



RODWAY PLANNING
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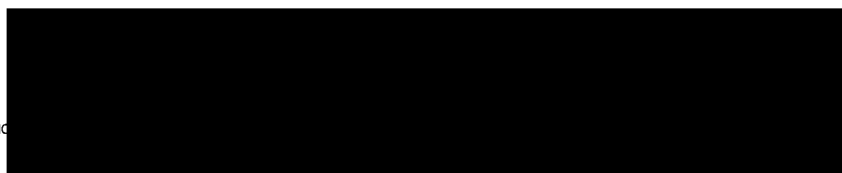
PLANNING & HERITAGE STATEMENT

In relation to:

‘Change of use of premises to a mixed use comprising: 1 no. 4-bedroom HMO unit and retention of 1 x bed-sit unit at first floor; 2 no. holiday let use units at ground floor, with reduction in size of retained hairdressers. Ancillary retail storage space and staff facilities to be provided at basement level’

**36 – 38 Surrey Street, Littlehampton,
West Sussex, BN17 5BH**

March 2021



RTPI 1
Chartered Town Planner

PLANNING & HERITAGE STATEMENT

36 – 38 Surrey Street, Littlehampton, West Sussex, BN17 5BH

I. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Planning Application and Listed Building Consent application proposes the *'Change of use of premises to a mixed use comprising: 1 no. 4-bedroom HMO unit and retention of 1 x bed-sit unit at first floor; 2 no. holiday let use units at ground floor, with reduction in size of retained hairdressers. Ancillary retail storage space and staff facilities to be provided at basement level'*. The proposals relate to No's 36 – 38 Surrey Street, Littlehampton.
- 1.2 This Planning Statement is submitted in support of the above planning and listed building consent application. The statement describes the site, its surroundings and the proposal itself. The Planning Policy background is considered along with an assessment of the proposal in light of the relevant policies and all other material planning considerations.
- 1.3 This statement should be read in conjunction with the submitted drawings, which have been prepared by Fuller Associates. The proposals are also accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment and Flood Evacuation Plan, which have been prepared by Ambiantal.





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2. SITE CONTEXT

- 2.1 The proposed development relates to 36 – 38 Surrey Street, Littlehampton. With reference to the existing floor plans that accompany this submission, the building is currently in a mixed use, comprising 2 x residential units at first floor (a bed-sit, and a separate 3-bed flat), with A1 uses at ground floor comprising a book shop and a hairdressers, and ancillary space below at basement level.
- 2.2 The exterior of the building is painted white brick with one window to the East and 3 no. windows to the South on the ground level. The main entrance to the property is located on the East front of the building, a corner doorway with curved double doors, the top half of which are glazed, which currently serve as an entrance of the hairdressers. Next to this the shop front features a large bay window with a triangular head. The South front of the building includes 3 no. large windows with another external door.



Fig 1. Aerial map of the application site & its surroundings (courtesy of Google Maps)



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- 2.3 The building is understood to be Grade II Listed. The Listed reads as follows:-
“Early C19 despite modern '1705' scratched in recent rendering on ground floor in 2 places. 2 storeys and basement. 1 window to East, 3 windows to South. Painted brick. East front has glazing bar sash window over triangular headed shop window. Corner doorway with pilasters, painted entablature, projecting cornice on triple brackets and curved double doors, top half glazed, panelled reveals. South front has glazing bar sash windows and a blind panel on 1st floor. Ground floor has 2 large shop windows (7 x 4 and 5 x 4 panes) and one original glazing bar sash window under a rubbed brick cambered arch. Entrance to former No 36 retained though blocked, and has fluted pilasters and entablature. Former No 38 has a contemporary shop window, with restored glazing bars, flanked by engaged Tuscan columns. Altered triple window over with wooden lintel. Slightly bevelled corner. West side stuccoed and contains entrance to No 32A. Hipped slate roof. Modillion eaves cornice”.
- 2.4 The building is located within a central town centre location. Surrounding uses are mixed, although generally retail/ office uses predominate at ground floor level with residential over in two, mainly three storey buildings in Terminus Road, High Street and Surrey Street. Properties are generally residential uses in River Road, with buildings primarily two storeys in height.
- 2.5 River Road Conservation Area abuts the site to the south. Nearby Listed Buildings include 20 – 24 Surrey Street, 32 Surrey Street (Public House) and No’s 1, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10 and 12 River Road.
- 2.6 Some internal works have been undertaken prior to the submission of this application, which is therefore in part retrospective.





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3. THE PROPOSAL

- 3.1 This proposal seeks planning permission and Listed Building Consent for the change of use of premises to a mixed use comprising 1 bed-sit (as existing) and 1 no. 4 bedroom HMO unit at first floor; 2 no. holiday let use units, with retention of part of a hairdressers at ground floor, and ancillary A1 storage space and staff facilities at basement level.

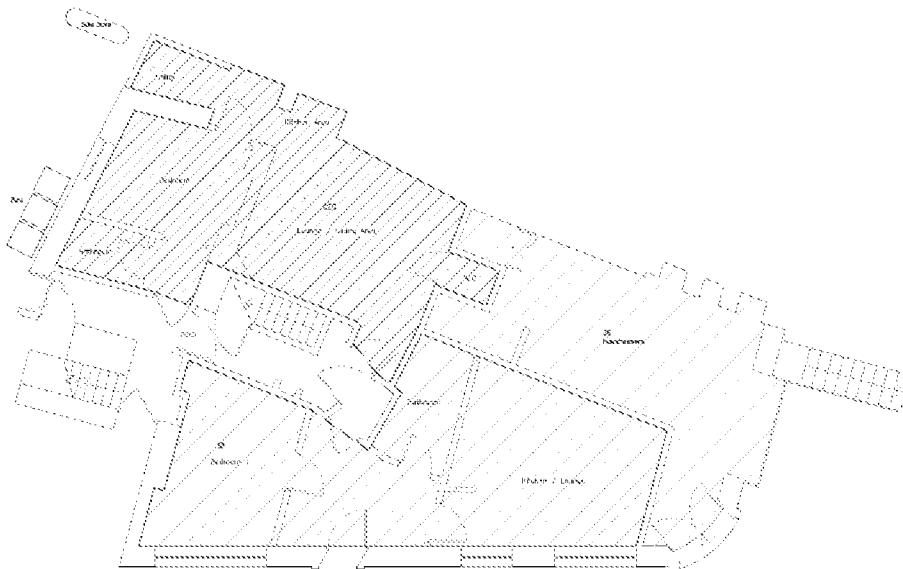


Fig 2. Proposed Ground Floor Plan



Fig 3. Proposed First Floor Plan

3.2 The table below shows the Current and Proposed Use of the building broken down by the proposed 'unit', or part of the building as proposed.

Unit Name	Floor	GIA m2	Current Use	Proposed Use
32a	1 st Floor	79.4	Residential 3-bed flat	4 bed/4 person HMO use
32b	1 st Floor	17.9	Residential Bed-sit	As existing
32c	Ground	31.9	A1 use	Holiday let unit
36	Ground	34.8	A1 use	Holiday let Unit
36-38	Ground	23.9 (net internal basis)	A1 use	Remaining GF space to remain as a hairdressing salon (A1 use class)
38b	Basement	47.4	None	Wig and Beauty Rooms/Staff room (A1 use class)

3.3 The proposal would not involve any significant external alterations or extensions. Therefore externally there would be no material change to the appearance of the building. Internally only minor changes are proposed to facilitate the proposed change of use.

3.4 Secure cycle storage and refuse storage is proposed to be provided as part of the development, as indicated on the proposed ground floor plan (see Fig 2).



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4. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

a. National Planning Policy

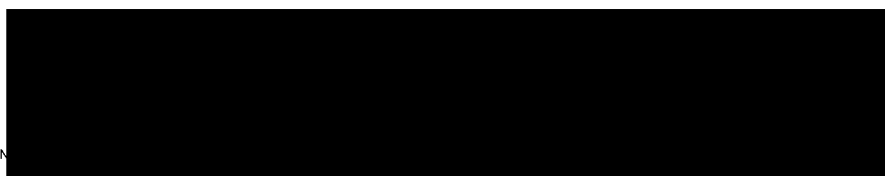
(i) National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was originally published in 2012, with a revised version published in July 2018. A further updated version of the NPPF was published in February 2019, comprising only minor alterations to the 2018 publication.
- 4.2 The NPPF confirms that planning law, as set out at Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, requires that applications for planning permission to be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.3 The focus of the revised NPPF continues to be achieving sustainable development. The NPPF clarifies that *“at a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”* (taken from Resolution 42/187 of the United Nations). However, at paragraph 8 the Framework sets out that in planning terms, and in order to achieve sustainable development there are *“three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives)”*. These objectives are economic, social and environmental, which *“should be delivered through the preparation and implementation of plans and the application of the policies in this Framework; they are not criteria against which every decision can or should be judged. Planning policies and decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area”* (paragraph 9).

- 4.4 Paragraph 11 is an important element of the NPPF. It states that: *“Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development... For decision-taking this means: c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:*
- i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or*
 - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole”.*
- 4.5 Paragraph 12 confirms that *“the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making. Where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan (including any neighbourhood plans that form part of the development plan), permission should not usually be granted. Local planning authorities may take decisions that depart from an up-to-date development plan, but only if material considerations in a particular case indicate that the plan should not be followed.”*
- 4.6 Section 4 of the Plan refers to Decision Making. At paragraph 38 of the Framework, it sets out that *“Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. They should... work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. **Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.**”*
- 4.7 Section 6 relates to building a strong and competitive economy. At paragraph 80, it notes that *“Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the*

need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The approach taken should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future”.

- 4.8 Section 7 refers to ensuring the vitality of town centres, noting that *“planning policies and decisions should support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation”.*
- 4.9 Section 9 discusses sustainable transport, including the need to support opportunities, and give priority to walking, cycling and public transport, in addition to creating places that are safe, accessible, address the needs of people with disabilities, and are designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles.
- 4.10 Paragraph 105 sets out that *“Maximum parking standards for residential and non-residential development should only be set where there is a clear and compelling justification that they are necessary for managing the local road network, or for optimising the density of development in city and town centres and other locations that are well served by public transport.”*
- 4.11 Paragraph 108 confirms that the main considerations in transport terms when determining specific planning applications is that proposals should provide: *“a) appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes can be – or have been – taken up, given the type of development and its location; b) safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users; and c) any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree.”*
- 4.12 At paragraph 109 the Framework also confirms that *“development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact*



on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.”

- 4.13 Section 11 is entitled ‘Making effective use of land’. Paragraph 117 confirms that *“Planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions”.*
- 4.14 Paragraph 120 states that *“decisions need to reflect changes in the demand for land... applications for alternative uses on the land should be supported, where the proposed use would contribute to meeting an unmet need for development in the area.”*
- 4.15 Section 12 refers to achieving good design. Paragraph 124 states *“The creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development...”*
- 4.16 Paragraph 127 sets out that *“decisions should ensure that developments:*
- a. will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
 - b. are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*
 - c. are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);*
 - d. establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;*





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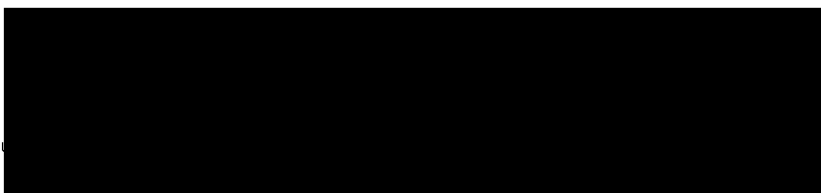
- e. *optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and*
- f. *create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience."*

4.17 Paragraph 130 confirms that *"where the design of a development accords with clear expectations in plan policies, design should not be used by the decision-maker as a valid reason to object to development."*

4.18 Finally, section 14 relates to meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change. Paragraph 155 states that *"inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk (whether existing or future). Where development is necessary in such areas, the development should be made safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere"*.

4.19 Paragraph 164 states that *"applications for some minor development and changes of use should not be subject to the sequential or exception tests but should still meet the requirements for site-specific flood risk assessments set out in footnote 50"*. Footnote 50 states that *"a site-specific flood risk assessment should be provided for all development in Flood Zones 2 and 3. In Flood Zone 1, an assessment should accompany all proposals involving: sites of 1 hectare or more; land which has been identified by the Environment Agency as having critical drainage problems; land identified in a strategic flood risk assessment as being at increased flood risk in future; or land that may be subject to other sources of flooding, where its development would introduce a more vulnerable use"*.

4.20

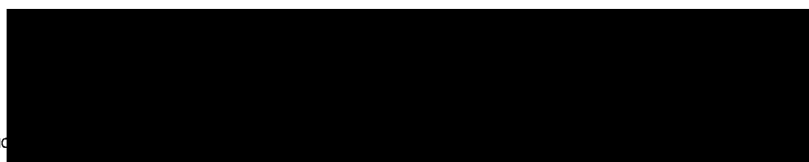


4.20 Section 16 refers to Conserving and enhancing the historic environment. Paragraph 192 states *“In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of: a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation; b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.”* Paragraph 193 goes onto say: *“When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.”*

(ii) The Arun Local Plan 2011 – 2031

4.21 The Arun Local Plan 2011 – 2031 was adopted by resolution of Full Council on 18th July 2018. It comprises a written statement and supporting policy maps 1-4. The plan sets out a spatial vision, objectives and a sustainable strategy for delivering the needed growth of the District over the period 2011 – 2031. This plan replaces the Arun Local Plan 2003 and the saved policies within it and now provides the most up-to-date policy guidance for the District.

4.22 The Application Site is located within the built up area boundary for Littlehampton where in accordance with **Policy SD SP2** (Built up Area Boundary), development should be focused, subject to consideration against other policies of the Local Plan. The site is also located within a designated Economic Growth Area (as depicted by purple dots). The site abuts River Road Conservation Area to the south.





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Fig 4. Extract from Arun Local Plan Policy Map 4: Littlehampton & Surrounding Area
(Littlehampton Town Centre Inset Map)

4.23 The following policies are considered to be of relevance to this proposal:-

4.24 **Policy SD SP1** is a general policy, which relates to Sustainable development. It states that *“when considering development proposals the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. It will work pro-actively with applicants to jointly find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved*



wherever possible and to secure development that will contribute to the social, economic and environmental conditions south of the National Park through to the coast and throughout its settlements (both coastal and inland). This presumption will not be applicable where development requires an Appropriate Assessment or where consideration of the need for one is being undertaken”.

- 4.25 **Policy SD SP2** relates to the built up area boundaries, noting that *“development should be focused within the Built Up Area Boundaries and will be permitted, subject to consideration against other policies of this Local Plan”.*
- 4.26 **Policy H SP4** relates to Houses in multiple occupation. It states that *“where planning applications for houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) are not already covered by permitted development rights, they will be favourably considered where the proposals contribute to the creation of sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities and meet the following criteria:*
- a. Do not adversely affect the character of the area including eroding the balance between different types of housing, including family housing;*
 - b. Do not contribute to the generation of excessive parking demands or traffic in an area;*
 - c. Provide adequate areas of open space”.*
- 4.27 **Policies EMP SP1 and EMP SP2** are general policies, which relate to Strategic Economic Growth and Economic Growth Areas respectively.
- 4.28 **Policy TOU DM1** relates to Tourism related development, and indicates that development that includes new tourism accommodation will be supported.
- 4.29 **Policy HER DM1** relates to Listed Buildings. It states that *“proposals affecting statutory Listed Buildings will be required to:*



- a. Preserve or enhance the historic character, qualities and special interest of the buildings;*
- b. Be necessary and not detrimental to the architectural and historical integrity and detailing of a Listed Building's exterior;*
- c. Protect the architectural and historical integrity and detailing of a Listed Building's interior;*
- d. Protect the special interest of buildings of architectural or historic interest; and*
- e. Protect, and where possible enhance the setting of the building. Total or substantial demolition of a Listed Building will only be permitted in wholly exceptional circumstances, and where it meets the following specific criteria:*
- f. Clear and convincing evidence has been provided that viable alternative uses cannot be found, through, for example the offer of the unrestricted freehold of the property on the market at a realistic price reflecting its condition and that preservation, in some form of charitable or community ownership, is not possible;*
- g. The redevelopment would produce substantial benefits for the community which would decisively outweigh the resulting loss from demolition or major alteration; and*
- h. The physical condition of the building has deteriorated, through no fault of the owner / applicant for which evidence can be submitted, to a point that the cost of retaining the building outweighs its importance and the value derived from its retention. A comprehensive structural report will be required to support this.*

The Local Planning Authority will support proposals for alternative uses for Listed Buildings which retain their structure and preserve character and setting where the change will provide for the long term conservation of the structure and fabric of the building..."

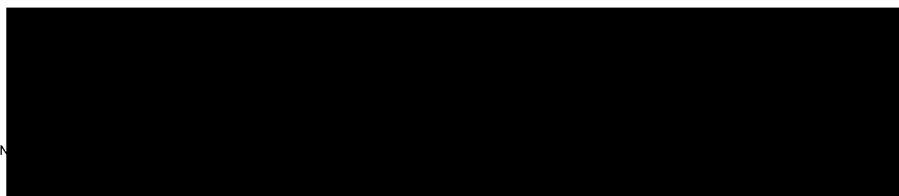
4.30 Policy D SP1 and D DM1 refers to Design and Aspects of form and design quality respectively.

4.31 The following policies are of a general nature and also considered to be of relevance-

- **Policy HER SP1:** The Historic Environment
- **Policy HER DM1:** Listed Buildings
- **Policy HER DM3:** Conservation Areas
- **Policy RET SP1:** Hierarchy of Town Centres
- **Policy RET DM1:** Retail Development
- **Policy D DM2:** Internal space standards
- **Policy T SP1:** Transport and Development.
- **Policy W DM2:** Flood Risk

(iii) Littlehampton Neighbourhood Plan 2014 - 2029

4.32 Littlehampton Neighbourhood Plan was 'made' on 5th November 2014. The policies are of a general nature, with none being of specific relevance to the development proposals.





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5. PLANNING HISTORY

a. Application Site

- 5.1 According to the Council's online planning records, the most recent and relevant planning application on the site is as follows:-
- **Planning ref: LU/223/18/PL/:** Conversion of basement & ground floor from Bookshop to 3 no. holiday lets. This application affects the character and appearance of Littlehampton River Road Conservation Area. Refused 10-01-19.
 - **Planning ref: LU/224/18/L:** Listed Building Consent for conversion of basement and ground floor from Bookshop to 2 no. holiday lets. Approved 08-11-18.
 - **Planning ref: LU/180/16/L:** Application for Listed Building Consent for the retention of railings & gate at front of property. Refused 10-10-16.
 - **Planning ref: LU/277/12/PL/:** Change of Use from Hairdressers (A1 shops) to Cocktail Bar (A4 Drinking Establishments). Withdrawn 23-10-14.

6. PLANNING ASSESSMENT

a. Principle of development

- 6.1 The application site is located within the defined built up area boundary, where the principle of development is accepted, subject to other policies in the plan. The Council reiterated this view at the time of the previous application, noting that *"the site is located within the built up area boundary where conversion of the premises to residential tourism use is acceptable in principle subject to compliance with relevant planning policies. In this instance, the main criteria against which the application will be assessed is that within policies DDM1, DDM4, TOU DM1, HER DM1, RET DM1 and WDM2 of the Local Plan, and the Nationally Prescribed Space Standards"*.

b. Planning History and Flood Risk

- 6.2 The proposals are essentially seeking a resubmission of a previously refused planning application, which sought permission for 'conversion of basement & ground floor from Bookshop to 3 no. holiday lets' (ref: LU/223/18/PL). The Council accepted the principle of the development, however concerns were raised regarding flood risk. The application was refused for the following reason, via decision notice dated 10th January 2019:-

"1. The site lies within Flood Zone 3 defined by the Planning Practice Guidance as having a high probability of flooding. The basement holiday dwelling, is classed as "highly vulnerable" in accordance with Table 2 (Flood Risk Vulnerability Classification) of the PPG for Flood Risk and Coastal Change. Tables 1 and 3 of the PPG make it clear that this type of development is not compatible with this Flood Zone, and therefore should not be permitted.

The submitted Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) has not mentioned how the flood risks will be managed following the development. As a result the safety of occupants will be entirely reliant upon a strategy of prior warning and evacuation, or refuge

within the building at a higher level and it has not been satisfactorily demonstrated that this is possible.

The proposal is therefore contrary to policy WDM2 of Arun Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and its associated Planning Practice Guidance for Flood Risk and Coastal Change”.

- 6.3 It will be noted that the related Listed Building Consent application for ‘*listed building consent for conversion of basement and ground floor from Bookshop to 3 no. holiday lets*’ was approved via decision notice dated 8th November 2018 (ref: LU/224/18/L).
- 6.4 As detailed at **fig 4** below, the application site is located within Flood Zone 3, which is land defined by the PPG as having a high probability of flooding.



Fig 5. Extract from Environment Agencies Flood Map for Planning

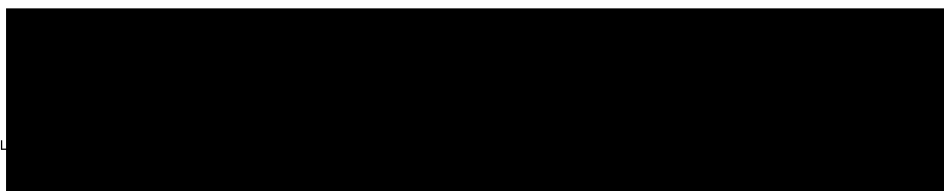
- 6.5 At the time of the previous application, the Council raised concerns regarding the basement holiday dwelling, due to it being classed as ‘highly vulnerable’ in accordance with Table 2 (Flood Risk Vulnerability Classification) of the PPG for Flood Risk and Coastal Change. They noted that *“Tables 1 and 3 of the PPG make it clear that this type of development is not compatible with this Flood Zone, and therefore should not be permitted. The proposal is therefore contrary to policy WDM2 of Arun Local Plan which requires that development in flood risk areas is accompanied by a specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) has not mentioned how the flood risks will be managed following the development. The basement accommodation is not considered to accord with this criteria”*.
- 6.6 The current proposals have been amended and now propose no residential accommodation at basement level. The basement will be used for purposes ancillary to the above A1 use. As such, it is our view that the proposal has fully addressed the Council’s previous concerns.
- 6.7 The current proposal is accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) and Flood Evacuation Plan, which have been prepared by Ambiental. The FRA draws the following conclusions:-
- *“The site has been subject to historic conversions/ change of use without planning permission. The client is now seeking to provide a beauty salon/hairdressers at basement level, [with] residential uses [above]...”*
 - *With reference to the Environment Agency (EA) Flood Map for Planning, the proposed development is located within Flood Zone 3.*
 - *The proposed beauty salon/ hairdressers at basement level would be a ‘Less Vulnerable’ commercial use. The proposed ground and first floor residential units would be considered ‘More Vulnerable’ under the NPPF.*
 - *The EA previously provided a Product 4 dataset to support the previous FRA for the retrospective planning application. During the meeting with the EA in February*



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2020, the EA noted that the modelling for this area had not been updated since the previous Product 4. However, the EA stated that the December 2019 climate change allowance/ sea level guidance should be considered in the resubmission.

- The EA have stated that in the absence of defence breach modelling, the 1:200 year +CC undefended event should be used as the design flood level to inform the risk and mitigation strategy.
- For reference, the 1:200 year present day (2017) undefended flood level for the site is 3.74mAOD. Based on the latest guidance (December 2019), for the southeast region, a Higher Central (HC) scenario would represent a 1.2m increase in sea levels; an Upper End (UE) scenario would represent a 1.6m increase in sea levels; and a High++ (H++) scenario would represent a 2.19m increase in sea levels. As such, the 1:200 year HC (2125) undefended flood level for the site is 4.85mAOD, the 1:200 year UC (2125) undefended flood level is 5.22mAOD and the 1:200 year H++ (2125) undefended flood level is 5.93mAOD.
- Based on a topographic survey undertaken in February 2020, the lowest Finished Floor Level (FFL) at the ground floor is 3.78mAOD. As such, the ground floor could experience flood depths of up to 2.15m in the 1:200 year H++ (2125) event. However, the survey also indicates that the lowest FFL at the first floor is 6.06mAOD in the lower level and 6.70mAOD in the upper level. As such, the first floor is a minimum of 0.13m above the 1:200 year H++ (2125) flood level.
- The client has confirmed that internal access will be maintained from the ground floor unit up to the first floor. As such, emergency safe refuge could be sought at the first floor in a worst-case event where prior evacuation is not possible.
- The controlling residual flood risk mechanism on site is tidal. Tidal flooding is generally caused by low pressure weather systems creating storm-surges (or storm tides), chiefly via high speed winds. These winds (and to a certain extent, the low pressure) create a 'bulge' of water which, if it coincides with high tide, can generate very high, stormy, water levels. However, because this mechanism is well



understood, it is very likely that an early warning will be issued before such an event strikes.

- *Section 9.4.1 of the Arun SFRA (2016) states that the lead time for EA Flood Warnings are at least 2 hours, with the aim to provide warnings up to 24 hours in advance for the area of Littlehampton. As such, it is very unlikely that the site would be subject to tidal flooding without several hours of early warning. In a worst-case breach event, emergency safe refuge could be sought at the first floor on site.*
- *Ambiental have produced a Flood Evacuation Plan (FEP) document to accompany the new planning application (Ambiental Ref 5325 FEP) which details the procedures that occupants and site users should adopt upon receipt of a Flood Warning.*
- *As such, and given that:*
 - *The development is for the change of use of the existing building within a developed area;*
 - *The development could be considered "More Vulnerable" under the NPPF;*
 - *Internal access will be maintained from the ground floor residential uses to the first floor, which will be above the 1:200 year H++ (2125) undefended flood level;*
 - *The site is located within an EA Flood Warning Area and within an area of tidal flood risk, which could provide sufficient warning to enable prior evacuation;*
- *Following the guidelines contained within the NPPF, the proposed development could be considered suitable assuming appropriate mitigation (including adequate warning procedures) can be maintained for the lifetime of the development".*

6.8 It is our view that the revised submission is acceptable from a flood risk perspective, and has fully addressed the Council's previous reason for refusal. The proposal

would be compliant with policy WDM2 of the Arun Local Plan and guidance contained within the NPPF.

c. Character of the area & introduction of an HMO use

- 6.9 As outlined above and as detailed within the previous application, the proposal would not involve any material external alterations or extensions. As such, the external appearance of the building would not be altered. The proposals merely seek to alter the internal use of the building.
- 6.10 The application site is located within the defined built up area boundary, within a town centre location. The surrounding area is mixed in use, with a number of residential uses within the immediate vicinity. It is our view that the residential use, including the 4-bed HMO, would be wholly in keeping with the mixed character of the area. At the time of the previous application, the case officer confirmed that *“the residential use would be in keeping with the character of the area”*. The residential units would be in full accordance with **Policy DDM1** of the Local Plan.
- 6.11 The HMO use, which is proposed at first floor level, to replace an existing 3-bed flat, would comprise 4-bedrooms, and is envisaged as being suitable for 4 person occupation. If the property was a standalone single dwelling, then it is understood that its change of use up to a 6 person HMO would comprise ‘permitted development’, and would not require planning permission. This is because such a use is not deemed to be ‘material’ in planning terms, in that it would result in a similar use (in terms of activity, frequency of movements, noise and disturbance) as the original family dwelling. We contend that the same arguments can be made in favour of the introduction of an HMO use to replace the existing 3-bed flat at first floor level at the application site.
- 6.12 It is worth noting that the management of the HMO use would be subject to a license that is the responsibility of the Council’s Public Health & Housing departments, and

subject to separate legislation and guidance. Notwithstanding this, we consider that the proposed HMO use will sit comfortably alongside the existing and proposed mixed residential and commercial uses at the application site.

d. Provision of tourism accommodation & loss of commercial floorspace

- 6.13 2 no. holiday let use units are proposed to the ground floor of the building. This is principally a residential type use, which will help to fulfil a need for tourism accommodation in Littlehampton. Local Plan **Policy TOU DM1** relates specifically to Tourism development, stating that:- *“Proposals for development [including accommodation]... which are likely to attract visitors... will be supported provided that they: are in accessible locations... and achieve good design...”*
- 6.14 As detailed above, the application site is located in a highly accessible and sustainable location. The proposal will provide high quality tourist accommodation. No external works or alterations are proposed as part of the development.
- 6.15 It is accepted that the proposal would result in the loss of some retail floorspace (a bookshop is to be lost, albeit this use ceased some time ago). However a viable A1 use (hairdressers) will be retained, with a new basement storage and staff room area, which will off-set the loss of these facilities at ground floor. It is our view that the proposed holiday let use at ground floor will provide valuable additional accommodation to serve tourists to the local area, and given that a commercial use will be retained, this is considered an acceptable balance of use in this case that will not materially affect the commercial ‘offer’ presented by the site.
- 6.16 Given the central location of the location of the site within Littlehampton Town Centre, and in a highly sustainable location, it is considered that the change of use of part of the ground floor to a holiday let use would be wholly appropriate. It is accepted that the development proposals would result in the reduction in the commercial floorspace at ground floor, but this will be off-set by the proposed



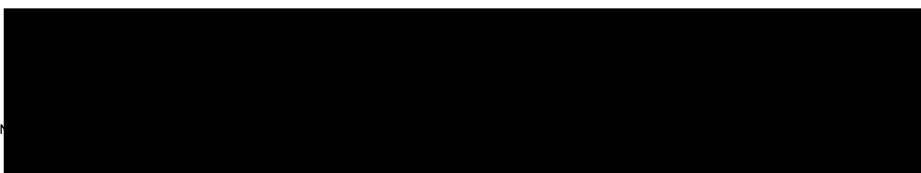
basement use, and in any case it is our view that the proposal would make an efficient use of the building space and result in a mixture of economic benefits. Given the wholly internal nature of the associated works, we contend that the change of use will have no impact on the character and appearance of the area. The proposal would represent an acceptable form of development, which would be compliant with policies Policy SD SP1, TOU SP1 and TOU DM1 of the Arun District Local Plan.

- 6.17 The Council considered this issue at the time of the previous application, noting that *“the proposal is considered acceptable in terms of its location close to existing facilities including shops/ pubs and restaurants, the seafront, bus services and the transport network. Since there would be no adverse impact on the character of the area and the proposal would comply with policy TOU DM1 of the Local Plan.*

The site lies within a secondary retail frontage and would not result in a concentration of non-retail uses to the detriment of the vitality of the town centre. The hairdresser use of part of the premises is retained together with its shop front at ground floor. One of the flats at ground floor has no road frontage and the other has only part of the elevation within the shopping frontage. Although the use was previously as a retail bookshop this use ceased some time ago and the proposal is retrospective. The proposal results in a loss of retail, but there is not considered to adversely affect the character of the area of the vitality of the town centre. The use would encourage more visitors to the town centre, potentially increasing footfall, which would provide a supportive role to the use of the town centre. The use would therefore accord with policy RET DM1 of Arun Local Plan”. We contend that an identical conclusion can be reached in respect of this revised submission.

e. Residential Amenity

- 6.18 The Council raised no concerns regarding residential amenity at the time of the previous application, noting that *“whilst the premises is located adjacent to other residential properties, the levels of activity generated by the units would not be significant given that the site is located within the town centre. Traffic noise from*



parking and vehicle movements already exists in this area". It is our view that there have been no significant alterations to warrant a different view being taken in relation to the proposals. Indeed, the amount of residential accommodation proposed has in fact been reduced as part of the current proposal.

- 6.19 The existing residential flat, the new HMO, and proposed holiday let uses would be provided with good quality internal accommodation entirely suitable for modern day living. At the time of the previous application being considered, the planning officer stated that a minor reduction in floor area below the Space Standards was acceptable for the holiday let units given that the use would be on a temporary basis. They stated *"The proposal therefore provides a satisfactory living environment for the occupiers and would not adversely affect their residential amenity. There is no external amenity space provided with the units but given their town centre location this is considered acceptable on the basis that the seafront and recreational facilities are located close by."* We do not foresee any reason for this opinion to not continue to remain entirely relevant to this revised submission.
- 6.20 The proposal would be acceptable from a residential perspective and fully compliant with **policies D SP1 and D DM1** of the Local Plan.

f. Heritage Considerations

- 6.21 The application property is Grade II Listed. Further heritage assets nearby include River Road Conservation Area, which abuts the site to the south, and nearby Listed Buildings including No's 20 – 24 Surrey Street, 32 Surrey Street (Public House) and No's 1, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10 and 12 River Road.
- 6.22 Section 16(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states: *"In considering whether to grant Listed Building Consent for any works, the Local Planning Authority 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."* Where the building is located in a Conservation Area, Section



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71(1) of the Act states: *"In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a Conservation Area of any powers (under the Planning Acts), special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area."*

- 6.23 *The internal layout of the building has been adapted throughout the course of the building's history, with new internal stud walls that has allowed for the building to be subdivided internally, to include the creation of separate bookshop and hairdresser uses at ground floor.*
- 6.24 *It is proposed to reconfigure the internal layout of the ground floor and basement levels to create holiday let/residential uses, whilst maintaining the hairdressers (the latter to include ancillary space at basement level). As a consequence of the minor nature of the works, no historically important or original features will be removed, altered or otherwise interfered with. Other non-original partition walls will be removed as shown on the existing and proposed plans. The intention is to enhance the economic benefits arising from the use of the building, which will have a positive impact on the wider area.*
- 6.25 *In considering the previous submission, the Council's Conservation Officer stated "The application relates to the conversion of basement space and an area of the ground floor from Bookshop to 3 holiday lets. The concept of the change of the use of the space is acceptable as it enables compatible uses to be introduced to the conservation area; there is a mixture of residential and retail/commercial uses in the local area. A significant amount of internal works have been undertaken in order to accommodate the new uses. As the works are retrospective, it is not possible to determine the scale of the impact i.e. in terms of the loss of historic fabric. It is considered that the proposed/implemented floor plan is acceptable as the majority of the floor plan is retained. There is a proposal to install further railings to the front of the shop. Railings have been fitted into other parts of the conservation area where*



it has been proven that they were there historically. In addition, they should be of a design and materials to reflect the status of the property as a listed building, located within a conservation area. At the moment, it is not clear what the railings will look like, and a full commentary cannot be provided.” It is also noted that the Conservation Area Advisory Committee (CAAC) did not object to the previous application.

- 6.26 This submission reflects a revision to that considered by the Conservation Officer. At that time the Listed Building Consent application was approved, whilst the related Planning Application was refused, but only on flood risk grounds.
- 6.27 The proposal includes the removal of non-original partition walls primarily to the ground floor, with new dividing walls inserted. These works were largely approved via LU/224/18/L. The layout of the property includes two separate one-bedroom holiday let apartments at ground floor level in place of existing retail floorspace. Part of the retail use will be retained to the east side of the ground floor area, with the basement being altered in its use to ancillary retail floorspace. The changes to the first floor affect the use, but not the internal structure. The proposed works do not adversely impacted on the character or integrity of the listed building. No features of historic merit are altered and the historic floor plans are unaffected. The previously proposed railings are not included within this submission.
- 6.28 Given the established mixed use of the building, together with the town centre location, we are of the view that the proposal would be wholly appropriate for this location. The proposed internal changes will not affect any important original features of the building, and no external changes are proposed. Therefore the proposals will not detract from the character and appearance of the Listed Building, any nearby Listed building or the adjacent Conservation Area. The proposals therefore accords with the Development Plan in terms of heritage interests,

particularly in compliance with Local Plan Policies HER DM1 and HER SP1, and the NPPF.

g. Highways and Parking

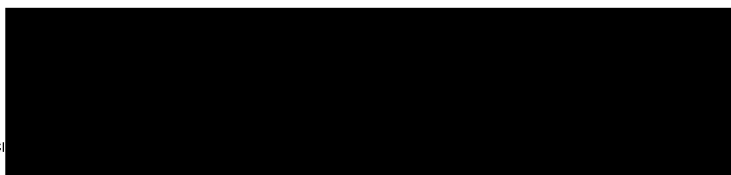
- 6.29 As per the previous proposal, no car parking is provided as part of the proposal. It is our opinion that the site is located within a highly sustainable location, within the town centre, with easy access to bus and train services. In addition, secure and covered cycle storage will be provided as part of the development and our client is happy for this to be ensured via a condition.
- 6.30 It is our view that due to the **highly sustainable** nature of the site within a central location, together with the fact that on-street car parking is available in this area (including Surrey Street Car Park), then the provision of nil parking provision would be appropriate for this form of development in this location. This was the view of the Planning Officer when dealing with the previous application, which was subsequently refused solely on flood risk grounds.
- 6.31 Consequently, it is our view that the proposal is acceptable from a traffic and transport perspective.

h. Other Matters

- 6.32 As outlined above, the focus of the new NPPF is for development to be sustainable. It sets out there are three principle 'objectives' to achieving sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. In this part of the Planning Statement the main factors that inform the judgement as to whether the proposal would be a sustainable form of development are summarised. In reaching that view all matters referred to in the above report have been taken into account.

Economic Objective

- 6.33 The planning application would result in the creation of construction jobs during the build period. Once completed, the proposals would bring additional tourism to the



area and will help to generate additional public spending. These are all material considerations that weigh in favour of the development. It is considered that the proposal would satisfy the economic role of sustainable development.

Social Objective

- 6.34 As set out in detail above, due to the location of the site within the built-up area of Littlehampton, in a town centre location where there are a number of services, facilities and transport options including a railway station, it is considered that the location of the site is highly sustainable. The proposals will provide a variety of residential accommodation including retention of the smaller 1-person unit, and a new HMO use. These would help meet identified local needs, in addition to boosting the range and quantum of housing available in this locality. Overall it is considered that the proposal would satisfy the social role of sustainable development.

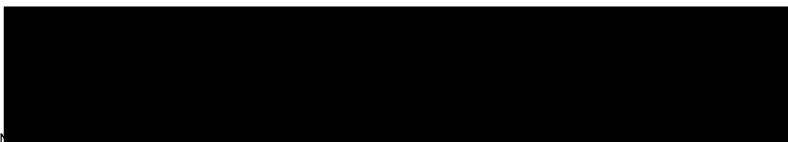
Environmental Objective

- 6.35 There is an overriding need to ensure that development should contribute to protecting and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment. The development would merely relate to a change of use and associated internal works to an existing building, and would have a neutral impact regarding the environmental role of sustainable development, which is our view is appropriate in this instance.

7 CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 The proposal seeks planning permission and listed building consent for the change of use of the property. The application is a revision following a similar (although not identical) submission in 2018. Although the Listed building consent element of this submission was approved, the planning application (LU/223/18/PL) was refused but solely on flood risk grounds relating to the creation of residential accommodation at basement level.
- 7.2 This revised planning application proposes revisions to the internal layout of the ground floor of the building, in addition to the use of each floor. The top floor will retain the existing bed-sit, but the larger flat will alter to a 4-bed HMO. At ground floor, the retail floorspace will reduce with the creation of 2 residential uses (holiday lets), but the hairdressers will be maintained (albeit with a reduced ground floor area), and this will be serviced by ancillary space at basement level. Importantly, the proposal is now proposing **no residential accommodation at basement level**.
- 7.3 The application is accompanied by a FRA and Evacuation Plan, which has been prepared by Ambiental and confirm *that "following the guidelines contained within the NPPF, the proposed development could be considered suitable assuming appropriate mitigation (including adequate warning procedures) can be maintained for the lifetime of the development"*.
- 7.4 The application site is located within the established built-up area boundary and town centre location, where the principle of new development is generally accepted, subject to compliance with other policies in the plan. The application site is located within a highly sustainable area, within Littlehampton Town Centre and as such, is within easy reach of its host of facilities and services, including Littlehampton railway station. This was all confirmed by Officers in their determination of LU/223/18/PL.

- 7.5 The proposal involves no significant external alterations or extensions and as such, would have no impact upon the building, which is Grade II Listed. There would therefore be a neutral effect on this heritage asset. Again, this was confirmed by Officers in their dealing of the previous applications for Planning Permission and Listed building consent (the latter being approved, albeit for a different use than now proposed).
- 7.6 The River Road Conservation Area abuts the site to the south. Further, it is recognised that there are a number of Listed Building within the vicinity of the site. Due to the proposal relating to a change of use of the building and internal works, it is considered that there would be no impact upon these historical buildings or the character and appearance of the River Road Conservation Area. Indeed, the appearance of the building when viewed from public areas of the Conservation Area would remain unchanged from that existing, with no visual impact being resultant. This was also agreed to be acceptable by Officers previously, and there have been no material changes to warrant a differing opinion now being given.
- 7.7 It is accepted that the proposal (which includes an HMO and holiday let uses) could result in a differing level of activity to and from the site; however given the existing mixed use of the site, together with the town centre location this is considered acceptable. Indeed, the proposed use will complement the existing uses and those in adjacent buildings. Further, the site is within a central location within an established residential area. It is our view that given the context of the surrounding area, the proposed uses would be entirely appropriate and would bring clear social and economic benefits in the form of bringing residents and visitors to the area with their associated public spending.
- 7.8 It is our view that the planning proposal would not have a detrimental effect on the residential amenities of the occupiers of any neighbouring dwelling by way of loss of light, overbearing effect nor would it result in the creation of any undue noise



and disturbance, and would be fully compliant with Policies **SP1** and **D DM1** of the Arun Local Plan.

- 7.10 Although no car parking is proposed to service the proposed uses, cycle parking is to be provided as part of the development, and we contend that this would be entirely appropriate given the town centre location.
- 7.11 The proposal will provide a high quality, sustainable use, which will set a positive benchmark for Littlehampton. It would appear wholly in keeping with neighbouring development and would not detract from the established character and appearance of the Grade II Listed Building, nor surrounding Conservation Area, nor cause demonstrable harm to the residential amenities of any neighbouring property. The proposal would accord with the aims and objectives of national, regional and local policy and guidance, due to the application site being in a suitable location for visitor accommodation, and planning permission should therefore be forthcoming.

March 2021