

The Brixton Society

Understanding the Past, Looking to the Future

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Website: www.brixtonsociety.org.uk

Lambeth Planning,
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Please reply to:
Alan Piper, RIBA,



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25th October 2020

For attention of:
Simon Brooksbank,
Sbrooksbank1@lambeth.gov.uk

Your ref:
20/02945/FUL

9 KNOWLE CLOSE, SW9 – Proposed Large HMO:

Dear Mr Brooksbank,

Thank you for your letter advising us of this application. I regret that our response to this case has been delayed while dealing with other major projects around Brixton.

We must **object** to this proposal, on the following grounds:

Location

We would normally be sympathetic to residential use on the periphery of Brixton Town Centre, but we are concerned at the loss of the nursery as an amenity which is valuable to an area of family housing.

The location, on a pedestrian route between a primary school and sheltered housing for the elderly, is sensitive to the type of residents to be housed in the building, but the applicant has provided no information about the expected occupants.

Management:

We are unhappy with any HMO proposal where the number of bed-spaces is in double digits, unless specific criteria are met, as outlined in the final paragraph below.

The applicant's Design & Access statement fails to explain why they have opted to provide an HMO rather than conventional self-contained apartments. An HMO might be acceptable if it met an identified need, such as special needs housing for a charitable organisation, but none such is proposed. No information has been provided about how the premises will be managed, or who residents are likely to be.

A major concern is that the upkeep of common parts and facilities will be inadequate, leading to deteriorating living conditions.

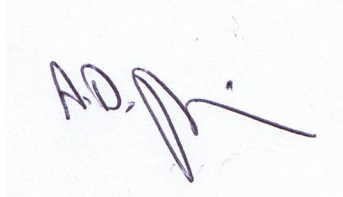
Requirements for a large HMO:

Our minimum expectations for a large House in Multiple Occupation are:

- On-site supervision should be provided, including a dedicated office space located near the entrance. A small desk in the entrance hall is inadequate and may not be acceptable in terms of fire safety. In this case, no information is provided on how the property would be managed in use.
- A cleaner's cupboard and sink should be provided, to enable cleaning of common parts, and storage of cleaning materials and implements.
- Basic laundry facilities should be provided on site, preferably with facilities for drying or airing clothing and bedding. Provision here seems to be very limited, with no drying space.
- While some units here have their own bathrooms or shower rooms, several still depend on shared facilities.
- For a location close to the town centre where car parking is not an option, at least some provision should be made for residents to store bicycles on site. There is no obvious provision shown on the drawings supplied.

The design fails to meet these requirements and Local Plan policies H4, H5, H8 and H9(a), and should therefore be refused.

Yours sincerely,



Hon. Secretary