

25-26 HIGH STREET, UXBRIDGE, UB8 1JN

**PROPOSED PAIR OF RETRACTABLE AWNINGS WITH VALENCES
AND RELATED SIGNAGE**

CLIENT: BLACK SHEEP COFFEE 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, Planning Policy 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 a pair of retractable awnings with valences and associated signage at 25-26 High Street, Uxbridge.
- 1.2 Black Sheep Coffee Ltd have taken on the lease of the vacant premises and run it as a coffee shop. Listed Building Consent (Council Ref: 8248/APP/2023/2601) and Advertisement Consent (Council Ref: 8248/ADV/2023/42) have been applied for to repaint the shop front, erect non-illuminated fascia signs, erect an externally illuminated projecting sign and fit out the building's ground floor and basement out as a coffee shop. The following sections of this Statement 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 in the context of the relevant policies and 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 cornicing 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 basement 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 drawings.

3.0 PROPOSALS/DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

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

3.2 The company have applied for Listed Building Consent (Council Ref: 8248/APP/2023/2601) and Advertisement Consent (Council Ref: 8248/ADV/2023/42) for repainting of the shop front, erection of non-illuminated fascia signs, an externally illuminated projecting sign and the internal fit out of the building's ground floor and basement out as a coffee shop.

3.3 It proposes to erect two retractable awnings, with valances, above the shopfront windows of 25-26 High Street either side of stone pilaster that denotes the separation between the previous individual shop units.

3.4 The retractable fabric awnings would be housed in a metal black coloured cassette box that will be fixed to the return or underside/soffit of the shopfront's distinctive stone fascia band. Both would have the company's "Black Sheep Coffee" logo/graphic printed in cream on the proposed charcoal-coloured awnings. The valance to the left-hand side would have "Black Sheep Coffee" applied to it, the letters in cream on the same charcoal coloured background.

3.5 The awnings would be supported on black coloured metal arms and be electronically operated. They would open during trading hours only and be retracted when the coffee shop is closed. They are intended to provide cover to customers when using the outside table and chairs, the subject of a Street Licence application.

3.6 The manufacture's technical details accompany the application. Whilst these show that a version of the cassette folding arm awning can provide LED illumination to the casing profile and arms, it is proposed however to install the standard non illuminated version, (the Puma I S-300 model).

3.7 The proposed awnings are shown on the drawings that accompany the application.

Those of the front elevation are shown in the context of the proposed Black Sheep signage proposals. For clarity a “as is” drawing showing the existing frontage of 25-26 High Street without the approved signage or awnings also accompanies the applications.

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 overall 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. The ground floor shop frontage of 27 High Street forms part of the adjoining HSBC Bank.
- 4.3 The result of the implementation of a number of these applications means it can be clearly shown that 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.

4.6 As previously stated Listed Building Consent (Council Ref: 8248/APP/2023/2601) and Advertisement Consent (Council Ref: 8248/ADV/2023/42) have been applied for the repainting of the shop front, erection of non-illuminated fascia signs, an externally illuminated projecting sign and the internal fit out of the building's ground floor and basement out as a coffee shop.

PLANNING POLICY

4.7 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 2023 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.

4.8 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 131 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.

4.9 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.

4.10 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.

4.11 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.

4.12 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.

4.13 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.

4.14 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.

4.15 Policy DMHB 2 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two on Listed Buildings will only permit development that retains 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.

4.16 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.

4.17 Supplementary Design Guidance on Shopfronts, including the erection of awnings, is given in Appendix B of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two. It states that traditional features of shopfronts include recessed blind boxes and retractable fabric blinds and that the Council will encourage the use of such traditional features in modern shopfronts and in sensitive locations such as Conservation Areas.

4.18 The Design Guidance requires awnings to be of a retractable design, appropriate to the scale of the frontage in sensitive locations, and housed in recessed blind boxes. Adverts on awnings should be carefully designed to enhance the shopfront. It states that awnings were traditionally of canvas and stored in boxes when not in use and that they offer shelter to pedestrians and their colours can enhance the appearance of the street scene and provide an opportunity to display the name of the company occupying the premises.

5.0 PLANNING POLICY

5.1 In consideration of the statutory development plan and other material considerations, the key planning matter in the determination of the applications is whether the proposals would preserve the character of the Grade II building and the surrounding Conservation Area.

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 had remained empty since April 2020 when vacated by its previous occupier Carphone Warehouse. Black Sheep Coffee in taking on the lease of the premises and occupying and running it as a coffee shop, propose to erect a pair of retractable fabric awnings housed in a metal black coloured cassette box that will be fixed to the return or underside/soffit of the shopfront's distinctive stone fascia band. Both would have the company's "Black Sheep Coffee" logo/graphic printed in cream on the proposed charcoal-coloured awnings. The valance to the left-hand side would have "Black Sheep Coffee" applied to it, the letters in cream on the same charcoal coloured background.

5.4 The awnings would be supported on black coloured metal arms and be electronically operated. They would open during trading hours only and be retracted when the coffee shop is closed. They are intended to provide cover to customers sitting at outside tables and chairs.

5.5 Policy HE1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part One encourages the reuse, modification and regeneration of historic assets and the proposed awnings are part of the applicant's proposed reuse, modification and regeneration of a vacant listed building.

5.6 It is considered that in respect of Policy DMHB1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two the proposed position of the awnings and their respective casings under the shopfront's distinctive stone fascia band avoid any harm to the historic environment in which the host building is located and the character, appearance and setting of the listed building and the building itself.

5.7 Similarly in respect of Policy DMHB 2 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two on Listed Buildings it is considered that the proposed awnings are appropriate in terms of the fabric, historic integrity and spatial quality of the existing ground floor elevation of the building and are sympathetic in terms of their scale, proportion, detailed design and use of materials. They will read as an appropriate addition to a modern shopfront that is part of a listed building

5.8 In the context of the Council's Supplementary Design Guidance on Shopfronts, within Appendix B of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part Two, the Guidance states that traditional features of shopfronts include recessed blind boxes and retractable fabric blinds and that the Council will encourage the use of such traditional features in modern shopfronts and in sensitive locations such as Conservation Areas. This the proposals do and replicate similar awnings found on other listed buildings within the immediate surrounding Conservation Area.

5.9 The same guidance requires advertisements on awnings to be carefully designed to enhance the shopfront. The modest "Black Sheep Coffee" lettering proposed on the valance to the left-hand awning, above the entrance to the coffee shop, is modest and proportionate to the height and length of the valance. The Black Sheep Coffee logos applied to the awnings themselves, although only viewed obliquely and from some distance, will enliven the street scene.

5.10 It is considered that the proposed awnings and associated signage would preserve the character and appearance of the Grade II Listed building, the surrounding Conservation Area, comply with policies in the NPPF and the Local Plan and result in less than substantial harm to the building.

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 fronts is a stone band that has been used by past businesses to fix their branded signage to and on which Black Sheep Coffee signage has been recently approved. The cassette boxes in which the retracted awnings would sit make advantageous use of the underside (or soffit) of this stone band and its return to the modern shopfront below to minimise their visual impact. It is considered they would not adversely impact on the historic or architectural character or appearance of the building. In accommodating two separate awnings, either side of the existing original pilaster that that once separated the individual shop units of 25 and 26 High Street, the awnings, in their retracted form, produces a balanced look to the building frontage.

6.11 It is considered that the awnings and associated signage would make a negligible to minimal and neutral impact 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 previously 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 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. It is concluded 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 still may be understood and appreciated.