

Planning Statement

Change of Use of 118 High Street, Hurstpierpoint, Hassocks, West Sussex BN6 9PX

From 6 Self-Contained Flats to One Residential Dwellinghouse

1. Introduction

This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of a planning application for the change of use of 118 High Street, Hurstpierpoint, Hassocks, West Sussex BN6 9PX from six self-contained residential flats to a single residential dwellinghouse (Use Class C3).

The proposal seeks to consolidate the existing residential accommodation into one high-quality family home, improving the usability, functionality, and long-term sustainability of the property whilst preserving the character and appearance of the building and surrounding area.

The application site benefits from an established residential planning history which clearly confirms the acceptability of residential occupation and conversion at the property.

2. Site and Surroundings

The property is situated on High Street within the built-up area of Hurstpierpoint and forms part of a mixed residential and commercial environment typical of a historic village centre.

The building is currently arranged as six self-contained flats over multiple floors. Whilst lawful residential use already exists, the present subdivision has resulted in fragmented accommodation that is less suited to modern family occupation.

The surrounding area contains a broad mix of residential property types including houses, converted buildings, apartments, and mixed-use premises. The proposal would therefore remain entirely compatible with the established character of the locality.

3. Relevant Planning History

Ref. No: DM/15/0334 – Change of use from office to one residential unit. Approved on Wednesday 25 March 2015.

Ref. No: DM/19/1118 – Proposed change of use from offices to a six-bedroom dwelling. Approved on Wednesday 15 May 2019.

These permissions demonstrate that the Local Planning Authority has consistently supported the principle of residential use and family occupation at the site.

In particular, the approval under reference DM/19/1118 established the acceptability of the building operating as a substantial single dwellinghouse. The current proposal aligns closely with that approved form of development.

4. Description of Development

The proposal comprises:

- Change of use from six self-contained flats to one single residential dwellinghouse;
- Internal reconfiguration of the building to create a cohesive family home;
- Retention of the existing external appearance with minimal external alterations; and
- Rationalisation of internal circulation and living accommodation.

The proposal would reduce the number of residential units at the site and would not intensify occupation.

5. Planning Policy Considerations

The proposal has been assessed against the Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

The NPPF supports sustainable development and encourages the efficient re-use of existing buildings to provide high-quality homes.

The proposal accords with these objectives by retaining the property in beneficial residential use, improving the quality and functionality of accommodation, supporting the long-term viable use of the building, reducing the intensity of occupation associated with six separate flats, and preserving the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

6. Principle of Development

The principle of residential use at the site is firmly established through both the existing lawful use and the planning history referenced above.

Permission DM/15/0334 approved the change of use from office accommodation to a residential unit, while permission DM/19/1118 approved the use of the building as a six-bedroom dwellinghouse.

The current proposal is therefore entirely consistent with the established planning history and continues a form of residential occupation previously accepted by the Local Planning Authority.

The proposal reduces the number of occupancies from six separate flats to one dwellinghouse and is likely to reduce traffic movements, parking demand, waste generation, and general activity associated with multiple occupancies.

7. Impact on Character and Appearance

The proposed works are principally internal in nature and would preserve the existing external appearance of the property.

No significant alterations are proposed to the scale, form, or architectural character of the building. Consequently, the proposal would preserve the visual amenities of the street scene and surrounding area.

8. Residential Amenity

The creation of a single dwellinghouse would significantly improve the quality of residential accommodation compared with the current fragmented flat arrangement.

The proposal is also likely to improve residential amenity through the reduction of activity associated with multiple separate households occupying the building.

No material overlooking, overshadowing, or loss of privacy impacts would arise given the absence of significant external alterations.

9. Highways and Parking

The reduction from six self-contained flats to one dwellinghouse is expected to reduce vehicle movements and parking demand associated with the property.

The proposal would therefore not give rise to adverse highway impacts and is likely to lessen transport pressures compared with the existing arrangement.

10. Sustainability

The proposal represents the sustainable re-use and enhancement of an existing residential building within a highly accessible village location.

By adapting the existing structure rather than constructing new development, the proposal minimises waste and supports the efficient use of existing buildings in accordance with the objectives of the NPPF.

11. Conclusion

The proposed change of use of 118 High Street, Hurstpierpoint from six self-contained flats to one residential dwellinghouse represents an appropriate and sustainable form of development.

The proposal would maintain the established residential use of the property, reflect and align with the site's approved planning history, improve the quality and functionality of the accommodation, reduce the intensity of occupation and associated impacts, preserve the character and appearance of the building and surrounding area, and provide a viable long-term family home.

For the reasons set out above, planning permission is respectfully requested.

