LEWIS & CO

PLANNING DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

80a HIGH STREET, STEYNING, BN44 3RD

ON BEHALF OF MR KEVIN THORNTON

Client: Mr Kevin Thornton

Site Location: 80a HIGH STREET, STEYNING, BN44 3RD

Job History:

Version	Date	Author	Checked	Notes
V1	24/08/2026	SH	SB	
V2	26/08/2026	SH	SB	Amendments
V3	21/09/2026	SH	SB	Additional photos, page numbering & others

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Statement has been prepared on behalf of Mr Kevin Thornton (the applicant) and relates to an application for planning permission and listed building consent for the *Change of Use of the 1st and 2nd floors from Offices (E(g)(i)) to a 2- or 3-bed apartment (C3) with associated internal alterations* at 80a High Street, Steyning.

1.2 The property is a Grade II Listed Building under 78-80/80a High Street. This application only relates to 80a High Street on the 1st and 2nd floors and does not include any internal or external changes to 78 & 80 High Street. No external changes are proposed to 80a.

1.3 A Heritage Statement has been submitted in support of this application, which further details the historic impact of the proposed change of use.

1.4 Further information is provided within the submitted drawings and supporting documents. This Statement addresses the proposed development, site and surrounding area and compliance with relevant local and national planning policies and guidance.

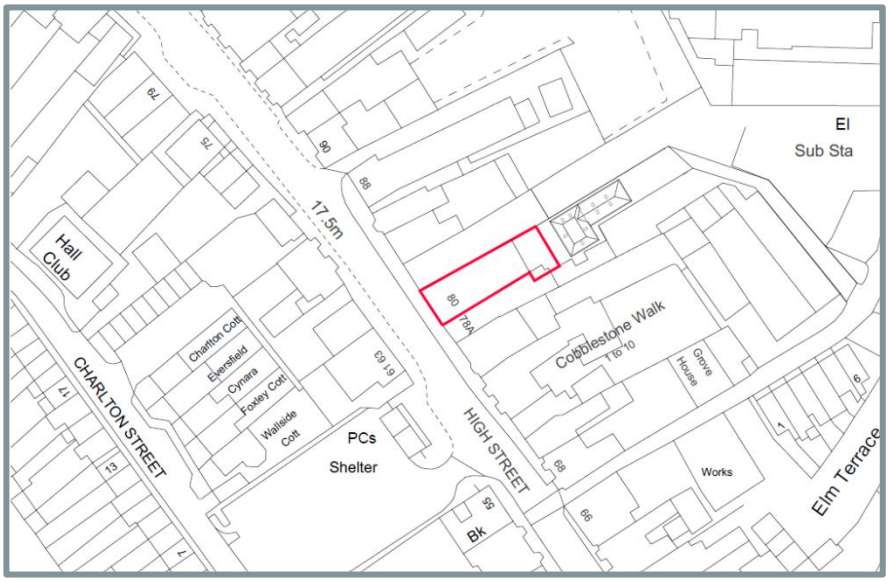
1.5 The following documents make up the submission pack for this application, apart from the Application form submitted via the Planning Portal:

- Heritage Statement (produced by Richard Howell BA (Hons) MA)
- Drawing pack (produced by KTA Limited)
- Marketing Report (produced by Whozoo)

2.0 APPLICATION SITE & SURROUNDING AREA

2.1. The application site is within a Grade II Listed Building, and it is accessed through a shared main entrance with No. 80 at the ground floor from the High Street.

2.2. The 1st and 2nd floors are accessed via a private staircase at the ground floor. It consists of two office spaces and a kitchen on the first floor, and two additional office spaces on the 2nd floor, with a ceiling hatch with access to the attic above.



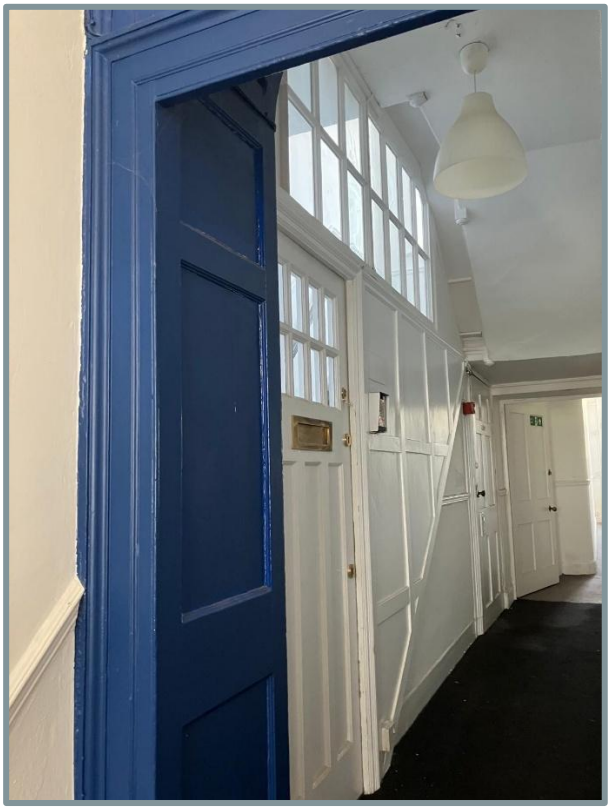
Above - Site (outlined in red) and surrounding context (not to scale)

2.3. The site lies within Steyning's Main Shopping Area along the High Street (policy 13) and within the Build-up Area Boundary (BUAB) of Steyning, classified as a Small Town/Larger Village (Policy 3).

2.4. The site is also located within the Steyning Conservation Area and falls within a RED Archaeological Notification Area[1].

2.5. The site is entirely within Flood Zone 1, and there are no other risks of flooding from any other sources, now or in the future.

[1] *Steyning Historic Core and assocaited Early Medieval and Medieval Occupation* [sic] - *Horsham 063*



Above – Existing hallway entrance from ground floor



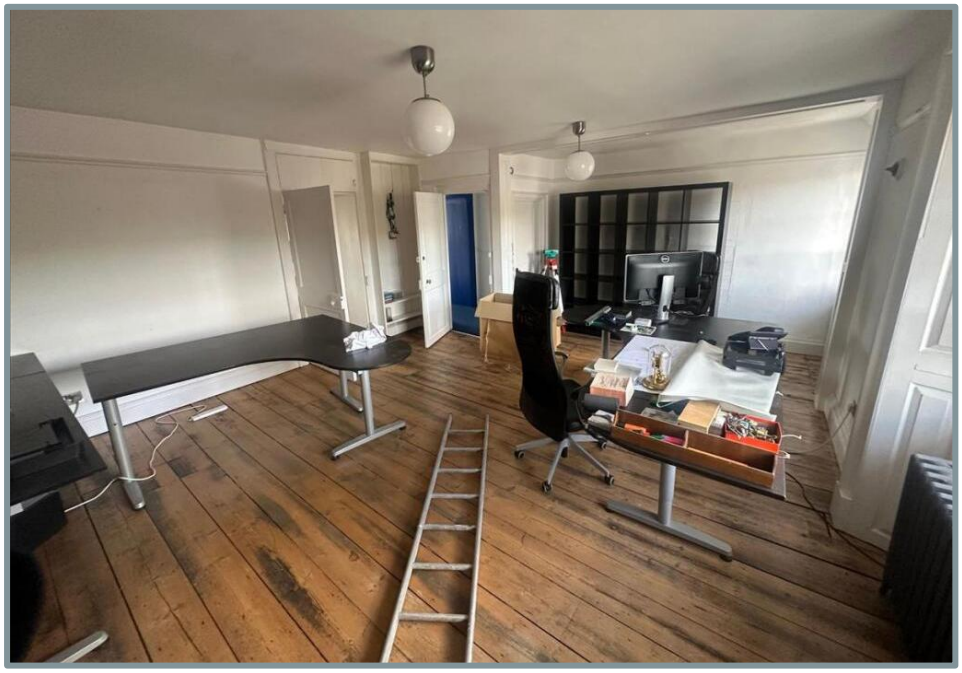
Above – Office 1 as existing



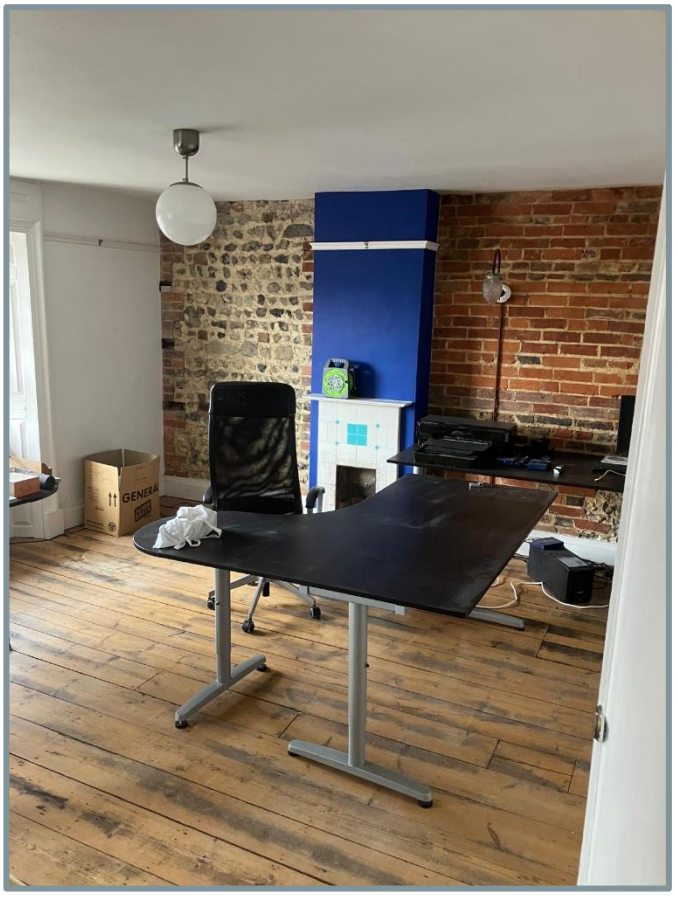
Above – Office 2 (looking into hallway) as existing.



Above – Office 2 as existing



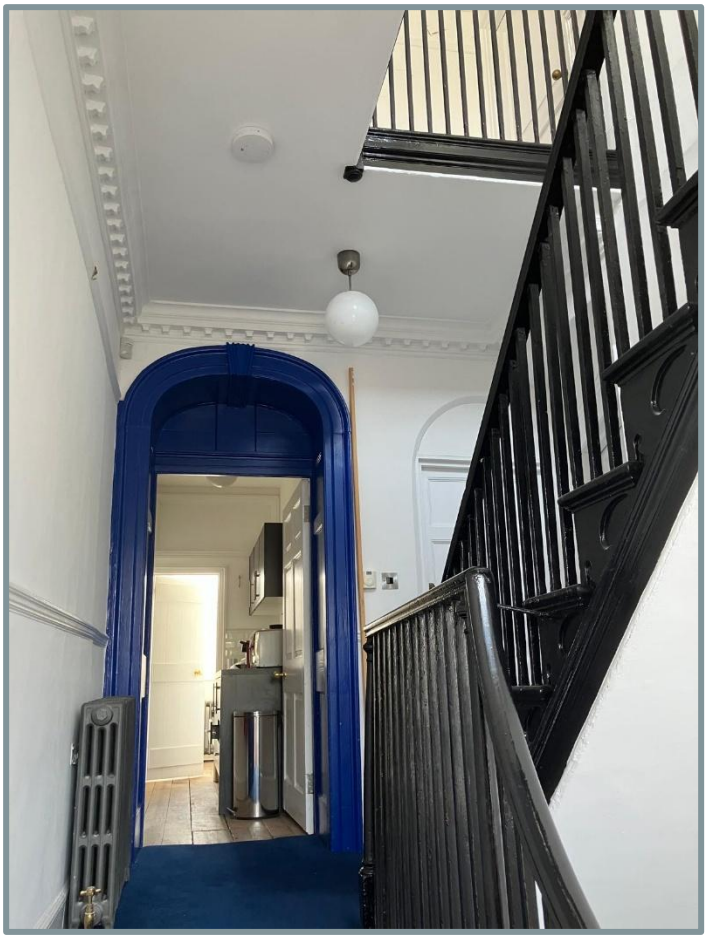
Above – Office 3 (looking towards access) as existing.



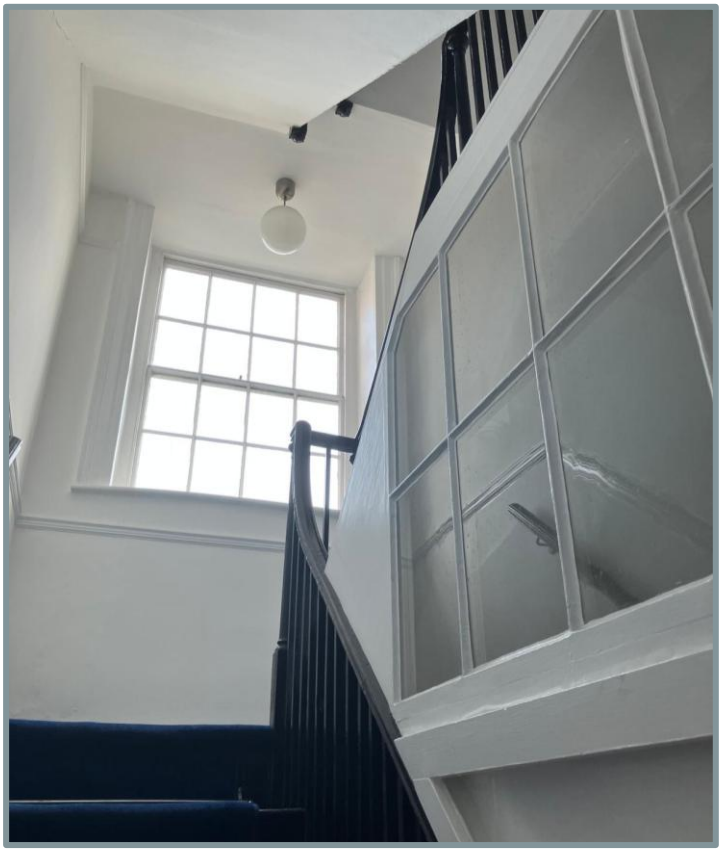
Above – Existing Office 3 as existing



Above – Office 4 as existing



Above – Existing stairwell looking into the kitchen.



Above – Existing stairwell showing dividing glass panels.



Above – Rear of the property looking towards rear access leading to Elm Grove Lane

3.0 PLANNING HISTORY

3.1 The Council's online planning register identifies the following planning applications that are relevant to the site and its planning history.

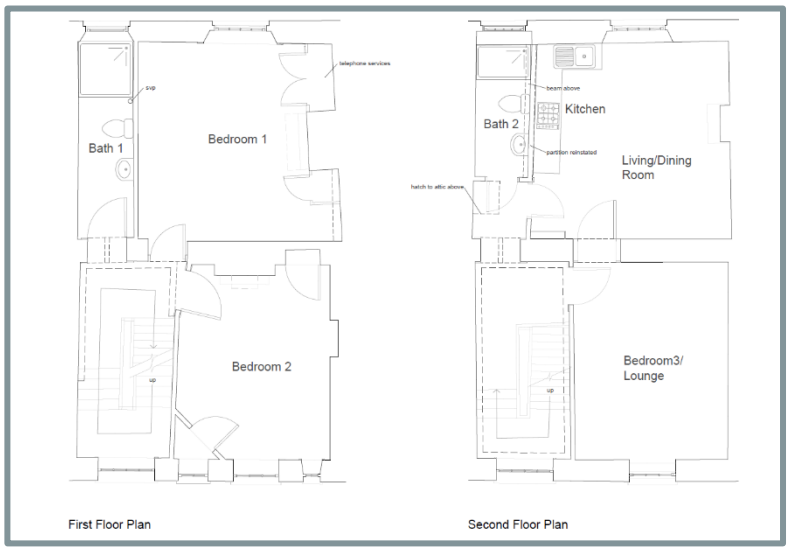
Reference	**DC/21/1705**
Address	Land at The Rear of 80 High Street Steyning West Sussex BN44 3RD
Description	Demolition of modern detached garage and erection of a chalet style dwelling.
Decision	Application Permitted – 03/05/2023
Reference	**DC/04/0696**
Address	Land North East Of 80 High Street Steyning West Sussex
Description	Erection of 2 retirement flats
Decision	Application Permitted – 05/07/2005
Reference	**ST/89/90**
Address	80A High Street Steyning West Sussex BN44 3RD
Description	Double sided hanging sign Site: 80a High St Steyning
Decision	Allowed on Appeal
Reference	**ST/90/90**
Address	80A High Street Steyning West Sussex BN44 3RD
Description	Double sided hanging sign (listed building consent) Site: 80a High St Steyning
Decision	Allowed on Appeal
Reference	**ST/112/03**
Address	80 High Street Steyning West Sussex BN44 3RD
Description	2-storey rear extension to provide extension to existing shop offices over and 2 retirement flats
Decision	Refused – 26/02/2004
Reference	**ST/113/03**
Address	80 High Street Steyning West Sussex BN44 3RD
Description	2-storey rear extension to provide extension to existing shop offices over and 2 retirement flats (listed building consent)
Decision	Refused – 26/02/2004

4.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT – DESIGN & ACCESS

Proposal

4.1 Planning permission and listed building consent is sought for the *Change of Use of the 1st and 2nd floors from Offices (E(g)(i)) to a 2 or 3-bed apartment (C3) with associated internal alterations*.

4.2 The proposal does not involve any below-ground activity or external works. The works will be entirely confined within the 1st and 2nd floors of number 80a.



Above - Proposed 1st and 2nd floors



Above - Existing 1st and 2nd floors

Amount & Layout

4.3 The implementation of the change of use and associated internal alterations will allow the provision of one three-bed apartment spread over two floors.

4.4 On the first floor, the master bedroom would be located at the front of the building with an adjacent family bathroom, accessed from the landing and a 2nd smaller bedroom facing the rear.

4.5 On the second floor, the living room and kitchen would be located in the front-facing room, making best use of the Southwestern window on the upper floor, with an adjacent bathroom, and a 3rd bedroom/lounge facing the rear.

4.6 Additionally, waste storage and cycle parking are proposed to the rear of the ground floor shop for residential use, as seen in the proposed floor plans.

Scale & Appearance

4.7 The external appearance of the building would remain as existing. The internal spaces will be reconfigured to create an additional bathroom on the 2nd floor, reinstating a previously removed partition wall. All other internal walls will remain as existing with updated fixings and painting where necessary.

4.8 The internal floor area of the property is approximately 129.5 sqm (including ground floor access). With the omission of areas for circulation and access, individual room areas are shown below:

First Floor

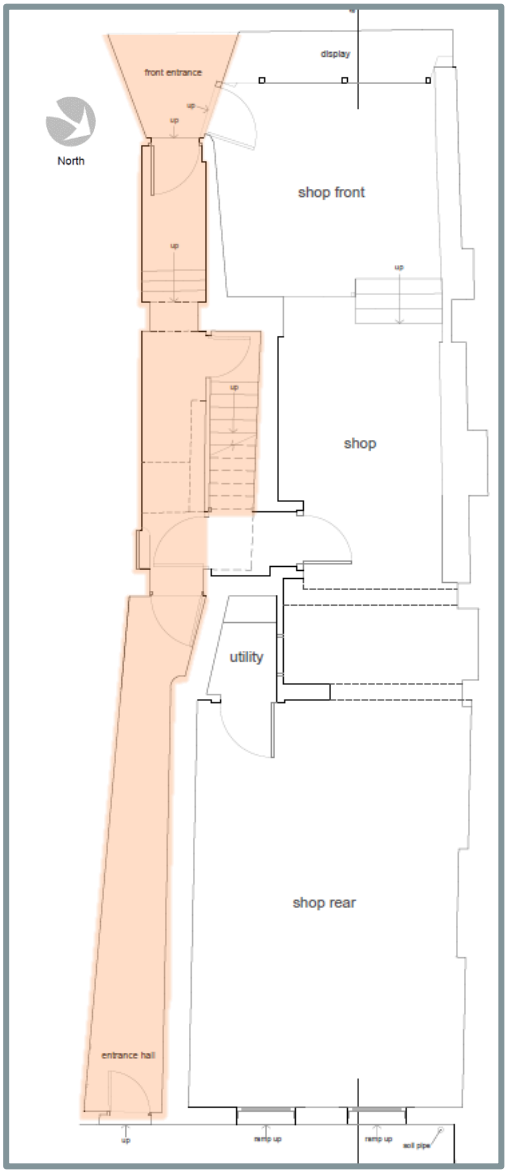
- 1st Bedroom: (Master) 20sqm
- 2nd Bedroom: 15.2sqm
- Bathroom 1: 5.8sqm

Second Floor

- Living room & Kitchen: 20 sqm
- 3rd Bedroom: 15sqm
- Bathroom 2: 3.7 sqm

4.9 The current use of the building consists of a shop on the ground floor accessed from the front and an entrance hall to the rear. The 1st and 2nd floors consist of office spaces also accessed through the shared front and rear entrances, leading to a private stairwell to the upper floors.

4.10 The proposal would retain the existing use of the ground floor and convert the offices of the upper floors into a single dwelling.



Above – Ground floor with highlighted access route

5.0 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

5.1 The adopted Local Development Framework is formed of the 2015 Horsham District Planning Framework and the Steyning Neighbourhood Development Plan (2019 – 2031), as well as the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024).

5.2 The site is also located within the Steyning Neighbourhood Development Plan 2019 - 2031. The Neighbourhood Plan was made in 2019 and forms part of the Local Development Plan.

5.3 In addition to these adopted development plan documents, the Council have submitted the Horsham District Local Plan 2023 to 2040 for examination in July 2024, with hearings having taken place in December 2024 and April 2026. The Council is now in the process of undertaking a Main Modifications consultation which will run until the 24th of August 2026.

5.4 The LPA expects to adopt Horsham District Local Plan 2023 to 2040 in January 2027[2]

5.5 According to Paragraph 1 of Section DM4: *Emerging development plan proposals* of the NPPF (2026), local planning authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to:

> *a) the stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced its preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);*
> *b) the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and*
> *c) the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan with the policies for plan-making in this Framework (the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in this Framework, the greater the weight that may be given to them).*

[2] As per Table 1 of Horsham District Council Local Development Scheme (2026 – 2027).

5.6 As the submitted plan is in the late stages of adoption, reference to policies in the 2023 – 2040 have been added where relevant or where they differ from those adopted, in accord to Section DM4 of the NPPF (2026).

Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF)

5.7 The Local Plan was adopted on the 27th of November 2015 and sets out the planning strategy for the years up to 2031.

5.8 Strategic Policy 1: Sustainable Development states the council will take a positive approach to considering development proposals, reflecting the presumption in favour of sustainable development. It further states that *where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision, then the Council will grant permission, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.*

5.9 Strategic Policy 3: Development Hierarchy states development within towns and villages which have defined built-up areas will be permitted. It classifies Steyning as a category 2: Small Towns and Larger Villages.

5.10 Policy 9: Employment Development states that the redevelopment of employment premises outside Key Employment Areas must demonstrate that the site is no longer needed and/or viable for employment use.

5.11 Policy 33: Development Principles sets a series of principles developments will be required to follow to conserve and enhance the natural and built environment, prioritising the use of previously developed land and buildings.

5.12 Policy 34: Cultural and Heritage Assets seeks to sustain and enhance the historic environment through positive management of developments affecting heritage assets.

5.13 Strategic Policy 35: Climate Change seeks for developments to make a clear contribution to mitigating and adapting to the impacts of climate change such

as (inter alia) to reduce energy use in construction, improve energy efficiency in new developments.

5.14 Strategic Policy 36: Appropriate Energy Use requires all development to *contribute to clean, efficient energy in Horsham based on the following hierarchy:* 1. Lean (use less energy), 2. Clean (supply energy efficiently) and 3. Green (use renewable energy sources). This policy also requires all applications for residential or commercial development to include an Energy Statement and quantify how the development will comply with the energy hierarchy.

5.15 Policy 37: Sustainable Construction states that proposals must seek to improve the sustainability of development, listing a series of measures developments should incorporate in order to deliver a sustainable design.

5.16 Policy 40: Sustainable Transport states that development will be supported which is (inter alia) appropriate in scale to the existing transport infrastructure, including public transport, is located in areas where there are modes of transport available, includes opportunities for sustainable transport and minimises the distance people need to travel.

5.17 Policy 41: Parking requires development to provide adequate parking and facilities to meet the needs of anticipated users, giving consideration to *cycle parking, motorcycle parking, charging plug-in or other low emission vehicles and the mobility impaired.*

5.18 is the Council's strategic design policy and seeks well-designed new development that is sensitive to the character of the area. The policy also requires new development to protect against harm to the amenities of existing residents.

Submitted Horsham District Local Plan (2023 - 2040)

5.19 Strategic Policy 2: Development Hierarchy is an update to the adopted Strategic Policy 3. The classification of Steyning as a Small Town/Large Village is retained.

5.20 Strategic Policy 6: Climate Change will replace the adopted Strategic Policy 35: Climate Change. It introduces stronger policy wording, adding whole-life carbon and circular economy principles to ensure development minimises carbon emissions and includes measures to adapt to the future impacts of climate change.

5.21 Strategic Policy 7: Appropriate Energy Use will replace the adopted SP36. As part of the Schedule of Proposed Main Modifications (MM55), the requirement to comply with an energy hierarchy will be removed to comply with the Written Ministerial Statement 2023 and the 2026 NPPF, as well as the requirement to provide an Energy Statement.

5.22 Strategic Policy 8: Sustainable Design and Construction will replace the adopted Strategic Policy 37, as part of the Main Modifications Schedule (MM58); the requirement for specific standards to be met will be removed, as well as the need for the Sustainability Statement. However, it adds support for the retrofitting of existing historic buildings, provided (inter alia) that it does not result in a detriment to the significance of the asset or damage its fabric, and that it takes a whole-building approach to improving energy efficiency.

5.23 Strategic Policy 21: Heritage Assets and Managing Change within the Historic Environment will replace the adopted P34. It will require proposals for changes of use to be compatible with, and respect the special architectural or historic interest of the asset and setting, as well as proposals that affect heritage assets to be accompanied by a Heritage Statement

5.24 Strategic Policy 24: Sustainable Transport will replace the adopted SP40.

5.25 Policy 25: Parking will replace adopted Policy 41 and makes the provision of adequate, safe and secure parking and/or overnight storage for bicycles a requirement.

6.0 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

6.1 The key material planning considerations relevant to this proposal are:

- The Principle of Development
- Heritage
- Transport and Active Travel
- Sustainability
- Marketing

Principle of Development

6.2 The principle of development is supported by SP1, P3 and P33 of the HDPF and Section S3 and S4 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2026).

6.3 The proposal involves the change of use of existing office spaces in a listed building, with no external alterations and only minor internal alterations; those necessary to implement the change of use, the addition of a kitchen and an additional family bathroom.

6.4 The recently published *Housing Delivery Test: 2025 Measurement*[3] confirms that Horsham District recorded a Housing Delivery Test (HDT) result of **44%**. This is substantially below the Government's housing delivery thresholds and demonstrates a significant level of housing under-delivery against assessed housing requirements over the relevant three-year monitoring period.

6.5 The proposal would provide a much-needed 2 or 3-bedroom dwelling within a sustainable location, at a time the Local Planning Authority (LPA) cannot demonstrate a housing land supply and the adopted development plan remains out of date.

6.6 The scheme as proposed is a 2-3-bedroom dwelling, with flexible use of the rear, second floor room as a lounge or bedroom. Assuming the flat were to be

[3] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/housing-delivery-test-2025-measurement

occupied as a three-bedroom 6-person unit, note that the national space standard for such a unit (2 storeys) is 102 sqm; the proposed 129.5 sqm unit would comfortably accord with space standards.

6.7 Other material considerations are addressed in detail below.

Heritage

6.8 As set out in Section Two, the site is a Grade II Listed Building within the Steyning Conservation Area and the Steyning Archaeological Notification Area; however, no works below ground level are proposed as part of this application.

6.9 In line with Section HE5: *Assessing effects on heritage assets* of the NPPF (2026), a Heritage Assessment has been submitted in support of this application which details the site's history and heritage significance, confirming the proposal is not expected to impact the heritage asset.

6.10 There are seven distinct character areas within the Conservation Area, and the Steyning Conservation Area Appraisal describes *the distinct character and appearance of the town as defined by the High Street and that of the character areas by the varying density of construction relative to it, as well as by their relation to the local topography and setting of the town*.

6.11 The Commercial centre has a high density of listed buildings, including 80/80a High Street, many of which are timber-framed. The appraisal states *some have exposed timbering, others are rendered or tile-hung, yet others were refronted in brick in the 18th and 19th centuries.* The shopfronts are historic, or of a sympathetic design with no illuminated signage, and several have elaborated *wrought iron brackets for hanging tablets.*

6.12 The proposal does not involve any external changes to 80/80a High Street, and would involve little or no impact on the historic fabric of the building, as was concluded in the Heritage Statement.

6.13 This accords with paragraph 1 of Section HE4: *Securing the conservation of heritage assets* of the NPPF (2026).

Transport and Active Travel

6.14 The site occupies a highly sustainable location within the town, with a wide range of day-to-day services and facilities available within short walking distance. Positioned along the High Street, future residents would have convenient access to a Co-op, post office, butchers, restaurants, public houses, and healthcare services, together with a range of other community facilities such as a Cricket Club.

6.15 The proposal involves the inclusion of cycle parking at the rear of the ground floor shop, for up to three bikes. Furthermore, the proposed use of the first and second floor as residential accommodation is likely to generate less parking demand than the existing office use. According to the *West Sussex County Council: Guidance on Parking at New Developments* (2019), the previous use would have generated a demand of 1 parking space per 30 sqm, equating to approximately 4 spaces, much higher than the proposed uses' demand of 1 space.

6.16 The site's proximity to these services would reduce the need to travel by private car and support the creation of a sustainable pattern of development consistent with national and local planning policies such as policy 40 of the HDPF as well as Section TR3: *Locating development in sustainable locations* of the NPPF (2026), where Paragraph 1a states that the location of a development should *limit the need to travel, particularly by private car, and offer a genuine choice of transport modes for residents and users, unless the nature of the development would make this impractical.*

6.17 The site is opposite the High Street Steyning Car Park, which offers parking spaces at annual, seasonal and daily rates. There are also 2 bus stops opposite the site travelling North and South, connecting the site with neighbouring towns and villages, running frequently.

Sustainability

6.18 The proposal is sustainable in principle due to the adaptation of an existing building within a town centre for housing accommodation, with sustainable transport connections by foot, cycle or bus.

6.19 The adaptation of an existing building would minimise the need for construction and demolition waste in line with policy 37 of the HDPF.

Marketing

6.20 The offices at 80a High Street have been on the market as commercial premises since the 21st of May 2025. A marketing report has been prepared by Whozoo and submitted in support of this application, which details the marketing strategy and exposure of the property, summarising the enquiries and feedback received so far.

6.21 A broad marketing strategy was implemented to ensure the property reached the widest possible audience. Over the course of the campaign, the property achieved strong visibility across both portal and digital channels.

6.22 The report demonstrates that there is little evidence of demand for the property in its current commercial use, with little interest from parties seeking to retain the property in its existing use. Most enquiries have focused on the potential to reposition the property away from its current commercial use, mainly for residential conversion.

6.23 This accords with policy 9 of the HDPF and Section TC2: *Development in Town Centres* of the NPPF (2026).

7.0 CONCLUSIONS

7.1 The proposed development is for the *Change of Use of the 1st and 2nd floors from Offices (E(g)(i)) to a 2 or 3-bed apartment (C3) with associated internal alterations* at 80a High Street, Steyning.

7.2 The proposal offers much-needed residential accommodation within a sustainable location at a time when Horsham District is experiencing significant housing delivery shortfalls, whilst making effective use of an existing building within the built-up area boundary.

7.3 During the marketing of the property in its commercial use, no credible purchases emerged despite the property being widely marketed and fully exposed to the target audience; enquiries received largely revolved around the potential for residential conversion.

7.4 The development would preserve the character and appearance of both the Grade II Listed Building and the Steyning Conservation Area, as no external alterations are proposed, and the internal works are limited to those necessary to implement the change of use.

7.5 As demonstrated throughout this Statement and the accompanying reports, the proposal accords with the relevant policies of the Horsham District Planning Framework and the National Planning Policy Framework. The scheme raises no unacceptable impacts in respect of heritage, design, transport, sustainability, neighbour amenity or any other material planning consideration.

7.6 The proposed development is therefore considered acceptable in principle, and satisfies all material planning considerations as set out in this statement. In the light of this, Horsham District Council are requested to grant planning permission without undue delay.

Lewis and Co Planning
September 2026