# Residents and authorities oppose 20-bedroom HMO plan on Smethwick High Street



Plans to construct a 20-bedroom house of multiple occupation (HMO) above and behind Viney’s Opticians on Smethwick High Street have drawn strong opposition from local residents and authorities. The proposed development, submitted by Quinton-based developer Pritam Singh Gill of We Want Any Homes Ltd, aims to convert and extend existing structures to provide residential accommodation and restore parts of the building, citing a sustainable approach to meeting local housing needs.

However, residents of Victoria Avenue, a small residential street situated behind the shops on Smethwick High Street, have voiced significant concerns about the impact the HMO would have on their community. They describe the current situation as already challenging, with existing issues related to limited parking, rat infestations, and frequent fly-tipping around the area. One resident told Sandwell Council, "If we the residents are having issues already with the existing shops and flats on rats, parking, fly tipping, can you imagine the situation when a 20 room HMO is slapped in the middle?"

Further complaints from neighbours highlight worries that the HMO’s occupants would likely use residential parking bays designated for Midland Heart residents, including those with disabilities and families with small children, forcing local residents to park elsewhere. A local objector commented, “The narrow alleyway where the HMO will be will get more congested because there are delivery vans congesting it already and an HMO will make matters worse. A 20 room HMO will make everything 100 times worse, please stop this from going ahead.”

West Midlands Police have also submitted objections concerning the application, particularly questioning the number of parking spaces available, which remains unspecified in the proposal. The police raised concerns about the lack of security and management plans for the HMO. Additionally, the planned accommodation would provide only three bathrooms and kitchens for the 20 bedrooms, with no communal lounge areas included, a design the police believe is insufficient for the future residents’ wellbeing and safety.

The application itself argues that the project represents a sustainable use of a brownfield site and would not cause harm to parking or the amenity of the area. It describes the refurbishment as a heritage-sensitive restoration and modernisation of the rear sections of the building, intended to tidy and improve the site.

As the proposal undergoes consideration by Sandwell Council, the objections from residents and local authorities underscore wide-ranging concerns about traffic congestion, parking availability, pest control, and the general suitability of such a large HMO in this part of Smethwick. The council’s decision on whether to approve or reject the plan will take into account these community and policing inputs as well as planning policies.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://find-and-update.company-information.service.gov.uk/company/13056483/officers> - This URL provides information about WE WANT ANY HOMES LIMITED, including the role of its director, Pritam Singh Gill, which supports the claim about the developer's identity. However, it does not specifically mention the project in Smethwick.
2. <https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/info/20072/planning/1646/planning_applications> - This URL could provide access to planning applications in Sandwell, which might include details about the proposed HMO project on Smethwick High Street, although specific application details are not directly available from this general link.
3. <https://www.westmidlands.police.uk/advice> - This URL offers general advice from West Midlands Police, which could indirectly support the concerns raised by the police regarding the proposal, though it does not specifically address the Smethwick HMO application.
4. <https://www.midlandheart.org.uk/information-for-residents/parking-permits-and-bays> - This URL provides information about Midland Heart's parking policies, which could be relevant to the concerns about parking availability raised by residents regarding the proposed HMO.
5. <https://www.birminghammail.co.uk/news/local-news/sm-18802140> - This URL could potentially provide local news coverage of similar developments or issues in the area, though it is not specific to the Smethwick High Street proposal.
6. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/houses-in-multiple-occupation-hmos> - This URL provides general guidance on HMOs from the UK government, which supports the context of the proposed development and the concerns raised about such establishments.
7. <https://www.birminghammail.co.uk/black-country/angry-neighbours-say-hmo-make-31512503> - Please view link - unable to able to access data