

Peckham Buildbase

Student demand assessment

July 2026

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Executive summary

The Proposed Development seeks to deliver a high quality residential-led scheme, offering both affordable C3 units and PBSA, as well as flexible community or commercial space, play space and improvements to public realm.

The opportunity

The Site falls within **The Peckham and Nunhead Action Area** and **The Peckham Core Action Area** – defined as an area with great development potential, exhibiting strong character, public transport accessibility and opportunity and capacity for growth.



The Site benefits from a strong **PTAL rating of 4-5**, due to its proximity to three overground/National Rail stations.

This location has strong connections to central London’s higher education institutions and to Peckham’s retail and leisure offering.



516
PBSA units



55
Affordable homes



1,619sqm
Open and play space



115sqm
Commercial/ community space

London makes a substantial contribution to the higher education sector in the UK

Nationally		London
300+	Higher education providers	115+
£158bn	Total economic impact associated with HEI	£32bn <i>21% of national</i>
768K <i>2.8% of all employment across the UK</i>	Total employment supported by the HE sector	126K <i>2.2% of London’s workforce in 2022</i>
2.9m	HE students	549K <i>19% of the UK’s HE student population</i>
£37bn	Net economic benefit of first-year international students over the duration of their studies.	£10bn
4,740	Graduate startups created in 2023/24, acting as a crucial catalyst for innovation through their advanced research	1,760 <i>37% of the UK’s graduate start-ups – demonstrating innovative nature of London grads</i>

Local benefits of students



Boosting the local economy

Students spend approximately **£14,500 per year** while living in London.

Additional visitors (family) to the area.

Students engage with the **night-time economy, arts and cultural events** in their local area.



Lower use of social infrastructure

Only **23%** of PBSA students registered with local GPs.

Universities provide a variety of facilities for their students such as libraries and sports facilities.

Students use public facilities at **different times** due to their different schedule.



Meaningful contribution

Approximately 69% of UK **students work part-time**.

71% of London graduates continue to work in the region following graduation.

Students are **more likely to volunteer in local communities**.

Add to **liveliness and cultural diversity**.

Student baseline context



Southwark

10 higher education institutions in Southwark.

22,360 enrolled students.



45-minute commute

46 higher education institutions within a 45-minute commute of the Site.

173,865 enrolled students.

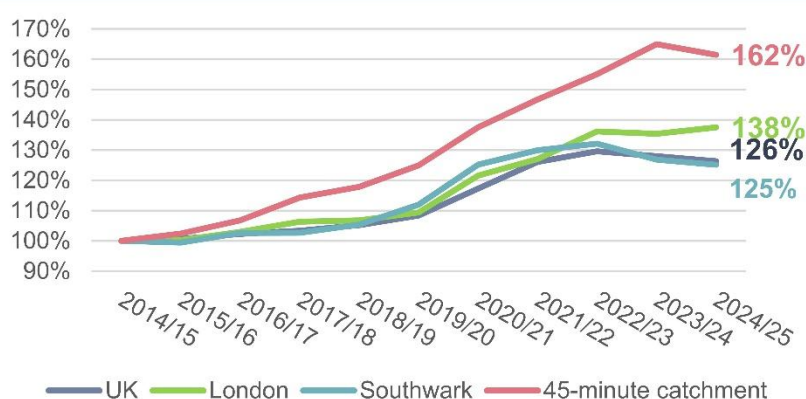


London

115+ higher education institutions across London

549,365 enrolled students.

Growing student numbers in London and in HEIs located near the Site



Since 2014/15, student numbers among HE institutions located within a 45-minute commute of the Site **grew by 62%, compared to London's average of 38%.**



By 2029/30, the total number of students studying at universities located within a 45-minute commute of the Site is expected to increase to **approximately 221,060.**

Housing crisis



UK house prices have been rising over time, with the country **consistently failing to meet the 300,000 annual homes target.** London is facing a particularly acute crisis.



Elevated house prices in London have **driven up demand for the PRS (predominantly HMOs and traditional rented homes)** as residents are priced out of homeownership.



Both residents and students are in **competition for HMOs and traditional rented homes.** This is particularly significant as **student housing supply has failed to keep up with demand.**



An identified need for PBSA

In London:

London has delivered only 52% of identified PBSA need since 2016, a cumulative shortfall of over 16,700 bedspaces.

HMO supply has fallen by 23% in five years. The result is **worsening affordability** for both students and existing residents.

The London Plan identifies a strategic need for 3,500 new PBSA bedspaces per year, yet average delivery has been just 1,829 in recent years.

The GLA is clear that PBSA need is a London-wide issue – well-connected locations such as the Peckham Core Action Area must contribute.

Between **100,000 and 105,000** students in London lack access to PBSA.

In Southwark:

Only 13% of students studying in Southwark live in PBSA, compared to 14% across London and 24% nationally.

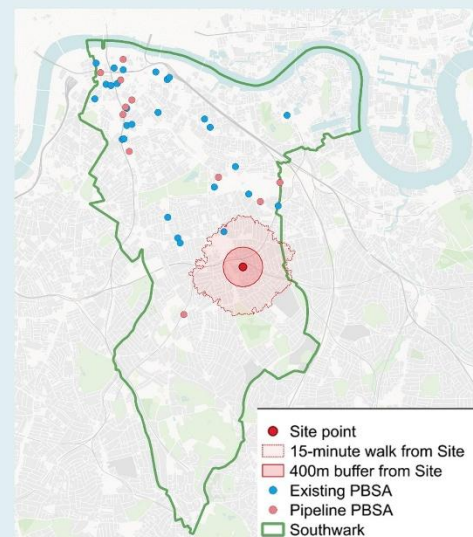
Much lower than the GLAs benchmark of 40% and indicates limited access to PBSA, relative to the number of students studying in Southwark.

There are **currently 7,765 PBSA bedrooms** in Southwark.

There are an additional **6,440 PBSA beds in the pipeline.**

Students to bedspace ratio is 4.5 in Southwark

And 7.6 in the Local Area – indicating an **under supply.**



Why PBSA?

The **specialist** nature of PBSA has many benefits over the PRS:



Study and specialist features



Lifestyle



Ease of booking



Health and wellbeing



Safety and security

Growing demand

The ratio of **students per PBSA bedspace** is expected to reduce to **2.8 once accounting for pipeline development and growth in students**.

And **9.2 in the Local Area**.

Both **above the reported national rate of 2.7**.

The GLA recognises that provision of PBSA is needed across all boroughs.

Contribution of the Proposed Development



516

PBSA units

Equivalent to 206 C3 homes



55

Affordable homes



261

Total C3 equivalent homes

Housing targets

11.2%

Of the **adopted Local Plan annual housing target** (2,335).

9.1%

Of the **housing target implied by the standard method** (2,882).

14.7%

London's **annual PBSA bedspace target** (3,500).

0.05 years

To the existing 4.53 **years of housing supply**.

Reduce competition between students and other residents for conventional housing stock

HMOs could be released for families helping relieve overcrowding



Freeing up to **124** HMOs for families

The Proposed Development would **boost overall existing and future supply to 14,720 bedspaces** – Reducing the future student to bedspace **ratio from 2.9 to 2.8 in 2029/30**.

Suitability of the location



Strong accessibility and connectivity

- The Site has **high levels of public transport accessibility**.
- PTAL rating of 4 – 5**.
- Strong links to the 46 HEIs** within 45-minutes.



No risk of overconcentration

- PBSA only comprises **1% of housing in the Local Area** and **2% across the borough**.
- This would **only rise to 2% and 4%**, once accounting for the **pipeline of development and the Proposed Development**.



Complementing a mixed and balanced community

- Peckham offers a **distinctly different proposition to the established student accommodation clusters** in the north of the borough
- A **range of retail, leisure and cultural destinations** within walking distance.

High quality PBSA offer

The Applicant has a track record of delivering PBSA and affordable housing in London: Devonshire Place, Chalk Farm Road, High Road Wembley, and Jamestown Road.

Homes for Students is an **experienced PBSA operator**.



Amenity and communal space.

Opportunities for social interaction, supporting good mental health.



Access to open and play space

As well as active travel infrastructure and natural surveillance and security.

2. Introduction

Purpose of this assessment

- 2.1 Volterra Partners LLP ('Volterra') has been commissioned by Regal Blackpool Road Ltd ('the Applicant') to provide a Student Demand Assessment, in support of the planning application for Buildbase Peckham, Blackpool Road, Peckham, London SE15 3SU (the 'Site'), in the London Borough Southwark.
- 2.2 The purpose of this report is to assess the need for purpose-built student accommodation (PBSA) in Southwark, and across London more broadly. The report considers the extent to which the Proposed Development responds to identified need for housing and more specifically PBSA.

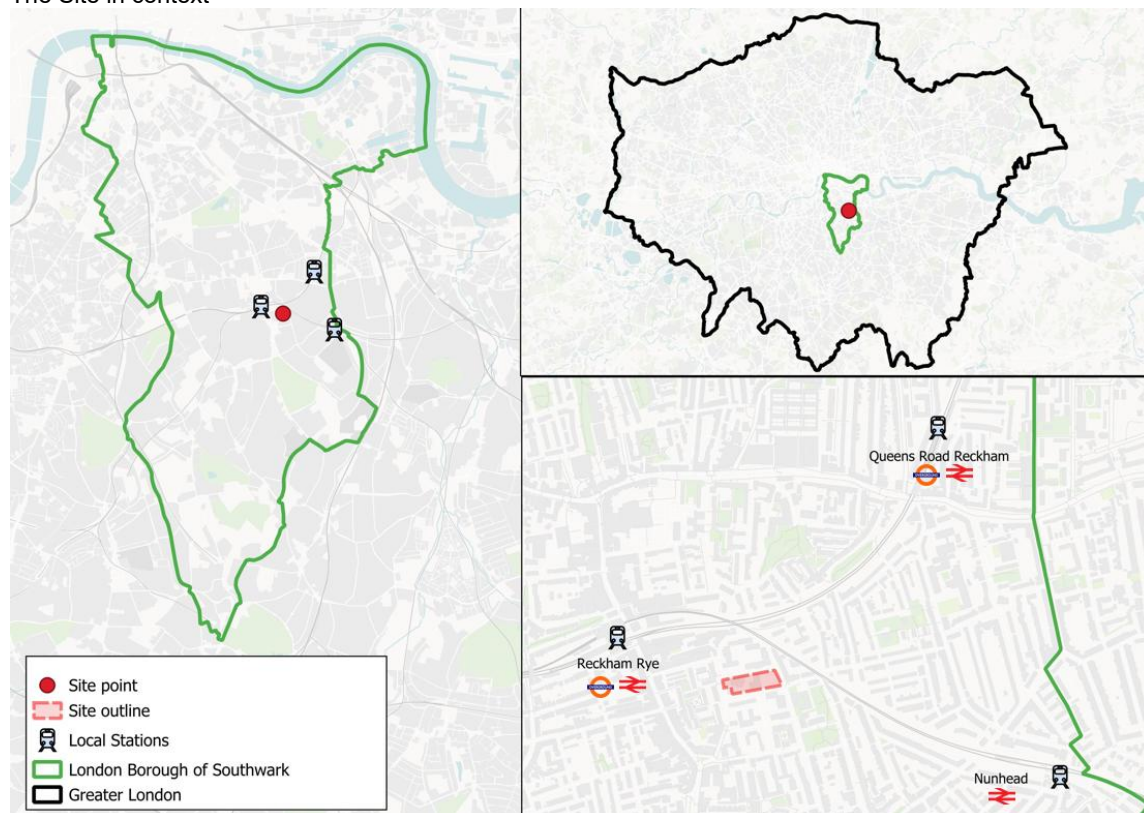
Site context

- 2.3 The existing Site comprises 0.5ha of land located on Blackpool Road. It currently operates as a builder's merchant, with associated yard and open storage space (Sui Generis). There is a bus depot to the north of the Site, and residential uses to the south. Beyond the Site's industrial function, it offers little to no benefits to its immediate urban condition.
- 2.4 The eastern half of the Site benefits from a Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) of 5, while the western half benefits from a PTAL of 4.¹ This demonstrates a very good level of public transport accessibility, with three overground/National Rail stations within an 8-15 minute walk (depicted in **Figure 1**). Peckham Rye is located in TfL Zone 2 and provides overground services towards Battersea and Canada Water, as well as rail services to London Blackfriars, London Bridge and London Victoria within 10 and 13 minutes respectively.

¹ Transport for London, 2026. TFL PTAL WebCAT; NB: the highest PTAL (highest accessibility level) equates to 6b

Figure 1 — The Site in context

The Site in context



Sources: Maptiler; OpenStreetMap Contributors

Proposed Development

- 2.5 The Proposed Development seeks to deliver a high quality residential-led scheme, offering both affordable C3 residential and PBSA units, as well as flexible community or commercial space, play space and improvements to public realm.



- 2.6 The scheme would complement and support local needs. It would contribute to local affordable housing needs, provide appropriate accommodation for students and through its ancillary uses support local residents wellbeing. In addition, the scheme would meet London Plan 2021 and Southwark Local Plan

sustainability requirements, including the Policy SI 2 energy hierarchy, and aims to achieve BREEAM Excellent.²

2.7 The description of development is as follows:

“Demolition of existing buildings and phased re-development of the site to provide purpose-built student accommodation (Sui Generis), residential dwellings (C3) and a commercial/community unit (E/F.2) alongside the provision of internal and external amenity space, public realm, play space, hard and soft landscaping, cycle parking and other associated works.”

Relevant policy and guidance

Nationally

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

2.8 This sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how these should be applied.³ It provides a framework within which local plans can provide for development in a sustainable manner. The current NPPF, published in December 2024, sets a new Standard Method for calculating housing need. The new method sets higher housing needs, to align with the Government’s target to deliver 1.5m homes. This estimated need is higher than what is recognised in the adopted Southwark Local Plan. The new implied housing target is outlined in section 4. The need for PBSA.

2.9 A new draft of the NPPF was published in December 2025, and consultation of this draft recently finished in March 2026.⁴ The consultation version of the NPPF carries very little/no weight at this time.

Regionally

London Plan

2.10 The plan is used to set the GLA’s objectives for London, which include Southwark. Relevant policy in this plan includes:⁵

- **Policy H15: Purpose-built-student-accommodation** states that boroughs shall ensure that local and strategic need for purpose-built-student-accommodation is addressed. Amongst other factors, policy outlines that it is crucial that development contributes to mixed and inclusive neighbourhoods and does not lead to overcrowding.
- **Policy H1: Increasing housing supply** sets the ten-year targets for net housing completions that each local planning authority should plan for. It sets an annual target of 52,287 homes per year across London and 2,335 per year (23,550 over 10-years) for Southwark.

² Mayor of London, 2021. The London Plan; Southwark Council, 2022. The Southwark Plan 2019 – 2036

³ Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, 2024. NPPF

⁴ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2025. National Planning Policy Framework: draft text for consultation.

⁵ Mayor of London, 2021. The London Plan

Towards a new London Plan

2.11

A new London Plan is being developed, and an initial consultation document was published in 2025.⁶ This sets the framework for the next London plan for the plan period 2027 to 2050. Housing targets in the new plan are expected to apply from 2026/27 for a ten-year period. The document does not form adopted policy at this stage and therefore carries limited weight. However, it provides useful context on the emerging direction of strategic planning policy in London, together with insight into the projected level of growth.

- **Increasing London's housing supply** – identifies the scale of London's housing challenge, with the new Government's housing need figure for London set at 87,992 new homes per year, or 88,000 homes over the ten-year period of the next London Plan. The document recognises that recent delivery has been below this level and that different types of housing including specialist housing such as student accommodation, form part of London's overall housing supply.
- **Purpose-built student accommodation and other forms of shared housing** – acknowledges that a lack of PBSA can reduce housing choice, and that PSBA can provide a well-managed alternative to private rented flat shares and helps free up those homes for others. It also recognises that PBSA is critical to supporting London's universities, other tertiary institutions, and the knowledge sector's contribution to London's economy.

Locally

Southwark Local Plan

2.12

The following policies most relevant this report:⁷

- **Strategic housing target** – of 2,335 homes per annum.
- **Policy P1: Social rented and intermediate housing (Affordable housing)** – To increase the provision of affordable housing in the borough, this policy requires a minimum of 35% affordable housing on all schemes of 10 or more homes, subject to viability.
- **Policy P5: Student homes (Purpose-built student accommodation)** – Sets the specific policy framework for PBSA in Southwark, sitting under the wider housing policies. It specifies location, design and management of student homes to ensure they meet identified need, are well-managed, and do not harm local amenity.

2.13

As outlined in the Local Plan, the Site is located in the southern parcel of allocated site NSP75: Blackpool Road Business Park. Key considerations mentioned for future development of the allocation include:

- That the site is allocated for residential development;
- Re-provision of employment floorspace on the site;
- Enhanced permeability across the site; and
- That commercial uses and taller buildings should be concentrated towards the north of the site.

The Peckham and Nunhead Area Action Plan

2.14

The Site falls within The Peckham and Nunhead Action Area (PNAA), which sets out policies to promote a healthy, safe and prosperous community.⁸ Relevant goals within the planning document include:

⁶ Greater London Authority. 2026. Towards a new London Plan: Consultation on the next London Plan

⁷ Southwark Council, 2022. The Southwark Plan 2019 – 2036

⁸ Southwark Council, 2014. Peckham and Nunhead Area Action Plan

- Encourage residential use in Peckham town centre;
- Provide 2,000 new homes, including a mixture of affordable, private homes without neglecting family homes; and
- To deliver high quality design and public realm improvements.

2.15 As identified in the Area Action Plan, the Site sits within the Peckham Core Action Area (PCAA), which is identified as an area for greatest development potential, exhibiting strong character, public transport accessibility and opportunity and capacity for growth.

Report structure

2.16 This report evidences the economic impacts of the Proposed Development, against the impacts of continued operation of the existing site. The report is structured as follows:

- **Student baseline** – This section establishes the role of higher education and students in London and Southwark, highlights the local benefits of students and outlines the current and future student demand in the borough.
- **The need for PBSA** – This section sets out the case for additional PBSA in Southwark, focusing on housing pressures, existing provision and the scale of unmet and future need.
- **Contribution of the Proposed Development** – This section explains how the Proposed Development would help meet identified student need in a suitable and accessible location, while supporting a balanced community. This section also addresses the contribution of the Proposed Development, to overall housing targets.

3. Student baseline

Economic and strategic role of higher education

3.1 Higher education (HE) is an important contributor to the UK economy, providing numerous benefits locally, regionally and nationally. Students strengthen the knowledge-based economy and contribute ground-breaking research.⁹ In turn, this encourages economic growth in the wider economy.¹⁰

London makes a substantial contribution to the HE sector in the UK

3.2 Many of London’s Higher education institutions (HEI) consistently rank among the top 50 in the world, in terms of factors such as research quality, learning experience and employability, solidifying the city’s reputation as a hub for world-class education.¹¹ It has also ranked as the best student city in the world five years in a row.¹² As of 2024/25 are over 115 HEIs located in London, the highest number of providers by region in the UK.¹³

Table 1 – London makes a substantial contribution to the HE sector in the UK

Contribution of the HE sector nationally and in London

Nationally		London
300+	Higher education providers	115+
£158bn	Total economic impact associated with HEI (Direct, indirect and induced impacts)	£32bn 21% of national
768K 2.8% of all employment across the UK	Total employment supported by the HE sector (Direct, indirect and induced impacts)	126K 2.2% of London’s workforce in 2022
2.9m	HE students	549K 19% of the UK’s HE student population
£37bn	Net economic benefit of first-year international students over the duration of their studies. (Including tuition fee income, living costs and associated indirect and induced effects)	£10bn

⁹ Universities UK, 2013. The impact of Universities on the UK economy
¹⁰ Digital Marketing Institute, 2018. What’s the importance of HE on the economy?
¹¹ QS, 2024. The world’s top 100 universities; Times Higher Education, 2024. World University Rankings 2023; US News and World Report, 2024. 2024-25 Best Global Universities Rankings
¹² QS, 2024. Best student cities 2025
¹³ HESA, 2026. Where do HE students study?



NB: Despite representing approximately a third of HEI, London represents an estimated one fifth (21%) of economic output. This is likely a result of London housing more smaller HEI than other regions. Sources: Universities UK International, HEPI London Economics, 2023. The costs and benefits of international higher education students to the UK economy; Universities UK, London Economics, 2024. The economic impact of higher education teaching, research, and innovation; HESA, 2025. Intellectual property, start-ups and spin-offs; HEPI, 2024. The Value of Higher Education in Developed Economies; Retrieved from: <https://www.lse.ac.uk/student-life/London-life/A-student-city>.

- 3.3 According to the most recently available data, one third of the UK's international students reside in London and London's rate of international students is 1.8 times higher than the national rate.¹⁴ Research conducted by the Higher Education Policy Institute (HEPI) highlights the important contribution that international students make to the economy.¹⁵ It is estimated that the economic benefit of international students in the UK rose from £31.3bn in 2018/19 to £41.9bn in 2021/22.¹⁶
- 3.4 In addition, London HEI are remarkably successful in retaining their graduates. Between 2013 and 2015, 76.9% of graduates of London HEIs who were working six months after graduation were working in London. The most recent data suggest that this trend continues, with 71% of graduates from London providers staying in London. This is the highest retention rate of all UK regions, alongside the North West.¹⁷ Graduates are an important source of entry level roles, therefore, maintaining the thriving student population in the region is essential.

Driving innovation

- 3.5 The UK economy is increasingly characterised by knowledge-intensive activity and innovation, often referred to as the “knowledge economy”.¹⁸ This comprises sectors where growth and productivity are driven primarily by the application of specialist skills, research, innovation and advanced professional expertise. These sectors include financial and professional services, digital and technology industries, life sciences, and the creative industries.
- 3.6 HEI are a crucial catalyst for innovation through their advanced research by staff and students. Some graduates go on to be entrepreneurs or start new companies that spin out from these institutions. In 2023/24, 4,740 graduate start-ups were created in England.¹⁹ These graduates carried out their entrepreneurial activities across all countries and regions of the UK but most substantially in London (31%), followed by the South East (11%) and the North West of England (8%).²⁰ HEI also encourage the commercial use of their intellectual property through the creation of spin-off companies, approximately 126 of which were set up across the UK in 2023/24.²¹

¹⁴ ONS, 2022. Census 2021.

¹⁵ Universities UK International, HEPI, London Economics, 2023. The costs and benefits of international higher education students to the UK economy

¹⁶ Universities UK International, HEPI, London Economics, 2023. The costs and benefits of international higher education students to the UK economy

¹⁷ HESA, 2025. Graduate Outcomes 2022/23: Summary Statistics - Graduate salaries and work locations?

¹⁸ DSIT, 2020. The knowledge economy & innovation in the UK public sector

¹⁹ HESA, 2025. Intellectual property, start-ups and spin-outs 2023-24

²⁰ National Centre for Universities and Business. 2022. An insight report into the UK's Graduate Entrepreneurs.

²¹ HESA, 2025. Intellectual property, start-ups and spin-outs 2023-24

There are a high number of students living and studying within 45-minutes from the Site

- 3.7 There are 10 HEI located within Southwark, with a total 22,360 students enrolled (see **Appendix 1 – Student Enrolments**). This represents approximately 4% of London’s student population.²² The largest institution by far is the London South Bank University, with 12,775 students, followed by London College of Communication (part of the University of Arts London (UAL)), with approximately 5,000 students.²³
- 3.8 It is likely that a large proportion of students living in the Southwark also attend HEI outside of the borough. As such, student demand is assessed based on commuting catchments rather than institutional location alone, reflecting the Site’s highly accessible location. To identify HEI that are considered to be local to the Site, it is necessary to define a reasonable commutable distance by students to HEI. No official source or assumption over this distance is publicly defined. However, given the strong transport links in London, for the purposes of this report, a 45-minute commute via public transport is deemed appropriate. This is based on the average commuting time in London, which is 45 minutes.²⁴ This is applied in absence of an official source or assumption on the average student travel time to their HEI. University College London (UCL) define a student ‘commuter’ as a student who travels more than 45-minutes to university, further supporting this assumption.²⁵
- 3.9 There are approximately 46 HEI campuses located within a 45-minute commute of the Site (**Figure 2**), with approximately 173,865 students enrolled, making up 32% of London’s student population.²⁶ This is a **substantial potential demand pool for the PBSA units at the Proposed Development**.

²² HESA, 2026. Where do HE students study?

²³ Sources: HESA, 2025. HE student enrolment FTE by HE provider, level of study and academic year; Retrieved from: www.arts.ac.uk/colleges/london-college-of-communication/about-lcc/lcc-global. Accessed June 2026

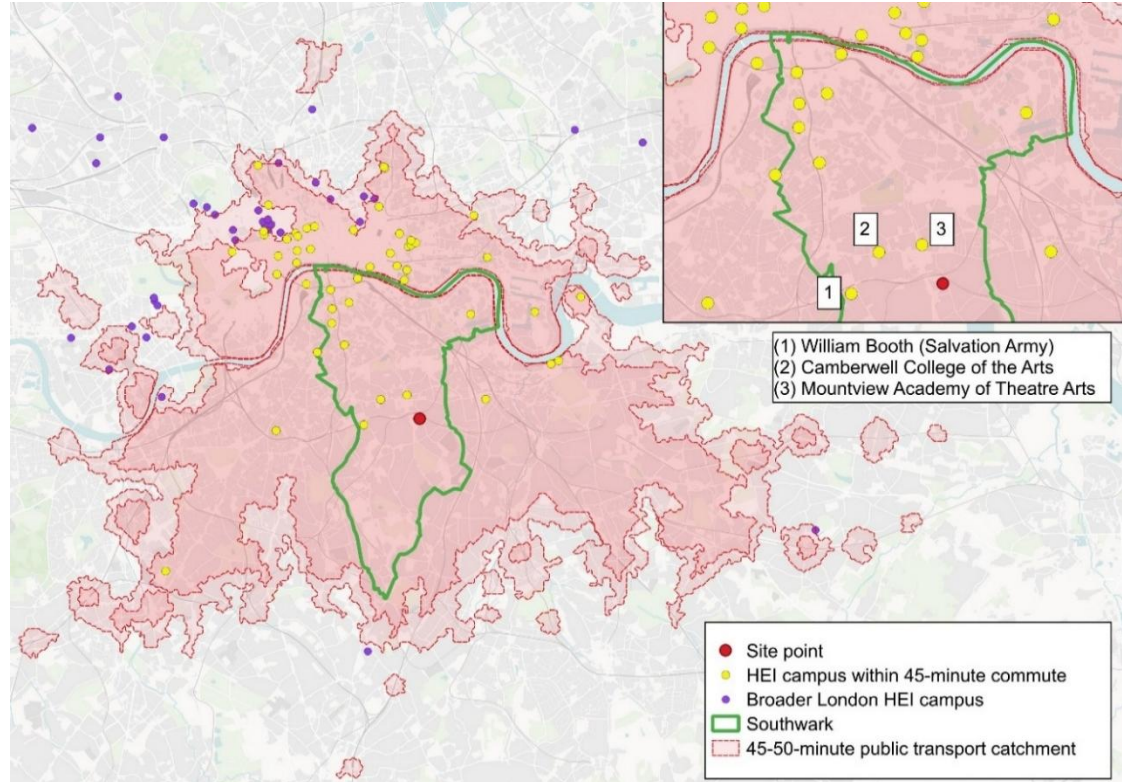
²⁴ DfT, 2025. Average time taken to travel to work by region of workplace in Great Britain

²⁵ UCL, 2023. Wider participation groups

²⁶ HESA, 2026. Where do HE students study?

Figure 2 – There are 46 HEI campuses within a 45-minute commute of the Site

HEIs within a 45-minute public transport commute of the Site



Source: Maptiler and OpenStreetMap contributors; HESA, 2026. *Where do HE students study?*

3.10

As depicted in **Figure 2**, there are an additional 17 campuses just outside of the 45-minute public transport catchment, within a 50-minute public transport catchment of the Site. This includes the prominent University College London, with over 46,000 students. All together, these HEI campuses accommodate an additional 94,765 students (268,640 students total across 63 campuses, or 49% of London's students within 50-minutes of the Site (See

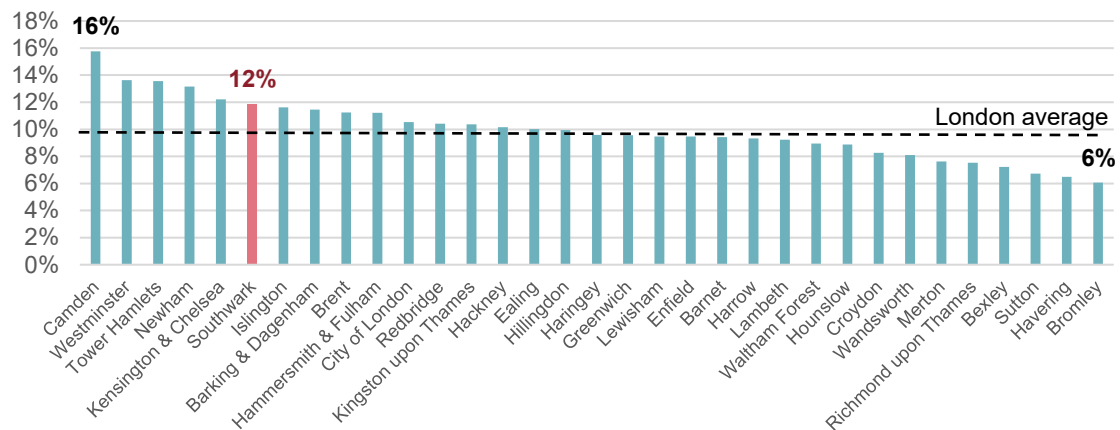
3.11 **Appendix 1 – Student Enrolments**). All HEI within the 50-minute public transport catchment can be accessed from the Site within 45-minutes or less by cycling, meaning that they could reasonably be accessed by students at the Proposed Development. For conservatism, this study focuses on the student population within the 45-minute public transport catchment, as this is more likely to represent the main and accessible mode of transport by students.

Students living in Southwark

3.12 The Census 2021 is the most recent comprehensive measure of students living in Southwark. According to the Census, there were a total 30,440 students living in the borough in 2021, the 4th highest student population of all London Boroughs (including City of London).²⁷ Proportionally, students represent approximately 12% of Southwark residents (aged 16 to 64).²⁸ This is slightly higher than the London-wide proportion (10%) and ranks 6th amongst the London boroughs (**Figure 3**).

Figure 3 – Southwark proportion of students is just above the London average

Students as proportion of the total population (aged 16 and over)



Source: ONS, 2022. Census 2021: TS066 - Economic activity status; NB: students are measured as “Economically active and a full-time student” and “Economically inactive: Student” (of all residents age 16 and over)

3.13 The existing student population in Southwark reflects the suitability of the location and existing demand from students. It is essential that there is an adequate supply of PBSA, to account for the high numbers of students who are drawn to the area.

3.14 Notably, the number of resident students in Southwark (30,440) exceeds the number of students enrolled at HEIs with a campus in the borough (22,360). This supports the use of a wider commuting catchment when assessing student accommodation demand, as it indicates that many students living in Southwark are likely to attend institutions elsewhere in London.

²⁷ ONS, 2022. Census 2021: TS066 - Economic activity status; NB: students are measured as “Economically active and a full-time student” and “Economically inactive: Student” (of all residents age 16 and over)

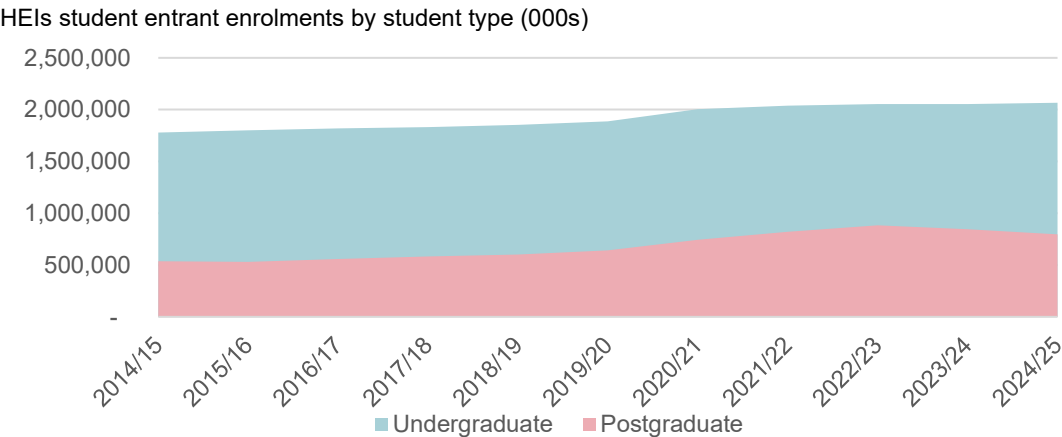
²⁸ ONS, 2022. Census 2021: TS066 - Economic activity status; NB: students are measured as “Economically active and a full-time student” and “Economically inactive: Student” (of all residents age 16 and over)

Growth in student demand

National growth

3.15 The number of students attending HEIs in the UK has increased steadily since 2014/15, rising by 24% to 2.9m in 2024/25 (up from 2.3m).²⁹ **Figure 4** shows the number of student enrolments over time broken down by level of study. In 2024/25, 28% of students in the UK are postgraduate students, with the remaining 72% being undergraduates.

Figure 4 – In 2024/25, 28% of all student enrolments in the UK were postgraduate students.



Source: HESA. 2026. Higher education (HE) student entrant enrolments by level of study

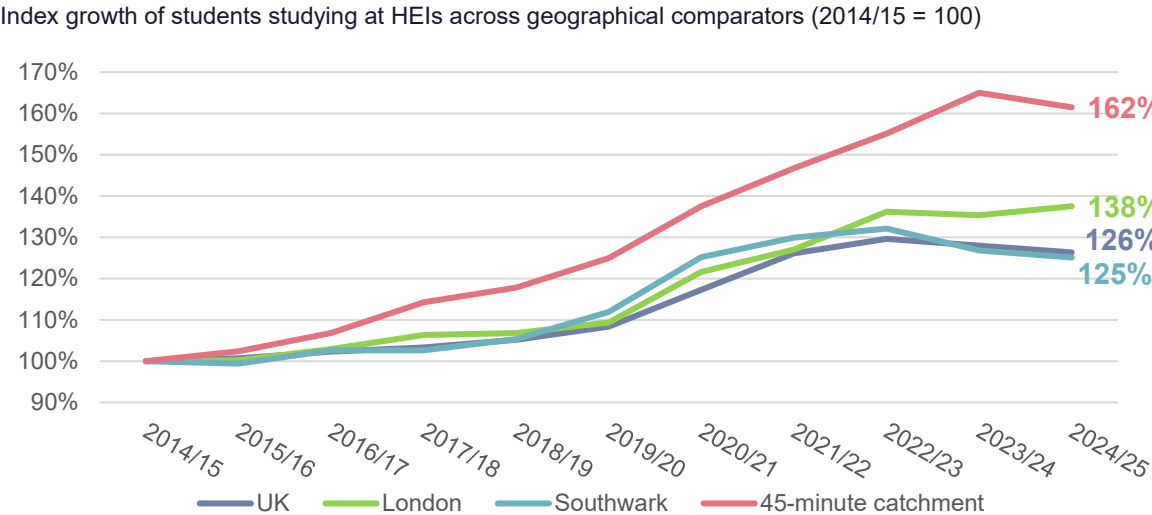
3.16 Since 2020/21 the number of international students studying in the UK have grown at a much faster rate than the growth in domestic students. Between 2020/21 and 2024/25, the number of international students studying in the UK has grown by 14%.³⁰ In this same time period the number of domestic students studying in the UK has grown by just 1%. These international students are less likely to have family and relatives that they can reside with and are therefore more likely to rely on PBSA.

Regional and local growth

3.17 Locally, growth in student numbers has been particularly strong among HEIs within a 45-minute commute of the Site, outpacing London and UK trends (**Figure 5**). Since 2014/15, student enrolments within this 45-minute catchment have increased by 62%, compared with 38% across London.³¹ This suggests that the Site sits within a fast-growing higher education catchment, reinforcing the case for additional student accommodation in a well-connected location, such as the Site. Southwark itself has seen a moderate increase in student enrolments of 25% since 2014/15. While this is lower than the London rate (38%), it almost mirrors the UK trend (26% growth) over the same period.

²⁹ HESA, 2024. Who's studying in HE?
³⁰ HESA, 2026. Where do HE students come from?
³¹ HESA, 2025. Where do HE students study?

Figure 5 – The growth in students studying at institutions within a 45-minute commute of the Site has outpaced comparators



Source: HESA, 2026. *Where do HE students study?*

- 3.18
- Student enrolments in central London is expected to remain high and continue to rise for a number of reasons:

 - **Higher accessibility** of institutions in central London due to strong transport links;
 - **Close proximity to a high concentration of businesses, cultural attractions and other institutions** where students may work, gain work experience or be required to attend as part of their studies (e.g. medical students attending practical experience within hospitals); and
 - **Concentration of prestigious HEI** within central London (such as Imperial College London, University College London, London School of Economics etc.).

3.19

The Site is well positioned to accommodate student growth across London. As an accessible location, with proximity to central HEI, it provides a suitable location for students that is more affordable than more central locations. It is within reach of London’s fastest growing HEI, making it an attractive location for future students coming to the city.

Projected growth in student demand

- 3.20
- The Department of Education (DfE) states that improving the quality of HEIs in England and delivering better outcomes for students, the economy, and society more broadly is a national mission.³² Supporting the growth of the student population is crucial for this, particularly as the UK’s 18-year-old population is forecast to grow from approximately 717,000 in 2020 towards a multi-decadal peak of over 890,000 in 2030.³³
- 3.21
- To project future student population growth in London, the compound annual growth rate (CAGR) is estimated for each geography, based on observed changes in HESA reported student enrolment numbers between 2014/15 and 2024/25. This period is used in full, including the years affected by the coronavirus pandemic, to capture longer-term shifts in the HE provider market and student participation patterns. While

³² Department for Education, 2022. Higher education policy statement & reform consultation

³³ Department for Education, 2022. Higher education policy statement & reform consultation

the pandemic resulted in short-term volatility in student numbers, it also accelerated structural changes in delivery models, accessibility, and provider composition. The CAGR is then used to project forward the year-on-year growth in students.

- 3.22 As depicted in **Table 2**, the number of students London are projected to increase by approximately 94,855 students (17%) between 2024/25 and 2029/30.³⁴ The total number of students at HEI within 45-minutes of the Site are projected to increase by approximately 47,110 (27%), while students at HEI in Southwark would increase by 2,650 students (12%).³⁵
- 3.23 Census data on resident student numbers does not provide an annual base for estimating annual growth. Instead, the London-wide HEI annual growth rate of students is applied to project future Southwark resident student numbers. This is more conservative than the Southwark HEI growth rate and reflects the population of students who live in Southwark but do not necessarily also study there (i.e. they could study at HEI across London). It is therefore estimated that since the 2021 Census, the number of resident students in Southwark has increased to approximately 34,895 (in 2024/25), and are projected to increase by a further 5,970 students to 40,550 in 2029/30 (a rate of 175%).

Table 2 – The number of students studying at HEIs across London are projected to increase

Student number projections 2024/25 to 2029/30

Student group	2024/25 students	2029/30 students	Growth	% increase (5-years)
Students enrolled at London HEIs	549,365	644,220	94,585	17%
Students enrolled at HEIs within a 45-minute commute of the Site	173,950	221,060	47,110	27%
Students enrolled at HEIs with a campus in Southwark	22,360	25,575	2,650	12%
Resident student population in Southwark	34,580	40,550	5,970	17%

Source: HESA, 2025. *Who's studying in HE*; ONS, 2022. *Census 2021: TS066 - Economic activity status*; NB: students are measured as "Economically active and a full-time student" and "Economically inactive: Student" (of all residents age 16 and over); Volterra projections based on historic growth rates; NB: figures are rounded and may not sum

- 3.24 This level of student growth is also recognised by HEIs local to the Site, who expect further student growth and call for more affordable, well-located student housing. For example:
- BPP University stated in its February 2025 Mid-Year Business Review that "all key business segments are forecasting growth" and notes that "the return of international students to the UK has accelerated".³⁶
 - In a recent report on innovation within UK universities, the University of London states that that demographic trends suggest growth in domestic demand for places is likely to persist.³⁷

³⁴ NB: over the past five years (2019/20 – 2024/5) the number of students in London has increased by approximately 112,000.

³⁵ NB: over the past five years (2019/20 – 2024/5) the number of students has increased by approximately 39,000 in the 45-minute catchment, and 2,300 in Southwark.

³⁶ BPP University, 2025. BPP Education Group – Mid-Year Business Review

³⁷ Richard Brown (University of London), 2026. *Degrees of Innovation: How London's universities transformed higher education in the UK and abroad*

- In Kings College London's 2023/24 financial statement, one of its main strategies is to "continue modest levels of growth in international and home students" to overcome its long term challenges.³⁸
- In 2023, UCAS reports that they expect continued growth in student numbers by the end of the decade – expecting a total 158,000 higher education applicants by 2030, an increase of 33.9% (from 2023);³⁹
- Goldsmiths University, despite seeing a recent drop in student figures, has plans to grow while keeping social innovation central, as outlined in their Strategy to 2033.⁴⁰

3.25

Additional PBSA is required support projected student growth, at nearby institutions, and to reduce pressure on the private rental sector.

³⁸ KCL, 2024. Financial Statements 2023-24

³⁹ Retrieved from: www.ucas.com/about-us/journey-million/what-journey-million. Accessed June 2025

⁴⁰ Retrieved from: www.gold.ac.uk/strategy/. Accessed June 2026

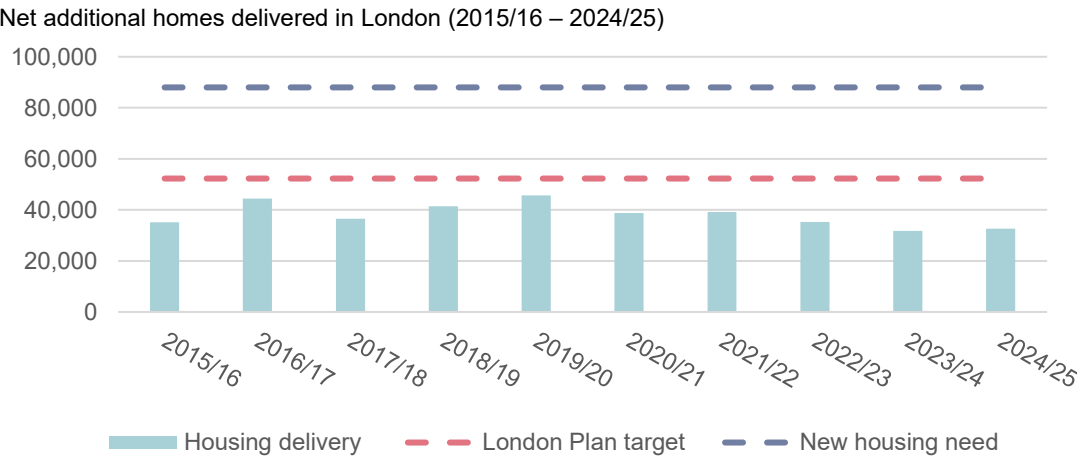
4. The need for PBSA

4.1 This section assesses the need for PBSA in Southwark, focusing on how the regional housing crisis, competition for rental housing, and the growing demand for high-quality PBSA underline the importance of the Proposed Development.

Housing delivery is not meeting demand Regionally

4.2 In August 2025, the Mayor of London identified that the housing need for London is 88,000 homes per year for the next decade if it were to meet demand.⁴¹ This is higher than the 52,287 annual target set out in the current London Plan.⁴² Actual delivery of homes across the Capital over the past decade has been well below these thresholds, as depicted in **Figure 6**.

Figure 6 – London’s housing delivery remains well below target



Source: DLUHC, 2024. Table 122 Net additional dwellings by local authority district, England 2001/02 to 2023/24; GLA, 2021. The London Plan; GLA, 2025. Mayor of London set to deliver 8,000 homes five years ahead of 2030 target

4.3 Over the past decade, housing delivery in London has averaged approximately 38,100 additional homes per annum, 27% below the current target. New housing starts are woefully behind target. In 2024-25, housing starts in London totalled 10,870 – just 12.4% of the annual housing target (88,000 homes).⁴³ This is only a slight improvement on the previous year where a total 4,170 homes were started – a mere 4.7% of the target.⁴⁴ A combination of factors, including stringent planning requirements, tougher post-Grenfell safety rules, high affordable-housing and other policy/levy costs that render many schemes financially unviable, and weaker market conditions (e.g., construction-cost inflation) has created a “perfect storm” that makes

⁴¹ GLA, 2025. Mayor of London set to deliver 8,000 homes five years ahead of 2030 target
⁴² GLA, 2021. The London Plan
⁴³ MHCLG, 2026. House building: permanent dwellings started and completed, by tenure and district, 2025-26
⁴⁴ MHCLG, 2025. House building: permanent dwellings started and completed, by tenure and district, 2024-25

starting new schemes extremely difficult.⁴⁵ All this is set against a backdrop of around 70,000 households, including 90,000 children, currently in temporary accommodation. London Councils estimates this is costing boroughs a collective £5m a day.⁴⁶ It is crucial that the delivery of all housing types increases, to meet targets going forward.

Southwark



Current adopted housing target: In alignment with the adopted London Plan, The Southwark Local Plan sets an annual target of **2,335 homes per annum**.



New Standard Method: the new Standard Method for estimating housing need was revised as part of the delivery of the new NPPF in late 2024. Under the new method and based on 2024 housing stock and affordability data, Southwark's new need is **2,822 homes per annum** - 21% higher.

Source: Southwark Council, 2022. Southwark Local Plan; MHCLG, 2024. NPPF; Volterra calculations

4.4 As depicted in **Figure 7**, housing delivery in Southwark has remained below the adopted housing target (2,335) since 2019/20, with the target having only been met twice over the past decade. Annual delivery has averaged just 1,540 homes, over the past three years, which equates to just 66% of the adopted target and 55% of the new SM target (2,822). Accordingly, under the Housing Delivery Test (HDT), a “presumption in favour of sustainable development” would apply, as well as a requirement to add a 20% buffer to the calculation of the five-year housing land supply (in addition to a Housing Action Plan).⁴⁷ In the most recent publication of the HDT (2023), Southwark scored 82%, qualifying Southwark to add a 20% buffer to the 5-year housing target.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ Retrieved from: www.hbf.co.uk/news/urgent-government-action-needed-to-prevent-london-housing-delivery-collapse-warns-hbf/. Accessed June 2026

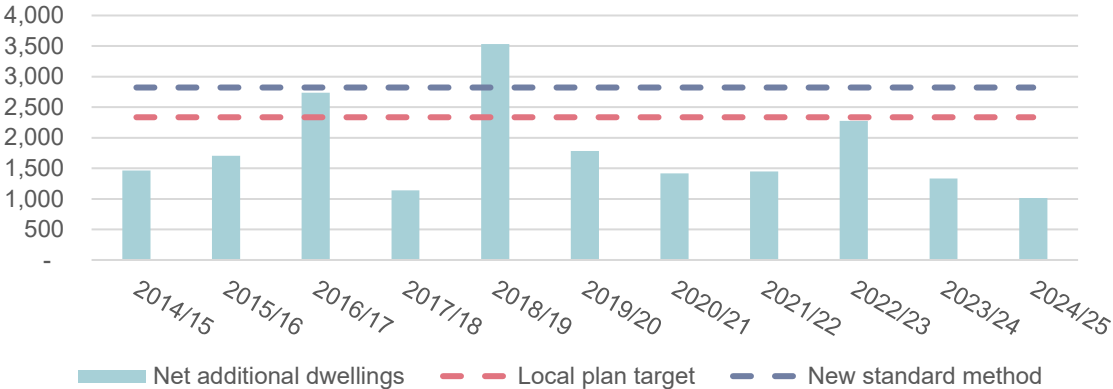
⁴⁶ Retrieved from: www.lgcplus.com/services/housing/why-housebuilding-in-london-stalled-08-12-2025/. Accessed June 2026

⁴⁷ The “presumption in favour of development” and 20% buffer are the relevant consequence where average housing delivery over the previous three years falls below 75% and 85% of the requirement, respectively – as set out in the Housing Delivery Test; MHCLG, 2024. NPPF

⁴⁸ MHCLG, 2024. Housing Delivery Test: 2023 measurement

Figure 7 – Southwark housing delivery has been well below target since 2018/19

Net additional homes delivered in Southwark (2014/15 – 2024/25)



Source: MHCLG, 2025. Net additional dwellings and all dwellings estimates by local authority district; Southwark Council. 2022. Southwark Local Plan; MHCLG, 2024. Housing Delivery Test: 2023 measurement

Future housing supply in Southwark

4.5 As a local planning authority, Southwark is required to produce a Housing Land Supply document to demonstrate how the borough can meet its housing delivery targets, particularly in relation to the 5-year and fifteen-year housing land supply required by national planning policy.^{49,50} Southwark’s 5-year and 15-year Housing Land Supply for 2020–2035 was confirmed during the examination of the Local Plan.⁵¹ The plan identifies enough land to meet the adopted target (2,355 net additional homes per annum) and 5.4 years of housing supply.

4.6 However, more recent reports suggest that Southwark’s housing delivery is falling behind. According to the latest Annual Monitoring Report (from 2025/26):⁵²

“Southwark Southwark’s updated 5-year housing land supply calculation shows an overall **deliverable supply of 17,780 homes** for the period 2026 to 2031. This results in an updated requirement of 16,337 homes since the beginning of the plan period. Applying a 20% buffer adds a further 3,267 homes, giving a **total 5-year housing requirement of 19,604 homes** and an **updated annual requirement of 3,921 homes** per year. Based on this calculation, Southwark can currently demonstrate **4.53 years of housing supply**. This means that, while the borough has a substantial pipeline of deliverable homes and capacity on allocated and windfall sites, it

⁴⁹ MHCLG, 2024. NPPF
⁵⁰ DLUHC and MHCLG. 2019. Housing Supply and Delivery
⁵¹ Southwark Council, 2022. The Southwark Plan 2019 – 2036
⁵² Southwark Council, 2026. Annual Monitoring Report 2025/26

does not currently demonstrate a full five-year housing land supply when the accrued deficit and 20% buffer are taken into account.”

4.7 This reinforces the need to bring forward all suitable forms of housing of all types, including PBSA, in order to support overall housing delivery and reduce pressure on the borough’s constrained supply of conventional homes.

High demand for housing is contributing to an affordability crisis

4.8 Whilst a lack of supply of housing is a critical component of the national housing crisis, the problem is also underpinned by a longstanding affordability crisis. Decades of undersupply in housing delivery combined with increasing demand for housing has resulted in house prices increasing faster than average earnings. Affordability issues have been exacerbated by the cost-of-living crisis and interest rate increases, to combat the rampant inflation that ensued after a period of government spending, high energy prices and global conflicts.

4.9 As of June 2026, interest rates are held at 3.75%, after having been cut six times since August 2024.⁵³ This is the lowest that the interest rate has been since January 2023, but still well above the rates of 0.25% to 0.75% held between 2009 and 2020. Higher interest rates since late 2021 have made it considerably harder for homeowners to afford their mortgage repayments, and made it more challenging for new home buyers to get on the property ladder through borrowing.

4.10 London is noted as being a particularly unaffordable region. In 2025, median house prices in London were £527,000, which is approximately 1.75 times higher than the median house price across England (£300,000).⁵⁴ Median house prices in Southwark are even higher than the London average at £540,000.

4.11 Compared to earnings, London house prices are approximately 11.35 times higher than median earnings (£46,415). Similarly in Southwark, median house prices are 11.09 times higher than median earnings (£48,680). These ratios are much higher than across England, where house prices are 7.64 times higher than median earnings, indicating that on average London and Southwark are much more unaffordable.

Table 3 – Housing in Southwark is more unaffordable than the national average

Housing affordability ratio (2025)

Geography	Median house price	Median income	Affordability ratio
Southwark	£540,000	£48,680	11.09
London	£527,000	£46,415	11.35
England	£300,000	£39,245	7.64

Source: ONS, 2026. House price to residence-based earnings ratio

⁵³ Bank of England, 2026. Interest rates and Bank Rate: our latest decision

⁵⁴ ONS, 2025. House price to residence-based earnings ratio

- 4.12 The ONS defines an area as “affordable” through an affordability threshold of five, where median house prices are no higher than five times the median income.⁵⁵ By this definition, housing is unaffordable across England but particularly in Southwark and London, both double this benchmark.
- 4.13 Housing affordability has slowly improved over the past few years. In Southwark, the median house price to earnings ratio peaked at 15.35 in 2018 compared to a peak of 13.58 in London in 2021. While there has been some improvement, the ratios remain higher than the “affordability threshold”.

Affordable housing delivery

- 4.14 The current Government recognises that there is a national need for more affordable housing, both in regard to bringing down house prices and delivering dedicated affordable housing.⁵⁶ This is also recognised regionally, as the GLA pledged to deliver between 18,800 and 19,000 affordable homes (including starts), between 2021 – 2026, as part of the Affordable Homes Programme (AHP).⁵⁷ This target had originally been higher (at between 23,900 and 27,100 starts over the five years), but was cut in 2025 due to delayed delivery. As of May 2026, the total affordable starts over the life of the programme was 14,335, leaving at least an additional 4,465 to be started to reach the target by June. Accordingly, the GLA and the government have agreed to an extension of up to six months for starts on site.⁵⁸
- 4.15 Looking forward, the GLA has secured a further £11.7 billion of funding, under the new 2026 to 2036 Social and Affordable Homes Programme, to support the delivery of thousands of new social and affordable homes across London, with the overall housing target for the programme to be confirmed after the initial bidding round.⁵⁹ Overall, there is a strong recognised need for the delivery of additional affordable housing across the region.
- 4.16 In Southwark affordable housing policy seeks to ensure that all developments creating one unit or more deliver a minimum of 25% of the housing as social rented housing and a further 10% as intermediate housing, totalling 35% affordable housing delivery.⁶⁰ However in late 2025, the government and the mayor of London agreed to change the quota for the amount of affordable housing for new qualifying developments in London from 35% to 20%, to help speed up planning decisions, incentivise developers and build more houses.⁶¹ This temporary policy is in place until the end of March 2028.
- 4.17 The Council reports that over the past three years, the delivery of affordable homes has been close to or exceeded the target.⁶² However, while new affordable housing delivery has been strong, overall affordability pressures remain very high in the borough (**Table 3**). Sustained affordability pressures contribute to many households failing to obtain housing of an acceptable standard due to being priced out of the market.⁶³ As more people are priced out of the housing market, increasing pressure is placed on the rental market. Rental prices are intensified by pressure on investment property owners to increase rents to cover their mortgage repayments. Affordability issues for renters deepen further as high rents inhibit their ability to save for house deposits.

⁵⁵ ONS, 2026. How affordable are homes in your neighbourhood?

⁵⁶ Retrieved from: www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c8e6w89537lo. Accessed June 2025

⁵⁷ Retrieved from: insidehousing.co.uk/news/housing-starts-rise-sharply-. Accessed June 2026

⁵⁸ Retrieved from: www.insidehousing.co.uk/news/housing-starts-rise-sharply. Accessed June 2026

⁵⁹ Retrieved from: www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/housing-and-land/. Accessed June 2026

⁶⁰ Retrieved from: www.southwark.gov.uk/planning-environment-and-building-control/. Accessed June 2026

⁶¹ Retrieved from: www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cdrzqxj37d5o. Accessed June 2026

⁶² Retrieved from: www.southwark.gov.uk/planning-environment-and-building-control/. Accessed June 2026

⁶³ UK Parliament, 2021. Research Briefing – ‘What is Affordable Housing?’

4.18 A lack of affordable housing in Southwark pushes students to compete more intensely for houses of multiple occupation (HMO's) and other homes in the private rented sector, increasing the risk that they are forced into lower-quality or more expensive accommodation, or out of the borough entirely (see **Poor quality of PRS**).

There is strong competition for housing among students

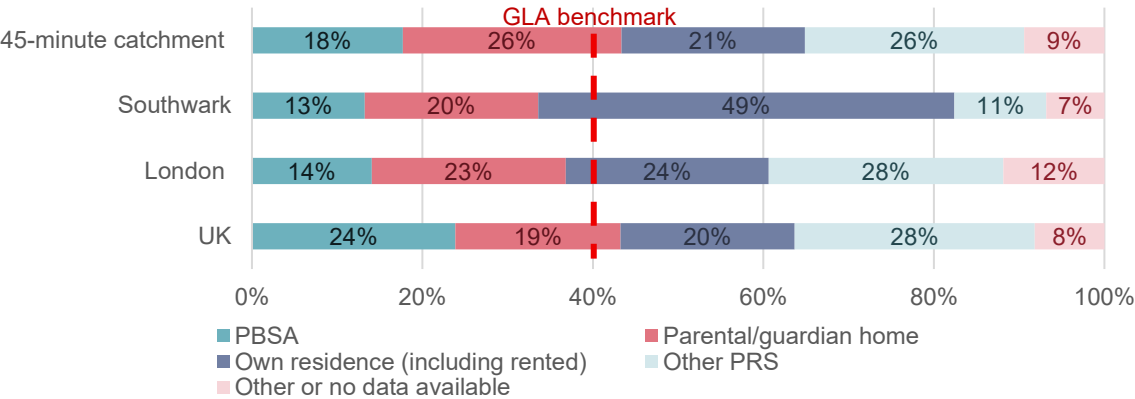
4.19 The housing crisis in London is not only impacting residents but also creating challenges for students, who are increasingly competing with other groups for accommodation in the private rental sector (PRS). In particular, HMOs have often been popular accommodation choices for students. With rising house prices pushing an increasing proportion of the population toward renting, competition for these options has grown. This will intensify if PBSA supply fails to keep up with rising demand.

 A need for **3,500 PBSA bedspaces per annum** across London

4.20 The London Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) reports a need for 88,500 additional PBSA bed spaces between 2016 and 2041 in London, equivalent to 3,500 per year.⁶⁴ This is derived from GLA's 2018 paper "Student Population Projections and Accommodation Need for the New London Plan (amended October 2018)", which forecast a total need of 171,063 PBSA bed spaces across London in 2041/42. This equates to approximately 40% of the total projected student population across HESA-registered HEI, campus branches and alternative providers in 2041/42. Taken as a strategic benchmark, this suggests PBSA should play a materially larger role in accommodating students than is currently evident across the geographies considered below.

Figure 8 – A lower proportion of HE students studying within London and the local area live in PBSA relative to national rates

Proportion of HE students in different accommodation types, by geography of study



Source: HESA, 2026. Where do HE students study? Note: 'Own residence (including rented)' includes a student's permanent residence, which may be either owned or rented by them. 'Other rented accommodation' refers to a more temporary arrangement e.g. where a number of students each rent a room in the same house on a yearly basis.

⁶⁴ Mayor of London, 2017. The 2017 London Strategic Housing Market Assessment

4.21 **Figure 8** outlines the location of residence of HE students across different geographies of study. Across all geographies, PBSA accounts for a relatively low proportion of student residence, compared to other residential offers.

- **At the UK level:** 24% of HE students live in PBSA, far higher than the proportion of London students and students studying in HEIs within Southwark and a 45-minute commute from the Site, which are 18% and 13% respectively.⁶⁵
- **At the Southwark level:** A total 60% of students live in their own residence or other PRS, the highest proportion of any geography. Only 13% of students enrolled at HEI in Southwark, live in PBSA, the lowest of all geographies shown, and substantially below the 40% guiding figure. This indicates that there is limited access to PBSA in the local area, relative to the number of students studying there.
- **For students studying within a 45-minute commute of the Site:** 18% live in PBSA while a total 47% live in their own residence or other PRS. This aligns more closely with national trends, however, the proportion of students in PBSA is still less than half the GLA benchmark.

4.22 The low proportion of students in PBSA, compared to national rates, indicates that there is under provision of PBSA across London and in Southwark in particular. At a UK level, a higher number of students reside in PBSA, indicating that it remains a preferred accommodation option. Coupled with rising student numbers, there is a clear need for additional high-quality PBSA that could alleviate pressures on rented housing, benefiting both students and local residents.

Poor quality of PRS

4.23 Beyond affordability, the quality of PRS housing remains a significant concern. Many PRS homes fail to meet the Decent Homes Standard, which requires homes to: ⁶⁶

- Meet the statutory minimum standard for housing under the Housing Health and Safety System (HHSRS);
- Provide a reasonable degree of thermal comfort;
- Be in a reasonable state of repair; and
- Have reasonably modern facilities and services.

4.24 According to the English Housing Survey, 21% of PRS homes in England are classed as 'non-decent,' compared to 14% of owner-occupied homes. Additionally, 10% of PRS properties have a HHSRS Category 1 hazard, the most severe type of housing hazard, compared to 8% in owner-occupied homes.⁶⁷

4.25 A 2021 Citizens Advice report found that two in three tenant voice panellists experienced some sort of disrepair, including dangerous hazards. They have found this has been an ongoing issue, finding that in 2015, one in five privately rented homes contained a HHSRS Category 1 hazard.⁶⁸ In London specifically, it was found that 15% of PRS homes were classed as non-decent,⁶⁹ compared to 7% social-rented and 5% owner-occupied.⁷⁰

⁶⁵ HESA. 2026. Table 57 - Full-time HE student enrolments by HE provider and term-time accommodation; NB: This is based on the known term-time accommodation of students; proportions may vary slightly in reality as term-time accommodation data is not available for all students.

⁶⁶ The Health Foundation, 2021. Trends in non-decent homes by tenure.

⁶⁷ DLUHC, 2025. Chapters for English Housing Survey 2024 to 2025 Headline Report

⁶⁸ Citizens Advice, 2021. Tenants Voice report March 2021.

⁶⁹ A non-decent home lacks modern facilities, lacks heating, is not in a reasonable state of repair, or has a health and safety hazard.

⁷⁰ DLUHC. 2023. English Housing Survey 2021 to 2022: private rented sector

- 4.26 The competition for PRS housing has pushed some students into precarious living situations, including ‘couch surfing’ or, in extreme cases, homelessness. In addition to generally being lower quality, PRS are a less reliable form of accommodation for students. In 2023, nearly 250,000 students across the UK were left without a room because of the landlord’s choice to sell the accommodation.⁷¹ This underlines the role of PBSA as a more suitable and dependable accommodation offer for students, providing purpose-built homes that are designed for student needs and reducing reliance on often lower-quality and less secure PRS accommodation.

Why PBSA?

- 4.27 Across the UK, the demand for accommodation from HE students is growing, with an increasing number of students seeking housing. One solution to this crisis is to increase the supply of PBSA, which is designed specifically for student needs. PBSA releases PRS stock back to residents, directly addressing Southwark’s and London’s housing pressures. The GLA explicitly acknowledges this in its 2024 PBSA London Plan Guidance which states that increased PBSA provision helps alleviate demand pressures on traditional rented homes.⁷² As such, it is counted as part of housing supply, and has a role in supporting wider housing delivery.
- 4.28 PBSA includes both university-owned accommodation and privately owned stock. Two-thirds of university-owned accommodation within London currently was built before 2000, so this type of accommodation is relatively old and in need of modernising.⁷³ In contrast, privately owned PBSA reflects modern standards and designs, offering features better suited to students’ lifestyles.
- 4.29 The specialist nature of PBSA holds several substantial advantages for students over the PRS:⁷⁴
- **Study and specialist features** – PBSA is built to accommodate students and their needs through different amenity spaces e.g., communal areas, study spaces, a cafe and laundry facilities;
 - **Lifestyle** – students value the opportunity to live in high quality accommodations where they can meet other students and bond over relatable circumstances. This can help form strong friendships and build a support network, which can be particularly important for students living far away from home;
 - **Health and wellbeing** – PBSA provide high quality facilities, such as heating, cooling and air filtration systems, as well as an onsite support team (including a mental health support team) and organised student activities for socialisation and mindfulness;
 - **Safety and security** – staff and security procedures ensure tenants’ security, such as through concierge service and security guards; and
 - **Ease of booking** – renting through one party, where everything is typically included in the bill. This makes it easier for students to plan their finances.
- 4.30 Many universities follow a campus model where PBSA and teaching institutions are self-contained in locations, often outside city centres. London-based HEIs are somewhat unique in the way their student population is distributed across the city. Given land availability in the region, it is not always possible for London HEIs to have large campuses where students can live and study in the same area. This is particularly true of the central London universities such as UCL and KCL. Increasingly, private providers are moving into the market, often in partnership with universities. Cushman and Wakefield reports that the private sector is the driving force behind new deliveries of PBSA, contributing 86% of new beds in 2021 and 85% over the previous five years.⁷⁵ While private providers initially focused on a higher quality offering for

⁷¹ The Telegraph, 2023. Russell Group students face ‘most competitive ever’ race to find housing

⁷² GLA, 2024. London Plan Guidance Purpose-built Student Accommodation 2024

⁷³ JLL, 2017. London Student Housing 2017

⁷⁴ Cushman and Wakefield, 2018. Student Accommodation Report 2018/19

⁷⁵ Cushman and Wakefield, 2023. Student Accommodation Report 2020/21

more affluent students (with a high proportion of studio beds), the narrowing of the rental gap with PRS housing has made it accessible to a broader student demographic.⁷⁶

4.31

Tuition fees are continuing to rise, and with this comes higher expectations for the entire university experience. Students are looking more closely at the role that the location, course, reputation and student accommodation play in the entire university experience.



The UCAS Student Accommodation Survey found that **76% of students living in private PBSA were satisfied with their accommodation** and would recommend it to other students. **A lower proportion (70%) of students in the PRS were satisfied**, indicating that **PBSA offers higher quality and experience for students**.

Source: Knight Frank, 2024. Student Accommodation Survey

4.32

University clearing is a process that allows students to find a university place if they do not have an offer or if they wish to change course or university. This process remains important for PBSA demand, as PBSA often accommodate later bookings (e.g., mid-way through a term or semester), which is the option for many students that go through university clearing. According to Alternative Real Estate Advisors, the number of university places secured through clearing is anticipated to rise further.⁷⁷

Existing PBSA supply

4.33

London is suffering from a structural undersupply of PBSA relative to the growing full time-student population in London.⁷⁸ This imbalance highlights the urgent need for additional supply for the growing student population and to alleviate pressures on the PRS.

London supply

4.34

As mentioned in **paragraph 4.20** the London SHMA reports that there is a need for 88,500 additional PBSA bed spaces between 2016 and 2041 in London, equivalent to 3,500 per year.⁷⁹ However, from 2016/17 to 2025/26, London has delivered an average of only 1,829 bed spaces per year, meeting just 52% of this annual target. London's total delivery between 2016/17 and 2025/26 equates to 16,707 bedspaces short of where it should be against the annual target (**Figure 9**). In addition, HMO stock across London (a key fallback for students unable to access PBSA) has also declined by 23% over the last five years.⁸⁰ This further constrains options for students and exacerbates competition in the PRS.

⁷⁶ Knight Frank, 2024. Student Accommodation Survey

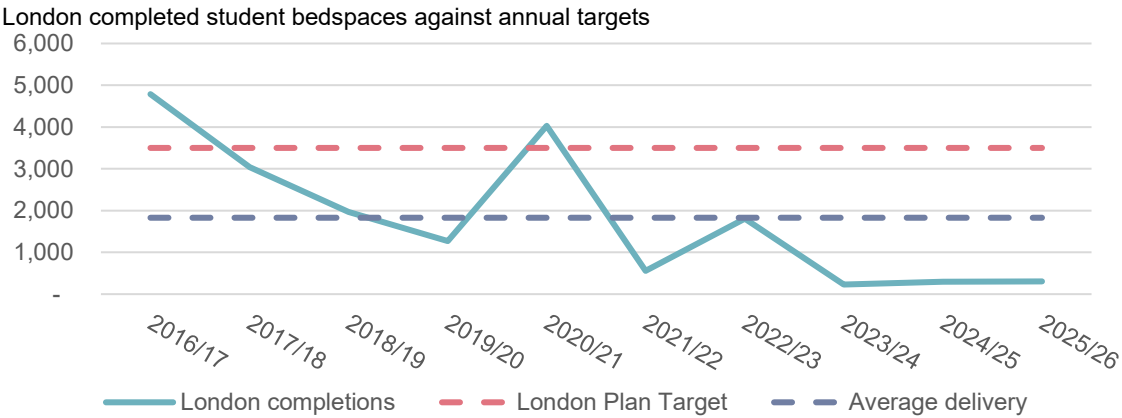
⁷⁷ Retrieved from: www.arealtd.co.uk/news/. Accessed June 2025

⁷⁸ Lichfields. 2024. Lichfields' view on the new GLA PBSA London Plan Guidance

⁷⁹ Mayor of London, 2017. London Strategic Housing Market Assessment

⁸⁰ CBRE, 2024. London Plan Policy Fails to Deliver Affordable Student Accommodation

Figure 9 – London is currently behind on its student bedspace delivery target



Source: Mayor of London, 2017. London Strategic Housing Market Assessment; Mayor of London, 2024. Residential pipeline dashboard

4.35 A recent report by CBRE corroborates this demand-supply gap, estimating that between 100,000 and 105,000 students in London lack access to PBSA.⁸¹ Despite increasing planning permissions for PBSA developments, with 12,000 bedspaces consented since the London Plan 2021 came into effect, the delivery remains insufficient to keep pace with demand.

The GLA is explicit in its London Plan 2021: PBSA need is a London-wide issue, not a borough-level one.⁸²

4.36 Well-connected locations like the PCAA, where the Proposed Development is located, are well-placed to contribute substantially to London-wide targets.

⁸¹ CBRE, 2024. London Plan Policy Fails to Deliver Affordable Student Accommodation

⁸² GLA, 2021. The London Plan 2021 – paragraph 4.15.3

Southwark supply

- 4.37 As of June 2026, there are approximately 7,765 PBSA bedspaces (7,640 PBSA units) across 27 developments in Southwark, as shown in **Table 4**.⁸³ Including PBSA developments in final planning stages (approved) and under construction, this increases to a total 14,200 PBSA bedspaces (14,080 PBSA units).

Table 4 – There are currently 7,765 PBSA bedspaces across 27 developments in Southwark

Breakdown of PBSA in Southwark (as of June 2026)

Status	PBSA developments	PBSA units	PBSA bedspaces
Existing	27	7,640	7,765
Under construction and final planning	11	6,440	6,440
Total existing including pipeline	38	14,080	14,200

Sources: CoStar, 2026; Volterra research; NB: figures may not sum due to rounding; where both rooms and bedspaces are not reported separately, they are assumed equal

Concentration of PBSA

- 4.38 The existing and pipeline PBSA is also displayed in **Figure 10**. As depicted, the majority of PBSA developments are concentrated within the north of the borough. There is very little provision of PBSA in the south of the borough, particularly around the Site of the Proposed Development.
- 4.39 As part of the 79 – 87 Westminster Bridge Road appeal it was agreed by the appellant and the Council that a 400m radius around the site should be used to assess the balance and mix of local land uses.⁸⁴ This same radius has also been used to assess the mix of uses in the Vauxhall area for the Urbanest PBSA development on Albert Embankment, Lambeth.⁸⁵ As depicted in **Figure 10**, there is no existing or pipeline PBSA development within 400m of the Site, indicating no overconcentration of PBSA.
- 4.40 Alternatively, a 15-minute walking catchment can be used to assess the local area.⁸⁶ Within this catchment there is only one existing PBSA and no pipeline developments. The existing PBSA is Archwood house (Eagle Wharf 90 Peckham Hill Street), a UAL owned hall offering 343 PBSA rooms.⁸⁷

⁸³ CoStar, 2026

⁸⁴ The Planning Inspectorate, 2024. Appeal Decision Appeal Ref: APP/N5660/W/23/3335892 79 - 87 Westminster Bridge Road, London SE1 7HR paragraph 51

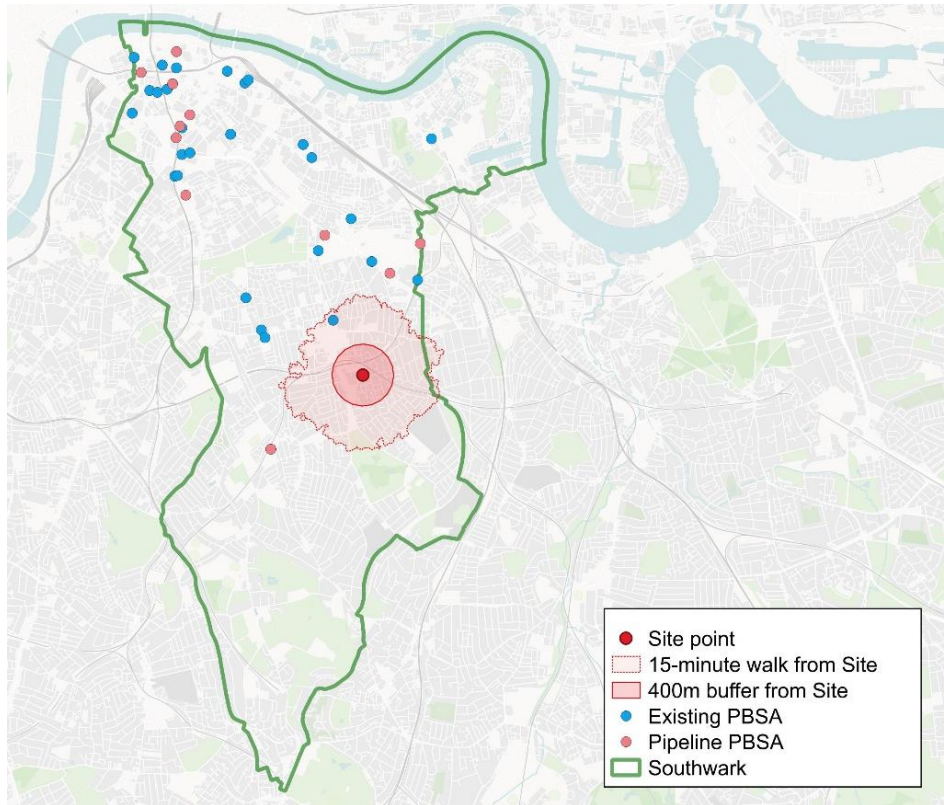
⁸⁵ Planning reference: 24/04003/FUL

⁸⁶ The Local Area is defined as the ability for residents to meet all of their daily needs within a short walk, wheel or cycle of their home; Town and Country Planning Association. Retrieved from: www.tcpa.org.uk/. Accessed June 2026

⁸⁷ Retrieved from: www.arts.ac.uk/study-at-ual/accommodation-services/halls-of-residence/archwood-house. Accessed June 2026

Figure 10 – PBSA is concentrated around the north of the borough

Existing and pipeline PBSA in Southwark (June 2026)



Source: Maptiler and OpenStreetMap contributors; 2026. CoStar Analysis

PBSA concentration

4.41

A student-to-PBSA bedspace ratio can be used to indicate the relative level of demand for PBSA. This shows the number of students living in the borough per available PBSA bedspace, with a higher ratio indicating greater competition for accommodation.

4.42

At the Southwark level, this can be considered by looking at the resident student population relative to available PBSA bedspaces. **Table 5** shows that Southwark currently has 4.5 students per PBSA bedspace, which would reduce to 2.4 once pipeline schemes are taken into account. Looking ahead, this ratio is projected to rise again to 2.9 by 2029/30, reflecting expected growth in the borough's enrolled student population. This indicates that, despite current and pipeline provision, there is likely to remain a relatively high level of competition for PBSA bedspaces in Southwark. Beyond 2029/30, this would intensify without further PBSA delivery.

Table 5 – Pipeline construction schemes will partly mitigate expected student growth in Southwark

Southwark student per bedspace: current population (2024/25) and future population (2029/30)

		PBSA bedspaces	
		Existing: 7,765	Existing + pipeline: 14,200
Southwark resident student population	Current: 34,580	4.5	2.4
	Future: 40,550	5.2	2.9

NB: current and future resident students are projected from Census figures; See **Table 2**; Sources: HESA, 2026. Who's studying in HE?; Volterra projections based on historic student growth rates; CoStar, 2026; ONS, 2022. Census 2021; NB: figures are rounded

4.43 Savills reports that in 2024, the ratio of full-time students to beds was 2.7 across 20 predominant student housing markets across the UK.⁸⁸ London was reported to have a higher ratio of 3.6 students per bedspace. The existing ratio in Southwark is comparatively higher. While the pipeline of development improves the ratio, it remains above the UK-wide benchmark reported by Savills.

4.44 Within the Local Area (defined as 15-minute walk), there are currently 7.6 students per PBSA bedspace. With no approved pipeline of development, this will rise to 9.2 by 2029/30 (**Table 6**). This is over three times the borough-wide ratio and the UK-wide benchmark, indicating that there is an undersupply of PBSA in the Local Area and no risk of overconcentration (see The Proposed Development does not carry a risk of concentration in the next section).

Table 6 – there is no risk of overconcentration in the Local Area

Local Area student per bedspace: current population (2024/25) and future population (2029/30)

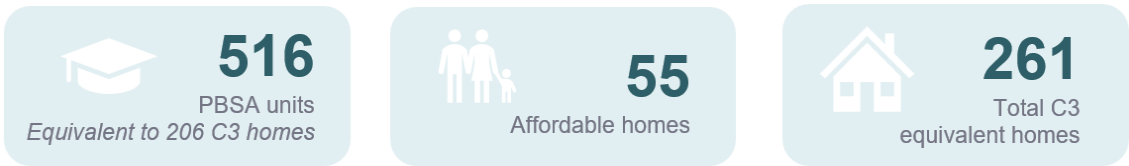
		Existing PBSA bedspaces: 343
Local Area resident student population	Current: 2,600	7.6
	Future: 3,145	9.2

NB: current and future resident students are projected from Census figures; The 'Local Area' is defined as LSOA that ads >50% within the 15-minute walking catchment: Southwark 026A, Southwark 026B, Southwark 023C, Southwark 023D, Southwark 023E, Southwark 022B, Southwark 022D, Southwark 026C, Southwark 025A, Southwark 025B, Southwark 025C, Southwark 026D, Southwark 025D, Southwark 022E, Southwark 026E, Southwark 022G, Southwark 022H Current and future student population is projected using London-wide student annual growth rate, as per **Table 2** methodology; Sources: HESA, 2026. Who's studying in HE?; Volterra projections based on historic student growth rates; CoStar, 2026; ONS, 2022. Census 2021; NB: figures are rounded

⁸⁸ Retrieved from: www.savills.co.uk/blog/article/358493/commercial-property/uk-cities-need-much-higher-rates-of-student-housing-delivery.aspx. Accessed June 2026

5. Contribution of the Proposed Development

5.1 The Proposed Development would deliver a residential-led development which includes PBSA alongside much needed affordable self-contained dwellings. This would will optimise a prominent brownfield site and improve its relationship to the wider area through active ground floor frontages and high-quality architecture. The PBSA building would include 516 units (516 bedspaces) and 558 total habitable rooms. London Plan guidance implies that a ratio of 2.5 is applied to PBSA bedspaces, to derive the equivalent conventional houses.⁸⁹ Applying this to the Proposed Development, PBSA is equivalent to 206 conventional housing units.



Contribution to housing targets

Table 7 – The Proposed development would deliver the equivalent of 261 total conventional (C3) homes

Contribution of the Proposed Development against housing targets

Target	Description	Contribution
Housing	Adopted Local Plan target of 2,335 homes per annum in Southwark.	11.2%
	Southwark’s total 5-year housing requirement is 19,604 homes – an annual requirement of 3,921 homes per year (4.53 years of housing supply).	6.7% <i>the annual requirement</i>
		<i>equivalent to</i> ~0.05 years <i>of housing supply</i>
	Implied housing target of 2,882 homes per annum in Southwark, under the new SM.	9.1%
PBSA	3,500 PBSA bedspaces per annum across London.	14.7%

Sources: Southwark Council. 2022. *Southwark Local Plan*; MHCLG, 2025. *NPPF*; Volterra calculations; Mayor of London, 2017. *The 2017 London Strategic Housing Market Assessment*

⁸⁹ GLA, 2024. Purpose-built Student Accommodation London Plan Guidance

Freeing up HMOs for families

5.2 Satisfying student demand for PBSA accommodation would divert students from the PRS, freeing up conventional homes. As outlined in **paragraph 5.1**, the Proposed 516 PBSA bed spaces is equivalent to 206 conventional housing units. The PBSA element alone represents 8.8% of the adopted annual housing target for Southwark (2,335 homes). Multiplying this number by the proportion of London students which live in their own homes or the PRS (60%, as indicated by **Figure 8**) provides an estimate of the number of homes that would be freed up in the PRS.



The Proposed Development has the potential to **release up to 124 HMOs** that may be more suitable for families.

5.3 Towards a New London Plan, recognises that PBSA can “provide a well-managed alternative to private rented flat shares and helps free up those homes for others”.⁹⁰

5.4 This would be beneficial in the context of acute housing pressures in Southwark. At the start of 2022 Southwark had approximately 4,820 households with overcrowding as their leading priority on our housing register.⁹¹ Increasingly the supply of PBSA in accessible locations such as the Site can help to reduce competition between students and other residents for conventional housing stock, including HMOs and other rented homes that may otherwise accommodate families and non-student households.

Addressing unmet need for PBSA

5.5 Combined with the 14,200 PBSA bedspaces existing and in the pipeline in Southwark, the Proposed Development would boost overall existing and future supply to approximately 14,720 bedspaces. This would reduce the future student to bedspace ratio from 2.9 to 2.8 in 2029/30 (from a resident student perspective).

Table 8 – The Proposed Development would increase the provision of PBSA bedspaces to better meet future demand

Projected student per bedspace ratio

		PBSA bedspaces	
		Existing + pipeline: 14,200	Existing + pipeline + Proposed Development: 14,720
Southwark student population	Current: 30,580	2.4	2.3
	Future: 40,550	2.9	2.8

NB: current and future resident students are projected from Census figures, based on student growth rates in the last 10 years – see **Table 2**; Sources: HESA, 2026. Who’s studying in HE?; Volterra projections based on historic student growth rates; CoStar, 2026; ONS, 2022. Census 2021; NB: figures are rounded

5.6 As displayed in **Table 6**, there are currently 7.6 students per PBSA bedspace in the Local Area, which increases to 9.2 by 2029/30, as the student population is projected to grow. The Proposed Development

⁹⁰ Greater London Authority. 2026. Towards a new London Plan: Consultation on the next London Plan

⁹¹ Retrieved from: www.southwarkhomesearch.org.uk/overcrowding. Accessed June 2026

would reduce the student to bed space ratio in the Local Area by over half to 3.7. This is more aligned with the London average ratio of 3.6 (**paragraph 4.43**).

Suitability of the location

- 5.7 As well as contributing to housing stock and meeting student demand, the Proposed Development is located in a highly suitable area for PBSA. As outlined in **Site context**, the Site is located in a vibrant and diverse location, within the PNAA and PCAA. These areas are defined as being well-connected and having high growth and development potential, making it a suitable location for PBSA.

Strong transport accessibility and connectivity

- 5.8 The expense of high central London rents can deter London students from living close to their HEI. Given these factors, it is imperative that students can live in accessible locations with strong transport links which keep them connected to their HEI, but also the areas of London which they may want to access for leisure purposes (e.g. for accessing sport or the night-time economy).
- 5.9 The PCAA has high levels of public transport accessibility with good links by bus and train. This accessibility is a key enabler of student access to the 46 HEIs within a commutable distance (**Figure 2**). The Proposed Development is therefore well-placed to accommodate forecast student demand from a range of HEIs. It would serve both students attending local HEIs, as well as the broader commutable HEIs across London.
- 5.10 In November 2024, the GLA adopted its PBSA London Plan Guidance (LPG) which builds upon London Plan Policy H15 (which includes important mechanisms to ensure proportionate PBSA provision, and to deliver affordable student accommodation). As set out in Lichfields' report on this guidance, the LPG explicitly recognises the pressing need for new PBSA, its contribution towards housing targets, its role in delivering mixed and balanced communities and its economic/regenerative benefits.^{92,93}

The LPG stresses the importance of PBSA being located in well-connected areas, highlighting that the most suitable locations are those with a PTAL of at least 5 in outer London.

- 5.11 It emphasises that accessibility should enable future residents to comfortably access a range of destinations by walking, cycling or public transport, and recognises that such accessibility can be enhanced over time through ongoing regeneration and infrastructure investment. In this context, the high level of public transport accessibility of the Site means it is well placed to meet these locational requirements.
- 5.12 In addition to transport accessibility, the LPG identifies a range of spatial locations that are considered particularly suitable for PBSA. These include Metropolitan and Major town centres, as well as areas with strong residential growth potential. According to the PNAA Plan, the PCAA contains a large concentration of development opportunities, with the capacity to contribute substantially to the regeneration of the entire PNAA.⁹⁴ Additional homes, shops, businesses and community uses are anticipated to be delivered across the PNAA, with the vast majority of allocated proposal sites located in within the PCAA. The variety of development opportunities, alongside the delivery of PBSA, support a continued mixed and balanced community.

⁹² Mayor of London. 2024. Purpose-built Student Accommodation London Plan Guidance.

⁹³ Lichfields, 2024. Lichfields' view on the new GLA PBSA London Plan Guidance

⁹⁴ Southwark Council, 2019. Peckham and Nunhead Area Action Plan

The area around the Site is characterised by a mix and balance of uses

5.13

The Proposed Development would be situated within an established and active mixed-use area. The PNAA Plan defines the PCAA area as follows:⁹⁵

“Peckham core action area is predominantly town centre uses. These are retail and light industrial uses, alongside important community and leisure facilities including the cinema, the library and Peckham Pulse leisure centre. There are also some homes within the core action area, mostly flats along Queens Road just outside the town centre boundary.”

5.14

The broad commercial offer in the local area is also reflected in the range of retail, leisure and cultural destinations within walking distance of the Site, as set out in **Table 9**.

Table 9 – The Site is within a 15-minute walk of a range of retail, leisure and cultural destinations

Destinations within walking distance of the Site and the nature of their offer

Destination	Distance from the Site	Offer
Peckham Levels	10-minute walk	Offers a vibrant mix of studios, desks, community programmes, and cultural events. The venue includes workspaces, as well as a range of food and drink options and leisure activities (including karaoke).
Market Place Food Hall Peckham	11-minute walk	Missed venue including 9 Food Vendors, live sports showings, 5 pool tables, multiple bars, frequent DJs and events, and a photobooth.
Tesco Express, Iceland, Morrisons and Lidl	All within a 15 minute walk from the Site	A range of main supermarkets, at varying price points.
Peckham Pulse Leisure Centre	16-minute walk	Large fitness centre including gym and a 25m pool
Rye Lane	5-minute walk	There is a large range of retail and food and beverage options along this high street – between Heaton Rd and Peckham High Street. With further options along the high street.

Source: Volterra Research, 2026

5.15

The scale and diversity of commercial uses surrounding the Site mean that the Proposed Development would not disrupt the existing balance of uses. Rather, it would sit within the PCAA established mixed-use environment and complement the surrounding retail, leisure and service offer. As outlined below, the student population would add to the local customer base, increasing footfall and day-to-day expenditure across these destinations, thereby helping to support the vitality and viability of the area's commercial uses.

⁹⁵ Southwark Council, 2019. The Peckham and Nunhead Action Area Plan

PBSA and affordable housing would contribute positively to the existing mixed and balanced community

- 5.16 Peckham represents one of London's most vibrant and culturally distinctive neighbourhoods, offering a compelling and well-rounded environment for student living. Peckham's unique cultural offer, includes a mix of independent cafés, street food markets, restaurants and bars, complementing a rich cultural and nightlife offer, and a network of independent galleries, studios and creative spaces. This makes Peckham a genuinely attractive place for students to live, socialise and thrive.
- 5.17 Critically, Peckham offers a distinctly different proposition to the established student accommodation clusters in the north of the borough, around London Bridge and Waterloo. Those areas are characterised by a high-density, fast-paced urban environment closely associated with major corporate and institutional anchors, and accordingly tend to attract students from large research-intensive universities such as King's College London and London South Bank University. Peckham's character is notably different, it is a neighbourhood defined by creativity, independent enterprise, and a strong arts and culture identity. This aligns closely with the profile of students attending institutions such as Goldsmiths and the UAL, including Camberwell College of Arts, which sits just to the north of the Site.
- 5.18 A PBSA development in Peckham would therefore not compete directly with existing provision, that is clustered around the North of the borough. Rather, it would address a distinct and currently underserved segment of student demand, broadening the borough's offer to reflect the genuine diversity of its student population.

The Proposed Development does not carry a risk of concentration

- 5.19 The LPG also recognises that London's universities are disproportionately concentrated in central and inner London, and supports the delivery of PBSA in well-connected outer London locations to help broaden provision and avoid over-concentration. In this context, the Proposed Development represents an appropriate and sustainable location for new PBSA.
- 5.20 As discussed in the previous section (**Concentration of PBSA**), there is only one existing and no pipeline PBSA development within the Local Area of the Site. As outlines in **Table 6**, based on the reported number of students living in the Local Area, there is an under provision of resident students to available PBSA bedspaces, reflected in the high ratio of 9.2 student residents per available PBSA bedspace. The Proposed Development would boost the number of PBSA bedspaces in the Local Area (from 343) to 859. This would reduce the 2029/30 student to bed space ratio from 9.2 to 3.7, just above the estimated London-wide provision (3.6) (**paragraph 4.43**). **Table 10** displays PBSA (as equivalent conventional housing units) as a proportion of total housing in the area. This demonstrates the balance of the residential offer in the Local Area and at the borough level.

Table 10 – The Proposed Development would not result in overconcentration

PBSA and non-PBSA households within a Local Area and in South

	PBSA equivalent households	Non-PBSA households	Total households
Current provision			
Households within Local Area	140	17,030	17,160
% of households within Local Area	1%	99%	100%
Households in Southwark	3,110	144,050	147,160
% of households in Southwark	2%	98%	100%
With approved pipeline (excl. Proposed Development)			
Households within Local Area	140	17,480	17,610
% of households within Local Area	1%	99%	100%
Households in Southwark	5,680	155,110	160,790
% of households in Southwark	4%	96%	100%
With approved pipeline and Proposed Development			
Households within Local Area	340	17,530	17,870
% of households within Local Area	2%	98%	100%
Households in Southwark	5,890	155,160	161,050
% of households in Southwark	4%	96%	100%

Sources: Source: MHCLG, 2025. Dwelling stock estimates by local authority district: 2001 - 2025, unrounded; CoStar, 2026; Realyse, 2026; GLA, 2026. Residential approvals dashboard; NB: Residential approvals dashboard is used to measure developments "Commenced" as pipeline for Southwark. For the Local Area: live Realyse data is utilised to measure pipeline development in the area, defined as the full construction pipeline; LSOAs used to define the Local Area radius: Southwark 026A, Southwark 026B, Southwark 023C, Southwark 023D, Southwark 023E, Southwark 022B, Southwark 022D, Southwark 026C, Southwark 025A, Southwark 025B, Southwark 025C, Southwark 026D, Southwark 025D, Southwark 022E, Southwark 026E, Southwark 022G, Southwark 022H

- 5.21 PBSA currently comprises just 2% of households in Southwark and 1% in the Local Area. Even once accounting for the pipeline of development (under construction and approved), the proportion of PBSA only raises to 4% across Southwark and remains close to 1% in the Local Area. The Proposed Development does not make an impact at the borough level. It does however raise the proportion by one percentage point to just 2% PBSA in the Local Area. This does not represent a risk of overconcentration.

Local benefits of students and residents

- 5.22 At a local level, additional residents and students generate multiple direct and indirect benefits for businesses, public services and local employment. In particular, the students, who are relatively distinct from the wider population and would make up the majority of residents at the Proposed Development. The

benefits discussed are supported by quotes that were obtained as part of a survey conducted by XV Insight.⁹⁶ The survey explored the impacts of students on local businesses and social infrastructure.

Boosting the local economy



Students and residents would boost local businesses through local expenditure

Average student living expenditure is estimated to be **£14,500 per student per annum** for the average student.⁹⁷ Applying this to the Proposed Development, **approximately £7.5m of student expenditure** is expected to be generated, of which **£4.5m** would be retained in the Brough.

An average of the second and third lowest deciles of household spend, are taken as a proxy for affordable household expenditure. Adjusting for differential in earnings nationally and in Southwark, it is estimated that **households at the Proposed Development would spend a total of approximately £488 per week per household** – a total £1.4m per annum.⁹⁸ Accounting for spend retained physically in Southwark, this translates to **£886,000 per annum in Southwark**.⁹⁹

Total resident and student expenditure, amounts to £8.9m, with approximately £5.4m per annum retained within Southwark. This expenditure complements the existing context of the area. Local businesses, including hospitality venues, retail and leisure, would benefit from the increased local consumer base and associated expenditure.



Students draw more visitors to the area

VisitBritain reports that international visitors of friends and relatives to London spend approximately £630 per visit.¹⁰⁰ If at least **25% of total potential students at the Proposed Development (516 rooms) are visited once a year, this would generate approximately £81,000 of additional visitor expenditure.**



Students engage with the night-time economy, arts and cultural

The GLA's Night Time Commission finds that the 18-29 age group makes up the largest proportion of night-time economy patrons in London and this age group represents a high proportion of the student population.¹⁰¹ Additionally, a study by Kingston University found that **over 90% of students had visited a bar or pub in the past month (typically in the evening)**.¹⁰² Student populations can

⁹⁶ Surveys were conducted of students at Urbanest PBSA and reported in the (2019) "ES Volume 3: Appendix – Socio-Economics and Health: Annex 3: Urbanest tenant and stakeholder primary research" – in support of Tower Hamlets Planning Application: PA/20/01402/A2

⁹⁷ NB: According to the Department of Education's Student Income and Expenditure Survey (SIES) 2021/22, using the London dataset and uplifted for current prices and annualised.[1] This is the most comprehensive and nationally recognised source of data on student income and living costs. The most comparable tenure category within the SIES dataset is "Renting (alone/with family)", which reflects independent living without cost sharing; Department for Education, 2018, Student Income and Expenditure Survey 2014 to 2015

⁹⁸ ONS, 2025. Table A4: High level expenditure by gross income decile; ONS, 2025. annual survey of hours and earnings - resident analysis

⁹⁹ Southwark Council, 2019. Retail and Town Centre Uses

¹⁰⁰ ONS, 2024. International Passenger Survey

¹⁰¹ GLA, 2018. London's Night Time Commission

¹⁰² R. Grant, et al., 2017. Narrative of the Night-out: Student Engagement In The Night Time Economy Of Kingston Upon Thames

events in their local area	therefore help sustain the viability of the night-time economy through their role as regular evening patrons.
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5.23 A survey regarding the impacts of students by XV Insight reported that businesses located near PBSA in London noticed a substantial economic impact from student patrons:¹⁰³

“50% of customers are students and they spend £10 to £20 on average. Students are around 50% of our overall revenue – so a pretty healthy chunk!” – A business owner (market stallholder)

Relatively low use of social infrastructure

	Less reliance on healthcare	Students living in PBSA are typically younger than average resident population (early 20s). The XV Insight survey finds that only 23% of PBSA students registered with local GPs . The remaining registered with university GPs, GPs at their permanent residence or weren't registered at all. Student populations can easily integrate into areas, without placing a burden on existing healthcare services, unlike more general residential populations and older populations.
	Less reliance on community facilities	Universities provide a variety of facilities for their students such as libraries, sports facilities, prayer rooms and mental health support. As with healthcare facilities, this means that increased student populations are unlikely to place strain on existing facilities .
	Different peak hours	Students typically have non-standard timetables with classes spread throughout the day, fewer 9-to-5 constraints and variable workloads across the week. As a result, they use public facilities at different times due to their different schedule , reducing pressure on these facilities at peak hours and boosting off peak activity.

5.24 The XV Insight survey also investigated the impact of students in the area on local community facilities. A Local librarian stated that:¹⁰⁴

“They don’t really use the borrowing service much – the books they need aren’t really stocked at the library; local community are the main borrowers, so there’s no conflict of interest and locals don’t have to wait longer to be served etc.” – A local librarian

¹⁰³ XV Insight, 2020, Living in London: Urbanest tenant and stakeholder research, 2020
¹⁰⁴ XV Insight, 2020, Living in London: Urbanest tenant and stakeholder research, 2020

Meaningful contribution to society



Taking up employment

The National Union of Students finds that approximately **69% of UK students work part-time**.¹⁰⁵ This is essential in filling demand for part-time roles and easing staff pressures in retail and hospitality sectors.



Strong graduate pipeline

Graduates provide a pool of skilled workers to employers. As outlined in **paragraph 3.4, 71% of London graduates continue to work in the region following graduation**. Much of this graduate population may continue to live in the same area where they lived as students, for familiarity and convenience.



Volunteering and charity work

The Community Life Survey (2023/24) reports that approximately 16% of adults take part in formal volunteering at least once a month.¹⁰⁶ Applied to the student capacity of the Proposed Development (up to 516 students), this could equate to **up to 82 local volunteers**. The British Heart Foundation finds that **students and young people are more likely to volunteer in general**.¹⁰⁷ This may be due to their desire to gain new skills and experience that supports their professional development and supplements their studies. As such, student populations may be more likely generate positive impacts in the local community by generating additional volunteers for the operation of charitable events and organisations.



Mixed and vibrant community

Students **add to the liveliness and cultural diversity of a place**. PBSA can help create truly mixed and balanced communities in the local area.

5.25

The XV Insight survey found that local business owners and workers recognise the positive impact that students have on the sense and feel of an area:¹⁰⁸

“It makes it feel like an up and coming area and businesses must benefit...they create a vibrant feel which is good for Lower Marsh area... students have had a positive effect on the area.....I like young people, they are nice not terrible...they are much more earnest and decent and well-mannered than we ever were as students” – A Café manager

¹⁰⁵ Retrieved from: www.nus.org.uk/new_data. Accessed June 2025

¹⁰⁶ Department for Culture, Media and Sport, 2024. Community Life Survey 2023-24: Volunteering and charitable giving

¹⁰⁷ Retrieved from: www.bhf.org.uk/what-we-do/. Accessed June 2025

¹⁰⁸ XV Insight, 2020. Living in London: Urbanest tenant and stakeholder research, 2020

The Proposed Development would deliver high quality PBSA

5.26

The Applicant is dedicated to shaping high-quality, integrated and sustainable places across London. With a pipeline of more than 10,000 homes, the Applicant is one of London's leading mixed-use developers, with expertise spanning residential, PBSA, workspace and complex regeneration projects. The Applicant has a track record of delivering high quality PBSA and affordable housing, including the following schemes:

- **Devonshire Place** – in Southwark, directly opposite the potential Bakerloo Line extension, this development offers 941 PBSA rooms and 200 affordable homes. With additional provision for a new convenience food store, along with transport infrastructure upgrades.¹⁰⁹
- **Chalk Farm Road** – a mixed-use development in Camden, including 264 PBSA rooms, 30 affordable homes, ground floor commercial space, and new public realm enhancements.¹¹⁰
- **High Road Wembley** – Offering 998 PBSA rooms in central Wembley, as well as quality amenities and luxury convenience provision.¹¹¹
- **Jamestown Road** – another mixed-use development in Camden, including 178 PBSA rooms, 27 affordable homes, ground floor flexible commercial space, and new public realm enhancements.¹¹²

5.27

The Applicant is committed to delivering a scheme that enhances the area and benefits local residents and businesses alike. Paul Eden, Co-Founder of Arada London, said:

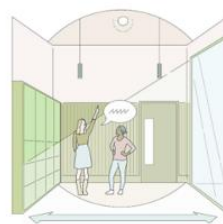
“Peckham is a dynamic and creative part of London. This development allows us to provide homes for local families alongside student accommodation that meets the city’s growing demand. We are committed to creating a community that enhances the area, supports local businesses, and contributes to Peckham’s wider regeneration.”

“Our vision is about more than buildings – it’s about creating vibrant, inclusive spaces that inspire students and residents alike, while reinforcing the character and spirit of Peckham.”

Amenity space and communal spaces



Spaces for sharing



Communal congregation



Considered internal amenity

¹⁰⁹ Retrieved from: aradalondon.com/project/devonshire-place/. Accessed June 2026

¹¹⁰ Retrieved from: 100chalkfarmroad.com/. Accessed June 2026

¹¹¹ Retrieved from: aradalondon.com/project/high-road-wembley/. Accessed June 2026

¹¹² Retrieved from: jamestown-road.co.uk/. Accessed June 2026

5.28 Both the PBSA and residential buildings would provide inclusive, welcoming and safe spaces for the new residents and the public. The high quality amenity and communal spaces would provide many physical and mental health benefits for students and residents alike. Communal spaces provide opportunities for students to get together and socially interact, supporting positive mental health. Increased interaction is linked to reduced loneliness, improved mood, and psychological resilience. According to the ONS Community Life Survey, people who report regular in-person interaction are significantly less likely to report chronic loneliness and socially isolated individuals report poorer wellbeing scores across all domains.¹¹³

Access to open space and play space



Generous, light spaces



Quality outdoor amenity



Connections to outdoors

5.29 The Proposed Development would also be providing high quality provision of open space and improved public realm. This would include enhancements to the existing on-site cycle route and integrated green space and play space. Connection to the outdoors would deliver both physical and mental health benefits to residents. For example, it has been found that exposure to nature reduces activity in parts of the brain linked to rumination, a key marker of depression and anxiety.¹¹⁴ In addition, the activation of the ground floor experience and increased number of residents would provide natural surveillance and safety advantages.

Accessibility

5.30 The Proposed Development aligns with relevant Local Plan policy regarding the delivery of any new PBSA in Southwark. The Council has set out the following requirements for PBSA schemes in its Local Plan:¹¹⁵

Policy = Provide 5% of student rooms as easily adaptable for occupation by wheelchair



The Proposed Development would deliver:

- **Up to 10% of PBSA units as adaptable for occupation by wheelchair** (double the policy requirement);
- **Wheelchair-accessible sanitary facilities** at all amenity floors, including accessible shower within the ground floor; and
- **Step-free access** to all parts of the buildings, including balconies and roof terraces.

More broadly, the design considers the needs of individuals with mobility impairments, vision impairments, neuro-diverse requirements, deaf individuals, older people, and small children.

¹¹³ ONS, 2024. Community Life Survey 2023/24: Loneliness and support networks

¹¹⁴ Bratman et al., 2015. Nature Walks & Rumination

¹¹⁵ Southwark Council. 2022. Southwark Local Plan 2019-2036

An experienced PBSA operator

- 5.31 Homes for Students would be the accommodation manager and operator for the PBSA building, on behalf of Arada. They currently manage over 48,000 beds nationwide under their Homes for Students & Prestige Students brands across the UK.¹¹⁶ Homes for Students will manage the operational standards in accordance with the Unipol ANUK Code of Standards for Larger Developments for Student Accommodation. The on-site team will actively seek to engage with local tenants and residents' associations and community organisations including attending regular meetings with local residents and groups to monitor and address any potential issues.
- 5.32 Refer to the **Student Management Plan**, for more details regarding the operational and management plan for the PBSA building, including the approach to security, health and safety, cleanliness and community liaison.¹¹⁷

Flexible community or commercial space

- 5.33 The Proposed Development would also provide approximately 115sqm of flexible space on the ground floor of the affordable housing block, opposite the communal PBSA entrance. The exact programme for the space is still to be fully determined, however it is envisaged as a space that can further activate Blackpool Road and new street. The space has been designed with flexibility in mind, with spatial provisions for a secure lobby, storage and sanitary spaces. Further design development will occur at a later stage, to tailor the space to a future occupier.

¹¹⁶ Retrieved from: www.abouthomesforstudents.com. Accessed June 2026

¹¹⁷ Homes for Students, 2026. Buildbase Peckham: Purpose Built Student Accommodation Management Plan

Appendix 1 – Student Enrolments

Table 11 – There are ten HEI campuses located in Southwark

HEI campuses in Southwark

Institution	Postcode	Number of students
UAL London College of Communication	SE1 6SB	5,000
UAL Camberwell College of Arts	SE5 8UF	1,600
Apex College London	SE17 1JE	965
The University College of Osteopathy	SE1 1JE	445
Kaplan International Colleges U.K. Limited	SE1 9DE	855
London College of Contemporary Music (LCCM)	SE1 0LR	30
London South Bank University	SE1 0AA	12,755
Mountview Academy of Theatre Arts	SE15 5JT	525
William Booth College (The Salvation Army)	SE5 8BQ	20
ASU London	SE16 7LG	165
Total HEI campus: 10		Total Students: 22,360

NB: UAL student numbers are not reported by campus and so the reported number of students are retrieved from sources alternative to HESA (total UAL students reported on HESA: 20,625); 2024/25 student numbers are not available for The University College of Osteopathy and so HESA estimate from 2023/24 is taken; 2024/25 student numbers are not available for London College of Contemporary Music (LCCM) and so HESA estimate from 2021/22 is taken (most recent available).

Sources: HESA, 2025. HE student enrolment FTE by HE provider, level of study and academic year; Retrieved from: www.arts.ac.uk/colleges/london-college-of-communication/about-lcc/lcc-global. Accessed June 2026; Retrieved from: www.topuniversities.com/universities/london-camberwell-college-arts. Accessed June 2026

Table 12 – Almost 50% of London students are enrolled at campuses within a 50-minute public transport commute from the Site

HEI campuses within 45-50 minute public transport catchment

Catchment	Institution	Number of students
45-min	Apex College	965
45-min	The University College of Osteopathy	445
45-min	Kaplan International Colleges U.K. Limited	855
45-min	London College of Contemporary Music (LCCM)	30
45-min	London South Bank University	12,755
45-min	Mountview Academy of Theatre Arts	525

Catchment	Institution	Number of students
45-min	William Booth College (The Salvation Army)	20
45-min	ASU London (Formerly The Engineering and Design Institute)	165
45-min	Hult International Business School Ltd	1,675
45-min	British Academy of Jewellery Limited	1,090
45-min	BPP University	22,570
45-min	Central Film School	190
45-min	The Council of the Inns of Court	290
45-min	Courtauld Institute of Art	610
45-min	Court Theatre Training Company Ltd	45
45-min	David Game College Ltd	340
45-min	Goldsmiths College	6,915
45-min	The University of Greenwich	24,120
45-min	ICON College of Technology and Management	1,670
45-min	Institute of Art - London Limited	310
45-min	King's College London	35,150
45-min	University of the Arts, London	6,600
45-min	London Bridge Business Academy	155
45-min	City and Guilds of London Art School	275
45-min	London School of Commerce & IT Limited	15
45-min	London School of Economics and Political Science	12,590
45-min	The London School of Architecture	110
45-min	Walbrook Institute London Limited	300
45-min	The London Interdisciplinary School Ltd	120
45-min	Istituto Marangoni Limited	1,155
45-min	Northeastern University London	820
45-min	St Patrick's International College	-
45-min	Point Blank Music School	900
45-min	The King's Foundation	25
45-min	Ravensbourne University London	7,470
45-min	Raindance Educational Services Limited	50
45-min	St George's, University of London	3,470
45-min	Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance	1,205
45-min	AA School of Architecture	845

Catchment	Institution	Number of students
45-min	Amity University [IN] London	150
45-min	Guildhall School of Music and Drama	990
45-min	JSA Education Group Ltd.	95
45-min	London Film School Limited	230
45-min	Queen Mary University of London	23,100
45-min	The Engineering and Design Institute London	165
45-min	The Royal Veterinary College	2,305
	45-minute catchment total	173,875
50-min	Birkbeck College	5,805
50-min	Bloomsbury Institute	695
50-min	Court Theatre Training Company Ltd	45
50-min	Le Cordon Bleu Limited	210
50-min	London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine	735
50-min	Paris Dauphine International	170
50-min	Rose Bruford College of Theatre and Performance	770
50-min	Royal Academy of Dance	120
50-min	Royal Academy of Dramatic Art	195
50-min	SOAS University of London	5,990
50-min	The City College	355
50-min	The Film Education Training Trust Limited	195
50-min	The Institute of Ismaili Studies	75
50-min	The University of Law	13,040
50-min	The University of Westminster	18,865
50-min	University College London	46,135
50-min	University of London (Institutes and activities)	1,365
	50-minute catchment additional	94,765
	50-minute catchment total	268,640

Source: HESA, 2026 . Where do people study?

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