

25-26 HIGH STREET, UXBRIDGE, UB8 1JN

**PROPOSED INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL ALTERATIONS TO
INCLUDE REFURBISHED SHOPFRONT, NEW INTERNALLY
ILLUMINATED AND NON-ILLUMINATED SIGNAGE**

CLIENT: BLACK SHEEP COFFEE BAR LTD



**PLANNING SUPPORT STATEMENT INCORPORATING DESIGN AND
ACCESS STATEMENT AND HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Planning Support Statement incorporating a Design and Access Statement and Heritage Impact Assessment Statement has been prepared to accompany applications, submitted on behalf of Black Sheep Coffee Ltd, for Listed Building Consent and Advertisement Consent for internal and external fit-out works, externally illuminated and non-illuminated signage at 25-26 High Street, Uxbridge.
- 1.2 Black Sheep Coffee Ltd are in negotiations to take on the lease of the vacant premises and run it as a coffee shop. The following sections describe the existing shopfront, the immediate surrounding area, the proposed works to it and the intended signage.
- 1.3 It identifies the relevant Development Plan policies, the planning history of the property, relevant planning policy, an assessment of the proposals and concludes with a Heritage Impact Assessment.

2.0 SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

- 2.1 25-27 High Street, Uxbridge, is a Grade II listed four storey building dating from the mid 19th Century with large basements within the Old Uxbridge/Windsor Street Conservation Area and the primary shopping area of Uxbridge.
- 2.2 Situated on the south west side of Uxbridge High Street the building and those in the general vicinity of it enclose an open and mainly pedestrianised area of the town, centred on the Market Square, with its entrance to the listed Grade II Uxbridge Underground Station and The Chimes Shopping Centre.
- 2.3 The section of High Street in which the building is located has a restricted gated, service vehicle only, access from the adjoining roads, with a shared pavement/service vehicle surface, the pavement area delineated by bollards.
- 2.4 25-27 High Street is an imposing yellow stock brick building with rendered window surrounds, rendered banding between its second and third floors and rendered corncicing and parapet to its central projecting bay. Together with the adjoining Listed Grade II HSBC building at 28 High Street and the Grade II* listed Market House building to the north west they collectively dominate the Market Square area.
- 2.5 First listed in April 1973, its details are as follows :

5018 HIGH STREET (South-West Side) UXBRIDGE Nos 25 to 27 (consec) tq 0584 SE 19/256

3.4.73. II GV 2. Imposing mid C19 building of 4 storeys, 6 windows. Yellow brick with stucco dressings including 3rd floor cill band and entablature and blocking course, with pediment over slightly projecting 2-bay centre. Moulded stucco architraves to sash windows with margin lights, those on 1st floor with console bracketed cornices and the 2 centre of these having pediments. Modern shops on ground floor.

Nos 24 to 28 (consec) form group

- 2.6 It is one of a number of other listed buildings in the surrounding area and adjoins, on its south eastern side, the grade II listed Three Tuns Public House.
- 2.7 When first built it is believed, by its frontage arrangement, to have comprised three shop units, but subsequently its interior has been mostly rebuilt and subdivided into two parts, one comprising Nos 25 and 26 High Street and the other 27 High Street. The ground floor of the building, split into three bays by stone pilasters, is testament to the original three retail units. Nos 25 and 26 have now however been amalgamated and separated from No.27, which at ground floor level and above comprises part of the HSBC Bank at 28 High Street.
- 2.8 The ground floor and upper floors of 25-26 High Street were previously occupied by Carphone Warehouse, with its retail element on the ground floor and offices above and staff toilets in the basement. It has been vacant since April 2020 when the company closed all of its 531 stand-alone stores and moved the business into its larger PC World stores and on line. Its current unoccupied status with internal security shutters and torn internal posters presents a dead frontage to the street.
- 2.9 There are two distinctive dressed stone bands at fascia level above the unit's windows, previously used by Carphone Warehouse and earlier businesses to fix their corporate or bespoke signage.
- 2.10 Internally the ground floor of 25-26 High Street comprises a large empty open concrete floored space, save for a small modern kitchenette room at its rear, contained within a single storey rear extension to the building.
- 2.11 The basement to 25-26 High Street extends under the pavement of the High Street and contains a series of small rooms, some brick vaulted, comprising former and unused storage space. The central part of the basement has been subdivided by modern stud partition walls to create male and female toilets with larger unused rooms to the rear sealed off from the rest of the basement.

2.12 In October 2022 Listed Building Consent was granted for the creation of a new ground floor entrance from street level to the upper floors of 25-26 High Street via a new staircase (Council Ref 8248/APP/2022/2664). The new entrance door occupied part of the current 26 High Street ground floor unit and is shown on the submitted elevational and internal layout drawings.

3.0 PROPOSALS/DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

3.1 Black Sheep Coffee wish to take on the lease of the vacant ground floor unit and basement at 25-26 High Street, Uxbridge and open it as a coffee shop.

3.2 It is proposed to refurbish the shop front, following the creation of the new doorway to the upper floors of the building at 26 High Street and paint it a dark grey (RAL7021 Dark Grey) finish.

3.3 It is further proposed to erect two non-illuminated “Black Sheep Coffee” fascia signs centred above the shopfront windows to both the shop’s entrance door at 25 High Street and above the truncated shopfront to 26 High Street.

3.4 The fascia signs will comprise Individual “Black Sheep Coffee” white acrylic non illuminated letters fixed by black spacers to the existing stone fascia panels.

3.5 An externally illuminated folded metal projecting sign with “Black Sheep Coffee” and logo on it will be fixed to the stone fascia panel by a metal framed support bracket above the proposed door to the upper floors of the building. The support bracket housing and the sign will be powder coated Jet Black and have white acrylic lettering on a black background and be lit by warm white LED’s housed within the support bracket pictorial arms.

3.6 An internally illuminated roundel sign will be fixed to the ceiling of 26 High Street facing out onto the street. It would consist of a black coated metal housing, finished in RAL 9005, with applied graphics and LED’s mounted within the signs to provide static illumination.

3.7 It has been included in the submitted drawings for completeness. By virtue of Class 12 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations it enjoys

Deemed Consent, this class permitting the display of illuminated advertisement inside a building within one metre of any window through which it can be seen from outside the building.

3.8 A customers outside seating area comprising 3 tables and 6 chairs will be positioned on the pavement outside the unit with planters at either end, as shown on Drawing No. 9659-P-07. The tables and chairs have also been included for completeness of the overall proposals by Black Sheep Coffee, as under the relaxations brought in by the Business and Planning Act 2020 (Pavement Licence) (Coronavirus) Amendment Regulations, planning permission is not required, only an application for a pavement licence. They and the mobile planters will be brought in and stored inside the unit outside of opening hours.

3.9 Internally the ground floor will be fitted out as a coffee shop to provide 44 covers.

Currently open plan with an exposed concrete floor, part plastered walls and concrete ceiling, the front area to it will become a customer retail area with servery to the right of the entrance from the High Street. Customers bench tables and chairs will be positioned opposite it and fronting onto the High Street and an extensive seating area with a variety of tables and chairs located, with an accessible WC, to the rear. Only part of the basement will be brought into use to provide a preparation area, storage area, staff toilets and rest area. The vaulted rooms under the High Street pavement will remain unused as will a large part of the bigger basement rooms to the rear of the building.

3.10 The concrete floors of both ground floor and basement will be surfaced in a variety of tiles ranging from stone in the retail area, timber effect to the rear customer area and safety flooring to the servery/back of house and basement preparation areas. The walls will be plastered and tiled behind the servery, the preparation areas and the accessible toilets, with metal sheeting to part of the customer seating area. Light fittings will be suspended from the ceiling, which will either be tiled in places or the bare concrete finish left exposed.

3.11 The only changes to the current internal layout of the existing ground floor will be the removal of a stud partition wall at the rear enclosing a former kitchenette/staff room, to facilitate the provision of a customers' accessible WC. At basement level two small sections of stud partition wall will be removed to open up space in the proposed staff preparation area and a further small section to facilitate a fire escape route to an existing flight of stairs from basement to the building's external courtyard. These sections of wall are shown highlighted in red on Drawing No. 9659-E-01 Rev A.

3.12 The proposed overall layout and functional use of both the ground floor and basement are shown on Drawing no. 9659-101 Rev A.

3.13 The existing double doors into the unit give level access from the High Street pavement and will be retained, enabling wheelchaired and ambient disabled customers and those with prams to easily access the shop unit.

3.14. The building is located in an area that benefits from a Public Transport Accessibility Rating of 5 rising to 6, with Uxbridge Underground Station opposite and the Town's bus station within easy walking distance.

4.0 PLANNING HISTORY AND PLANNING POLICY

PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1 Reference to the Council's online records shows there has been past applications for Listed Building Consent, Advertisement Consent and Planning Permission related to changes of use, shopfront changes and signage proposals to 25-27 High Street, dating back to the early 1960's.
- 4.2 As previously referred to it is believed the building was originally designed with three shops on the ground floor which then became two. In 1963 planning permission was granted for change of use of 25-26 High Street to a Halifax Building Society office and subsequently a number of applications were submitted and approved for the installation of new shop frontages, internal alterations and externally illuminated fascia and projecting signs in connection with its use as a Building Society and then subsequent use by Carphone Warehouse.
- 4.3 The result of the implementation of a number of these applications means it can be clearly shown that the original shop fronts to 25-27 High Street have long gone. Those there now are modern in appearance and materials and on implantation of the Listed Building Consent (Council Ref: 8248/APP/2022/2664) recently granted for a new entrance doorway to facilitate access to the upper floors of 25 and 26 High, Street, the appearance of the existing shopfront to 26 High Street will change again.
- 4.4 There have been recent applications for Planning Permission, Listed Building Cosset and Advertisement Consent in connection with a proposal for change of use of the ground floor and basement of 25-26 High Street from its established Class E (a) use to a mixed restaurant and hot food takeaway sui generis use. Submitted in August 2021 these were withdrawn in November 2021.

4.5 An application for Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent for change of use of the upper floors of 24-25 High Street from ancillary office use to the retained ground floor retail unit to create 3 x 2 bedroom flats, to include a new front entrance door way was submitted in January 2022, but also subsequently withdrawn in August 2022.

PLANNING POLICY

4.6 Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework 2021 sets out the Government planning policies for England and how these should be applied and must be taken into account in the preparing the development plan. It is a material consideration in planning decisions.

4.7 Section 6 of the NPPF encourages planning policies and decisions to create conditions in which business can invest, expand and adapt. Further, 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. Section 12 of the NPPF states that the high quality buildings and places are fundamental to what the planning and development process should aim to achieve. Paragraph 126 advocates good design as a key aspect of sustainable development, which in turn creates better places to live and work and helps to make development acceptable in communities.

4.8 Section 16 of the NPPF states that decisions should conserve and enhance the historic environment, appropriate to their significance, so they can be enjoyed by existing and future generations.

4.9 The statutory Development Plan comprises:

The London Plan. Adopted 2021

Hillingdon Local Plan. Adopted January 2020:

a Part 1 Strategic Policies

b Part 2 Development Management Policies, Site Allocations and Designations.

4.10 The main Development Plan policy issues raised by the application relate to the impact the proposed works would have on the character, appearance and setting of the Grade II listed building and the Uxbridge/Windsor Conservation Area in which it is located and the impact on the internal fabric of the building.

4.11 Policy HC1 of The London Plan on Heritage Conservation and Growth requires development proposals affecting heritage assets, and their settings, to conserve their significance, by being sympathetic to the assets' significance and appreciation within their surroundings and deliver positive benefits that conserve and enhance the historic environment, as well as contributing to the economic viability, accessibility and environmental quality of a place, and to social wellbeing.

4.12 Policy HE1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part One - Strategic Policies on Heritage states that the Council will conserve and enhance Hillingdon's distinct and varied environment, its settings and the wider historic landscape, including statutorily Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas and encourage the reuse, modification and regeneration of historic assets.

4.13 Policy DMHB 1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two - Development Management Policies on Heritage Assets, states that the Council will expect development proposals to avoid harm to the historic environment and to prevent the loss of significance or harm to the character, appearance and setting of heritage assets.

- 4.14 Policy DMHB 2 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two on Listed Buildings will only permit developments that retain the significance and value of Listed Buildings whilst being appropriate in terms of the fabric, historic integrity, spatial quality and layout of the building. In addition, any alterations or additions to a Listed Building should be sympathetic in terms of scale, proportion, detailed design, materials and workmanship.
- 4.15 Policy DMHB 4 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two on Conservation Areas requires any signage to be of high quality contextual design and Policy DMHB 13A on Advertisements and Shop Signage state they should complement the scale, form, materials and architectural composition of the individual buildings of which they form part. The same policy states that shop signage will generally be limited to the strip above shop windows and where appropriate, a projecting sign is possible.
- 4.16 Supplementary Design Guidance on Shopfronts. Including fascia lettering, hanging signs and illumination is given in Appendix B of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two.

5.0 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

5.1 In consideration of the statutory development plan and other material considerations, the key planning matters in the determination of this application can be summarised as:

- Principle of proposed signage
- Principle of internal fit out
- Principle of outside seating area

PRINCIPLE OF PROPOSED SIGNAGE

5.2 25-26 High Street, Uxbridge is situated in the heart of the metropolitan Shopping Centre of the town. Part of a listed Grade II building within the Old Uxbridge /Windsor Street Conservation Area it occupies a very prominent location overlooking Market Square and the entrance to The Chimes Shopping Centre.

5.3 It's ground floor shop unit has remained empty since April 2020 when vacated by its previous occupier Carphone Warehouse. Black Sheep Coffee in wanting to take on the lease of the premises and occupy and run it as a coffee shop, propose to erect two non illuminated fascia signs and an externally illuminated hanging sign to the shop frontage, having refurbished and repainted the existing shopfront.

5.4 The proposed non illuminated fascia signs would occupy an area of the existing shop front consisting of two distinct stone bands above what were the original separate shop units at 25 and 26 High Street. The non illuminated letters that make up the "Black Sheep Coffee" sign would be fixed by spacers to the existing stone bands.

5.5 The size of the lettering proposed is considered proportionate to the height of the fascia and the overall appearance of the shopfront and each sign is centred on the

existing shopfront windows. It is argued that in line with Local Plan Policy DMHB 13A they would complement the scale, form, materials and architectural composition of the building on which they would form part.

- 5.6 Policy DMHB 13A states that where appropriate, a projecting sign is possible and in line with that policy the one proposed is at fascia level and considered proportionate to its location and the overall appearance of the building .

PRINCIPLE OF PROPOSED FIT OUT

- 5.7 The proposed ground floor fit out would require the construction of a front and rear servery fixed to the floor and wall of the ground floor with the necessary free standing appliances to make coffee etc and store coffee making ingredients and those for teas smoothies etc.

- 5.8 The remaining ground floor will be occupied by free standing tables and chairs, with fixed banquette seating along one of its walls. An accessible customer WC will be constructed at the rear of the ground floor area.

- 5.9 At basement level the former staff area and separate WC facilities will remain with some minor adjustment to 3 existing stud partition walls to accommodate the shop's proposed preparation area and access to a new basement fire escape route. Apart from a fixed sink all other equipment, primarily upright freezers will be freestanding.

- 5.10 With there being no elements of architectural or historic significance at ground floor level and the more historic features at basement level remain untouched and unused and the existing layout at basement level remains, it is considered that the proposed internal alterations are in compliance with the requirements of Policy DMHB 2 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two on Listed Buildings and protects the spatial quality and internal layout of the building.

PRINCIPLE OF OUTSIDE SEATING

- 5.11 The placing of customers tables and chairs outside on the pavement to High Street utilises its fully pedestrianised street frontage. The tables and chairs will be visible by staff from inside the unit and will be removed and stored within it outside of opening hours.
- 5.12 They will enliven the street scene and provide an active frontage to this part of the High Street, mirroring those outside the adjoining Three Tuns Public House. Being an ephemeral feature, they would have no adverse impact on the appearance of the listed building and enliven its setting.
- 5.13 They have been included within the submitted drawings for completeness of the proposals by Black Sheep Coffee for the unit, as under the relaxations brought in by the Business and Planning Act 2020 (Pavement Licence) (Coronavirus) Amendment Regulations, planning permission is not required, only an application for a pavement licence.

6.0 HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT.

- 6.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) provides the Government's national planning policy on the conservation of the historic environment. In respect of the information required for applications, it states that: *"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"*
- 6.2 This assessment has been carried out in accordance with the statutory duties of The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the policies of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- 6.3 25-26 High Street Uxbridge, together with cojoined 27 High Street is a Grade II listed building located within the Old Uxbridge/Windsor Street Conservation Area . There are several other listed buildings in close proximity to it, including those at 28 High Street and the Three Tuns Public House.
- 6.4 As the building is situated within a Conservation Area, Section 72 of the Act requires the Local Planning Authority to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.
- 6.5. Section 66 of the Act requires the Local Planning Authority to 'have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possess' when considering whether to grant Planning Permission.
- 6.6 The focus of the Government's planning policy guidance is to ensure that account is always taken of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and for new development to make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. A designated heritage asset is defined as, inter alia, a

Conservation Area that has been identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest.

6.7 In determining planning applications, local authorities are required to take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation. The NPPF requires any harm or loss to have clear and convincing justification. Less than substantial harm to any designated heritage assets must be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing the asset's optimum viable use. The fundamental objective is to ensure that the balance of the impact on the heritage assets is demonstrably beneficial, minimising any negative impact on their significance. The NPPF defines setting as the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance, or may be neutral.

6.8 The significance of 25-26 High Street (together with 27 High Street) lies in the detailing and architectural character of its front elevation facing onto Market Square and is setting within the context of the immediate surrounding area and the Conservation Area in which it is located.

6.9 The ground floor shopfronts to the whole building are not original and have been replaced a number of times since first installed in the mid 1850's. Recently Listed Building Consent was granted to further alter that to 25-26 High Street by the creation of a new entrance door to the upper floors, resulting in the loss of part of the shopfront to 25 High Street and the creation of large two pane full height glazed shop front windows to both 25 and 26 High Street, the former having the centralised entrance doorway into the conjoined shop unit.

6.10 At fascia level above these shop front is a stone band that in the past has been used by Carphone Warehouse and previously Halifax Building Society to fix to it their

branded signage lettering to. In the case of the latter, contemporary photographs at the time of its occupation suggest it was a box sign. The proposed Black Sheep Coffee signage aligns with the building's existing shopfront windows and makes use of the two stone bands to produce a balanced look to the building frontage. Double signage fascia's are evident elsewhere in High Street, Lloyds Bank at 21-22 High Street and the neighbouring HSBC Bank at 26-28 High Street being cases in point, as are illuminated hanging signs.

6.11 It is considered that the signage aspect of the proposal would make a negligible to minimal and neutral contribution to the heritage significance of the building, and a negligible and neutral contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and the settings of other nearby heritage assets. It is also part of a proposal to bring a vacant building back into use, advertise the business's presence and enliven a street scene which is characterised by its retail and commercial nature, with a variety of illuminated and non-illuminated signs to retail and business premises.

6.12 The ground floor of 24 -24 High Street has been completely stripped out of any previous subdividing walls and any features of architectural or historic interest and had its floors replaced in concrete, resulting in its ceiling being the underside of the floor to that of the first floor. The only thing removed in the proposed strip out by Black Sheep Coffee is a stud partition wall to a former staff kitchenette.

6. 13 The basement of 24-25 High Street retains the historic vaulted rooms under the street and these will remain unused. The only structural changes to the basement area will be the removal of small sections of modern stud partition walls, put in when the basement was fitted out as staff toilets.

6.14 Given that the ground floor has lost its original plan form, and the proposed removal of modern partition walls at ground floor and only small sections of such walls in the basement the proposed fit out as a coffee shop would not affect the

extent to which the historic plan form of the building can be understood and appreciated.

6.15 It is therefore considered that the proposed internal alterations would not cause any harm to the building's historic and architectural interest, which is derived in the main from its front elevation onto High Street. It is further considered that the proposals have been designed in an appropriate and sympathetic manner to sustain the extent to which the heritage significance of the listed building may be understood and appreciated. In conserving the front elevation, the heritage significance of the listed building and its positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and to the settings of other nearby heritage assets remains. No historic fabric and plan form of significance to ground floor and basement would be detrimentally affected by the proposals.

6.16 As the NPPF advises, where a development will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposals including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

6.17 25-26 High Street has been vacant for 2 years and the proposals by Black Sheep Coffee will bring the ground floor and basement of the building back into active use.