

Thank you for the opportunity to speak at the planning committee and voice my objection to the conversion of 82 Chichester Road to a seven-bedroom HMO. I'm aware that the Council wants to ensure they have the right housing to meet the demand for certain types of accommodation however the Council has also quite rightly stated that the geographical constraints of Portsmouth streets and their densely built Victorian terraced housing means that converting them to HMOs creates problems for community cohesion and has also led to lower availability of much needed family housing in the city. This is one of the main reasons why I object to the conversion of 82 Chichester Road from a family home to an HMO.

Despite the fact that the Council's own policy (PCS20) seeks to ensure that the future supply of family housing is not jeopardised by its unchecked conversion to shared accommodation and that communities are not negatively impacted by HMO development, it currently feels as though property developers can also use these policies and planning regulations to further their own ends in pushing through a high rate of HMO conversions, despite strong objections from neighbours, because the Council appears powerless to intervene against its own policies.

With respect to 82 Chichester Road, this development will increase the size of the property and instead of having one bathroom, it will have **seven bathrooms and an additional toilet**. Next door, 80 Chichester Road has been converted in the same style with seven ensuite bathrooms and an additional toilet, as has number 85 over the road, which now has eight ensuite bathrooms. This will have a cumulative effect on water demand and pressure and increase sewage and foul water. The Portsmouth Plan (2012, p.80) states that some parts of the city face the risk of flooding from surface and foul water, which currently flows into one combined sewer system, which then becomes overwhelmed during severe storms, leading to flooding of streets, homes and other property. It also states that one of the two main interceptor sewers in the city is at capacity. This is another reason why I object to the development of 82 Chichester Road.

I would ask the Council to reconsider reducing the 10% threshold limit to 5% of dwellings in any area of 50m radius given that Portsmouth is already a densely populated island city and there are already over twenty HMOs in Chichester Road alone. This further application for yet another HMO at 82 Chichester Road has the potential to cause noise and nuisance to neighbours and friction between the HMO residents themselves who will be living in what is essentially a glorified bedsit. Neighbours are quite rightly worried about an increase in activity within and coming and going from the property. If the developers and Council want to provide essential housing, then convert a large house into two two-bedroomed flats and provide individuals with a home rather than a bedroom, such as the proposed HMO development at 82 Chichester Road. HMOs are a short-term fix that potentially lead to longer-term issues such as poor wellbeing and increased demand on already stretched local services such as GPs and dentists. This is the final reason why I object to this development.