



Planning, Design, Access and Heritage Statement

The Fox Inn, Guildford Road, Rudgwick,
Horsham, RH12 3JP



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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This Planning, Design, Access and Heritage Statement has been prepared in relation to proposals to undertake a series of internal and external alterations at The Fox Inn, Guildford Road, Rudgwick, Horsham, RH12 3JP. It has been prepared on behalf of the applicant, Hall and Woodhouse.
- 1.2. Hall and Woodhouse are an independent family-owned brewery founded in 1777 and based in Blandford, Dorset. The company brew the award-winning Badger Ale, and own and operate a collection of 150 pubs and inns across the south of England, many of which are food led. They have a strong refurbishment programme, which seeks to invest and refurbish their pubs to ensure that they continue to be important community facilities.
- 1.3. Hall and Woodhouse has been brewing beer and operating public houses for centuries. They have considerable experience and expertise in taking on and evolving historic public houses and creating sustainable neighbourhood pubs with a food offer. They also seek to actively engage with local communities where they have a presence.
- 1.4. The rationale for the proposed alterations and extension is to update and refresh the internal areas and external façade of the pub to ensure it is fit for purpose and meets the modern-day requirements of its customers whilst also uplifting this prominent building in the village.
- 1.5. This Statement addresses the relevant planning, design and access matters connected with the proposed development. It is also noted that The Fox Inn is a Grade II listed building. As such, the application is for full and listed building consent and is supported by a Heritage Statement, which is included at Section 7 of this report.
- 1.6. In terms of its structure, the Statement is as follows:
 - Describes the site and its surroundings (Section 2).
 - Explains the proposed development (Section 3).
 - Summarises the planning history (Section 4).
 - Reviews relevant policy (Section 5).
 - Considers the key design and access principles (Section 6).
 - Considers the heritage impacts of the proposed development (Section 7)
 - The conclusions are provided (Section 8).

2. SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

- 2.1. The Fox Inn is a detached Grade II Listed building located on the corner of Loxwood Road and Guildford Ford (A281). It is a large site that is set-back from the road by 20 metres and it is moderately screened from the highway via natural green landscaping including large trees and medium-sized shrubbery.
- 2.2. The pub is located in the southwest of Rudgwick, which is a predominantly residential area that also contains a small parade of shops to form a minor 'high street'.
- 2.3. The building was listed at Grade II in November 1980. The official listing states that the building is assumed to have been constructed in the 17th Century and that the building provided five windows with a painted brick fascia. The listing further notes that the building features an eaves cornice with brick coggling, a tiled roof, and traditional casement windows.
- 2.4. The site includes a grass lawn garden to the rear of the main building that is currently used for informal outdoor seating. There is also some seating provided to the south of the property.
- 2.5. The site has an existing car park that serves the pub and is accessed from the south of the site, off Loxwood Road.
- 2.6. The pub's main entrance is to the north of the building via the car park. There is also an outbuilding located in the north western boundary of the site that is accessed via a small path from the pub.
- 2.7. The site is not located within the Rudgwick Conservation Area.

3. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1. The proposed development relates to a variety of external and internal alterations.
- 3.2. The proposed development is intended to make better use of the floorspace, through modest changes to plan form, reconfiguration of internal dining area, erection of single storey extension to form new cellar. In more detail, they are as follows:

External Works

- Single storey extension to form new cellar (existing exposed concrete slab to be utilised for extension foundation)
- New felt flat roof.
- Painted rendered finish to walls (colour to match existing).
- 2 No. new Velux rooflights
- New timber fence to the rear of the building
- New accessibility ramp to the rear of the building; and
- Installation of over-door heater to rear door.

Internal Works

- Removal of internal walls and door.
 - 1No. Internal wall located in kitchen
 - 4No. Internal walls located within Bar Area.
 - 3No. Internal walls located within Dining Area
 - 3No. Internal walls located within Lobby
 - 3No. Doors located within Dining Area
 - Removal of north western facing windows to ground floor.
 - New internal column.
 - New engineered oak timber floor.
 - Remove ironmongery and secure existing door shut
 - New over bar gantry
 - New Accessible W.C within extension
 - W.C's redecorated and new vanities; and
 - Installation of curtain rail to separate dining area from bar
- 3.3. Recent years have posed significant challenges for the hospitality sector, with venues still grappling with the long-term effects of Covid-19 restrictions and shifting customer habits. These difficulties have been compounded by high interest rates, soaring energy costs, and the ongoing cost-of-living crisis, creating extremely tough trading conditions. In 2024 alone, an average of six pubs closed each week, resulting in approximately 4,500 job losses nationally. This stark reality highlights the fragility of the sector and the urgent need for operators to adapt in order to remain viable.
- 3.4. Many pubs that continue to trade do so on very fine margins, and some operate at a loss. Rising overheads, including increased national insurance contributions, have further intensified these pressures. This is not a sustainable position, and it is essential that existing venues improve and consolidate their offer to withstand these economic challenges. The proposals for The Fox Inn are made in this context, aiming to strengthen its long-term resilience and ensure it remains a viable and accessible local pub for the community.

- 3.5. Customer expectations have also evolved significantly, with a strong emphasis on high-quality service, fresh locally sourced food, and comfortable surroundings. To meet these demands and operate efficiently, establishments must provide modern, well-designed, and appropriately scaled facilities. The proposed single-storey extension, which will accommodate an enlarged cellar and improve internal layout, is a key part of this strategy. These changes will enable the operator to deliver a higher standard of service, optimise operational efficiency, and secure the future viability of The Fox Inn.

4. PLANNING HISTORY

- 4.1. A desktop planning history search has been undertaken. The site has been subject to over 30 total applications submitted in relation to minor external and internal alterations, as well as discharge of condition applications associated with larger proposals, the most relevant of which are detailed below:

Extensions

- **DC/06/2336 (Full) & DC/06/2337 (Listed Building Consent)** - *Single storey lean-to extension to rear of kitchen to extend existing cold room, beer store and extend existing patio* – Approved November 2006

Within the Planning Officers Report, the Conservation Officer concluded that the proposed alterations were very minor and have little impact on the Listed Building and could be accepted as preserving its existing character.

- **DC/05/2589** - *Single storey rear extension to form an extension to existing public house area* – Approved December 2005
- **RW/95/01 (Full) & RW/96/01 (Listed Building Consent)** - *Single-storey extension internal and external alterations* – Approved 2002.

Internal Alterations

- **DC/12/0208** - *Internal works to include some minor modifications to bar servery, installation of log burner to existing inglenook, installation of new fireplace with stove to bar area (adjacent cellar), joinery works to include flooring, screens and general decoration and external works to include cladding on single storey element, erection of fence and gate to side and external works to barn* – Approved March 2012

The Council considered that this application was acceptable, and the Conservation Officer confirmed that she had no objection to the majority of the work, however, objected to a minor aspect involving the use of a screen within the dining/bar area. It is, therefore, considered that the Conservation Officer has been generally positive towards improvements and works to the heritage asset.

- **RW/16/02** - *Removal of internal chimney breast in kitchen area* – Approved May 2002
- **RW/18/95** - *Alterations to bar area (listed building consent)* – Approved May 1995
- **RW/78/91** - *Internal alterations to bar area (listed building consent)* – Approved December 1991

Roofing

- **DC/13/0883** - *Proposed part re-roofing/part repair and associated maintenance (Listed Building Consent)* – Approved July 2013
- **RW/33/95** - *Installation of 3 rooflights (listed building consent)* – Approved August 1995

External Furniture

- **DC/07/0549** - *Erection of 2 x 4 metre square umbrellas to patio area to include internal heating and lighting* – Approved May 2007

- 4.2. The site's planning history indicate that similar scale of works and alterations have previously been approved at the site, and Officers have concluded that there would be no adverse impact on the historical significance of the listed building.

5. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 5.1. This section assesses the relevant national and local policy. The Development Plan is formed by the Horsham District Planning Framework (excluding South Downs National Park) (Adopted November 2015)
- 5.2. This Plan is currently in the process of being replaced by the Horsham District Local Plan 2023-2040; the emerging Local Plan is currently under examination and the LPA have confirmed that the position of the Council is that it wishes to resume hearings and continue the Examination. With that in mind, the LPA have agreed to the procedural/exploratory meeting proposed by the Inspector and it is understood that they will be liaising with the Programme officer to find a mutually convenient date in February 2026. Therefore, the emerging District Local Plan is a material consideration together with national guidance in the form of the National Planning Policy Framework (2024).
- 5.3. This section will consider relevant policy and legislation in relation to planning, design and heritage matters.

Heritage Legislation

- 5.4. The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 is the primary legislation and foundation on which further policy, and guidance relating to the conservation of the historic environment is built. Section 66 of the Act relates to the general duty in respect of listed buildings when exercising planning functions, with Section 66 (1) stating that when deciding whether to grant planning permission for a development, special regard must be given by the local authority to the 'desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses'.
- 5.5. Section 66 (2) of the Act states that a local authority shall have regard to the desirability of preserving features of special architectural or historic interest, and in particular, listed buildings.
- 5.6. Section 72 of the Act relates to the general duty in respect to Conservation Areas in exercise of planning functions, with Section 72 (1) of the Act stating that in exercising planning functions, special attention should be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024)

- 5.7. The latest version National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in December 2024. However, on 16th December 2025, reforms and other changes to the planning system were published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities, and Local Government. This consultation seeks views on a revised version of the NPPF and is accepting comments to the proposed revisions by 10th March 2026. Due to the early stages of this consultation, it is not considered that the contents are relevant to the determination of the development sought as part of this current planning application.
- 5.8. In terms of design, the NPPF states, at Paragraph 139, development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides. Conversely, significant weight should be given to:
- Development which reflects local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes; and/or
 - Outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, as long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.
- 5.9. Paragraph 207 sets out that applicants will be required to describe the significance of the heritage asset affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.
- 5.10. Local authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal. This should be taken into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset (Paragraph 208).
- 5.11. Paragraph 210 stipulates that, in determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of the following:
- 5.12. The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation.

- 5.13. The positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- 5.14. The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.
- 5.15. Paragraph 212 states stipulates that great weight should be given to an asset's conservation when considering the impact of a proposed development on its significance. The weight given should reflect the importance of the asset. Where harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset is identified, the NPPF requires clear and convincing justification of the proposals and harm the significance of assets of the highest significance (including World Heritage Sites) should be wholly exceptional (Paragraph 213).
- 5.16. Paragraph 219 sets out that Local Planning Authorities should look for opportunities for development within Conservation Areas to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset should be treated favourably.
- 5.17. Paragraph 85 of the NPPF also states that planning decisions should help to create the conditions within which business can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity.
- 5.18. Design is considered in Paragraph 139 which states that development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance.

The Development Plan

Adopted Horsham District Planning Framework (excluding South Downs National Park) (Adopted November 2015)

- 5.19. Policy 11 sets out that measures which promote tourism and enhance local cultural facilities will be encouraged. The policy continues and states that any development should be of a scale and type appropriate to the location and should increase the range, or improve the quality of accommodation, attraction or experiences for tourists, day visitors, business visitors, and residents in the District.
- 5.20. Design is addressed via Policy 32 which states that high quality and inclusive design for all development in the district will be required based on a clear understanding of the local, physical, social, economic, environmental, and policy context for development. In particular, the policy is clear that development will be expected to complement locally distinctive characters and the heritage of the district. It also requires all new development to optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development and contribute to the support for suitable complementary facilities and uses
- 5.21. Additionally, Policy 33 outlines the key principles of development and specifies that in order to conserve and enhance the natural and built environment developments shall be required to, *inter alia*:
 - Make efficient use of land and prioritise the use of previously developed land and buildings whilst respecting any constraints that exist.
 - Ensure that it is designed to avoid unacceptable harm to the amenity of occupiers/users of nearby property and land.
 - Ensure that the scale, massing and appearance of the development is of a high standard of design and layout and where relevant relates sympathetically with the built surroundings, landscape, open spaces and routes within and adjoining the site, including any impact on the skyline and important views; and
 - Use high standards of building materials, finishes and landscaping; and includes the provision of street furniture and public art where appropriate.

Material Policy Considerations

Emerging Horsham District Local Plan 2023-2040

- 5.22. The Horsham District Local Plan 2023-2040 is currently under examination. As the emerging Local Plan is at an advanced stage, it is considered that the policies contained should, in normal circumstances, be afforded significant weight in the determination process.
- 5.23. However, the most recent letter from the Local Plan Inspectors (dated 28th November 2025), provides a clear summary of the current position of the Local Plan. The Inspectors states as follows:

“As you know the Local Plan falls some way short of its minimum housing need when assessed using the standard method. However, as the Council indicate in its letters, in light of changes in circumstances, there may now be a need to identify new sites to meet that

need which are not allocated in the Plan. The scope of the work necessary to make the Local Plan sound could therefore be significant. For example, it could require consultation, new evidence and significant updates to the existing evidence base."

- 5.24. It is, therefore, considered that there is significant work to be done to allow for the emerging Local Plan to be considered sound, its policies cannot be relied upon and should be afforded limited weight in the decision-making process.

NPPF (December 2024)

Summary

- 5.25. It is clear from the above policy review that there is support for the proposed alterations to The Fox Inn.
- 5.26. The proposal seeks to refresh and retain the pub in its current use through the introduction of a series of minor external and internal amendments. In these terms, the design is sensitive to its location and its neighbours and, more importantly, it will improve the viability of the pub to allow for Hall and Woodhouse to continue to operate it. It, therefore, accords with Policy 11.
- 5.27. The design of the proposed development has also been carefully considered, and sensitive materials are proposed internally to ensure that all of the proposed works will complement locally distinctive characters and the heritage of the district. The aligns with the requirements of Policy 32.
- 5.28. The proposal also aligns with adopted Policy 33 in that the proposed alterations will respect and enhance the character, distinctiveness, and amenity of both the site and its context. The proposed development is not proposing to remove any significant internal aspects of the existing public house.

6. DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

- 6.1. Part of the purpose of this Statement is to explain the design principles and concepts that have been applied. Guidance also states that there is a requirement to appraise the context of the site and how the proposed development considers that context whilst also setting out how access to the development has been addressed. Section 2 has already appraised the context of the site; this chapter will show how the proposal considers this context from a design and access perspective.

Use

- 6.2. The proposed development will not change the use of the building. However, the proposals will allow for the current occupier to refresh and improve their offer by affording an updated and new reconfiguration of the internal and external space.

Layout

- 6.3. The proposed development will result in minor changes to the layout of the ground floor of the pub. The proposed development is seeking to extend and make changes to the layout to improve the functionality of the pub in order to improve its operation.
- 6.4. With regards to the ground floor, this involves removal of existing stud walls within the lobby and dining area and the creation of a new cellar on the ground floor. The proposed extension will slightly change the layout by the removal of internal stud walls, allowing for a more visually 'open' internal offering that significantly enlarges the existing dining area. It is, however, not considered to be a significant extension as the main building has been subject to numerous extensions and alterations as detailed within Section 2, and certainly in line with adopted policy.
- 6.5. Changes to the layout of the external areas are also proposed. These proposed changes will involve the installation of 3No. Jumbrellas and will result in the overall enhancement of the external areas of the pub.

Amount (Density, Scale and Massing)

- 6.6. The proposed side extension will slightly increase the amount on site in that it will form a new cellar and accessible WC. It is considered that this element of the proposal will have limited, if any, impact on the scale and massing of the proposed development.

Appearance

- 6.7. The building will undergo external changes consisting of the introduction of a new side extension. The proposed extension will be keeping with the existing pub in terms of scale, design and materials

Access

- 6.8. A minor alteration to the existing access is proposed and consists of the introduction of a new ramp to allow for accessible access from the rear garden into the dining area.

Summary

- 6.9. It is considered that this section of the Statement aptly covers the relevant design and access related matters of the proposed development.
- 6.10. The proposed alterations are considered to be in keeping with the current look and feel of the pub, whilst allowing the current operator to optimise their occupancy. It is considered that the proposed changes will not adversely affect the structure, layout or appearance of the building and will respect the character, appearance and setting of its surroundings.

7. HERITAGE STATEMENT

Heritage Significance

- 7.1. The Fox Inn, Guildford Road is a Grade II Listed Building (Ref. 1354189). The building was listed on 28th November 1980. The alterations proposed are minor in extent, therefore, a proportionate Heritage Statement is required to demonstrate that there is to be no impact to the heritage assets, including the surrounding listed buildings, as stipulated within Paragraph 207 of the NPPF.
- 7.2. The listed building description states as follows:
- “Probably C17. Two storeys. Five windows. Painted brick. Eaves cornice of brick cogging. Tiled roof. Casement windows”*
- 7.3. Notwithstanding the above listing, it should be noted that the Fox Inn has been subject to a considerable amount of internal and external works in recent years following the listing that have been documented and described in Section 3.

Heritage Impact Assessment

- 7.4. The requirement of this Statement is to set out the potential impact of the proposed works and demonstrate how they will preserve and enhance the special architectural and historic importance of the building as well as the building setting.
- 7.5. In these terms, the property has an extensive recent planning history with over 30 total applications submitted in relation to minor external and internal alterations, as well as discharge of condition applications associated with larger proposals that have been approved by the Council.
- 7.6. The most recent application for a single-storey extension approved by the Council was applications ref. DC/06/2336 (Full) & DC/06/2337 (Listed Building Consent); of which, the Planning Officer considered that the proposals would be acceptable and were not considered to have any adverse impact on the Grade II listed building.
- 7.7. The proposals, subject to this application submission, are of a similar form, nature, and extent.
- 7.8. The introduction of the extension at the site will have an impact on the historic nature and structure of the building. It is, however, considered that the impact would be minimal. This is because the scale of the extension is small, its design is in keeping with the existing site and it utilises heritage sensitive materials and colours. The proposed additions to the site are necessary to allow for the re-use of the building by the applicant for continued use as a public house.
- 7.9. The proposals would result in some minor losses of the internal fabric, as the proposal includes the removal of some existing internal non-original elements of the building. It is important to note, however, that the removal of a chimney breast has previously been approved under app no: RW/16/02. It is considered that the previous approved works have impacted the heritage asset in a far greater manner than the works proposed as part of the current application. As such, the principle of development in this regard has previously been considered acceptable by the Council.
- 7.10. The changes proposed as part of this application are minor. Notwithstanding this, the design choices have been designed to sensitively approach the building and seek to avoid impact to the wider structure of the heritage asset. It is, therefore, considered that, in this instance, the proposals will not impact the character or significance of the building, particularly when viewed within the context of the previous approvals and alterations that have taken place on site.
- 7.11. Moreover, the proposed changes will allow for the current operator to refresh and improve the listed building. The proposed changes will allow the applicant to improve the offer and ensure that the public house can operate with the required level of viability.
- 7.12. When considering the Planning Policy context of the Listed Building, Policy 34 of the Adopted Horsham District Planning Framework (excluding South Downs National Park) relates to Cultural and Heritage Assets and states that the Council recognises that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource, and, as such, the Council will sustain and enhance its historic environment through positive management of development affecting heritage assets. The policy continues and states that applications for such development will be required to:
- Make reference to the significance of the asset, including drawing from research and documentation such as the West Sussex Historic Environment Record.
 - Reflect the current best practice guidance produced by English Heritage and Conservation Area Character Statements.

- Reinforce the special character of the district's historic environment through appropriate siting, scale, form and design, including the use of traditional materials and techniques.
- Make a positive contribution to the character and distinctiveness of the area and ensuring that development in conservation areas is consistent with the special character of those areas.
- Preserve, and ensure clear legibility of, locally distinctive vernacular building forms and their settings, features, fabric and materials.
- Secure the viable and sustainable future of heritage assets through continued preservation by uses that are consistent with the significance of the heritage asset.
- Retain and improves the setting of heritage assets, including views, public rights of way, trees and landscape features, including historic public realm features; and
- Ensure appropriate archaeological research, investigation, recording and reporting of both above and below-ground archaeology, and retention where required, with any assessment provided as appropriate.

7.13. The proposed development is compliant with Policy 34 as it does sustain and enhance the heritage asset. The proposed development is not proposing to remove any significant internal aspects of the existing public house, and most importantly, the proposed development secures the viable and sustainable future of the heritage asset. Accordingly, it is considered that the proposed development aligns with heritage policy as set out in the Local Development Plan.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1. It is considered that this Statement conveys the planning, design, access, and heritage principles that have informed the proposal.
- 8.2. The level of information that has been provided within this Statement is proportionate to the proposed changes at The Fox Inn, Guildford Road as well as the requirements set out by the NPPF (2024) and the Development Plan. The alterations are considered to be in keeping with the existing structure and will allow for the enhancement of the pub. They involve a single storey side extension, minor internal alterations, and the provision of 3No new jumbrellas within the rear garden area.
- 8.3. The proposed design approach has sought to retain the core qualities and nature of The Fox Inn whilst enhancing the functionality of the pub, thereby allowing for increased ease of operation. Additionally, the proposed changes, in particular the erection of the single storey side extension, will allow for an enhanced offer to be provided.
- 8.4. The improvements proposed will allow the operator's needs to be met whilst maintaining the historic significance of the pub. This will therefore allow for the continued use of the listed building as a pub and local community facility. It is considered that the changes proposed will represent a sensitive solution to the need to improve and refresh the pub.
- 8.5. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with the adopted Horsham District Planning Framework and the provisions set out within the NPPF (2024). In particular, it is considered to be in accordance with Policy 34 of the District Planning Framework which considers Cultural and Heritage Assets. The proposals will not remove any significant internal aspects of the existing public house, and will secure the viable and sustainable future of the heritage asset. A more cohesive and enhanced appearance is proposed, using high quality materials and colour schemes which respect the character of the listed building.