

DESIGN + ACCESS

Design, Access and Heritage Statement

Householder alterations affecting the curtilage and setting of a Grade II listed building

The Byre, Needs Farm

Steyping Road, Partridge Green
West Sussex RH13 8ED

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DRAWING REFERENCES	SY1 - Existing; PL1 - Proposed
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Purpose

This combined statement explains the design rationale, access arrangements, heritage significance and heritage impact of the proposed alterations shown on drawing PL1.

1. Executive summary

Planning permission is sought for a coordinated series of modest alterations to The Byre: enlargement of the existing single-storey side element, removal of the existing entrance porch and construction of a wider oak-framed porch, and selected changes to external doors and windows. The works improve the function, daylight and connection of the dwelling to its garden while retaining its established residential use, single-storey character and long, low farm-building form.

The Byre is not identified as the principal Grade II listed building. It is, however, understood to stand within the historic curtilage of Grade II listed Need's Farmhouse (National Heritage List for England entry 1026875). The proposals have therefore been assessed with particular regard to the significance and setting of the listed farmhouse and the contribution made by the wider farmstead group.

The proposal is contained within the existing domestic plot, uses forms and materials derived from the building and its agricultural setting, and causes no change to the access, parking arrangement or relationship of the farmstead to Steyning Road. It preserves the significance and setting of the designated heritage asset and is consistent with the development plan and national policy.

2. Site and surroundings

2.1 Location and context

The application site forms part of the former Needs Farm group on the west side of Steyning Road, close to the War Memorial and the southern edge of Partridge Green. The group includes Need's Farmhouse, The Byre, The Barn, The Granary and other associated buildings arranged around a shared rural approach and landscaped grounds.

The Byre is a detached, single-storey dwelling of elongated, irregular plan. Its appearance reflects the character of a converted farm building: a broad plain-tiled roof, low eaves, simple wall planes, areas of facing brick and dark timber boarding, and modestly scaled openings. The eastern range projects to form a cross-wing. Domestic garden space lies principally to the south and west, while hardstanding and the shared approach lie to the north and east.

The building is set well back from Steyning Road and is experienced primarily within the farmstead group rather than as a prominent roadside building. Existing buildings, boundary vegetation and the arrangement of the group limit wider public views of the proposed work.

Photographic record

The following photographs record the existing character and appearance of The Byre and the principal areas affected by the proposal.



Figure 1. Garden elevation: long, low roof form, dark weatherboarding and mature domestic planting.



Figure 2. Enclosed courtyard and the junction of the single-storey ranges.



Figure 3. Existing end element, showing the tiled roof and weatherboarded walling.



Figure 4. Brick cross-wing and pergola viewed from the private garden.

2.2 Existing building and accommodation

The existing dwelling provides four bedrooms and associated bathrooms within the western portion, with the living room, dining room and kitchen extending through the central and eastern ranges. An entrance porch projects from the south elevation. A smaller single-storey element terminates the western end.

Externally, the building is characterised by its horizontal emphasis, hipped and gabled plain-tiled roofs, facing brickwork, dark timber cladding and a mixture of domestic openings introduced through its conversion and subsequent use.

3. The proposal

3.1 Scope of works

- Enlarge and remodel the existing single-storey side element at the western end to improve the principal bedroom and bathroom accommodation.
- Remove the existing entrance porch and form a wider, oak-framed gabled porch in a revised position on the south elevation.

- Introduce a restrained set of new and altered door and window openings, including glazed doors to improve daylight and garden access.
- Undertake internal reconfiguration associated with the above works; the building remains one dwellinghouse.

3.2 Amount, scale and massing

The proposal remains wholly single storey. The side addition is read as a subordinate end element and does not challenge the height or long roof form of the main range. The porch is a modest entrance feature: its gabled roof and exposed oak framing provide a clear but appropriately domestic point of arrival without becoming a competing principal volume.

No new upper floor, dormers or roof-level enlargement are proposed. The limited height and the location of the additions against the existing building keep the visual change contained within the established developed part of the curtilage.

3.3 Layout and use

The residential use is unchanged. The revised plan rationalises the principal bedroom suite and entrance arrangement and improves the relationship between the main living spaces and the private garden. The works do not create a separate unit of accommodation, increase the number of dwellings or encroach into the wider agricultural landscape.

3.4 Appearance and materials

The architectural approach is deliberately contextual rather than imitative. The simple single-storey forms, plain-tiled roofs and expressed oak frame refer to the rural building group, while the clean detailing allows the alterations to be understood as a coherent contemporary phase.

Element	Proposed treatment	Design purpose
Roofs	Plain tiles to complement the existing roof covering	Maintains the unified, traditional roofscape.
Porch structure	Exposed oak frame with simple gabled form	Creates a legible entrance using a material appropriate to the farmstead.
Doors and windows	Rosewood-toned composite units to match the house; aluminium glazed doors where shown	Provides a consistent domestic palette and improves light and garden access.
Walling	Finishes to follow the proposed elevations and harmonise with existing brickwork/rendered wall planes	Keeps new work visually recessive and compatible with the existing building.

4. Heritage significance

4.1 Designated heritage asset

Need's Farmhouse is listed at Grade II under National Heritage List entry 1026875. The official list description identifies an L-shaped 18th-century house of two storeys and four windows, faced with Roman cement, with an eaves cornice, a hipped Horsham-slab roof, surviving glazing bars and a 19th-century gabled porch roofed in Horsham slabs.

The farmhouse's significance derives principally from the age and survival of its historic fabric and plan form, the architectural qualities of its elevations and roof, and its historic association with the surrounding rural land and former agricultural buildings. Its setting includes the approach, gardens and the farmstead group, which help explain its former status and function.

4.2 Contribution of The Byre

The Byre contributes to the setting through its agricultural origin, low scale, broad tiled roof and spatial relationship with the other buildings. Its conversion and later domestic alterations mean that its significance is lower than that of the listed farmhouse, but its retained form and group relationship remain relevant.

The key characteristics to preserve are therefore: the primacy of the listed farmhouse; the legibility of the former farmstead group; the low, subservient scale of The Byre; the open and landscaped spaces between buildings; and the rural material palette.

4.3 Curtilage status

The Byre is understood to lie within the historic curtilage of the listed farmhouse. Whether it is legally treated as curtilage-listed depends on matters including its age, ownership and functional relationship at the date of listing. This statement adopts the precautionary approach of assessing the works as development affecting a designated heritage asset. The local planning authority should confirm whether a parallel application for listed building consent is required before works commence.

5. Assessment of heritage impact

5.1 Effect on fabric

No works are proposed to the fabric of Need's Farmhouse itself. The intervention is confined to The Byre. The changes affect fabric associated with the dwelling's converted and domestic phase, including the existing porch, modern openings and the side element. Any concealed historic fabric encountered during opening-up should be recorded and retained where reasonably practicable.

5.2 Effect on form and character

The side addition continues the established single-storey hierarchy and is positioned at the end of the long range. It does not interrupt the principal roof ridge, add an upper storey or obscure the building's overall form. The enlarged porch remains a lightweight, clearly expressed entrance feature; the use of oak and a tiled gable sits comfortably with the rural character of the group.

The fenestration changes introduce more glazing but are concentrated on the dwelling's private elevations and relate to existing domestic rooms and garden space. Their simple proportions and limited distribution avoid transforming the building into an overtly urban or formally composed house.

5.3 Effect on setting of Need's Farmhouse

The proposal does not alter the farmstead access, the open spaces between buildings, the principal views of the listed farmhouse or its relationship with the wider rural landscape. The additions remain low, attached to an existing converted outbuilding and visually contained within the domestic curtilage. Need's Farmhouse therefore remains the principal historic building within the group.

On this basis, the proposal preserves the setting and significance of the Grade II listed farmhouse. No harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset has been identified. If the authority considers that any residual effect arises, it would be at the lowest end of less than substantial harm and should be weighed against the benefits of securing a well-designed, functional and sustainable long-term use of an existing building.

5.4 Mitigation and detail control

- Agree final samples or product details for roof tiles, external wall finishes, oak framing and visible joinery before installation where required by condition.
- Use restrained junctions, eaves and verge details so the additions remain subordinate.
- Retain existing mature landscape features and avoid unnecessary external lighting.
- Record unexpected historic fabric and seek advice before alteration if significant material is exposed.

6. Access

6.1 Vehicular and pedestrian access

There is no change to the established vehicular access from Steyning Road, the shared internal drive, parking or turning arrangements. No additional dwelling or intensified independent use is created, so the proposal will not generate a material increase in traffic or parking demand.

6.2 Inclusive access

The dwelling remains single storey and the principal entrance continues to be clearly identifiable from the domestic approach. The revised porch provides a more generous arrival space. Thresholds, door widths and internal circulation will be detailed, so far as practicable within the existing building, in accordance with the relevant Building Regulations. The works do not remove an existing public access route.

7. Residential amenity, landscape and safety

The additions are contained within the applicant's established plot and remain single storey. Their position and scale avoid material overlooking, loss of privacy or an overbearing effect upon neighbouring occupiers. New glazed openings face principally towards the property's own private garden and established curtilage.

No significant change to boundary treatment, trees or the broader landscape structure is proposed. Existing domestic waste storage and servicing arrangements remain available. The entrance and active openings support natural surveillance within the private plot without introducing public-realm impacts.

8. Planning policy and design response

Policy / duty	Relevant requirement	Response
Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, s.66(1)	Special regard to preserving a listed building, its setting and special features.	The farmhouse fabric, spatial setting and primacy within the group are preserved.
NPPF (2024, amended 2025), paragraphs 202-214	Heritage assets are irreplaceable; great weight is given to conservation and harm requires clear justification.	A proportionate assessment identifies the asset's significance and demonstrates no harm.
HDPF Policy 32	High-quality, inclusive design that complements local character and heritage.	Single-storey forms and a rural material palette respond to The Byre and its farmstead context.
HDPF Policy 33	Appropriate scale, massing, appearance, amenity and high-quality materials.	The additions are subordinate, contained and do not adversely affect neighbours or important views.
HDPF Policy 34	Sustain and enhance heritage significance through appropriate siting, scale, form, materials and setting.	The proposal retains the legibility of the group and the setting of Need's Farmhouse.
West Grinstead Neighbourhood Plan 2019-2031	Protect rural character, openness and local landscape qualities.	Works remain within the developed domestic plot and do not extend into the wider landscape.

9. Conclusion

The proposal represents a proportionate and carefully composed evolution of an existing dwelling. It improves the quality and usability of the accommodation while retaining the low, horizontal form, rural character and material language of The Byre.

The Grade II listed farmhouse remains physically untouched and visually pre-eminent. The farmstead layout, access, open spaces and wider rural setting are unchanged. The proposal therefore preserves the significance and setting of Need's Farmhouse and accords with the statutory duty, national heritage policy and Policies 32, 33 and 34 of the Horsham District Planning Framework.

Planning permission should accordingly be granted, subject to appropriate control of external materials and detailed workmanship.

Sources and application documents

- Shear Architectural Design Ltd: drawing SY1, Existing.
- Shear Architectural Design Ltd: drawing PL1, Proposed - side extension, relocated/enlarged front porch and new fenestration, dated 26 July 2026.
- Historic England: National Heritage List for England, Need's Farmhouse, list entry 1026875.
- Planning Inspectorate: appeal decision APP/Z3825/W/25/3361744, 13 June 2025 (site-specific description of significance and setting).
- Horsham District Council: Horsham District Planning Framework, adopted November 2015.
- West Grinstead Parish Council: West Grinstead Neighbourhood Plan 2019-2031.
- Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government: National Planning Policy Framework, December 2024, amended 7 February 2025.

Important consent note: Curtilage-listing is a matter of fact and degree. The applicant should obtain confirmation from Horsham District Council as to whether listed building consent is required in addition to planning permission.