

From: Nizar Jaffer [REDACTED]
Sent: 16 June 2025 10:52
To: Section 62A Applications Non Major <section62anonmajor@planninginspectorate.gov.uk>
Subject: Subject: Objection to Planning Application S62A/2025/0105 (Land to the rear of 9 Priory Road, Clifton)

From: 26 Elmdale Road, Clifton, Bristol, BS8 1SH\ Date: 16 June 2025

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing as the resident of [REDACTED] of the proposed development site, to object in the strongest possible terms to this planning application. My family and I have lived in this house for [REDACTED] and cherish the unique character and community of this area. Frankly, I am appalled that an application to squeeze a five-bedroom House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) into the tiny rear plot of 9 Priory Road has even progressed this far. This proposal flagrantly conflicts with numerous planning policies and the values that make our area special. I urge the Planning Inspectorate to refuse this application outright.

My specific objections, based on material planning considerations, are as follows:

- **Overdevelopment of a Confined Backland Site & Out-of-Character Design:**

The scheme attempts to shoehorn an entire house into an extremely confined space behind an existing property. This is blatant overdevelopment. Policy DM26 (Local Character and Distinctiveness) requires new development to respect the height, scale, massing, form, and architectural style of its surroundings. In the case of backland/infill development, DM26 is explicit that it must be subservient to surrounding buildings and not harm the character or amenity of the area. What is proposed here is the opposite – a two-storey modern block crammed into a back garden, which would tower awkwardly close to neighbouring homes. The design is starkly modern and completely out of keeping with the predominantly Georgian and Victorian architecture that defines Priory Road. Our street's charm comes from its historic

terraces and villas; a contemporary flat-roofed HMO in a rear yard utterly fails to “reflect locally characteristic architectural styles... and materials” as required. Instead, it would stick out like a sore thumb. Far from contributing positively to local character, this intrusive design would harm the appearance of the street – a direct conflict with DM26, which states development will not be permitted if it is harmful to local character. In plain terms, this proposal would diminish the distinguished character of our street.

- **Harm to Neighbours’ Amenity – Overbearing and Oppressive Impact:**

I am especially concerned for the immediate neighbors adjacent to the site (the properties to the sides of 9 Priory Road’s rear plot). They will suffer a major visual intrusion and loss of amenity if this goes ahead. The proposed HMO building would sit just metres from their windows and gardens, creating an overbearing presence. It will loom over their outlook, block light, and erode any sense of privacy. What is now open rear aspect would be replaced by a looming modern wall. This kind of impact is unacceptable in a residential area. Again, Policy DM26 and related design guidance insist that backland developments must not adversely affect the amenity of existing properties – yet clearly this proposal would do exactly that. No amount of token landscaping or frosting of windows could mitigate having a bulky structure so tightly pressed up against adjacent homes. In particular, I would draw your attention to the house to the left of the development site on Tyndalls Park Road, which looks to be even closer to the proposed new building than any other neighbouring property. That household will have the view from their windows replaced with a two-storey modern wall just a few metres away. The impact on their privacy, natural light, and enjoyment of their home and garden will be severe – arguably even worse than the impact on our property opposite. They are being boxed in and overshadowed in a way that is completely unacceptable.

As a neighbor opposite the site, I am also concerned about the visual impact: looking out from Elmdale Road, we and our neighbors will see an ugly modern box popping up behind No.9, spoiling the

historic rooflines and open feel between villas. It will feel very oppressive for everyone nearby.

- **Conservation Area – Violations of Heritage and Design Policies:**

This location falls within the Clifton and Hotwells Conservation Area, a designated heritage area known for its special architectural character. As residents, we face strict rules to protect that character – for example, we can’t even install a new window or solar panel without careful consideration. In fact, minor changes that would normally be “permitted development” (like small extensions, dormer windows, or modern window frames) are often refused in conservation areas under Article 4 Directions, precisely to safeguard our 18th-19th century streetscape. It is therefore incredible and deeply ironic that while historic homeowners in Clifton are prohibited from trivial alterations, a developer is seriously proposing to drop a wholly modern building into our back gardens. National and local heritage policies make it crystal clear that any development in a conservation area must “preserve or enhance” the area’s special architectural or historic character. Innovative or contemporary designs are not outright banned, but they “must be sympathetic to their context.” This proposal is blatantly unsympathetic – it would neither preserve nor enhance the character of Clifton. Bristol’s own Core Strategy Policy BCS22 demands that development “safeguard or enhance” heritage assets and the character and setting of important areas, including conservation areas. Here, instead of enhancement, we get harm. The modern style, materials, and form proposed bear no relationship to the Georgian and Victorian context. Approving this would make a mockery of conservation principles. The modern structure would be an eyesore that conflicts with the architectural integrity of the area.

- **Housing Mix, Community Balance and HMO Impacts:**

The plan is to create a 5-bedroom House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) (Use Class C4). I have serious concerns about the intensification of HMO use on this street and what it means

for the community. Clifton is a mixed area but is fundamentally a residential family neighborhood with many long-term residents. We value a balanced community. The Council's Core Strategy Policy BCS18 (Housing Mix and Balanced Communities) exists to ensure exactly that it requires that new housing development "maintains, provides or contributes to a mix of housing in an area" so as to support mixed, balanced and inclusive communities. What does this proposal contribute? Nothing positive. A 5-bed HMO will likely be occupied by transient renters (such as students or young short-term tenants), not by families or long-term community members. It does not add any family housing or diverse housing type – it is just more of a type of accommodation (student/shared housing) that Clifton already has in ample supply. BCS18 says developments should help redress housing imbalances, but this would exacerbate an imbalance if anything, by converting a potential small-house plot into yet another group rental unit. I fear this indicates a worrying trend of HMO creep, where family homes or plots are repurposed for maximum profit rental units, to the detriment of community stability.

- **Lack of Sustainable Design and Infrastructure Provision:**

Even on practical grounds, the scheme appears poorly thought out. Bristol Core Strategy Policy BCS15 (Sustainable Design and Construction) insists that new developments be built to high standards of sustainability – addressing issues like energy efficiency, waste and recycling, water management, and overall environmental quality. There is no indication that this proposal meets any of those expectations. On such a constrained plot, where is the space for adequate refuse and recycling storage, or secure bicycle parking for potentially 5+ occupants? Will bins have to be dragged through the narrow access and left on the pavement, cluttering the street? The application doesn't inspire confidence that these practicalities are resolved. Furthermore, the plans also involve demolishing part of a historic stone boundary wall to create access – a move that in itself is questionable in a conservation area (those walls are often of historic value).

In summary, this application is profoundly flawed and inappropriate for this part of Clifton. It seeks to place a jarring, dense HMO development on a tiny backland site in a conservation area, to the great detriment of the area's character, appearance, and residential amenity. The scheme conflicts with multiple development plan policies (DM26, DM2, BCS18, BCS15, BCS22 to name a few) as well as the core principles of national heritage guidance. It offers no public benefit that could begin to outweigh this harm – only harm is evident.

I implore you to reject this application. Approving it would set a terrible precedent that undermines our conservation area and encourages cramming inappropriate developments into every nook and cranny without regard for context or community.

Thank you for considering my comments. I trust the Inspectorate will give significant weight to the local objections and the policy conflicts I have highlighted.

Yours faithfully,

Nizar Jaffer -

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of Nizar Jaffer.