
PLANNING STATEMENT

Change of Use from Public House (Sui Generis) to Four Self-Contained Flats (Use Class C3)

Former Ox Public House

178 New Road, Littleborough, OL15 8NL

1. Introduction

This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of a full planning application for the proposed change of use of the former Ox Public House, 178 New Road, Littleborough, to provide four self-contained residential flats.

The application seeks full planning permission for the conversion of the vacant public house building (Sui Generis use) to Use Class C3 (dwellinghouses).

2. Site and Surroundings

The application site comprises a detached former public house building dating from the early 20th century. The building is arranged over two floors with a partial basement beneath.

The property is currently vacant.

The surrounding area is mixed in character but predominantly residential in nature, with dwellinghouses forming the principal land use along New Road and surrounding streets.

Pedestrian access is currently gained via the existing front entrance, with a secondary rear access formerly reserved for landlord use. Vehicular access is taken from New Road to an existing car park located to the side of the building. These access arrangements are to be retained.

3. Planning History

There is no relevant recent planning history relating to change of use proposals at the site.

There have been no prior refusals relating to residential conversion, and the lawful use of the building as a public house is not in dispute.

4. The Proposed Development

The proposal seeks the conversion of the existing building to form four self-contained flats. The accommodation schedule and layout are detailed within the submitted drawings and accommodation matrix.

flat	floor area [sq.m]	type
1	60.5	1B2P

2	49.2	1B1P
3	48.5	1B1P
4	54.7	1B2P

External Alterations

External alterations are minimal. Works comprise:

- Raising the cill level to the ground floor left gable window; and
- Replacement of existing window frames.

No other material alterations to the external appearance of the building are proposed.

Bin Storage

Bin storage is proposed within the existing car park area, as shown on drawing no. K248-08.

Cycle Storage

No dedicated cycle store is proposed; however, secure cycle storage could be accommodated within the cellar store if required.

Parking

The existing car park and access arrangements are to be retained as shown on drawing no. K248-08.

5. Principle of Development

Suitability of Residential Use

The site is located within a predominantly residential area where residential development is considered appropriate in principle. The proposal represents the reuse of an existing building within the urban area and therefore accords with sustainable development objectives.

Loss of the Public House

The building has ceased trading and is currently vacant. The continued operation of the premises as a public house is not considered economically viable.

The proposal does not result in the loss of a facility that is demonstrably capable of being viably operated in its former use. The site's location within a largely residential area, together with changing market conditions and trading patterns affecting public houses generally, has resulted in the premises becoming unviable.

In these circumstances, the retention of the building in public house use is unrealistic. The proposed conversion secures a viable long-term use for the building, prevents ongoing vacancy and deterioration, and ensures the building remains in active and beneficial use.

The proposal therefore represents a pragmatic and sustainable reuse of the site.

Compliance with Housing Policies

The development provides four additional residential units within the existing urban area, making efficient use of previously developed land.

The proposal is compliant with local housing policies and contributes positively to the borough's housing supply.

6. Design and Impact on Character

As noted above, external alterations are minimal and limited in scope.

The overall form, scale and appearance of the building will remain unchanged. There will be no material impact on the street scene or the character of the surrounding area.

No changes to external materials are proposed other than replacement window frames.

7. Residential Amenity

The proposed flats are designed to provide satisfactory living conditions for future occupants.

Internal Space Standards

The units comply with the Technical Housing Standards – Nationally Described Space Standard.

Natural Light and Outlook

Habitable rooms benefit from adequate natural light and outlook via existing window openings.

Privacy

The relationship with neighbouring properties is unchanged from the existing built form. The proposal does not introduce unacceptable overlooking or loss of privacy.

Noise

External noise considerations will be addressed through a separate acoustic report where required, and any recommended mitigation measures can be secured by condition.

8. Highways and Parking

The site benefits from an existing car park located to the side of the building, accessed directly from New Road.

The proposal retains the existing access and parking arrangements. The change of use is not expected to result in a material intensification beyond the former public house use and will not result in a severe impact on the local highway network.

The site is sustainably located, being close to Smithybridge railway station and positioned on a bus route between Littleborough and Rochdale, reducing reliance on the private car.

9. Refuse and Recycling

Refuse storage is proposed in the form of 2 no. 1100 litre commercial waste bins housed within a timber screen enclosure in the existing car park area.

A separate Waste Management Plan has been prepared and submitted in support of the application.

10. Conclusion

The proposal seeks the sustainable reuse of a vacant former public house building to provide four self-contained residential flats.

The development:

- Represents appropriate development within a predominantly residential area;
- Secures the long-term viable use of a vacant building;
- Makes efficient use of previously developed land;
- Provides additional housing supply within the borough;
- Preserves the character and appearance of the building and surrounding area; and
- Does not result in unacceptable highway or amenity impacts.

For the reasons set out above, the proposal accords with the relevant provisions of the Development Plan and national planning policy.

Accordingly, full planning permission is respectfully requested.

AJ Cocker Associates

25th February 2026