



## DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

**Proposed Works:  
Change of use to Hostel for 49 Persons (SUI Generis)**



**Site Address:  
Regency Court  
2A High Street  
Kings Heath  
Birmingham  
B14 7SW**

**Clients:  
Mr. Arfat Ashraf  
Mr. Waqas Ashraf**

26/10/2018

## **1.0 SITE ASSESSMENT**

The application site is situated at the corner of High Street and Findlay Road within the Kings Heath District Centre. The surrounding area is predominantly commercial comprising of retail units at ground level with offices/storage at first floor.

The local centre is the main shopping hub for Kings Heath area which consists of many businesses operating from the street such as, shops that include branches of national chain stores, charity shops, supermarkets, electrical retailers and opticians. There are also a number of churches and schools on and around High Street.

The style and scale of the buildings along High Street vary from two-storey to five-storey buildings, listed buildings and large warehouse units.

## **2.0 EXISTING PROPERTY**

The application property also known as 'Regency Court', is a large, four storey, brick facing, corner building, dating from the 1980s. It comprises of an undercroft car park at basement level with vehicular access on its south elevation off High Street, and three storeys of vacant offices above. The second floor is accommodated within a mansard roof.

The building fronts the corner of High Street and Findlay Road, with its stepped entrance on the corner.

The building was formerly used as headquarters for a security firm. The property is currently vacant and has been vacant for 6 years.

## **3.0 PROPOSALS**

The proposals are for the change of use of property from Use Class B1 to Hostel for the homeless (Sui Generis), which shall cater for 49 persons.



#### 4.0 CONSULTATION

The proposals have been discussed with Z. S. Partnership Ltd, who are the appointed agent for the project.

#### 5.0 PLANNING HISTORY

##### 5.1 Application REF: 2017/09171/PA

Proposal: Prior Approval for change of use from offices (Use Class B1) at first and second floors to 10 no. Residential units (Use Class C3)

Status: Approved in December 2017

##### 5.2 Application REF: 1996/02590/PA

Proposal: Change of use of first and second floors to offices

Status: Approved in September 1996

*This development was not implemented*

## 6.0 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

The following planning policies apply:

- NPPF – National Planning Policy Framework 2018
- Birmingham Unitary Development Plan 2005 (UDP – saved policies)
- Birmingham Development Plan (2017)
- Shopping and Local Centres SPD (2012)
- Houses in Multiple Occupation in the Article 4

### 6.1 Planning Policy Statement 4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth

There are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles:

- **An economic role** – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure.
- **A social role** – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being.
- **An environmental role** – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy.

## 7.0 PROPOSED HOSTEL

The proposal aims to create a hostel which shall cater for the homeless, a niche sector of the accommodation industry. The client manages two existing similar hostels in Birmingham, and therefore, has extensive experience in this niche industry.

A copy of supporting letter from 'New Roots Placement and Direct Accommodation Services', a registered Housing Association, is attached in **Appendix A**.

A reference, provided by Ward End Hostel, is attached in **Appendix B**.

## 8.0 OPERATIONAL STATEMENT

### 8.1 Selection Process

The Centre Manager receives referrals from various Local Authority's housing/homeless section and Housing Associations for housing homeless clients.

The clients are interviewed by the manager to assess:

- Behaviour attitude and suitability to integrate within the community.
- References are obtained from their previous accommodation.
- Length of stay varies from few days to few months.
- Accommodation is provided to clients who are over 18 years.

## 8.2 Support & Training

- Training is provided to become self-reliant and independent individual. Assistance is provided in finding a job orientated training programme by contacting apprenticeship providers, local job centre and personal contacts.
- Qualified full time support workers shall be employed to assist clients to reform/improve living standards of their day to day life.
- The clients are assessed and provided weekly reports by support workers. They are also taken to various trips, gyms and other leisure activities for good behaviour.

## 8.3 Security

- 24hour security shall be in place.
- Main doors shall open at 7:00am and locked at 12:00pm. Strict curfew will apply and zero tolerance shall be exercised to eliminate disorderly behaviour.

## 9.0 AREA

There is no set clear guidance relating to the minimum standards associated with a hostel, therefore, the bedrooms have been designed in accordance with Category A2 of the HMOs (Bedsits with communal kitchen). The minimum size for one person bedroom where all occupant have access to separate communal space is 6.5m<sup>2</sup>. The proposal shall create a total of 49 bedrooms with shared social space. The bedrooms have been created taking into account the existing floorspace and window orientation.

The proposed use is a hostel (Sui Generis), therefore, one large kitchen and dining area shall be created on the ground floor for all occupants. This setup is currently being used in the other hostels run by the client.

The proposal shall create the following spaces:

### 9.1 Ground Floor:

- 11 Bedrooms (10.8m<sup>2</sup> to 16.1m<sup>2</sup> each)
- Kitchen (26.0m<sup>2</sup>)
- Dining (45.0m<sup>2</sup>)
- 5 Shower+w.c's
- 2 w.c's
- Laundry room
- Service room

### 9.2 First Floor:

- 18 Bedrooms (8.6m<sup>2</sup> to 14.5m<sup>2</sup> each)
- 4 Shower+w.c's
- 2 w.c's
- Communal area (21.5m<sup>2</sup>)
- Store

### 9.3 First Floor:

- 20 Bedrooms (8.6m<sup>2</sup> to 12.6m<sup>2</sup> each)
- Store

#### 9.4 RESIDENTIAL AMENITY

All windows to the bedroom shall be acoustic glazed to reduce noise levels from the street. The existing building comprise of solid concrete floors which provide sound insulation between floors. The development shall include sound resisting walls between the bedrooms.

#### 9.5 PRIVATE AMENITY

##### **On-site**

There is a rooftop balcony area on the first floor which can be used for private amenity purposes.

##### **Off-site**

The nearest park, Highbury Park, which is situated approximately 150metres North of the site, shall be utilised as a form of outdoor amenity space.

#### 10.0 STAFF

There shall be 12No. full time staff employed at the premises for administration, catering, cleaning and security duties.



## **11.0 ACCESS**

### **11.1 Basement**

The basement level is accessible via an access road located on the southern side of the property.

### **11.2 Ground Floor**

Access into ground floor shall remain from the stepped entrance at the corner.

### **11.3 First Floor**

The bedrooms located on the first floor shall be accessible via the existing internal staircases.

Fire escape route shall be provided at the side and the travel distance to the staircase does not exceed 15metres.

## **12.0 TRANSPORT**

### **12.1 Car Park**

Parking is available within the basement for up to 14 cars. It is worth noting, the hostel shall cater for the homeless who are more likely to be non-car users.

### **12.2 Public Transport**

High Street is served by a comprehensive transport system which include bus No's.35, 50, 50A and 150.

### **12.3 Cycling**

The proposal shall include new cycle stands which shall be situated inside the basement.

## **13.0 APPEARANCE**

The appearance of the building shall remain the same.



# APPENDIX A

SUPPORTING LETTER



Placement and Direct Accommodation Services  
*Accommodating those who need it most*

New Roots Ltd  
369 City Rd  
Edgbaston  
Birmingham  
B16 0NB

Tel: 0121 429 3933

Fax: 0121 429 8476

E-mail: [laurence.mone@newrootsltd.co.uk](mailto:laurence.mone@newrootsltd.co.uk)

Web: [www.newrootsltd.co.uk](http://www.newrootsltd.co.uk)

27/03/2018

To Whom it may concern,

New Roots is a growing registered housing association currently taking on service provider led projects.

Waqas is known to us through working for a long term service provider and is experienced in this niche sector of the industry. We are happy to consider his proposal of accommodation.

If you need any further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind Regards,

Laurence Mone  
Business Manager



# APPENDIX B

REFERENCE



## CONTACT

AHSAN RIAZ (DIRECTOR)  
07806000000

WAQAS ASHRAF (MANAGER)

792 WASHWOOD HEATH RD,  
WARD END,  
BIRMINGHAM,  
WEST MIDLANDS,  
B8 2JL  
whhostels@hotmail.com  
Direct Line: 07900568305

**18/10/18**

To whom it may concern,

Dear Sir/Madam

I am very pleased to provide this reference for Mr Waqas Ashraf, since I became acquainted with Mr Ashraf approximately four years ago, when he became an employee at Heartlands Hostel. I am the director of Heartlands Hostel (Ahsan Riaz) and I initially interviewed him for his current position, where he demonstrated his passion for the homeless sector.

Mr Ashraf worked closely with all my tenants to ensure their journey through the hostel into secure accommodation. He adapted his approach to each tenants needs and confidently provided support in an anti-discriminatory and anti-oppressive manner.

He was able to select tenants that would feel comfortable within the environment and interact with other tenants harmoniously.

Mr Ashraf has excellent organisational and leadership skills aligned with a keen eye for detail and a natural inquisitive investigative mind-set. He also has excellent communication skills both oral and written and is comfortable with communicating at an executive level. Most importantly, Mr Ashraf understands the needs and demands of tenants by listening empathetically and personalising the experience from the start.

During his tenure with my company, Mr Ashraf has expressed the importance of multi-agency collaboration which provides an effective service under one umbrella and is more likely to accommodate needs, in comparison to acting as a single agency. As such, Mr Ashraf



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COM



#WHHOSTEL



07900-568-305



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# WARD END HOSTEL

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has worked closely with agencies such as West Midlands Fire Service, West Midlands Police, Crime Intervention and Prevention Programmes and Reach Out Recovery.

Mr Ashraf acquires knowledge and understands elements enshrined within the Human Rights Act 1998, Data Protection Act now recognised as General Data Protection Regulation 2018 and Equality Act 2010. Furthermore, he recognises the introduction of the Universal Credit replacing the current welfare benefits and the major changes which have impacted those in receipt of benefits.

792 Washwood Heath Road  
Washwood Heath  
Birmingham  
B8 2JL

I am confident he will exceed in his plans as he carries a passion for the work he does and i resolutely believe he has the required skills and abilities to begin his career. Should any further information be required, please do not hesitate to contact me on the number provided.

Thank You

Mr Ahsan Riaz (Managing Director)

Ward End Hostel



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07900-568-305



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