

Design and Access Statement

Proposed Change of Use from Class E to Sui Generis (Public House/Tavern)

Property: 5 West Street, Havant, PO9 1EJ

Applicant: SMM Productions Limited

Date: 09/07/2026

1. Introduction

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared in support of a planning application for the change of use of the existing commercial premises from Class E to Sui Generis to create a small neighbourhood public house and mead tavern, to be known as *Hearth & Honey Tavern*.

The proposal also includes minor external alterations comprising restoration of the existing shopfront and replacement of the existing signage with new signage of the same overall dimensions. No extensions or significant alterations to the building's form are proposed.

The premises have an internal floor area of approximately 133 square metres (1,434 square feet).

The site lies within a designated Conservation Area and this statement explains the design approach adopted and the measures incorporated to ensure the development provides an accessible and inclusive environment while preserving the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

2. Site and Context

The application site comprises an existing commercial unit situated within an established town centre environment characterised by traditional retail and commercial premises of varying ages and architectural styles.

The building forms part of the established street frontage and contributes positively to the character of the Conservation Area. The proposal seeks to retain and enhance this contribution through sensitive restoration rather than substantial alteration.

The building already benefits from a commercial use, and the proposed public house represents a continuation of active town centre use that will increase

footfall and support the vitality of the local high street, particularly during the evening economy.

3. Design Principles

The principal design objective has been to restore and celebrate the character of the existing building while adapting it for its new use.

The proposal has been guided by the following principles:

- Retention of the existing building and its architectural character.
- Minimal intervention to the historic fabric.
- Restoration in preference to replacement wherever practical.
- Enhancement of the existing shopfront using traditional materials and colours.
- Creation of an attractive and welcoming frontage that complements neighbouring properties.
- Support for the continued vitality and viability of the town centre.
- Creation of a distinctive independent business that contributes positively to the local community.

Internally, alterations are limited to those necessary to facilitate the proposed tavern use while preserving the existing structure wherever possible.

4. Appearance

The external appearance of the building will remain largely unchanged.

The existing shopfront will be carefully restored and redecorated to improve its appearance while respecting the established character of the Conservation Area.

New signage is proposed within the existing fascia and will not exceed the dimensions of the existing signage. The design adopts a traditional style appropriate to the age and character of the building and avoids oversized or illuminated commercial signage.

Where modern paint finishes have detracted from the original appearance of the property, these will be removed or replaced with more sympathetic finishes to enhance the building's contribution to the streetscape.

No extensions, alterations to the roof form, or significant changes to the building's proportions are proposed.

5. Heritage Considerations

The proposal has been developed with careful regard to the significance of the Conservation Area.

Rather than introducing contemporary architectural features, the design seeks to reinforce the traditional character of the building through restoration and sympathetic detailing.

The proposed works preserve the established rhythm of the street frontage, maintain the existing scale and proportions of the building, and retain the visual character that contributes to the wider historic environment.

As the proposal involves only modest external alterations, it is considered that the development will preserve, and where possible enhance, the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

6. Access

The proposal seeks to provide an inclusive environment that is welcoming to all visitors.

Access will continue to be provided through the existing principal entrance from the public highway.

The internal layout has been designed to provide clear circulation routes throughout the premises. Furniture layouts have been arranged to maintain accessible routes wherever practicable, allowing wheelchair users to move comfortably through the building.

An accessible WC will be provided in accordance with the requirements of the Building Regulations.

The proposal has also considered the needs of customers with reduced mobility through the provision of suitable seating options and unobstructed circulation space.

A permanent accessible ramp will be installed allowing ease of access to wheelchair users.

Emergency escape routes will be provided in accordance with Building Regulations and fire safety requirements.

7. Inclusive Design

Accessibility has been considered throughout the design process.

The proposal aims to provide facilities that are accessible to the widest possible range of users while recognising the practical constraints associated with adapting an existing building within a Conservation Area.

The development has been designed to balance heritage conservation with modern accessibility requirements by:

- maintaining straightforward access from the street;
- providing accessible toilet facilities;
- ensuring clear internal circulation;
- arranging seating to accommodate wheelchair users;
- minimising unnecessary level changes wherever possible.

Compliance with Part M of the Building Regulations and the Equality Act 2010 will be achieved where applicable to the proposed works.

8. Planning Policy

The proposal supports the objectives of national and local planning policy by:

- bringing an existing commercial premises into an active and viable long-term use;
- supporting the vitality of the town centre;
- encouraging independent local business;

- preserving the character and appearance of the Conservation Area;
- promoting sustainable development through the reuse of an existing building rather than new construction.

The proposal has also been designed with regard to accessibility requirements and inclusive design principles.

9. Consultation

No formal public consultation has been undertaken specifically regarding access arrangements.

Accessibility has instead been considered throughout the design process with reference to current Building Regulations, the Equality Act 2010 and relevant planning guidance.

Where appropriate, any comments received from the Local Planning Authority during the determination of the application will be incorporated into the final design.

10. Conclusion

The proposal represents the sensitive conversion of an existing commercial premises into a small independent public house and mead tavern.

The development has been designed to preserve the character of the existing building and its contribution to the Conservation Area while creating an attractive, accessible and sustainable destination that supports the local economy and enhances the vitality of the town centre.

The proposed works involve only modest external alterations and are considered to preserve, and where possible enhance, the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Accessibility has been fully considered throughout the design process, ensuring the premises will provide an inclusive environment for customers and staff alike.

It is therefore considered that the proposal represents appropriate and sustainable development and planning permission is respectfully sought.