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Date: 10th January 2018

Bath and North East Somerset Council
Planning Services
Lewis House
Manvers Street
Bath
BA1 1JG

Dear Sir/Madam,

**BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET COUNCIL
DRAFT LOCAL PLAN 2016-2036 ISSUES AND OPTIONS CONSULTATION
REPRESENTATIONS ON BEHALF OF UNITE STUDENTS**

We write on behalf of our client, Unite Students, to submit representations to the consultation on the Local Plan 2016-2036 Issues and Options. Unite Students is the UK's leading manager and developer of student accommodation, providing homes for around 50,000 students in more than 140 purpose built properties across 28 of the UK's strongest university towns and cities. The consultation invites comments on options for responding to the universities' growth and student accommodation demand.

Summary of Representations and Recommendations

Our representation focuses on Section 6: Housing Needs and Student Accommodation and comment as follows:

- We support the Council's recognition of the demand for additional housing within Bath and North East Somerset and that future housing provided must address a range of specific needs.
- We support the Council's recognition of the significant implications of student accommodation pressure and the need to consider this alongside other development pressures to ensure the city is able to continue to fulfil its strategic economic role.
- We support the Council's acknowledgement of the estimated population trends and the significant changes to the population profile which will result in a more student led mix in Bath.
- We support the Council's recognition of the need to address the issue of affordability of student accommodation and to ensure the needs of 2nd and 3rd year students are met.
- We support the Council's intentions to plan for the provision of further Purpose Built Student Accommodation this can help to take some pressure off the private rented sector and the increasing numbers of HMOs.
- We agree with the Council's recognition of the link between the supply of additional academic space and the demand for student accommodation and believe the Council should consider the approach of allowing additional academic space only where additional student accommodation will also be provided.

To summarise, we support the Council's recognition to address the strong demand for student housing in Bath and North East Somerset through the provision of purpose built student accommodation. We also are in agreement that this provision would help to alleviate the pressure on other housing sectors such as private rented, and in particular HMOs thus ensuring sufficient provision of family sized homes.

Section 6: Housing Needs and Student Accommodation

Set out within this section are 5 Options designed to stimulate discussion regarding the appropriate response the Council should have to the universities' growth and student accommodation demand.

Option 5 proposes that the provision of further academic space must be supported by the provision of additional student accommodation which includes 2nd and 3rd year students. This approach enables strong protection of employment and housing land within Bath and North East Somerset. Additional academic space would require additional student accommodation to be provided on campus or elsewhere in the district.

We are of the strong opinion that Option 5 is indeed the most appropriate response to the strong demand for student housing within Bath and North East Somerset.

Conclusion

We are generally in support of the plan and in particular Section 6: Housing Needs and Student Accommodation and believe that taking forward Option 5 is the most appropriate response to the universities' growth and student accommodation demand within Bath and North East Somerset.

Please acknowledge receipt of our representations to the Draft Local Plan 2016-2036. We look forward to discussing matters with you further in the future.

Yours faithfully,

A black rectangular box redacting the signature of Matthew Roe.

MATTHEW ROE
Director