

Cllr. Nancy Platts
BH2020 02524 - Top Floor Maisonette, 20 Bloomsbury Place

4th October 2020:

Please accept this email as a Ward Councillor objection to the approval of application BH2020/02524 / 20 Bloomsbury Place BN2 1DB. I would like to request that this application is determined by the Planning Committee.

As a Ward Councillor, I am supporting residents who live in this property and are concerned at the change of use to an HMO. I have outlined each concern below:

1. At the increasing number of HMOs in this area. Councillors sought to address this concern through a request to include East Brighton in an Article 4 Direction and residents want this to be strictly applied.
2. That the conversion to an HMO further reduces the availability of family homes in the Kemp Town area.
3. That the change of use to an HMO could lead to more than three residents occupying the property and that this may increase noise due to lack of soundproofing. Residents have highlighted historic problems with noise between floors due to the fact they are converted properties and were not originally designed as flats. This problem has been more noticeable with everyone working at home during the pandemic.
4. The small dimensions of the third bedroom which doesn't appear to meet current space standards, the lack of windows and lack of bathroom facilities for three separate households. My understanding from one of the residents is that the owner bought a two-bedroom flat and has changed the bathroom into a bedroom and changed a storage area into a shower room.
5. The potential for increased parking in an area that already suffers from significant parking problems. I understand that secure cycle parking has not been included in the application.
6. Inadequate fire safety provision.

I also wish to express my concern that residents seem to be unaware of the previous application that converted this property from a two-bedroom into a three-bedroom flat and that it was that planning application (approved in August 2020) that has appeared to 'pave the way' for another HMO in the area. On behalf of residents I want to reiterate their expectation that developers act within the spirit of Planning legislation and guidance.

