

C2322 26a St Martin's Place, Brighton

## **DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT**

### **INTERNAL ALTERATIONS**

October 2023  
REV:P1

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### **Background**

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared on behalf of the owners of the property, in support of an application for a Prior Approval (PA) application for internal alterations. It should be read in conjunction with the planning application under Planning Portal Reference: (PP-12575990).

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared following Government guidance which requires a statement to be produced for planning applications.

It advises that one statement should cover both design and access, allowing applicants to demonstrate the integrated approach that will deliver inclusive design, and address a full range of access requirements throughout the design process.

It should also explain the design principles and concepts that have been applied to a proposal providing an explanation and justification for the following particular aspects of a development – the amount of development, the layout, the scale and the appearance of a development. The Circular also clearly states that it is a requirement for a statement to describe access arrangements.

This Design and Access Statement fully accords with this Government advice.

### **Application Documentation**

The Prior Approval is supported by the following documentation, which should be read alongside this Design and Access Statement:

1. Supporting Statement (prepared by Wilbury Planning Ltd)
2. Application Form

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3. CIL Form
4. Wildlife Assessment Checklist
5. Drawings C2322(08)02 and C2322(08)20.

### **Scope and Content of this Statement**

Section 2 of this Design and Access Statement includes an assessment of the Application Site and its context with particular regard to surrounding land uses, access, transport, and local character.

Section 3 includes an assessment of the Application Site with particular regard to its social and economic context.

Section 4 includes an assessment and analysis of the Application Site and considers the constraints and opportunities to development.

Section 5 considers matters such as public involvement and consultation prior to the submission of the Prior Approval.

Section 6 evaluates the design process and considers such matters as potential operator's likely requirements. In addition, it considers a range of matters in relation to the design of the proposed development and its impact on the historic environment of the town.

Section 7 provides discusses sustainability issues of the proposed development including in terms of the extent to which it is possible to be energy efficient.

Section 8 of this Statement provides a brief conclusion setting out why this Prior Approval should be approved.

### **Summary of the Proposed Development**

The property at 26a St Martins Place is consented, constructed, and currently used as a mixed-use building, comprised of a single ground floor storey for Use Class E(g)(i) office accommodation with three upper storeys as flats in Use Class C3(a) residential dwelling use with a dedicated entrance at street level.

The ground floor provides a single floor of office space with its own dedicated street level access with kitchen, WC and shower rooms, dedicated storage, and three outdoor terraces on three elevations behind single-storey brick-built boundary walls, some with additional steel railings above (related to the change in external levels).

The building is owned by the applicant and the ground floor is a single open-plan lettable office space, which, however, has been on the market and remains unlet since

December 2022. Therefore, the office is currently unoccupied and vacant. Local commercial letting agents advise that this may be due to its location, size, outlook, and particularly the relatively low levels of natural light for an office space.

It is proposed to undertake a change of use from office to residential through only internal alterations. These alterations are proposed to consist of converting the single open-plan ground floor office space to two residential dwellings, one 1-bed flat (57.7m<sup>2</sup>) and one 2-bed flat, both of which are already M4(1) compliant and can easily be later adapted to become M4(2) or M4(3) compliant.

A separate Planning Application was submitted to introduce more natural light into the office space (via new window and rooflight).

No other works are proposed as part of this Prior Approval.

The building is not listed and is not of local architectural significance.

## 2.0 ASSESSMENT: SITE CONTEXT

### The Application Site

26a St Martins Place is in a predominantly residential area with some commercial uses adjoining on St Martins Place, and nearby the A270 Lewes Road local high street. The Application Site is located within the Elm Grove and Lewes Road area, with St Martins Place accessed off Lewes Road.

The building is set back from the road and has an entrance into the site that provides a number of covered cycle parking spaces to the front, with this footpath providing access to two, set back, dedicated entrances for each of the office use and the residential use.

The Application Site has a 261m<sup>2</sup> footprint at ground level (133.5m<sup>2</sup> GIA at ground floor) and is located entirely within the administrative boundaries of Brighton and Hove City Council (BHCC).

The Application site is slightly sloped from southeast down to northwest.

### Surrounding Land Uses

The site is primarily surrounded by residential use, except for the small-scale commercial space to the northwest on St Martins PI. The site adjoins the three-storey terraced pitched roof dwellings on St Martins PI at the southwest end. The site is also at, and overlooks, the west end of the Wellington Road residential estate at the southwest end of St Martins PI nearest Morely Lodge and Barclay House.

To the northwest, the building adjoins an electrical substation site and the current Brighton Bike Hub, which adjoins residential properties on St Martins Pl and on Lewes Road, which are all accessed directly off St Martins Pl. To the west, the building adjoins the single storey commercial buildings on land to the rear of Lewes Road, currently home to the Kicks Martial Arts Centre, and accessed via a footpath off Lewes Road connecting the southwest end of St Martins Place.

The boundary to the southwest and southeast adjoins a cul-de-sac at the end of end of St Martins Place with carparking and garage spaces, with perimeters planted to grass, hedge, and several mature trees of small height adjacent and some larger bordering the southeast leg of St Martins Place at the top of the Wellington Estate.

### **Access and Transport**

The site borders on Central Brighton and is just off the A270 Lewes Road. It is therefore very well served and accessible by modes of transport other than the private car. It is very well located for both walking and cycling journeys to and from Central Brighton and the surrounding areas. There are excellent local bus services and cycle lanes along Lewes Road going further into Brighton travelling south-west on Lewes Road, northeast towards Moulsecoomb, Hollingbury, Falmer and beyond. Excellent local bus services run along Elm Grove travelling east towards Warren Road, the Race Hill, Bevendean and Woodingdean. Similarly, both Ditchling Road and Preston Road are also well served by public transportation and cycle lanes going north and northwest respectively.

Brighton mainline train station is 0.7 miles away and 17-min walking distance via the east entrance, with regular services linking main south coast towns, cities, and London. London Road train station is 0.6mi and 16-min walking distance with services heading east towards Lewes and Eastbourne, etc.

## **3.0 SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONTEXT**

### **Local/Retail Facilities**

The site is short walking distance to main shopping area in Brighton city centre along the Level and Grand Parade, with the nearby local retail facilities and attractions including the Open Market (0.4mi), London Road (0.5mi) as well as the North Laines (0.6mi), Royal Pavilion and Gardens (0.9mi), The Lanes (1.1mi), West Pier (1.3mi) and adjoining seafront.

Sainsbury's superstore is 0.3mi, a 7-min walk northeast up Lewes Road

Aldi Lewes Road superstore is 0.6mi, a 14-min walk northeast up Lewes Road, whereas Aldi London Road is 0.5mi southwest.

## 4.0 SITE ANALYSIS AND CONSTRAINTS

### Site Location

The Application site forms part of an end of terrace mixed-use building and can be seen from the road along St Martins Place, which bounds the site to both north and south (see plans). The site is within a predominantly residential area, adjoining the Lewes Road local high street in a mainly residential section. Residential buildings are located to the north and northeast (adjoining and across the road), southwest and southeast of the site. Very small-scale back land commercial uses are to the immediate northwest of the site.

The existing building itself is of modern construction with planning permission granted in 2012 and construction completed some time afterwards.

## 5.0 CONSULTATIONS

### Pre-Application Discussions

No pre-consultation was sought with the council, as the alterations are minor and will have minimum effect on the surrounding area due to the proposed changes. However, this Prior Approval should be read in conjunction with planning application under Planning Portal Reference: (PP-12575990).

## 6.0 APPLICATION SCHEME DESIGN

### Layout

The proposed changes to the layout involve converting the existing ground floor from single open-plan office with kitchen, WC, and shower room (133.5m<sup>2</sup> GIA at ground floor), to residential use through only internal alterations.

These alterations are proposed to consist of converting the ground floor office space to two residential dwellings, one 1-bed flat of 57.7m<sup>2</sup> and one 2-bed flat of 75m<sup>2</sup>, both of which are already M4(1) compliant and can easily be later adapted to become M4(2) or M4(3) compliant.

An area schedule with units, beds, bedspaces is shown below. The flats have been planned to be compliant with the Nationally Described Space Standards and include all the required storage space as well as private outdoor amenity.

## Proposed Area Schedule

Unit	Beds & Bedspaces	Area
Flat 01	1 Bedroom, 2 bedspaces	57.7m <sup>2</sup>
Flat 02	2 Bedroom, 4 bedspaces	75m <sup>2</sup>

It is proposed to retain the existing entrances to both office and residential uses, as well as the residential entrance lobby stair and stair. It is also proposed to reuse the office entrance door for the one 1-bed flat and introduce a new door internally within the entrance stair to access the one 2-bed flat.

For the 1-bed unit it is proposed to provide the main living/dining space and bedroom with views onto the existing westernmost private terrace at ground floor. Similarly, for the 2-bed unit it is proposed to provide the main living/dining space, kitchen, and bedrooms with views onto the two existing southern and easternmost private terraces at ground floor (please see floor plans).

No other works are proposed as part of this Prior Approval.

## Appearance

No change to the existing external envelope, external works, or appearance is proposed.

No other works are proposed as part of this Prior Approval.

The building is not listed and is not of local architectural significance.

## Servicing/Bin Stores

There will be no adverse effect on the current Servicing/Bin Stores. A dedicated accessible, enclosed bin store already exists on site accessed from the property entrance areas. This existing bin store already has the capacity to hold either 2no. 1100ltr wheelie bins or 7no. 240ltr wheelie bins. Additionally, as the two proposed units are at ground floor, ample space is already available within the units for temporary storage of waste and recycling bins for repositioning on collection days.

## Impact on the Environment/Traffic/Parking

The existing carparking arrangement and cycle parking are to be retained. Owing to the excellent central location of the site, the proposed alterations are intended to create car-free accommodation and therefore no further carparking is provided. A dedicated covered private cycle store already exists, which has the capacity to hold 6-

8no, cycles single stacked, which can be converted into double-stack arrangement if required. Further public cycle racks are available at the end of St Martin's Pl. In addition, each of the proposed residential units already has their own dedicated external terrace with level access which has ample space to store several cycles each alongside adequate outdoor amenity space. It is therefore envisaged that there will be no adverse effect on either car or cycle parking arrangements.

## 7.0 SUSTAINABILITY

This Prior Approval is for relatively minor internal alterations to an existing building. Whilst there is no opportunity to explore alternative energy sources in this particular situation, the unit is already supplied with one air source heat pump (ASHP) which will be retained in one unit. This will be supplemented in the second unit with a second (ASHP). Wherever possible, materials with recycled content will be sourced.

## 8.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This Design and Access Statement has demonstrated the approach to the design of the proposed buildings, with the relevant criteria for decision-making highlighted.

It has also clearly described the operational requirements for the building as far as they can be established at this stage and the response to the particular design requirements and constraints of this site.

The proposed elevational changes are minimal and any issue regarding overlooking will be mitigated by provided obscured/translucent glazing.

The design and use of the building forming this Prior Approval is an entirely appropriate response to those criteria.

[END]