also be considered, particularly if any policy changes could affect access to services or housing options outside urban centres.
- 10.2 The Council will ensure that services and any changes to policy or licensing are accessible to all, regardless of location or method of delivery. This includes making information available in accessible formats and providing opportunities for all affected groups, including those in rural communities, to participate in consultations.
- 10.3 An Equality Impact Assessment will be completed.

11. Climate implications

- 11.1 The direct climate impact of introducing an Article 4 Direction or additional HMO licensing is expected to be minimal, as these measures regulate use rather than physical development. However, any policy changes will be reviewed to ensure they support energy efficiency and align with the Council's climate objectives.

12. Corporate implications

12.1 By submitting this report, the report author has taken the following into account:

- Community safety implications
- Environmental implications
- ICT implications
- Asset management implications
- Procurement implications
- Human resources implications
- Planning implications
- Data protection implications
- Voluntary sector

Background papers: None

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