

STATEMENT C25 – Olivia Nava

20/04934/P – St Catherine’s Place: Statement in support

Olivia Nava, Bubble Play Café, East Street

I own and run Bubble Play Café on East Street, employing a number of local people. We are a community-focussed café and restaurant, with a fantastic softplay area on our upper floor for young children.

We love our community and we really want East Street to succeed. But the reality is that keeping going on East Street has been a real struggle in recent years as the street has continued to decline. It is a near impossible situation for traders, with many shops having closed over the years, including a number of key anchor stores.

The pandemic has exacerbated an already very difficult trading environment. As a community-focussed business, we have been able to keep going on a limited basis with a takeaway service, but our softplay has had to be closed for most of the past year.

Without significant investment into our community, the outlook is bleak. East Street needs an injection of life, with new families moving in, new improved public spaces and better links from surrounding areas. This application delivers that. This is the only opportunity to finally regenerate St Catherine’s Place. Only through regeneration can we drive footfall back to our remaining shops and provide the boost we so desperately need to convince new businesses to start up.

East Street traders, and we at Bubble Café, urge committee members to please approve this application which is recommended for approval by your officers, and help us deliver the beginnings of a renaissance for East Street. Without this investment and regeneration, it is very hard to see a viable future for our part of Bedminster as a place to do business and a sustainable community.

Thank you.

Olivia Nava, Bubble Play Café