

**Planning Statement for Full Planning Permission
and Listed Building Consent Regarding External
and Internal Works to 4 Sunderland Road
(Retrospective).**

4 Sunderland Place, Clifton, Bristol BS8 1NA.

On behalf of Shaunak Investments Ltd.

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Author: WS/FS



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1. Introduction

- 1.1. This statement has been prepared in support of a retrospective planning and Listed Building Consent application to Bristol City Council for a number of external and internal works to 4 Sunderland Place, Clifton, Bristol.
- 1.2. A full itemised list of works can be found within Section 4 'The Proposals' of this statement.
- 1.3. The description of development is as follows:

"Retrospective application for Planning Permission for minor External Works and Listed Building Consent for internal and external alterations".
- 1.4. The application site comprises an existing large House in Multiple Occupation (Sui Generis). This use is to remain extant.
- 1.5. This Statement sets out the justification for the proposed development firstly by reviewing the site and its surroundings in terms of the relevant physical, social, economic and planning context as well as the relevant planning history and local and national planning policies.
- 1.6. The Assessment section then explores whether the proposal is compliant with the adopted and emerging development plan policies and considers the proposal against other material considerations, including the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), to which the appropriate weight is given.
- 1.7. This Statement should be read in conjunction with the associated drawings submitted alongside this application.



2. Site Description and Context

- 2.1. The site is located in Clifton, a suburb of north Bristol, at no.4 Sunderland Place, and is contained within the administrative boundary of Bristol City Council.
- 2.2. The application site comprises a four-storey, terraced building in use as a large House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) (Sui Generis). Access is via the front of the property by Sunderland Place which benefits from restricted on-street parking ('Permit Holders Only' parking restriction zone).
- 2.3. The immediate surrounding area is predominantly residential with a number of commercial/retail uses found sporadically within the locality. Whiteladies Road and Queens Road are located close by and benefit from a wide range of services and amenities, as well as public transport options. Furthermore, the Clifton Down Railway Station is located within walking distance of the site (circa 650 meters).
- 2.4. Due to the application sites' close location to a range of public transport options and services and amenities the area is considered highly sustainable.
- 2.5. The property forms part of a Grade II Listed Building (ref: 1202608) which includes properties 1-4 Sunderland Place. The application site is also located within the Whiteladies Road Conservation Area. A number of Listed Buildings are found within close proximity to the site.
- 2.6. The site is within Flood Zone 1, the area least at risk from flooding.
- 2.7. As highlighted below, planning permission was previously granted for the use of the site as a large HMO (Sui Generis). The site continues to be used for such purposes.

3. Planning History

3.1. The planning history of the application site is set out in the table below. Principally these relate to the conversion of the property to a House in Multiple Occupation as of the most recently permitted permission.

Application Reference	Proposals	Decision Date	Determination
06/01339/F	Change of use of existing property from guest house to student accommodation in the form of a house in multiple occupation.	17/07/2006	Granted – Subject to Conditions.
00/00724/F	Change of use of property from a guest house to a single dwelling house.	29/03/2000	Application Withdrawn.
83//00932/E_C	Guest house and premises	11/04/1983	Granted

Table 1. Planning History

3.2. The application use classification as a Large House in Multiple Occupation (Sui Generis) is considered well established as per the permission above and the ongoing tenancy.

3.3. A copy of the decision notice can be found at **Appendix 1**.

4. The Proposals

- 4.1. This application is made for retrospective listed building consent for internal and external works that have already been implemented.
- 4.2. Retrospective planning permission is also sought for a number of external works principally related to the restoration and repair of windows and fittings, drainage detailing and courtyard roofing. No additional floor space is proposed.
- 4.3. These external works are itemised below and are illustrated via the enclosed plans and drawings (please refer to the Heritage Statement for further information).

External

Sunderland Place Elevation

- Removal of redundant pipework.
- Creation of minor ventilation openings at basement level (within the lightwell).

Rear Elevation / Rear Extension

- Repair of timber window units.
- Recovering and reduction in pitch of the roof of the rear extension.
- Installation of a new uPVC door unit and window unit to rear extension.
- Removal of a plastic roof covering to the rear courtyard.

Internal

Basement

- Installation of new partition in rear space.
- Upgrading of bathroom facilities

Ground Floor

- Reconfiguration of layout and subdivision bedroom spaces to the rear.
- Installation of new internal partition walls and reconfiguration of layout to the front.
- Upgraded of bathroom facilities.
- Installation of suspended ceilings to bedroom areas.

First Floor

- Reconfiguration of layout and subdivision of bedroom spaces the rear.



- Installation of new internal partition walls and reconfiguration of layout to the front of the building.
- Upgrading of bathroom facilities.
- Installation of suspended ceilings to bedroom areas.

Second Floor

- Reconfiguration of subdivision and layout of bedroom space.
- Upgrading of bathroom facilities.
- Installation of suspended ceilings to bedroom areas.
- Installation of new clear glazed roof light, replacing a wired glass rooflight.

5. Planning Policy

5.1. Section 38(6) of Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that a determination made under the Planning Acts must be in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

5.2. The development plan for Bristol City Council comprises the following:

- Bristol Development Framework Core Strategy (Adopted June 2011)
- Site Allocations and Development Management Policies document (Adopted July 2014)
- West of England Joint Waste Core Strategy (Adopted March 2011)

Statutory Development Plan

Bristol Development Framework Core Strategy (2011)

- **Policy BCS15** Sustainable Design and Construction

5.3. Policy BCS15 sets out the Council's aims and ambitions regarding sustainable design and construction, with a number of key issues identified including flexibility and adaptability of existing stock by allowing for future modification and facilitating future refurbishment and retrofitting.

- **Policy BCS20** Effective and Efficient Use of Land

5.4. BCS20 emphasizes the need to use land effectively and efficiently, highlighting the importance of reusing previously developed land for new development.

- **Policy BCS21** Quality Urban Design

5.5. Policy BCS21 states that new development in Bristol should deliver high-quality urban design, safeguard the amenities of existing development, and create a high-quality environment for future occupiers.

- **Policy BCS22** Conservation and the Historic Environment

5.6. Policy BCS22 confirms that development proposals will safeguard or enhance heritage assets and the character and setting of areas of acknowledged importance including: *"Scheduled ancient monuments; Historic buildings both nationally and locally listed; Historic parks and gardens both nationally and locally listed; Conservation areas; Archaeological remains"*.

Bristol Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Document (2014)

- **Policy DM1** Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

5.7. DM1 states that Bristol City Council will always work proactively with applicants jointly to find solutions which means that proposals can be approved wherever possible.

- **Policy DM26** Local Character and Distinctiveness

5.8. DM26 confirms that development will not be permitted where it would be harmful to local character and distinctiveness or where it would fail to take the opportunities available to improve the character and quality of the area and the way it functions.

- **Policy DM27** Layout and Form

5.9. Policy DM27 sets out that the layout, form, pattern and arrangement of streets, open spaces, development blocks, buildings and landscapes should contribute to the creation of quality urban design and healthy, safe and sustainable places.

5.10. Proposals should not prejudice the existing and future development potential of adjoining sites or the potential for the area to achieve a coherent, interconnected and integrated built form.

- **Policy DM30** Alterations to Existing Buildings

5.11. DM30 states that should alterations be made to the building's curtilage, they are expected to:

- *Respect the siting, scale, form, proportions, materials, details and the overall design*
- *and character of the host building, its curtilage and the broader street scene;*
- *Retain and/or reinstate traditional or distinctive architectural features and fabric;*
- *Safeguard the amenity of the host premises and neighbouring occupiers;*
- *Leave sufficient usable external private space for the occupiers of the building.*

- **Policy DM31** Heritage Assets

5.12. Policy DM31 sets out a number of general principles for conservation, and where appropriate enhancement, of heritage assets. In regard to listed buildings and Conservation Areas, the following is identified:

Listed Buildings: *Alterations, extensions or changes of use to listed buildings, or development in their vicinity, will be expected to have no adverse impact on those elements which contribute to their special architectural or historic interest, including their settings.*

Conservation Areas: *Development within or which would affect the setting of a conservation area will be expected to preserve or, where appropriate, enhance those elements which contribute to their special character or appearance" (our emphasis added).*

Material Considerations

- 5.13. The following material considerations are identified as relevant and significant in relation to the submitted proposals.
- National Planning Policy Framework (September 2023)**
- 5.14. A National Planning Policy Framework was revised in September 2023 and sets out the Government's Planning Policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.
- 5.15. **Paragraph 8** sets out that the function of the planning system is to contribute to sustainable development, Paragraph 8 elaborates on this further confirming the three overarching objectives, which are:
- a) An economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy;*
 - b) A social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities; and*
 - c) An environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment.*
- 5.16. **Paragraph 10** states that “so that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development”.
- 5.17. **Paragraph 11** elaborates on this and states that development proposals that comply with an up-to-date development plan should be approved without delay.
- 5.18. **Paragraph 134** confirms that permission should be refused if the development is of a poor design and fails to take available opportunities for improving the character and quality of an area.
- 5.19. **Paragraph 190** confirms that plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. The following considerations are noted:
- “a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
 - b) the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;*
 - c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and*
 - d) opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place”.*
- 5.20. With regard to determining proposals affecting heritage assets, **Paragraph 194** sets out that (inter alia):



“In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance”.

5.21. **Paragraph 201** regards the potential impacts on designated heritage assets where proposed development will lead to substantial harm (or total loss of significance). It is identified that Local Planning Authorities should refuse planning consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial harm or loss (a number of exception criteria are also identified that must be satisfied in whole).

5.22. **Paragraph 202** regards potential impacts on designated assets where proposed development, in contrast to Para 201, would result in less than substantial harm. Para 202 sets out:

“Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use”.

6. Planning Assessment

Principle of Development

- 6.1. The application site currently comprises a large House in Multiple Occupation (Sui Generis) for which this use is to remain extant. The proposed works are largely made with regard to the restoration and repair of external features (and removal of redundant features). They are also made to facilitate a slightly different layout/room arrangement for which planning permission is not required.
- 6.2. As the site use is to remain unaffected with no subsequent change to the character and function of the property it is considered that the Principle of Development is established.

Impact on Designated Heritage Assets

- 6.3. When assessing the weight to be applied to any perceived harm to heritage assets in the planning balance, Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) sets out:

“(1) In considering whether to grant planning permission [or permission in principle] for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

“(2) Without prejudice to section 72, in the exercise of the powers of appropriation, disposal and development (including redevelopment) conferred by the provisions of sections 232, 233 and 235(1) of the principal Act, a local authority shall have regard to the desirability of preserving features of special architectural or historic interest, and in particular, listed buildings”.

- 6.4. As a consequence of the legislation above the desirability of preservation must be given importance in decision making process.
- 6.5. As aforementioned, this application is accompanied by a supporting heritage statement which sets out in detail the significance of the asset, the perceived impact upon its significance, and public benefits arising from the proposals. The below is summarised.
- 6.6. The application proposes a number of external and internal works which are as follows:

External works

- The removal of redundant pipework to the principal elevation.
- The creation of minor ventilation openings in the front lightwell at ground floor level.
- The repair of timber windows on the rear elevation.
- The installation of a new uPVC door unit and window unit to rear extension.
- The recovering and reduction in pitch of the roof of the rear extension.

- The removal of a plastic roof covering to the rear courtyard.

Internal works

- The installation of new partition walls on the basement, ground and first floors.
- The reconfiguration of the layout and subdivision of bedroom spaces created through a previous phase of subdivision.
- The installation of a suspended ceilings to the bedroom areas on the ground, first and second floors.
- The upgrading of bathroom and kitchen facilities.
- The replacement of the rooflight in the central stairwell.

6.7. The works as set out above have been assessed with regard to their positive impact, neutral impact and perceived harm on the Listed Building and Conservation Area, which are summarised below. These impacts should be assessed as part of the planning balance of the proposals.

- The removal of the pipework to the principal elevation, the plastic roof structures to the rear, and the repairs to the rear windows are identified to have a positive impact on the overall presentation and character of the building and the wider Conservation Area.
- The re-covering of the roof structure and the introduction of minor ventilation openings from lightwell are identified to have neutral impact upon the overall architectural interest of the building.
- The introduction of uPVC door and windows units and subsequent minor addition of modern fenestration are set out to have some degree of harm. However, these alterations are contained within the later addition to the building, and as such this harm is assessed to be at *"the very lower end of less than substantial harm"*.

6.8. As previously noted, these works have primarily been implemented to restore and repair and number of external features as well as to improve the quality of life of the building's occupants.

6.9. The assessment sets out that some of the internal works to No. 4 Sunderland Place (such as the partitions at the basement and front of the ground and first floors) have resulted in a less than substantial harm, at the lower end of the spectrum, to the overall heritage significance of the Listed Building.

6.10. As paragraph 202 of the NPPF sets out, the harm derived from the proposals should be weighed against the public benefits of the scheme including the optimal viable use as continued residential (the extant use as an established HMO) use, and an improved living environment for the future occupiers.

6.11. Furthermore, some of the works such as the removal of the pipework and plastic roof structures result in positive enhancements to the designated heritage assets, which should also be seen as a public benefit.

6.12. It is therefore considered that overall, the retrospective works are considered acceptable on balance in terms of their impact on the Listed Building.

6.13. In terms of the impact on the Conservation Area, the Heritage Assessment highlights that:

“The ability to appreciate the elements of the building which contribute to the character and appearance of the surrounds, as well as the group value with the rest of the Listed terrace will be preserved through the external proposals ... Therefore, no harm is considered to arise to the contribution which No. 4 makes to the wider terrace of Nos. 1-4 Sunderland Place or the surrounding Conservation Area”.

Residential Amenity

6.14. The external alterations to the property do not propose the addition of new windows or alterations to the building’s height, scale or massing and will therefore not impact upon the residential amenity of surrounding properties in terms of privacy and overlooking.

6.15. Therefore, it is considered that the scheme would have no harmful impact on the levels of residential amenity for future occupants and neighbours.

Character and Appearance

6.16. The application seeks retrospective consent for a number of external works, which are relatively minor in nature. Notably, the removal of redundant pipework on the principal elevation and repair of timber windows on the rear elevation are the most visible of the proposed works within the setting of the Listed Building and Conservation Area (and are considered of public benefit).

6.17. Based on the minor nature of the external works, and their limited impact on the building’s overall appearance and character, it is believed that the proposed changes will not have any negative effect on the visual quality of the surrounding area.

6.18. The proposals therefore accord with Policy DM31 by proposing no adverse impact to the elements of the designated asset that contribute to its special architectural and historic interest, and by preserving the special character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1. The application seeks full planning permission for retrospective works to an existing large House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) (Sui Generis) comprising a number of external works principally related to the preservation of the building and quality of life of the occupants.
- 7.2. The enclosed heritage assessment finds that the submitted proposal would result in a less than substantial harm, at the lower end of the spectrum, to the overall heritage significance of the Listed Building. This limited degree of harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the scheme, and the intention for continued use as a residential property as per the extant permission.
- 7.3. The scheme would provide suitable levels of residential amenity for the occupants of the building and would not impact upon the residential amenity of neighbouring properties.
- 7.4. Accordingly, the proposals are in compliance with the local plan and there are no relevant material considerations which would amount to a clear reason for refusal. As such, it is considered that planning permission should be duly granted.



Appendix 1 – Decision Notice ref: 06/01339/F

Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)
Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

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