

Written evidence submitted by Anonymous [PDR 003]

In my town there are a large number of illegal HMOs. These are often in the form of illegal hostels. Commercial and residential buildings are used. In many areas the above outnumber residential homes. The link with modern day slavery and exploitation is apparent. There is a high degree of overcrowding, illegal immigrants and anti-social behaviour. The local facilities and infrastructure cannot cope with the huge increase in demand. It is impractical to build many new buildings due to problems with flooding and because of this inappropriate buildings have illegally been converted. Many local people have left the area because of these problems and have therefore increased the problem by providing additional properties to be converted. The housing conditions make control of Coronavirus difficult for the whole community.

My concern is that through the expansion of PDR this will provide rogue landlords with the opportunity to expand the number of their properties with even more ease and increase the problem further. Changes to planning will not provide more accommodation for migrant workers but instead allow rogue gang masters and slum landlords to import more legal and illegal immigrants into the area.

The impact of PDR will restrict the ability further of local authorities to plan, develop and shape their local communities further.

PDR Class 1 change of the use of small HMOs to dwelling houses and visa versa undermines that ability. The National Planning Framework (NPPF, 2012, revised 2018,2019) enjoins local authorities to promote strong local communities. Paragraph 7 sets out that purpose of a planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, and one of three overarching objectives is a social objective to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities (paragraph 8). Paragraph 61 notes that within the context of boosting housing supply the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies (including families with children, older people and students amongst others). Paragraph 91 requires that planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy and safe places. My hope is that our environment does not deteriorate further through even more overcrowding and lack of management.

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