

From: Ange Cowley [REDACTED]
Sent: 13 March 2025 14:40
To: Section 62A Applications Non Major <section62anonmajor@planninginspectorate.gov.uk>
Subject: Orchard House 25/10551/PINS

Application Number 25/10551/PINS

Orchard House 515-517 Stockwood Road Brislington Bristol BS4 5LR

Reference number S62A/2025/0079

I am writing to lodge a strong objection to the above planning application. I am [REDACTED] The flat is currently tenanted as we are unable to sell it due to ongoing safety issues with the building.

In April 2023 leaseholders paid for an intrusive EWS1 survey to take place. The result of the assessment was a B2 rating - meaning there isn't an adequate standard of fire safety and remedial work is required. Surely permission cannot be granted whilst the building currently has cladding issues and a B2 fire safety rating? I am appalled that they are trying to extend again onto an already unsafe building. They need to 'make good' the original building in the first instance. If the building was extended this would increase the risk of fire to current residents and also any new residents would be at risk with the two buildings attached to each other. The freeholder of the building has ignored all attempts from Orchard House leaseholders and the management company to rectify the danger. They have known about the fire safety issues since 2021 and no effort has been made to resolve them.

In December 2023, some of the leaseholders secured a First Tier Property Tribunal Remediation Order (CH1/00HB/2023/0007). This judgement ordered the freeholder to complete the works by June 2024. The freeholder did not partake in the FTT remediation hearing and no action has been taken by them to date. This new application is yet another insult to the leaseholders. It clearly shows the freeholder has no respect or care for their leaseholders, they obviously think they are 'above the law'.. Since the survey in 2023 the freeholder has cut all communications with the leaseholders and the management company.

The current management company are unable to apply to the Cladding Safety scheme as they are not the responsible entity for the building. They have asked the freeholder to either provide them with the authority or apply for it

themselves. The freeholder has ignored all requests. Homes England has also attempted to contact the freeholder to arrange for them to complete an application but they have also been ignored.

The freeholder - [REDACTED] and their associated companies have been applying to Bristol Council for planning developments at Orchard House since 2021, even though they were well aware of the defects. They have a pattern of applying to build a care home then switching to residential use as a way of avoiding affordable housing targets. The previous requests and appeals have been declined. Please refer to the Appeal decision report APP/Z0116/W/24/3341173. One of the leaseholders attended the hearing and met with Horizon Homes, Stokes Morgan and other associates of [REDACTED] informing them of the current situation.

[REDACTED] have been fined by Avon Fire for ignoring fire safety legislation at other buildings and have been involved in several planning controversies over the years.

Bristol Council, Avon Fire, local [REDACTED] Homes England, Sky News, BBC news and Bristol local papers have all tried and failed to get any response from the freeholder. [REDACTED] has taken her concerns about Orchard House to the House of Commons. The Housing minister stated that 'freeholders will be held to account', but obviously we don't know when that will be.

Current owners are unable to sell or remortgage as the major banks won't lend against the building as they deem it unsafe without a EWS1 certificate. This is causing anxiety and some residents are struggling with their mental health as they can't sell or remortgage their property and feel 'trapped' in an unsafe building. Access to the car park would also be severely affected as the proposed development attaches to the existing building at the car park entrance. There is also insufficient parking spaces as it is, before you add on any more flats. The current residents do not need their lives impacted any more. Any extension of Orchard House would surely be subject to a B2 rating as well so allowing this would only make the current problem even worse.

It is important that your department understands the severity of this situation and the impact your decision has on the leaseholders and residents at Orchard House.

To sum up, the freeholder has shown no interest in resolving the current building issues and has still not met their responsibilities for the fire safety concerns with the existing building. Allowing the building of more flats on a B2 rated property is a massive risk to life and should not even be considered. Exposing the current building to further fire risks with machinery and hazardous materials is beyond belief.

This proposal should therefore most definitely be declined.

I really hope you make the right decision.

Thank you for your time.

Regards

Angela Cowley