

PBSA Demand and Supply Report: Blackburn Road

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Confidential

14 Blackburn Road, West Hampstead, NW6
1RZ

Prepared for Hampstead Asset Management
Ltd & Fifth State

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1. Introduction

Knight Frank Student Property have been instructed by Hampstead Asset Management Ltd and their delivery partner Fifth State to produce a bespoke analysis of the student housing market in Camden and London. This is in support of a proposed purpose-built student accommodation (PBSA) scheme that forms part of the demolition and redevelopment of 14 Blackburn Road, West Hampstead, NW6 1RZ for a mixed-use development comprising purpose-built student accommodation (Sui Generis), affordable housing (Use Class C3), lower and ground floor flexible commercial/business space.

The development will deliver circa 192 high quality purpose-built student accommodation bedrooms with associated student amenities and facilities.

This research assesses the demand for student accommodation across London and specifically in relation to the proposed scheme at 14 Blackburn Road. The research also identifies the extent of competing supply in close proximity to the scheme.

This report provides the following analysis:

- Demands side drivers – socio-economic profile, growth projections;
- Existing supply of student accommodation – existing PBSA, HMO accommodation within mainstream rental market;
- PBSA development pipeline – across London and within close proximity to 14 Blackburn Road;
- Housing market profile: supply and demand balance, and pricing trends.

Catchment Analysis

We have assessed demand across Camden, London and where applicable presented demand/supply metrics at lower levels of geography based on distance/travel times from the proposed scheme. This reflects the location of the site and travel times to and from Higher Education Providers (HEPs) and other amenities.

Figure 1 presents the scheme's location and local information relating to public transport services and access to amenities. The proposed scheme is readily accessible by cycle, foot, or public transport to numerous universities in London, including University College London (UCL), The University of Westminster, and Middlesex University.

14 Blackburn Road is located in West Hampstead, Camden and is adjacent to West Hampstead Underground, Overground and mainline railway stations, offering easy access to the centre of London and national destinations in under 30 minutes. The site is 2.9 miles from UCL's main campus which is accessible by public transport in 24-minutes or by a 24-minute cycle. The University of Westminster's Marylebone campus is 2.3 miles away and is accessible in 16-minutes by public transport or 22-minutes by cycling. Middlesex University's campus in Hendon is accessible in 34-minutes by public transport or 26-minutes by cycling. In total this proposed scheme at Blackburn Road is in proximity to nine HEPs/campuses. The nine HEPs with campuses within proximity of the proposed scheme were selected by analysing location of the proposed 14 Blackburn Road site in relation to campuses, attendance trends of full-time students living within one-mile of the proposed scheme, and ease of travel to HEP campuses. Further details are provided in Section 2.

We have used a radius catchment around the site to examine the profile of students with their term-time addresses in this area, as well as analysing the total number of students studying in London. This allows us to provide an analysis of the changing number and profile of students living within the immediate area and London as a whole.

In planning terms, the proposed scheme is located in the London Borough of Camden and a summary of the council's approach is provided below. The site has a Public Transport Access Level (PTAL) rating of 6a therefore demonstrating an excellent level of connectivity. The PTAL rating combines information about how close public transport services are to a site and how frequent these services are. The highest level of connectivity is PTAL level 6b and the lowest has a PTAL score of 0. As stated in the London Plan, sites with better connectivity provide opportunities for development at higher densities and for sustainable development that reduces the need to travel by car.

The London Borough of Camden's approach to student accommodation

The Camden Local Plan 2016-2031 aims to provide a diverse range of housing to sustain growth in the borough and deliver mixed communities. Policy H9 focuses on the provision of student housing in Camden and states that the minimum requirement for additional student housing in the borough to be 160 beds per annum. The policy recognises the potential for student population growth and increased demand for accommodation from local institutions, such as UCL which is the largest HEP in the borough. The H9 student housing policy therefore 'supports development to meet or exceed the target' of 160 PBSA beds per annum.¹

Camden Council will support the development of student housing provided that the development:

- *"Will not involve the net loss of 2 or more self-contained homes;*
- *Will not prejudice the Council's ability to meet the target of 742 additional self-contained homes per year;*
- *Will not involve a site identified for self-contained housing through a current planning permission or a development plan document unless it is shown that the site is no longer developable for self-contained housing;*
- *Complies with any relevant standards for houses in multiple occupation (HMOs);*
- *Serves higher education institutions that are accessible from it;*
- *Includes a range of flat layouts including flats with shared facilities wherever practical and appropriate;*
- *Has an undertaking in place to provide housing for students at one or more specific education institutions, or otherwise provide a range of accommodation that is affordable to the student body as a whole;*
- *Will be accessible to public transport, workplaces, shops, services, and community facilities;*
- *Contributes to creating a mixed, inclusive and sustainable community;*
- *Does not create a harmful concentration of such a use in the local area or cause harm to nearby residential amenity."*

It should be noted that Camden Council are in the process of drafting a revised local plan which states, in policy H9, that 'the council will seek a supply of student housing to meet or exceed Camden's [revised] target of 200 additional places in student housing per year'.² This local plan will cover the period from 2026-2041.

The London Plan

The new London Plan (The Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London) CD (3.26) was published in March 2021 following a 'rigorous process of consultation and an Examination in Public, in which 300 different organisations or individuals participated'. The London Plan includes a policy on purpose-built student accommodation (Policy H15), which was updated in October 2024 with the 'London Plan Guidance: Purpose-built Student Accommodation' supplement. Together, these state that Boroughs 'should seek to ensure that the local and strategic need for purpose-built student accommodation is addressed', provided that:

- The PBSA development is situated within the Central Activities Zone, Inner London Opportunity Areas, metropolitan and major town centres, areas with PTAL scores of at least 5 or 6 (and PTAL 4 if within inner London), other town centres with high or medium residential growth-potential. Development in areas with PTAL scores of 3 or 4 may also qualify for support, especially in locations where public transport connectivity is improving.
- The development contributes to a mixed and inclusive neighbourhood. PBSA developments should avoid over-concentration of PBSA to alleviate the risk of 'crowding out' and deliver a mix of community-focused schemes within the development to integrate student-centric spaces into the local area.

¹ <https://www.camden.gov.uk/documents/20142/4820180/Local+Plan.pdf/ce6e992a-91f9-3a60-720c-70290fab78a6>

² <https://www.camden.gov.uk/documents/20142/4820180/Draft+New+Camden+Local+Plan+2024+v1.pdf/415cc7da-c24a-8237-ddc2-5c72045af9d2?t=1706548115256>

- At least 35% of the student accommodation is ‘affordable’. ‘Affordable’ is defined as ‘the rental cost for the academic year is equal to or below 55% of the maximum income that a new full-time student studying in London and living away from home could receive from the government’s maintenance loan for living costs for that academic year.’
- The majority of the rooms are secured through a nominations agreement by a higher education provider (unless all rooms qualify as ‘affordable’), with efforts to secure a nominations agreement throughout the development process. There is no obligation for the higher education provider linked by the agreement to fill the PBSA rooms, instead nominations agreements are allowed on a referral-only basis.
- The scheme contributes to London’s housing needs outlined in the 2017 London Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) (CD3.70).

The Mayor has carried out a London-wide Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) (CD3.71). The SHMA has identified the need for 66,000 additional homes per year over the next ten years. The SHMA covers overall housing needs as well as exploring specific requirements for PBSA and specialist older persons’ accommodation within the overall figure. Therefore, development of PBSA, within the parameters of the London Plan, plays a crucial role in addressing the housing needs of London’s growing student population while alleviating pressure on the general housing market.

The London Plan identifies a strategic requirement of 3,500 additional PBSA bed spaces per annum. The need for PBSA is not considered in terms of Borough, but in context of HEPs’ growth and availability. The London Plan also states that Boroughs should be ‘encouraged to develop student accommodation in locations well-connected to local services by walking, cycling and public transport.’

The London Plan states that ten-year housing targets should be monitored in net terms taking into account homes lost through demolition, amalgamations or change of use. Net non-self-contained accommodation for students should count towards meeting housing targets on the basis of a 2.5:1 ratio, with two and a half bedrooms/units being counted as a single home. GLA planning officers, in response to pre-application development proposal of the proposed PBSA scheme at 14 Blackburn Road, acknowledged that this proposal would ‘contribute’ to PBSA bed space targets and housing targets set out in the London Plan. This proposed PBSA and C3 residential scheme at Blackburn Road would, according to the GLA, ‘help to meet an established demand for homes within the Borough.’

Long-term strategic plans of proximate HEPs³

University College London

- ‘UCL 2034’ provides the principal strategic direction for University College London until 2034 with the aim to create a ‘diverse intellectual community’ that leverages its ‘widespread influence’ to change the wider world for the better.
- The University aims to deliver this through focusing on academic leadership and fostering a global approach to challenges through the integration of research and education.

University of Westminster

- ‘Being Westminster: 2022-2029’ outlines the objectives the University of Westminster is pursuing to foster the institution’s development.
- This focuses on delivering high-quality and personalised education to students, increasing community and stakeholder engagement through the ‘Research and Knowledge’ programme, increase employability skills for students, and engage globally to make a difference.

Middlesex University, London

³ There are nine HEPs with campuses within proximity of the proposed scheme, selected by analysing location, attendance trends of full-time students living within one-mile of the proposed scheme, and ease of travel to HEP campuses. Further details are provided in Section 2.

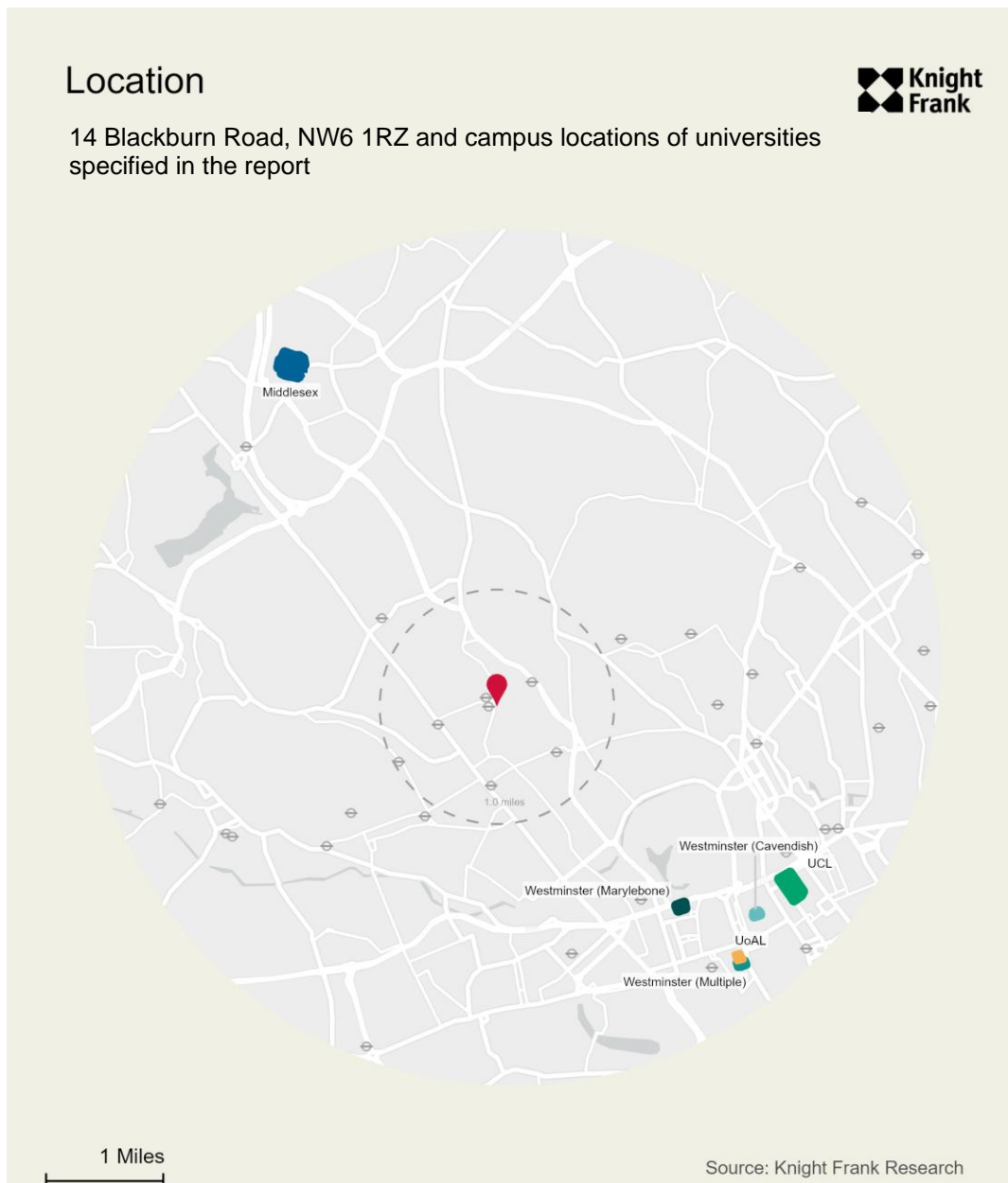
- ‘Middlesex University Strategy 2031’ outlines the purpose, vision and strategic priorities of Middlesex University.
- Middlesex University describes its purpose as to educate and share knowledge with its student and wider communities to create a ‘more sustainable, productive and prosperous society’. This will be delivered through fostering a global outlook to teaching and partnerships to boost graduate employability.

University of the Arts, London

- ‘UAL: Our strategy 2022-2032’ aims to expand high quality education in the creative industries to ‘more students than ever before’ and change the world through ‘creative endeavour’.
- The University of the Arts London’s objectives are to increase student numbers by 3,000 full-time student equivalents at its London sites, develop a world class student experience with the use of creative technology and computing, while tackling large social issues such as fashion sustainability.

Please note, demand for proximate HEPs analysed in this report encompasses a total of nine HEPs, as outlined in Section 2.

Figure 1: **Location and Connectivity Map**



2. Student Demand Profile: London & Bespoke Catchment Area

2.1 Profile of students studying in London and bespoke catchment area

The proposed scheme benefits from excellent connectivity to the local and wider area, and as such, the demand for PBSA as part of the proposed development has been broken down into two components;

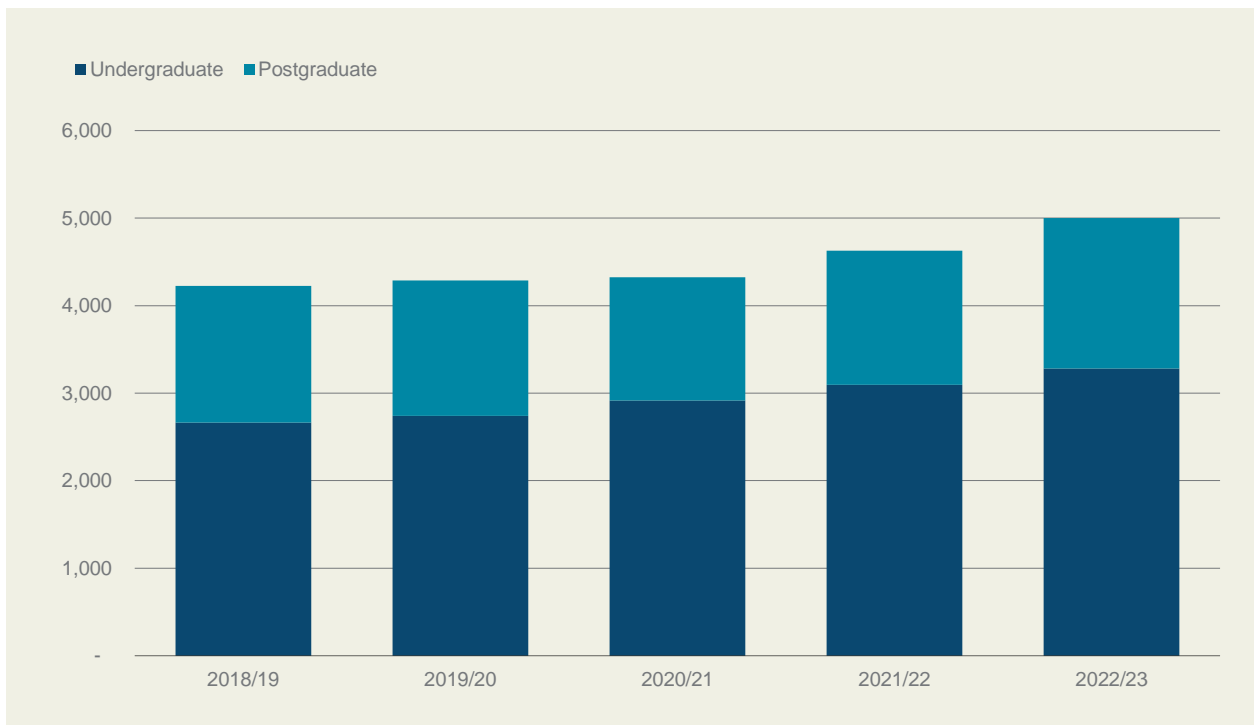
1. Students who live in the immediate catchment (one-mile radius from NW6 1RZ)
2. Students studying at HEPs within proximity of NW6 1RZ
3. Students who live in the Borough of Camden

Students living within a one-mile radius catchment area

The Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) is the designated body that collects and disseminates data on students studying at HEPs in England. HESA data records the number of students studying at HEPs and living in England.

- There are 4,999 full-time students living within a one-mile radius of the proposed scheme. The largest cohort of students are studying at UCL (15.8%), 6.5% at The University of Westminster and 5.3% at Middlesex University.
- The remaining 72.4% of full-time students living within a one-mile radius of 14 Blackburn Road study at a large variety of HEPs throughout London and the UK.
- The total number of full-time students living within this catchment (4,999) has increased by 18.3% over the period 2018/19-2022/23. This equates to an average of 193 additional full-time students living within a one-mile radius of 14 Blackburn Road per annum between the 2018/19 and 2022/23 academic years.
- The total number of full-time undergraduates living in the catchment, representing 65.6% (3,281) of the total full-time student population, has increased 23.3% over the period 2018/19-2022/23. The number of full-time postgraduate students has increased by 9.8% over the same period and represents 34.4% (1,718) of full-time students in the catchment.
- Full-time non-UK domicile students represent 53.6% (2,678 students) of total full-time students living within the one-mile catchment, and their number increased by 19.8% over the period 2018/19-2022/23.
- Full-time UK domicile students living within a one-mile catchment of the proposed Blackburn Road scheme (2,321) represent 46.4% of the total 4,999 full-time students within this catchment. The number of full-time UK domiciled students has increased by 16.6% over the period 2018/19-2022/23.

Figure 2: **Change in students living within a one-mile catchment**



Source: Knight Frank Research, HESA

Students living within the Borough of Camden

Using the latest HESA data, in the 2022/23 academic year, there were 28,133 full-time students living in the Borough of Camden. This represents a 10.2% increase on the 2018/19 figure.

Full-time undergraduate students living in Camden represent 68.4% of total full-time students living in Camden in the 2022/23 academic year with 19,231 students. This figure is 13.4% higher than the same measure in the 2018/19 academic year. Looking at full-time postgraduate students living in Camden, there were 8,902 – an increase of 3.7% since 2018/19.

Students studying at HEPs within proximity to the proposed scheme

There are nine HEPs with campuses within proximity of the proposed scheme, selected by analysing location, attendance trends of full-time students living within one-mile of the proposed scheme and ease of travel to HEP campuses. These nine HEPs collectively host 90,401 full-time students as of the 2022/23 academic year. The largest of these HEPs is University College London (an entire HEP) where 45,831 students' study. The University of Westminster (an entire HEP) and Middlesex University (an entire HEP) host 17,681 and 13,973 full-time students respectively.

Table 1: **HEP campuses within proximity to Blackburn Road**

HEP Institution	Number of full-time students
University College London	45,831
The University of Westminster	17,681
Middlesex University	13,973
University of the Arts, London: John Prince's Street Campus	5,929
London Business School	2,066
Regent's University London	1,892

HEP Institution	Number of full-time students
Institute of Contemporary Music Performance	1,134
The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama	954
The Royal Veterinary College: Main campus	941
Total	90,401

Source: Knight Frank Research, HESA

Table 2: Profile of students studying within proximity of Blackburn Road 2022/23

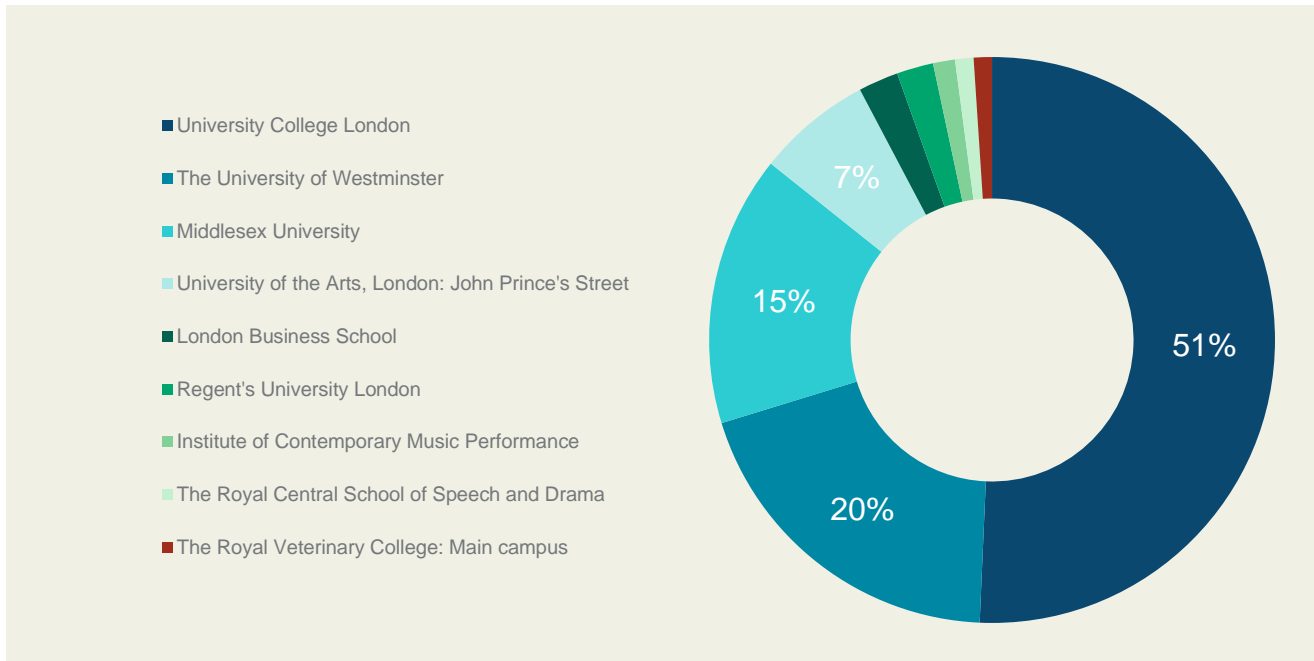
Full-time HE Student Population	Proximate HE Institutions	% Total Full-Time Students
UK Undergraduate	33,791	37.4%
Non-UK Undergraduate	23,215	25.7%
Undergraduate total	57,006	63.1%
UK Postgraduate	11,452	12.7%
Non-UK Postgraduate	21,942	24.3%
Postgraduate Total	33,394	36.9%
Total International Students	45,157	50.0%
Full-time Students	90,400*	100.0%

Source: Knight Frank Research, HESA, *1 student in the HESA dataset is from an unknown domicile, hence the anomaly of total full-time students

The following outlines the recent development of student numbers at proximate HEPs where the three largest groups of students living within a one-mile radius of the proposed scheme study.

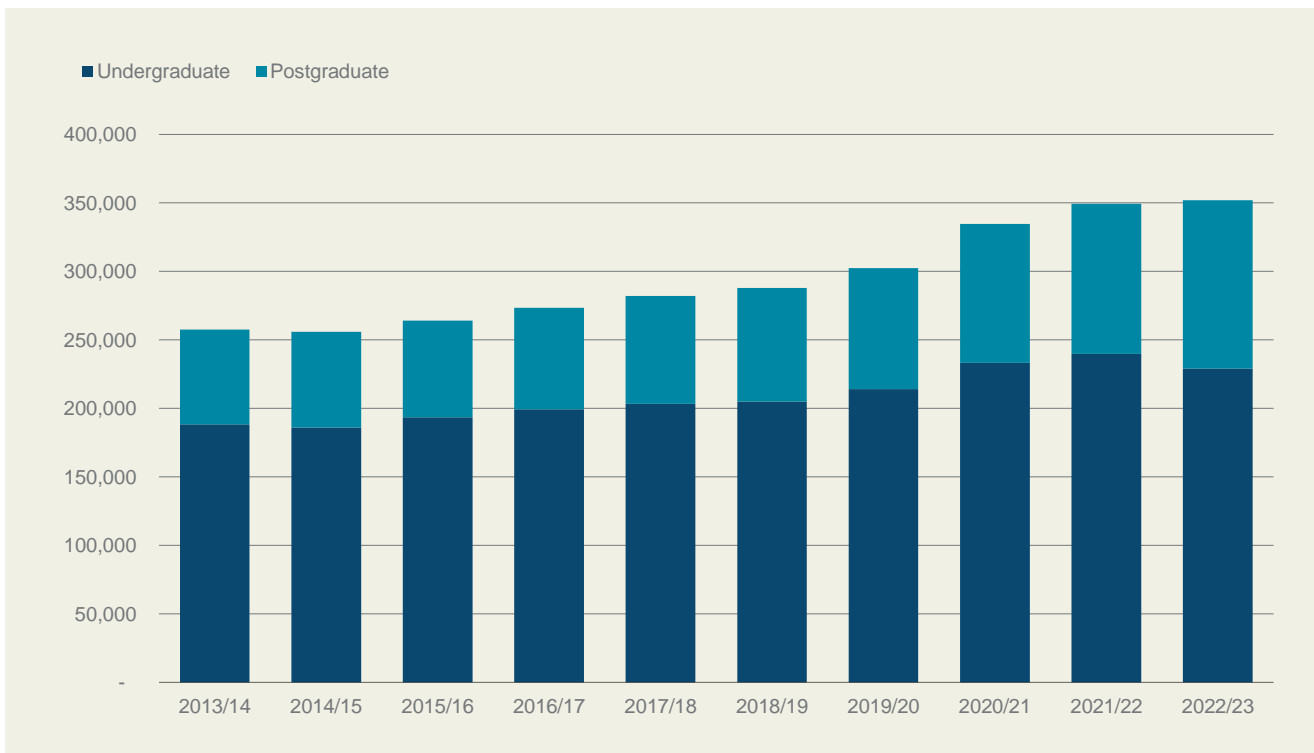
- Over the period 2018/19-2022/23, full-time students studying at UCL have increased by 35.2%, driven by increases in both undergraduate and postgraduate enrolment, with UK domiciled postgraduates growing 37.6% and non-UK domiciled postgraduate student numbers increasing by 48.5%. UK domiciled undergraduate students experienced the least growth at 13.2%, with international undergraduate enrolment growing 44.3%.
- Full-time students studying at the University of Westminster increased by 18.5% between 2018/19-2022/23. The most significant growth in this period was the 74.7% recorded by non-UK domiciled postgraduate students. Non-UK student numbers experienced growth of 23.0% between 2018/19-2022/23, while UK domiciled student numbers increased 18.9%. The number of UK domiciled students studying in London, comparatively, increased by 8.2% over the same period.
- Non-UK domiciled students studying at Middlesex University increased by 33.6% between 2018/19-2022/23, however there was an even greater 176.1% increase in the number of non-UK domiciled postgraduate students. The overall number of postgraduate students studying at Middlesex University over the same period grew 73.1%, with a 15% increase in UK domiciled postgraduate students.

Figure 3: **Full-time students by proportion at HEPs within proximity**



Source: Knight Frank Research, HESA

Figure 4: **Full-time students by level of study at London based HEPs**



Source: Knight Frank Research, HESA

2.2 Applications and acceptances

In 2024, HEPs in London received 525,925 applications for places which is 17.7% higher than in 2019. In 2024, there were 6.2 applications for every accepted place at HEPs located in London.

Acceptances of places within London have increased by 13.7% since 2019. This growth in acceptances has been driven by demand from both domestic and non-EU students which have increased by 18% and 43% respectively since 2019.

Table 3: Applications and acceptances - London overall

Year	Applications	Acceptances	Applications to Acceptances Ratio
2019	446,970	74,700	6.0
2020	465,380	82,335	5.7
2021	501,225	80,715	6.2
2022	524,985	80,370	6.5
2023	517,905	78,000	6.6
2024	525,925	84,950	6.2
% change 2019-2024	17.7%	13.7%	

Source: Knight Frank Research, UCAS

University College London and The University of Westminster account for the largest cohort of students both living and studying within proximity of Blackburn Road, and in 2024 these institutions received a total of 106,570 applications for university places. This equates to 7.2 applications for every accepted place, which is greater than the ratio of 6.2 applications for every accepted place across HEPs in London. Applications and acceptances to UCL have increased by 42.7% and 49.2% respectively, with this growth driven by demand from domestic and non-EU students, with applications up by 44.4% and 67.0% respectively. The number of both applications and acceptances to the University of Westminster recorded growth since 2019, increasing by 5.9% and 0.5% respectively.

Table 4: Applications and acceptances - University College London

	Applications	Acceptances	Applications to Acceptance Ratio
2019	54,890	6,110	9.0
2020	58,690	9,145	6.4
2021	68,085	8,140	8.4
2022	74,775	7,530	9.9
2023	77,615	7,595	10.2
2024	78,330	9,115	8.6
% change 2019-2024	42.7%	49.2%	

Source: Knight Frank Research, UCAS

Table 5: Applications and acceptances - The University of Westminster

	Applications	Acceptances	Applications to Acceptance Ratio
2019	26,670	5,575	4.8
2020	26,980	5,855	4.6
2021	25,085	5,380	4.7
2022	26,340	6,700	3.9
2023	27,315	6,200	4.4
2024	28,240	5,605	5.0
% change 2019-2024	5.9%	0.5%	

Source: Knight Frank Research, UCAS

2.3 Projecting Future Student Numbers across London

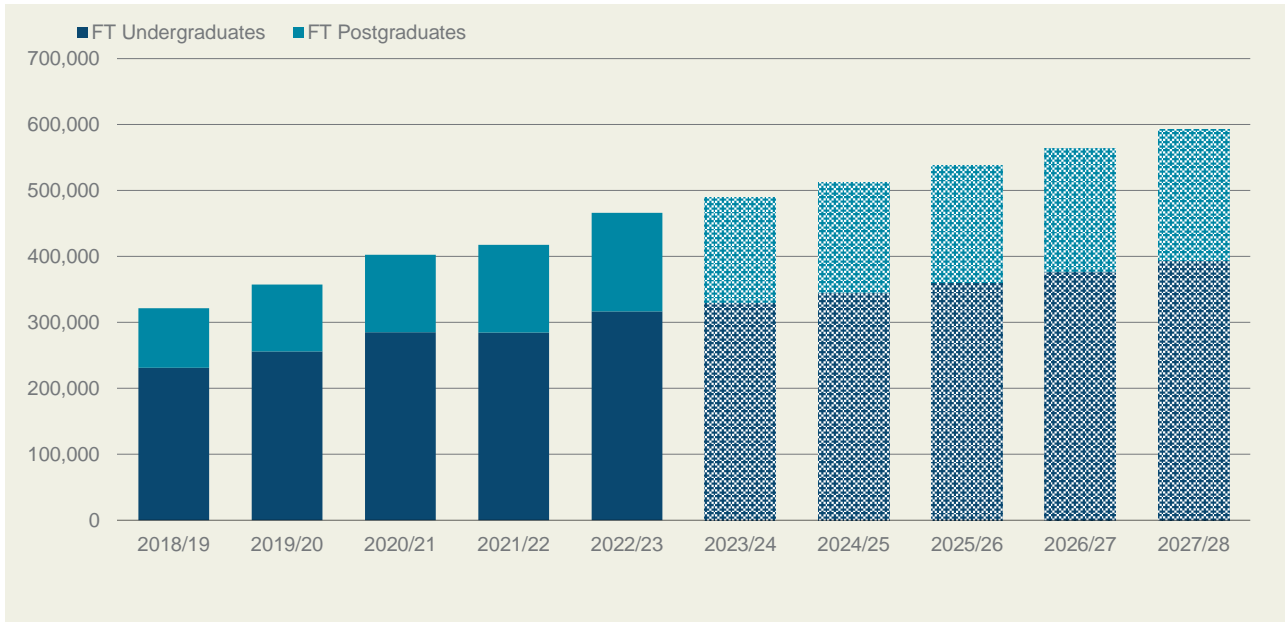
Knight Frank Research has conducted an analysis using five-year historic trends in changing student numbers. This analysis was conducted across aggregated data for all HEPs with both main and satellite campuses in London.

Based on previous trends for key student groups, the total number of full-time students studying at HEPs within London is projected to increase by 27% over the next five years (from 2022/23 – most recent data). This represents an increase of approximately 25,000 students per annum.

This anticipated growth would bring London's full-time student population from 466,388 in 2022/23 to approximately 592,292 in the 2027/28 academic year, a net gain of 125,904 students over five years.

It should be noted that in conducting this analysis, Knight Frank Research where appropriate, excluded anomalous data points or modified trends which were strongly influenced by the pandemic. By doing this, we believe it gives a more accurate reflection of the trajectory of student numbers in London.

Figure 5: Projection of full-time student numbers studying in London (including main and satellite campuses)



Source: Knight Frank Research, HESA

Table 6: Summary of full-time student number projection in London (including main and satellite campuses)

Academic cycle	Undergraduates	Postgraduates	Full-time students	All Students
2018/19	231,348	89,952	321,300	386,238
2019/20	255,976	101,320	357,296	419,416
2020/21	285,100	117,614	402,714	471,043
2021/22	284,441	133,273	417,714	487,323
2022/23	316,855	149,533	466,388	524,002
2023/24	330,746	158,274	489,020	545,299
2024/25	345,302	167,554	512,855	567,843
2025/26	360,556	177,407	537,962	591,702
2026/27	376,545	187,870	564,415	616,949
2027/28	393,309	198,983	592,292	643,659
Growth 2018/19 - 2022/23 (%)	37%	66%	45%	36%
# Growth 2018/19 - 2022/23	85,507	59,581	145,088	137,764
Projected 5 yr. growth (%)	24%	33%	27%	23%
# Projected 5 yr. growth (net)	76,454	49,450	125,904	119,657

Source: Knight Frank Research, HESA

3. Supply of Student Accommodation

The Knight Frank and UCAS Student Accommodation Survey tracks preferences of students towards student accommodation options. The 2024 edition indicates how student satisfaction in purpose-built student accommodation is driving an increase in demand from second- and third-year students returning as tenants.

- Those students living in private PBSA or university operated halls were the most satisfied with their accommodation at 76% and 77% respectively. Of note, between 2023 and 2024, the number of students living in the private rented sector that were satisfied with their accommodation fell from 78% to 70%.
- As the cost of living has risen in recent years, 62% of UCAS applicants surveyed stated that living in PBSA enables them to manage costs 'more easily'.
- While a majority of PBSA residents, 69%, now rate the option to live in the property for more than one year as 'good' or 'excellent'.

High levels of satisfaction, good perceived value, and positive attitudes to remaining in PBSA were stated in the UCAS x Knight Frank 2024 Survey, leading to the expectation that within the next decade the PBSA sector could accommodate the majority of second and third-year students. Increased PBSA development therefore reduces demand for limited private rental sector housing stock from students, while providing a better living experience to students.

3.1 Existing PBSA supply

This section outlines the existing provision of PBSA and the extent of the development pipeline across London and within a one-mile radius of the proposed scheme at 14 Blackburn Road.

University operated accommodation

- Across London, there are currently a total of 151 university operated PBSA schemes. These schemes collectively provide 39,626 bed spaces for students (43% of total available bed spaces). University operated PBSA comprises 14,004 standards rooms with shared bathroom facilities, 23,514 ensuite rooms, and 2,108 studios.
- There are no university operated schemes within a one-mile radius of the proposed scheme at 14 Blackburn Road.
- In the Borough of Camden, there are 28 university operated PBSA schemes which provide 6,412 beds collectively. Of these beds, 4,040 (63.0%) are standard rooms with shared bathroom facilities, 2,032 ensuite rooms, and 340 studios.

Table 7: Summary of all university operated PBSA schemes (London, Camden & one-mile catchment)

	London		Camden		One-mile radius	
Bed space type	# beds	%	# beds	%	# beds	%
Non-Ensuite	14,004	35.3%	4,040	63.0%	-	0.0%
Ensuite	23,514	59.4%	2,032	31.7%	-	0.0%
Studio	2,108	5.3%	340	5.3%	-	0.0%
Total	39,626	100.0%	6,412	100.0%	-	100.0%

Source: Knight Frank Research

Privately operated accommodation

- There are 182 privately operated PBSA schemes across London, of which 50 are part-nominated and the remainder are operated on a direct-let basis. Collectively, these schemes provide 53,568 bed spaces for

students and make up 57% of the total available beds in London. Privately operated PBSA in London is made up of 13% standard rooms with shared bathroom facilities, 40% studio accommodation, and 47% ensuite rooms.

- Within a one-mile radius of the site, there are a total of four privately operated PBSA schemes, of which one is part nominated, collectively providing a total of 639 PBSA bed spaces. The private PBSA bed stock within this one-mile radius comprises of 139 standard rooms with shared bathroom facilities, 374 ensuite rooms and 126 studios. Privately operated PBSA schemes make up 100% of the bed spaces within a one-mile of the proposed scheme at Blackburn Road.
- Of the 639 PBSA bed spaces within a one-mile radius of the proposed scheme at Blackburn Road, 344 are on Blackburn Road. This one scheme provides 287 ensuite rooms and 57 studios. This clustering of PBSA in one location highlights the appropriate nature of the proposed scheme at 14 Blackburn Road and would contribute to the development of a mixed and inclusive neighbourhood, with PBSA, affordable housing (use class C3) and flexible commercial/business space. Within a one-mile catchment of the proposed scheme at Blackburn Road the private rented sector accommodates hundreds of students that would be better served by PBSA situated in proximity to amenities and other students while still maintaining a mixed and diverse neighbourhood.
- In the Borough of Camden, there are 22 privately operated PBSA schemes which provide 5,260 beds collectively. Of these beds, 1,355 (25.8%) are standard rooms with shared bathroom facilities, 1,970 ensuite rooms, and 1,935 studios.

Table 8: Summary of all privately operated PBSA schemes (London, Camden & one-mile catchment)

	London		Camden		One-mile radius	
Bed space type	# beds	%	# beds	%	# beds	%
Non-Ensuite	6,676	12.5%	1,355	25.8%	139	21.8%
Ensuite	25,386	47.4%	1,970	37.5%	374	58.5%
Studio	21,506	40.1%	1,935	36.8%	126	19.7%
Total	53,568	100.0%	5,260	100.0%	639	100.0%

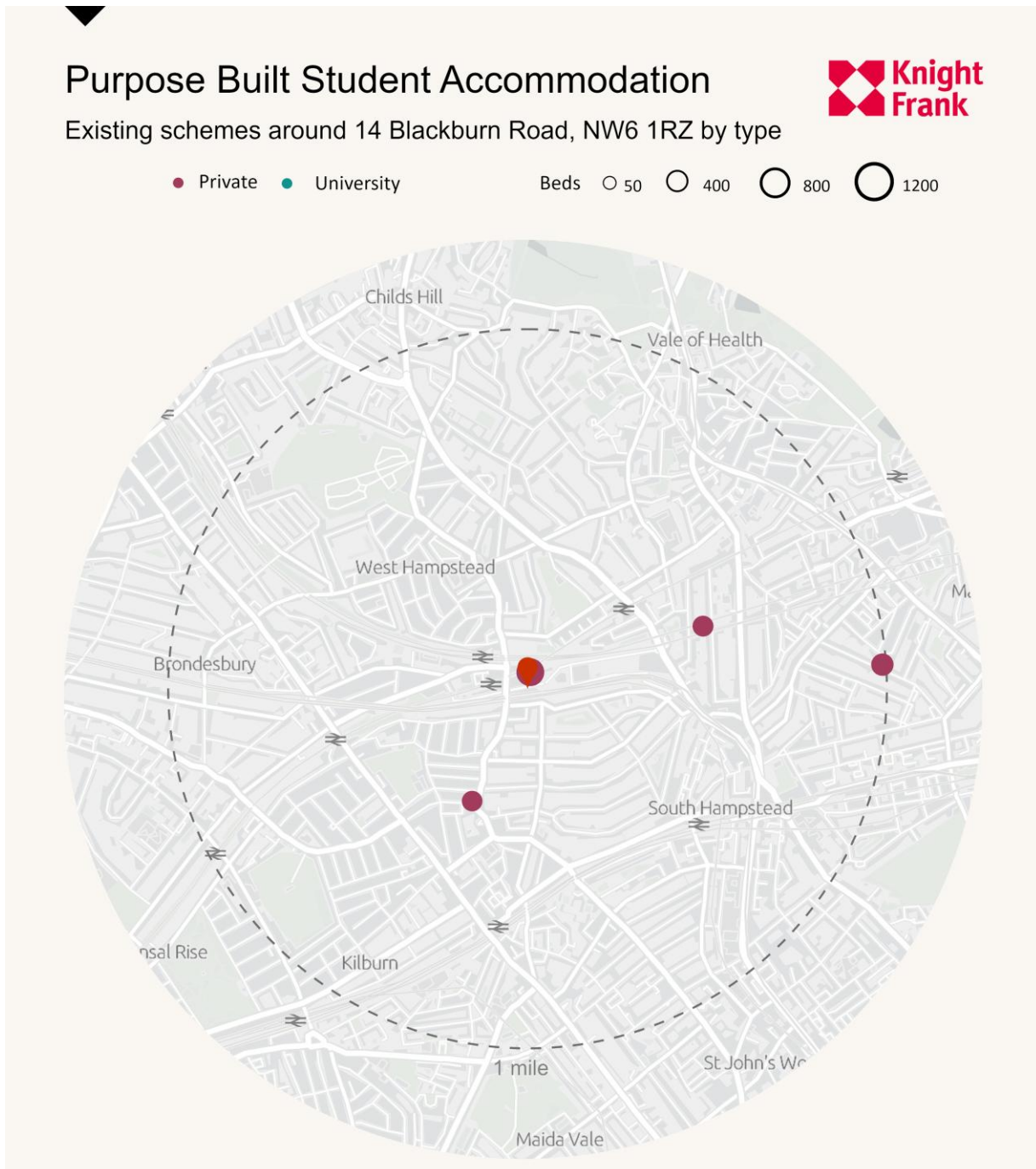
Source: Knight Frank Research

Table 9: Summary of all PBSA schemes (London, Camden & one-mile catchment)

	London		Camden		One-mile radius	
Bed space type	# beds	%	# beds	%	# beds	%
Non-Ensuite	20,680	22.2%	5,395	46.2%	139	21.8%
Ensuite	48,900	52.5%	4,002	34.3%	374	58.5%
Studio	23,614	25.3%	2,275	19.5%	126	19.7%
Total	93,194	100.0%	11,672	100.0%	639	100.0%

Source: Knight Frank Research

Figure 6: **Existing PBSA schemes - one-mile catchment**



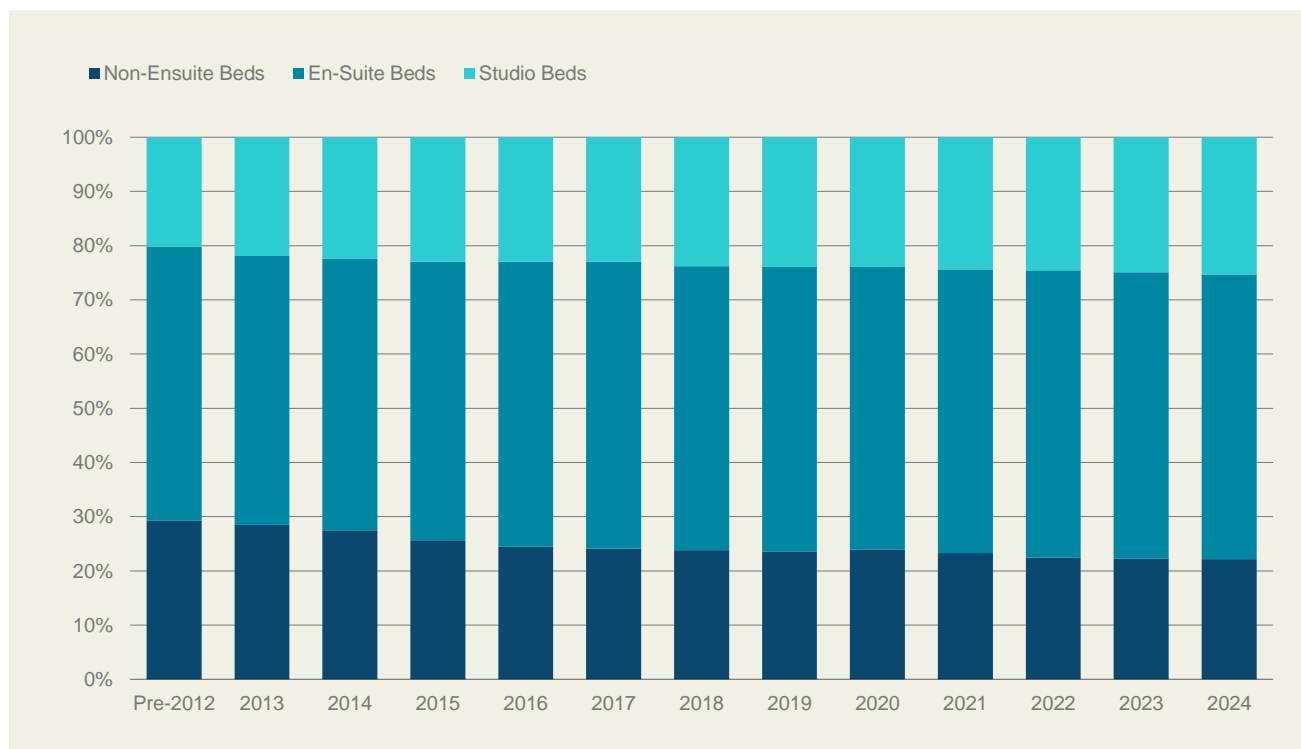
Source: Knight Frank Research

Changing composition

- London has seen the development or re-development of 30,140 beds since 2012, equating to an average of 2,512 beds per annum. This figure has fallen short of the 95,717 additional full-time students (as at the 2022/23 academic year) added to the London student population since the 2012/13 academic year. Of the beds which have been developed or re-developed since 2012, 57% have been ensuite beds, 36% studios and the remaining 7% are standard rooms with shared bathroom facilities.

- All 639 PBSA beds within a one-mile catchment of Blackburn Road were constructed pre-2012, with only 10.8% of stock (69 bed spaces) having been refurbished since 2012. This demonstrates the lack of new, quality PBSA stock in proximity to this site, and suggests that the pre-existing PBSA stock in this catchment may no longer meet the contemporary requirements of student accommodation, including availability of extensive and diverse amenity space. Additionally, the Knight Frank & UCAS Student Accommodation Survey indicates the importance that students place on the quality and usability of the social and amenity space provided in their accommodation, with 79% of students saying that the standard of amenity space in their term-time accommodation is important in supporting their wellbeing.

Figure 7: **Delivery of student beds by type, London**



Source: Knight Frank Research

3.2 Future PBSA supply

The PBSA pipeline data referenced in the following section has been compiled by collecting data from several sources, including (but not limited to) Glenigan and Molior as well as local authority planning departments across London.

Knight Frank's records suggest that there are 20 PBSA schemes in London, consisting of 14,420 beds, that are currently under construction. There are 41 PBSA schemes, totalling 17,713 beds which have planning consent but are not yet under construction, and a further 35 PBSA schemes comprising 19,127 beds have submitted planning applications but have not yet been approved. These figures would indicate that the total potential pipeline in London amounts to 51,080 beds. This figure includes PBSA beds at all stages of the planning and development pipeline, it should be noted that successful delivery of all 51,080 PBSA beds is unlikely due to changes made during planning and development.

According to our records, within a one-mile radius of the proposed scheme at the Blackburn Road site there are no PBSA schemes in the planning and development pipeline.

Table 10: Summary of PBSA development pipeline (London, Camden & one-mile catchment)

	London		Camden		One-mile radius	
Planning Status	# beds	%	# beds	%	# beds	%
Plans Submitted	19,127	37.4%	215	28.3%	-	0.0%
Plans Consented	17,713	34.7%	546	71.7%	-	0.0%
Under Construction	14,240	27.9%	-	0.0%	-	0.0%
Total Development Pipeline	51,080	100%	761	100.0%	-	0.0%

Source: Knight Frank Research

Timeline

The delivery timeline of PBSA schemes within the pipeline in London has been assessed, using estimated construction start dates and estimated construction project duration lengths. However, given that only 28% of the PBSA schemes in the development pipeline are making meaningful construction progress in London, it should be noted that estimated delivery timelines are complex and difficult to assess due to the evolving planning and development stages.

- Of the 20 PBSA schemes across London which are under construction, seven are expected to complete in 2025, adding a total of 4,327 beds to current supply.
- A further 12,735 beds are due to be completed in 2026, accounting for 24.9% of the overall development pipeline in London.
- There are no PBSA schemes in the development pipeline within a one-mile radius of the proposed scheme at the Blackburn Road site.

4. PBSA Pricing Analysis

4.1 Pricing in the private rented sector and HMO market for students

Private rented sector (PRS) pricing – Rightmove wider PRS estimates

It must be noted that students in PBSA schemes benefit from all-inclusive rents which include their utility bills and wi-fi and increasingly, in many schemes, contents insurance is also included. However, this is not the case in PRS schemes where utilities are added on top of rent costs. Beyond all-inclusive rents, PBSA schemes offer a wide range of additional amenities that private rented sector properties cannot offer, such as study and group workspaces, on-site gyms, in-house events, and game rooms as well as onsite wellbeing support teams and 24/7 staff and security.

PBSA's overall cost per annum is fixed and inclusive of all bills. Knight Frank's Student Accommodation Survey results indicated that students welcome the sense of financial security this provides, as they do not need to worry about defaulting on bill payments caused by rising energy costs. Accommodation in the PRS was rated as 'good' or 'excellent' value for money by 37% of students surveyed and 32% responded that their PRS accommodation was 'poor' or 'awful' value for money. Whereas accommodation in private PBSA was identified by 44% of students as 'good' or 'excellent' value for money. The gap in cost between the two modes of accommodation is closing. As a result, PBSA is beginning to be seen as a much more affordable and a compelling value-for-money option to students.

Private rented sector & Housing of Multiple Occupancy (HMO) in a one-mile catchment

The private rented sector in London is expected to house the students who require accommodation and do not have access to PBSA schemes. Analysis of listings data within a one-mile catchment of the site indicates that throughout 2024 there were 236 PRS and HMO properties that were marketed directly at students. Collectively, these properties provided 379 bed spaces.

Of the properties listed as student lets on Rightmove, 61.4% were studio or one-bedroom properties, 23.3% were two-bedroom properties, 9.7% were three-bedroom properties, 5.5% were four or more bedroom-properties.

However, properties advertised for students are not always occupied by students, as shared houses are also popular with graduate and young professionals. Therefore, students are often competing with the wider market for accommodation in PRS properties.

The development of more PBSA would provide a greater number of purpose-built bed spaces for students, allowing some PRS/HMO properties advertised to students to be released back into the traditional housing rental market. Therefore, PBSA development can alleviate pressure on the wider PRS market.

Table 11: Summary of student HMOs and PRS marketed towards students (one-mile catchment 2024)

	No. Properties	% of total	No. of beds
Studio	76	32.2%	76
1 bedroom	69	29.2%	69
2 bedrooms	55	23.3%	110
3 bedrooms	23	9.7%	69
4 bedrooms	10	4.2%	40
5 bedrooms	3	1.3%	15
Total	236	100.0%	379

Source: Knight Frank Research, Rightmove

5. Summary of Analysis & Concluding Statement

5.1 Students to bed space ratios

An estimated 93,194 PBSA bed spaces have been identified across London, representing 26.5% of total full-time students across London at London based HEPs (351,873 for the 2022/23 academic year). This equates to a gross ratio of 3.8 students per bed space (0.27 bedspaces per student).

In Camden, there are an estimated 11,672 PBSA beds, representing 41.5% of the 28,133 total full-time students living in Camden in the 2022/23 academic year, or a ratio of 2.4 full-time students per bed space.

Within a one-mile radius of the Blackburn Road site and proposed scheme, there are 639 PBSA bed spaces, representing 12.8% of the 4,999 full-time students living with the catchment. This equates to a gross ratio of 7.8 students per bed space (0.13 bed spaces per student).

Students living in their parental or guardian home

Using data collected by HESA, Knight Frank estimate that of the students studying across London, 24% live with parents or guardians and therefore either cannot access suitable PBSA or do not require accommodation. This compares to an average of 18% across the UK as a whole.

In Camden, of the 28,133 full-time students living in Camden in the 2022/23 academic year, 9.1% or 2,574 students live with their parents or guardians. If these students are excluded from any ratio calculations, the full-time student to bed ratio changes to 2.2 students per bed space. Of the remaining students, 54.3% are not provided for by PBSA and therefore seek accommodation in HMOs or the wider PRS placing pressure on Camden's rental stock through increased demand.

Of the 4,999 full-time students living within a one-mile radius of the Blackburn Road site and the proposed scheme, approximately 1,094 (21.9%) are living at home with parents/guardians. Less those students living at home, the provision rate of the full-time students who need accommodation and that have access to PBSA increases by 3.6%, from 12.8% to 16.4%.

5.2 Key market drivers

Based on the analysis the key demand and supply-side factors for the student market relating to the proposed scheme are as follows below.

Key demand side factors

- There are 4,999 full-time students living within a one-mile radius of the proposed scheme. Full-time non-UK domicile students represent 53.6% (2,678 students) of total full-time students living within the one-mile catchment, and their number has increased by 19.8% over the period 2018/19-2022/23.
- There are nine HEPs with campuses within a proximity of Blackburn Road, hosting 90,401 full-time students in the immediate area. Over the period 2018/19-2022/23, full-time students studying at University College London and The University of Westminster have increased by 35.2% and 18.5% respectively, which are the largest HEPs in proximity.
- Full-time non-UK domiciled students represents 50% (45,157) of total 90,401 full-time students studying at institutions within proximity of Blackburn Road. Over the five-year period 2018/19-2022/23, the number of international students at University College London have increased by 46.5% from 17,919 students to 26,243. Over the same period, the number of international students studying at The University of Westminster increased by 23.0% from 5,157 to 6,342.
- The number of full-time students living in the Borough of Camden has increased by 10.2% from the 2018/19 to the 2022/23 academic years, with 28,133 students in 2022/23. This is predominantly made up of undergraduate students which represent 68.4% of this group.

- The overall number of full-time students studying in London has increased by 22.2% between 2018/19-2022/23, the increase in full-time students at University College London exceeded this with a 35.2% increase. At 46.5%, the increase in non-UK domiciled full-time students studying at University College London, was above that of London as a whole, which experienced 46.2% growth in international students.

Key supply side factors

- Within one-mile of Blackburn Road and the proposed scheme there are 639 PBSA bed spaces, all of which are operated by private providers on a direct let or part-nominated basis.
- According to HESA, of the 4,999 students living within a one-mile radius of the proposed scheme, approximately 1,094 are living with parents. If those students who live at home, and those who live in PBSA within the catchment are removed, it means that approximately 3,266 full-time students living in the immediate catchment are solely reliant on the private rental market for appropriate accommodation. Therefore, 65.3% of all full-time students residing with a one-mile radius of Blackburn Road and the proposed scheme are unable to access PBSA. Whilst 1,094 full-time students are living with parents/guardians this could be due to the limited number of PBSA bed spaces in the catchment and the lack of high-quality stock.
- All four PBSA schemes that provide 639 bed spaces to students within a one-mile radius of Blackburn Road and the proposed scheme were developed pre-2012, demonstrating a distinct lack of modern bed stock in the area. The current supply of PBSA within the catchment area therefore potentially lacks the amenity space and diversity of choice that contemporary students look for when considering accommodation.
- Of the 50 schemes in Camden, 85.6% of bed spaces were built in 2012 or earlier with 100% built before 2017. This further demonstrates that there is a lack of modern PBSA stock across Camden, not just in the catchment area.
- At present, within one mile of Blackburn Road and the proposed scheme there are 7.2 students per one PBSA bed space. This indicates that only 12.8% of full-time students residing within a one-mile radius of the proposed scheme have access to PBSA.
- As of Knight Frank's latest assessment of London pipeline, in February 2025, there are no PBSA schemes in the development and planning pipeline (with planning consent or under construction) within one mile of Blackburn Road. This suggests that the area within one-mile catchment of Blackburn Road will continue to lack modern, quality PBSA accommodation and require students to live in HMOs in the PRS market, which has experienced rapid cost inflation in recent years and increasingly provides less value compared to PBSA.
- Knight Frank's latest assessment of the London PBSA development pipeline finds four schemes in Camden, of which none are under construction. It is worth noting that there has been no new PBSA delivery in Camden since 2016 meaning that there has been a significant period without any PBSA delivery. This contrasts with the 200 PBSA bed target per year between 2026 and 2041 in the revised Camden Local Plan.
- Increased development of PBSA schemes provides the opportunity to return HMO and PRS housing stock to traditional housing uses, contributing to reducing local housing pressure by alleviating student-led demand for properties. PBSA's role in alleviating pressure on traditional rented homes is reinforced by the GLA in its 'London Plan Guidance – Purpose-built Student Accommodation' update published in October 2024. This guidance states that PBSA development is counted as part of housing supply as it supports the delivery of housing in an area through freeing up PRS properties for local residents.⁴

5.3 Concluding statement

After considerable bespoke analysis of the student housing market in London, Knight Frank Research confirms that the location of the proposed PBSA development at 14 Blackburn Road, West Hampstead, NW6 1RZ is highly preferable as a location to live for students, in particular those studying at University College London,

⁴ <https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2024-11/Purpose%20Built%20Student%20Accommodation%20LPG%20FINAL.pdf>

The University of Westminster, Middlesex University, and the University of Arts, London: John Prince's Street, in addition to a further five HEPs in the local area.

Currently, only 26% of full-time higher education students across London have access to university or private sector PBSA, while a further 24% are estimated to be living at home with parents or guardians. The remaining 50% of full-time students in London are required to find accommodation within PRS and HMOs and would otherwise be unable to access university or private PBSA. As noted in detail throughout this study, full time student numbers studying within the catchment area and wider London market are likely to record strong growth over the next upcoming academic cycles to 2026/27, based on historic trends and market evidence.

The proposed scheme will be well served by public transport, with links to local and London-wide university campuses. Our analysis of the immediate catchment of Blackburn Road shows that 3,266 full-time students living in the area are solely reliant on the PRS market for appropriate accommodation, representing 65% of total full-time students living in the catchment. 100% of the pre-existing stock within a one-mile radius of Blackburn Road and the proposed scheme was developed prior to 2012, therefore demonstrating a lack of new, quality stock in the catchment area. Furthermore, there are currently no PBSA schemes in the planning or development pipeline within a one-mile radius of Blackburn Road. PBSA supply will therefore continue to accommodate a maximum of just 12.8% of full-time students living in the immediate area, assuming no growth in the student population, meaning there are 7.8 full-time students for every PBSA bedspace or 0.13 bedspaces for each full-time student. The population of full-time students living within the one-mile catchment area has increased by 18.3% since 2018/19, therefore it is highly unlikely that current supply and future supply will keep pace with demand within the local area, and the wider area of North London and as a result of this imbalance, it is likely that students will continue to place more unwanted pressure on the local PRS market.

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