# Leicester plans to convert St John’s House office block into 142 student flats with cycle-friendly design



Plans are underway to transform a vacant office block in Leicester into student accommodation. St John's House, located on South Albion Street, was constructed in 1976 and has primarily served as administrative offices for NHS staff in recent years. The latest proposal, submitted to Leicester City Council, outlines an ambitious plan to convert the building into accommodation for 142 students, with a focus on creating a modern living environment. Among the key features are 114 studio apartments, complemented by communal lounges, study areas, and a gym situated on the ground floor.

The move comes amid a growing trend in cities across the UK to repurpose empty office spaces, a trend that has gained momentum particularly since the pandemic, which has left many workplaces underutilised. By converting office blocks into residential units, local councils aim to address housing shortages while also rejuvenating urban environments. This approach aligns with broader sustainability efforts, as evidenced by the inclusion of 78 designated bicycle parking spaces in the new design. Such initiatives resonate with Leicester's ongoing commitment to promote cycling as a viable mode of transport, encouraging environmentally friendly commuting options among new residents.

Leicester City Council’s planning portal provides detailed information on the proposed conversion, inviting public feedback on the project and its associated amenities. Critics, however, have raised concerns about the impact of increasing student accommodation on local communities, particularly regarding noise and the strain on local services. Despite these apprehensions, proponents argue that well-planned student housing can contribute positively to the local economy, fostering a vibrant community atmosphere.

Further enhancing the project's appeal is the thoughtful architectural design aimed at integrating the building into its surroundings. Considerations are being made regarding the communal spaces intended to foster a sense of community among students, a crucial aspect in residential environments that can sometimes be isolating. The importance of such facilities was highlighted in a recent discussion in The Architects Journal, which stressed how effectively planned communal areas can improve quality of life and student connectivity.

As the planning process unfolds, Leicester’s approach to adapting its urban landscape may serve as a model for other cities grappling with similar issues of vacant commercial properties and housing shortages. With ongoing support from the council and community feedback, the future of St John's House could signal a significant shift in the use of urban spaces, ensuring they serve contemporary needs while enhancing the quality of life for its residents.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://news.google.com/rss/articles/CBMiWkFVX3lxTFBxY2ZLaVJ2RlFSWWtfaDRCMXZqQng2MVBVUVQyaUF1VTUwb1NOcEd3S3JjWC1lRnd6dWJRbi1WMGJsVm56NDlzWTdtc3VQQjFaRTZpdU9DQXJtZ9IBX0FVX3lxTE5nLXJDQS1SR0FNZUhxN1FoNDNnM1JsQlZWX3hCRjVUTFBhaVlwMEJUbFNRcUpuRFRTbWJUbnYzM3ZGWlBLZk9mSnBGNkY0R2ZLX2UwbkFsX3YtYUkyMFRR?oc=5&hl=en-US&gl=US&ceid=US:en), [[2]](https://www.leicestermercury.co.uk/news/local-news/empty-leicester-office-block-could-8690198)
* Paragraph 2 – [[2]](https://www.leicestermercury.co.uk/news/local-news/empty-leicester-office-block-could-8690198), [[5]](https://www.cycle-leicester.org.uk/), [[6]](https://www.leicester.gov.uk/your-council-services/environment-and-sustainability/sustainability/cycling-in-leicester/)
* Paragraph 3 – [[3]](https://www.leicester.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-applications/view-planning-applications/), [[7]](https://www.architectsjournal.co.uk/news/empty-leicester-office-block-could-become-student-flats/10042604.article)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://news.google.com/rss/articles/CBMiWkFVX3lxTFBxY2ZLaVJ2RlFSWWtfaDRCMXZqQng2MVBVUVQyaUF1VTUwb1NOcEd3S3JjWC1lRnd6dWJRbi1WMGJsVm56NDlzWTdtc3VQQjFaRTZpdU9DQXJtZ9IBX0FVX3lxTE5nLXJDQS1SR0FNZUhxN1FoNDNnM1JsQlZWX3hCRjVUTFBhaVlwMEJUbFNRcUpuRFRTbWJUbnYzM3ZGWlBLZk9mSnBGNkY0R2ZLX2UwbkFsX3YtYUkyMFRR?oc=5&hl=en-US&gl=US&ceid=US:en> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.leicestermercury.co.uk/news/local-news/empty-leicester-office-block-could-8690198> - An empty office block in Leicester could be transformed into accommodation for more than 140 students. Plans show the project would include 78 cycle parking spaces for residents. St John's House in South Albion Street was built in 1976 and was most recently used as offices for NHS staff. A planning application submitted to Leicester City Council has outlined a proposal to convert the building into flats for 142 students, which includes 114 studio apartments. The plan also includes new communal lounges, study areas and a gym on the ground floor.
3. <https://www.leicester.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-applications/view-planning-applications/> - Leicester City Council's planning portal provides access to view and comment on planning applications. The application for converting St John's House into student flats can be found here, offering detailed information on the proposal, including the number of studio apartments, communal areas, and amenities like cycle parking spaces.
4. <https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/about-the-nhs/nhs-organisations/> - The National Health Service (NHS) in the UK comprises various organisations, including NHS trusts and foundation trusts. St John's House in Leicester was previously used as offices for NHS staff, serving as a base for administrative and support functions within the healthcare system.
5. <https://www.cycle-leicester.org.uk/> - Cycle Leicester is an initiative aimed at promoting cycling within the city. The inclusion of 78 cycle parking spaces in the proposed student accommodation aligns with the city's efforts to encourage sustainable transportation options among residents and visitors.
6. <https://www.leicester.gov.uk/your-council-services/environment-and-sustainability/sustainability/cycling-in-leicester/> - Leicester City Council's cycling strategy focuses on improving facilities and infrastructure to support cyclists. The proposed development's provision of cycle parking spaces reflects the council's commitment to enhancing cycling amenities in the city.
7. <https://www.architectsjournal.co.uk/news/empty-leicester-office-block-could-become-student-flats/10042604.article> - An article from The Architects Journal discussing the potential conversion of an empty office block in Leicester into student flats. The piece highlights the architectural and planning considerations involved in such a transformation, including the integration of communal spaces and amenities to create a conducive living environment for students.