

11/05/2021

PLANNING STATEMENT: 62 OCKLEY ROAD, BOGNOR REGIS PO21 2HR

The Adopted Arun Local Plan (2011-2031) strikes a balance recognising the contribution of HMOs to the local economy as a source of housing for people on low incomes whilst recognising concerns over the clustering of HMO in the centre of Bognor Regis and its impact on a local area amenities, noise and disturbance, generation of more refuse and off-street parking.

We believe that the introduction of the “Landlord Tax” (Section 24) combined with the new licensing laws introduced in October 2018 have driven many landlords including HMO landlords to leave the private rental sector and sell their rental properties and that these are not being replaced. As HMO landlords, we know the impact this is having as we are receiving daily enquiries of people who say they are desperately looking for rooms because their landlords are selling. Our existing tenants are also staying put presumably because they can’t find anywhere else.

As professional HMO landlord since 2005, we have been witnessing a chronic shortage of rooms available to workers on low income in Bognor Regis throughout this time judging by the number of enquiries which we and our fellow landlords are regularly unable to satisfy. The room occupation rate analysis of our properties proves this. It is often the case that new tenants move in in the afternoon when the former tenants left in the morning as they are desperate.

Finally, our tenants have been from the beginning what we now refer to as Key Workers working in care homes, hospitals, within the food production and distribution, shops etc. These people are often paid a minimum wage or are on 0 hour contracts and are unable to obtain conventional tenancies or unable to afford them even though they work very hard. There are lot of businesses and farms who depend on these people within our local area and HMO accommodation availability is also essential for these businesses to attract and house their staff.

In our experience, our tenants work too hard and too many long hours to have time to create a nuisance preferring to rest on their day off when they get one. Moreover, our HMO tenants very rarely have cars as they generally can’t afford them and therefore need to live close to amenities.

The location of this particular HMO is very popular being close to central amenities, shops and public transports.

Karin Butcher