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PLANNING AND HERITAGE STATEMENT

Cherry Tree Inn Road,
Faygate, Horsham
RH12 4SA

Change of Use from Public House (Sui Generis) to 7-Bedroom, 13-Person
House in Multiple Occupation (HMO)

01/04/2026

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1. Introduction

This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of a full planning application for the change of use of the former Cherry Tree Public House from a Sui Generis use to a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) comprising 7 bedrooms accommodating up to 13 residents.

The site is currently vacant and has ceased trading as a public house. The proposal seeks to bring the building back into viable and beneficial use through conversion into high-quality shared residential accommodation. The development has been carefully designed to align with relevant national, regional, and local planning policies, including housing delivery objectives and HMO standards set by Horsham District Council.

2. Site Context And Surroundings

The Cherry Tree Public House is an existing built structure located within an established area characterised by a mix of residential and commercial uses. The building forms part of the local streetscape and contributes to the character of the area.

The site benefits from:

- Established access arrangements
- Existing servicing infrastructure
- Proximity to local amenities, services, and public transport links

The lawful use as a public house has become unviable, and the building has remained vacant, contributing to a decline in its condition and local visual amenity.

3. Heritage and Historic Context

The Cherry Tree Public House is a building of local historic interest that reflects the traditional role of public houses as social and community focal points within towns and villages. While not formally listed, the property contributes positively to the character and appearance of the surrounding area and forms part of the established built environment.

The building's architectural form, materials, and detailing are consistent with its historic function and local vernacular, reinforcing its visual significance within the streetscape. The retention of the structure therefore preserves an element of the area's social and built heritage, particularly as public houses have historically played an important role in community cohesion and local identity.

The proposed development has been carefully designed to respect and preserve this historic character. There are no external alterations proposed to the building, ensuring that its appearance, scale, and relationship with the surrounding context remain unchanged. As such, the proposal conserves the significance of the asset and avoids any harm to its setting.

In line with the principles of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the scheme represents an appropriate and sensitive re-use of a heritage asset, securing its long-term viable use. Bringing the building back into active occupation will prevent further deterioration and safeguard its contribution to the local environment.

Overall, the proposal preserves the historic fabric and character of the building while enabling a sustainable and beneficial new use, consistent with national and local heritage policies.

4. Need for Development

4.1 Housing Demand

There is a well-documented and increasing demand for affordable and flexible housing options, particularly shared accommodation. HMOs play a vital role in:

- Providing cost-effective housing solutions
- Supporting young professionals and key workers
- Reducing pressure on traditional housing stock

The proposed development directly responds to this demand by delivering a high-quality, well-managed HMO in a sustainable location.

4.2 Loss of Public House

The loss of a public house has been carefully considered. The property is no longer operational and is considered unviable in its existing use due to:

Changing social and economic patterns
Reduced demand for traditional public house facilities
Ongoing vacancy and lack of commercial interest

The proposed re-use ensures the building remains occupied and maintained, preventing further deterioration.

5. Proposed Development

The proposal involves the internal conversion of the building with no material alteration to its external appearance.

Key features include:

- 7 bedrooms accommodating up to 13 residents
- All bedrooms with private en-suite facilities
- Two shared kitchen/dining areas
- Communal circulation space

- Secure cycle and refuse storage
- Rear garden amenity space
- Parking provision (one space per bedroom plus visitor provision)

The development retains the existing building footprint and architectural character, ensuring no adverse impact on the surrounding streetscape.

6. Planning Policy Context

6.1 National Planning Policy

The proposal accords with the principles of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which supports:

- The efficient use of land and buildings
- Reuse of previously developed sites
- Delivery of a wide choice of high-quality homes
- Sustainable development in accessible locations

The scheme represents sustainable development by reusing an existing building and contributing to housing supply.

6.2 Local Planning Policy (Horsham District Council)

The proposal aligns with key local policy objectives, including:

Housing Delivery Policies

- Supports provision of diverse housing types
- Contributes to meeting identified housing needs

HMO Standards

- Fully complies with adopted HMO standards
- Exceeds minimum space and amenity requirements

Design and Amenity Policies

- No external alterations affecting character
- No significant adverse impact on neighbouring amenity

Sustainable Development

- Promotes reuse of existing buildings
- Reduces need for greenfield development

7. Compliance with HMO Standards

The scheme has been designed to meet or exceed all relevant HMO requirements:

Room Sizes and Layout

All rooms exceed minimum national space standards. Areas below 1.5m ceiling height are excluded from calculations.

Sanitary Provision

Each bedroom benefits from a private en-suite, significantly exceeding baseline requirements.

Communal Facilities

Two large kitchen/dining areas provide adequate shared space, reducing pressure on facilities and supporting good living standards.

Fire and Safety

Room Sizes and Layout

The building will be upgraded in accordance with:

- Fire risk assessment recommendations
- Fire detection and alarm systems
- Safe escape routes
- Building Regulations (Part B & E)

A qualified fire safety consultant will be engaged.

Management Plan

A robust management strategy will ensure:

- Regular inspections
- Maintenance protocols
- Tenant behaviour management
- Clear communication channels

8. Access, Parking and Transport

The site benefits from existing access arrangements and is located in a sustainable area. Provision includes:

- One parking space per bedroom
- Visitor parking
- Secure cycle storage

This level of provision ensures minimal impact on surrounding highways and encourages sustainable transport modes.

9. Impact on Amenity and Local Area

The proposal has been carefully assessed to ensure minimal impact:

- No extensions or increase in building mass
- Retention of existing external appearance
- Managed occupancy reduces risk of disturbance
- Screened bin and cycle storage
- Active use reduces vacancy-related issues

Overall, the scheme is considered to enhance the site and surrounding area.

10. Sustainability Considerations

The development supports sustainable objectives by:

- Reusing an existing structure
- Minimising construction waste
- Reducing demand for new land development
- Promoting efficient land use

11. Conclusion

This proposal represents a sustainable and policy-compliant redevelopment of a vacant and underutilised building. The scheme:

- Meets identified housing needs
- Fully complies with HMO standards
- Aligns with national and local planning policies
- Preserves the character of the existing building
- Minimises impacts on neighbours and the wider area
- Provides a long-term viable use for the site

The development delivers clear social, economic, and environmental benefits.

In light of the above, it is respectfully requested that planning permission be granted for the proposed change of use.