

Planning Statement

Proposed Change of Use from Private Members Club (Sui Generis) to 2 No. Three-Bedroom Dwellings (Use Class C3)

9–11 Buckingham Road, Shoreham-by-Sea, BN43 5UA

1. Introduction

This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of a planning application for the change of use of 9–11 Buckingham Road, Shoreham-by-Sea, from a former private members club (Sui Generis) to two self-contained three-bedroom family dwellings (Use Class C3).

The application seeks to secure the long-term viable use of a vacant building that has remained unused since the closure of the former Royal British Legion Club in February 2020. The proposal will bring a prominent and deteriorating building back into beneficial use, provide much-needed family housing, and enhance the appearance of the property and surrounding street scene.

2. Site and Surroundings

The application site comprises a substantial three-storey building located on Buckingham Road within a predominantly residential area of Shoreham-by-Sea.

The property was most recently occupied by the Royal British Legion as a private members club. There is currently no residential accommodation within the building. Following closure during the Covid-19 pandemic in February 2020, the building has remained vacant and unoccupied.

The building is now in poor condition, suffering from various water ingress issues, extensive deterioration and general disrepair. As a result, the property has become increasingly detrimental to the visual appearance of the locality and is considered an eyesore within the street scene.

Historically, the building is understood to have originated as two Victorian terraced houses dating from approximately the 1870s before being combined and adapted for club use.

3. Proposed Development

The proposal seeks permission for:

Change of use from a private members club (Sui Generis) to two self-contained three-bedroom dwellings (Use Class C3).

The scheme will:

- Re-establish the building as two residential units, reflecting its original form and historic function.
- Provide two spacious family homes.
- Exceed the Nationally Described Space Standards.
- Provide private front and rear garden areas.

- Provide off-street parking for one vehicle per dwelling.
- Provide secure cycle storage facilities.
- Provide suitable refuse and recycling storage.
- Deliver significant improvements to the appearance of the building.

The external refurbishment works will include:

- Repair and restoration of the building fabric.
- White rendered elevations.
- Installation of traditional sash windows.
- Refurbishment of the roof with slate tiles.
- General enhancement of the Victorian architectural character of the building.

The proposed works will significantly improve the visual quality of the property and positively contribute to the character of Buckingham Road.

4. Need for the Development

The proposal will deliver two family-sized dwellings in a sustainable and highly accessible location.

There is an established and ongoing need for family housing across the district. The proposed three-bedroom houses represent the type of accommodation that is in strong demand and will contribute towards meeting local housing needs.

The development represents an efficient reuse of a previously developed site and will provide high-quality residential accommodation within an existing urban area where residents can access local services, public transport and employment opportunities without reliance on private vehicles.

5. Marketing Evidence and Loss of Existing Use

The former Royal British Legion Club ceased trading in February 2020 and has remained vacant since that date.

The property has been actively marketed for approximately eight months for its existing use. Despite this marketing exercise, no interest has been received from prospective occupiers seeking to continue the property as a private members club or similar community facility.

The only offers received have been conditional upon obtaining planning permission for a change of use to residential accommodation.

Supporting evidence from the appointed marketing agents confirms:

- The property has been openly marketed.
- No viable interest has been received for its current use.
- All serious enquiries have been linked to redevelopment or residential conversion opportunities.

This demonstrates that the existing use is no longer viable and that there is no realistic prospect of the building returning to its former function.

The proposed residential use therefore represents the most appropriate and sustainable means of securing the long-term future of the property.

6. Planning Policy Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The proposal accords with the objectives of the NPPF by:

- Supporting the efficient use of land and buildings.
- Bringing a vacant building back into productive use.
- Delivering additional housing in a sustainable location.
- Enhancing the built environment.
- Promoting sustainable patterns of development.
- Securing the long-term conservation and maintenance of an existing building.

The proposal represents sustainable development and should therefore be supported in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Adur Local Plan (2017)

The proposal is considered to comply with the relevant policies of the adopted Adur Local Plan 2017.

In particular, the development:

- Provides high-quality residential accommodation.
- Makes effective use of an existing developed site.
- Is located within an established and sustainable residential area.
- Has excellent access to local services and facilities.
- Benefits from convenient access to public transport including bus services and Shoreham railway station.
- Includes appropriate parking provision.
- Provides cycle and refuse storage facilities.
- Enhances the visual appearance of the building and surrounding area.
- Supports sustainable development objectives.

The proposal is therefore fully consistent with the strategic aims of the Development Plan.

7. Design and Heritage Considerations

The proposal seeks to reinstate the building's original residential character.

Historical evidence indicates that the property was originally constructed as two Victorian terraced houses in the 1870s before being adapted for club use. The proposed conversion therefore represents a return to the building's historic residential function.

The external improvements have been carefully designed to respect and enhance the Victorian character of the building through:

- Traditional sash windows.
- White rendered elevations.
- Slate roof coverings.
- Sensitive restoration of architectural detailing.

These works will significantly improve the appearance of the property and contribute positively to the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

8. Sustainability

Sustainable construction principles will form a key element of the development.

The refurbishment and reuse of the existing building will retain significant embodied carbon while reducing the need for demolition and new construction.

The site's sustainable location provides excellent access to:

- Local shops and services.
- Bus routes.
- Rail services.
- Walking and cycling routes.

Cycle storage will be provided to encourage sustainable travel choices and reduce reliance on private vehicles.

9. Conclusion

This application presents an opportunity to secure the future of a vacant and deteriorating building through its conversion into two high-quality family homes.

The proposal will:

- Bring a long-term vacant property back into beneficial use.
- Restore a prominent building currently suffering from significant disrepair.
- Provide two spacious three-bedroom family dwellings.
- Exceed Nationally Described Space Standards.
- Reinststate the building's original residential function.
- Improve the appearance of the street scene.
- Deliver sustainable development in a highly accessible location.
- Provide parking, gardens, cycle storage and refuse facilities.
- Comply with the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework and the adopted Adur Local Plan 2017.

For these reasons, the proposal represents an appropriate and sustainable form of development and planning permission is respectfully requested.