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architecture & planning

Our Ref: JMH / PL / 23-008-11

**By Submission**  
Dec 2023

# HERITAGE STATEMENT

27 Bath Street, Southport, PR9 0DP

Change of Use from a 10 Bed Guest House (C1) to a House in Multiple Occupation (Sui Generis)  
(8no Units) and associated works

## Introduction

This statement has been produced in support of a Full Application for the proposed Change of Use from a 10 Bed Guest House with shared facilities (available on short-long term rent) (Planning Use Class C1) to a 9 Bed Large HMO with shared facilities (Planning Use Class *Sui Generis*).



This document is intended to be read in conjunction with the Design and Access Statement for the project, which sets out the proposals in greater detail.

## Setting

Southport is a resort town that developed in the late 18th and 19th centuries.

The town contains 175 listed buildings that are either Grade 2 or Grade 2\* listed. There are no Grade 1 buildings in the town but there are a number of significant Conservation Areas covering a large part of the town centre.

Many of the significant buildings in the town are located on Lord Street and date from the period between 1880 and 1920 when a great deal of commercial and tourism development took place in the resort.

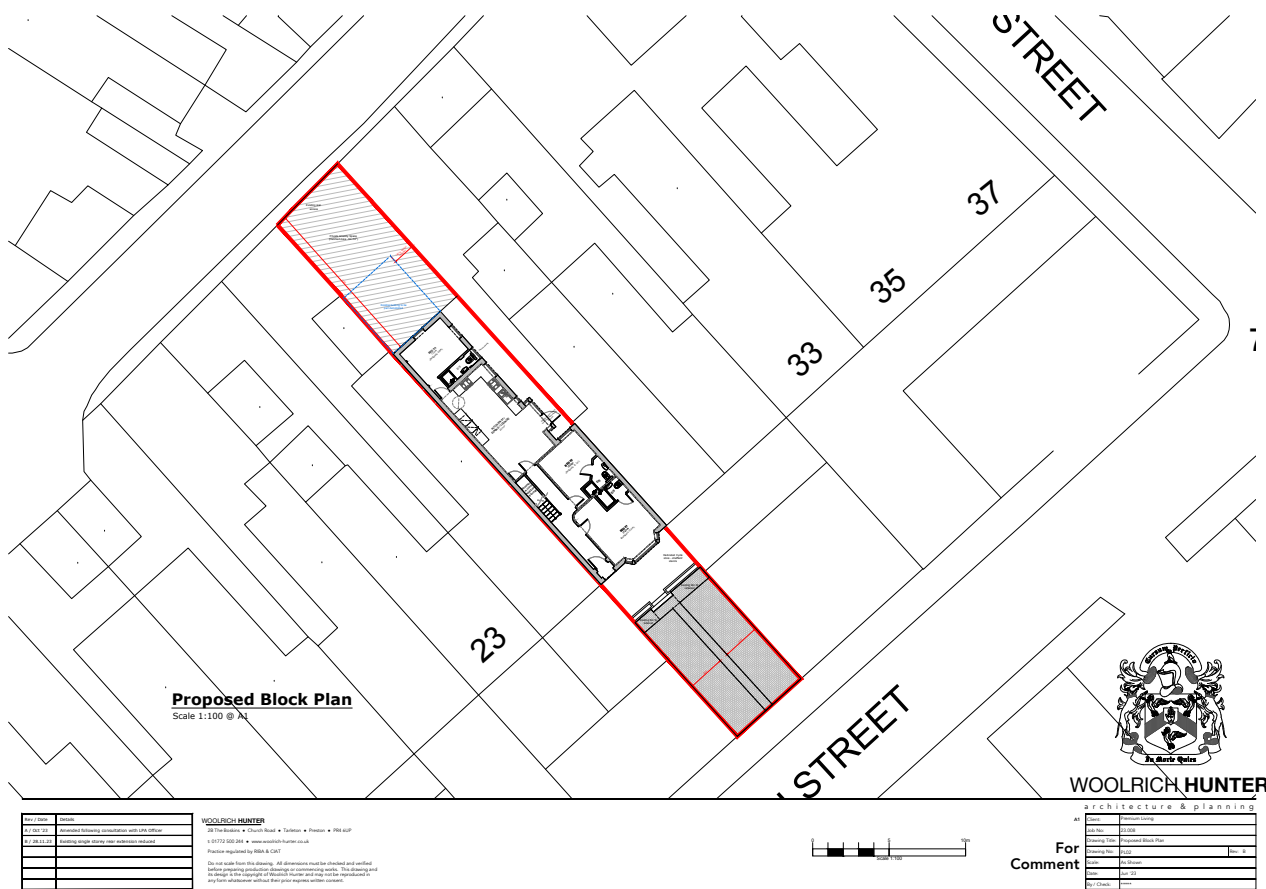
The Verandas along Lord Street are a significant feature of the town as well as being important survivors from this era and many verandas are listed separately or completely independently from the buildings to which they are attached. The heyday of the town was clearly the Victorian and Edwardian decades in which very flamboyant and decorative architecture prevailed.

## Site Description

The application site is situated in an area designated as Southport Resort Area , Southport Central Area and a Regeneration Site on the Council’s Adopted Unitary Development Plan. The application site is within the Southport Central Area on the emerging Local Plan. The site is within the Promenade Conservation Area.

The application property is a 3 Storey Building on the North Western Side of Bath Street.

The application property is a well proportioned and spacious terraced property, with a long standing historic use as a 10 bed unit Guest House.



## Heritage Appraisal

The application site sits within the Promenade Conservation Area.

The Promenade Conservation Area defines the original line of seafront buildings and provides access to Southport Pier, built in 1860. It is the oldest iron pleasure pier still in existence. The Promenade created a pleasant seaside environment with the sea on one side and grand attractive villas and hotels on the other. It is the most obvious visual expression of the resort character of Southport. Its mainly 19th Century townscape exhibits unique architectural vitality with most buildings having grand proportions, varying in style and materials, from French Renaissance in stone ashlar, to Flemish Gothic with stepped parapets, turrets and dormers. The Royal Clifton Hotel dominates the southern

end of the Promenade with the former hospital dominating at the northern end, together providing a distinctive enclosure to the linear Promenade frontage .

Bath Street runs parallel and in between Lord Street and the Promenade, it connects Nevill Street to Seabank Road while intersecting Bold Street. Bath Street is a wide road which has a more spacious character than the other side streets. The street is characterised by what would originally have been townhouses with their long narrow front gardens. Many of these have been converted to B&B's, flats and houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) and some of these have a dated and dilapidated appearance which has a negative effect on the character and appearance of the area. Recent changes have seen the closure of several of the B&Bs and conversion to flats and HMOs. Also, some of the B&Bs house seasonal workers, rather than holidaymakers.

The majority of properties have uPVC windows and have lost important features, such as their boundary walls. This undermines their appearance and their formal relationship with the street. There are a number of poorly designed front and side extensions; this has caused a negative effect on the streetscape and general amenity of the area.

Previously there has been an uncontrolled element to development which benefits from permitted development rights in regard to the conversion of buildings into HMO's. This has now been addressed through the recent adoption of a HMO Supplementary Planning Document and removal of permitted development rights under an Article 4 direction.

The application site is not a listed building, listed non-heritage asset or included within Southport Council's Townscape Heritage Project Plan (NB. The site sits within the wider Townscape Heritage boundary).

## **Proposal**

The proposal seeks planning permission for the change of use of this 10 bed unit Guest House (C1 Class) to an 8 Bed Large HMO (Sui Generis Use Class) - At the time of application, the application property has been granted an HMO Licence for occupancy of the premises up to a maximum of 10 people.

Given the historic use of the premise as a guest house with shared facilities; no external alterations are required with the application largely comprising a material change of use only. The "comings and goings" of a fully occupied guest house, to an 8no. unit HMO would present a de- intensification of use.

The existing bin storage (as with many properties located along Bath Street) is at the front off the premises. It is proposed to move the bin store to the rear of the property so to improve the overall aesthetic of the street scene and thus preserve and enhance the character of the area.

The purpose is to continue to offer high quality, affordable shared accommodation to working Professional people such as key workers, graduates, local workers and those on secondment from established employment (not intended for Students).

With the property currently used as a mid-long term As the number of tenants occupying in the property will be decreasing, the refuse and recycling storage facilities provided are

more than adequate for the intended number of occupants with an established use. Additionally, since the use of the property began as a 10-bedroom Guest House, there have been no complaints either to the applicant or the council concerning refuse management at the property and no complaints are expected to be made going forwards.

It is proposed to part demolish the rear single storey outrigger to create additional external amenity space. Said annex is a non-original feature to the property and unlikely to cause significant harm to the character of the area.

## **Conclusion**

The historic use of the site as a 10 bed unit Guest House is akin to a modern day HMO in terms of core material use, with the proposed COU presenting no material changes either externally or internally there would be continuity in terms of the use and character of the area. The “comings and goings” of a fully occupied guest house, to an 8no. unit HMO would present a de-intensification of use.

The proposal to move the refuse and cycle storage to the rear of the property can be seen as a positive contribution towards preserving the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, as well as the overall street scene in general. The part demolition of the rear single storey annex cannot be seen from the public highway, and as a non-original / additional form, will not cause any significant harm to the Conservation Area.