

Deputations 13/03/2024

Thank you Mr Chairman,

I am speaking in opposition of the application for 7 bed potentially 14 person HMO's at 82 Chichester Road and 165 Laburnum Grove as both are covered by the same arguments. Firstly I say 14 person HMO's because the reality of these developments are that despite the official line, there is generally nothing that can be done to prevent each room having 2 people occupying them (an official resident, and a respective partner). I'm quite sure we are going to hear lots of "what does the application state, what are the licencing rules" etc. but this is the sad reality.

There are many issues leading residents to oppose this, and many other HMO applications and they are issues that pose serious questions of the current policy and process. For example, If the administration is serious about its green credentials why is there not a cast iron link between planning policy and Green policy? Adding developments that will increase the amount of cars driving around the Copnor area looking for parking spaces that frankly aren't there to start with seems ludicrous. In the vicinity of both applications in Copnor on the agenda today are 4 schools, and we are supposed to be encouraging children and parents to be walking, cycling and scooting to school through the increasingly bad air quality ensured by the continued additions of HMO's.

And whilst these children are walking, cycling and scooting to school, they now also have to run the gauntlet of human excrement flowing from our sewers on a regular basis. If you think I am being dramatic, I can show you a very recent photo of this very situation showing excrement flowing into the street and children in very close contact. Southern Water have highlighted the two way valves as being the main issues for the increase in these incidences, and the continued increase of HMO's as a factor to the increased incidences of these sewage leaks.

I also want to raise the data issue. The wording in the agenda pack states "It has been raised that the HMO data in Laburnum Grove is inaccurate and there are several unregistered HMOs in the surrounding area. This has been investigated through planning application searches and corresponding this with

the licencing database and it is not believed that there are any extant permissions that are not represented within 50m of the application site". In my mind this doesn't answer the query and actually suggests that if there isn't a live application or it isn't already on the database then it is assumed that there aren't more unregistered HMO's in the area. I've previously been assured that all efforts are made to ascertain if there are unregistered HMO's whenever an application is made but this seems to suggest that this isn't the case at all!

Finally, its extremely disappointing that despite some extremely compelling arguments the request to look at moving to a 5% per cent per 50m threshold that would have made so much of a difference to our island city was dismissed out of hand on the basis of an informal show of hands at a meeting not attended by all members, and not published as a meeting where such a decision would be made. Its extremely poor.

Thank you Mr Chairman for the opportunity to submit this deputation to the Committee in writing. I fully understand the enormity of some of the applications on the agenda today and the time these take.