~ LITTLE ST MARY'S ~

THE STREET, BRAMBER, STEYNING, WEST SUSSEX, BN44 3WE

General repair, conservation and structural works. Minor external and internal alterations.

DESIGN ACCESS STATEMENT INCORPORATING HERITAGE STATEMENT







Prepared by Roberto Prieto-Labrador MA, PCIfA ~ Reviewed by Ben Kirk MSc, IHBC

May 2025

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ABOUT MANORWOOD

Manorwood is a small team of historic building professionals with varied skills across different areas of the historic environment.

This report has been prepared by Senior Historic Building Consultant and Researcher Roberto Prieto-Labrador and reviewed by Director Ben Kirk

Roberto holds a MA in English Building History, awarded with Distinction by the University of York. His field of expertise is domestic vernacular architecture, specialised in material culture and domestic life during the late medieval and early modern periods.

Roberto is a Practitioner member of the Chartered Institute of Archaeologists (PCIfA), as well as an Affiliate member of the Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC). He is also a member of The Domestic Buildings Research Group (DBRG) and the Wealden Buildings Study Group (WBSG).

As a Senior Historic Building Consultant and Researcher at Manorwood, Roberto is responsible for in depth research into building records, mapping, and physical evidence to help inform proposals and for preparing Heritage Statements and Statements of Significance to support applications for alteration or redevelopment of historic buildings and areas, as well as surveying and recording historic buildings.

Ben holds an MSc in Timber Building Conservation, completed at the Weald and Downland Museum, and validated by Bournemouth University, and is a full member of the Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC) and a recognised Historic Environment Service provider under the well-established HESPR scheme.

Ben is a member of various groups including the Vernacular Architecture Group (VAG), the Domestic Buildings Research Group (DBRG), and the Wealden Buildings Study Group (WBSG).

Ben has been actively working in the historic environment industry for 15 years on numerous heritage asset projects which include surveying of historic buildings (both domestic and agricultural), preparation of schedules of works and detailing of repairs. Ben oversees numerous applications for Planning permission and Listed Building Consent and has built solid working relationships with Conservation Officers at a number of Authorities across the South East.

As a company Director at Manorwood, Ben has overseen works to historic buildings carried out by a skilled network of sub-contractors including the timber restoration at Charleston Farm barns in Firle and the re-erection of historic buildings at the Weald and Downland Living Museum near Chichester, both which received awards from the Sussex Heritage Trust.

As a company Manorwood have provided various historic environment services to a number of Country Estates across the South East including the Lydhurst Estate, the Borde Hill Estate, the West Dean Estate and a number of projects on the Wiston Estate where Manorwood continue to provide consultancy advice on redevelopment and reuse of various areas.

Most recently Manorwood completed the sensitive restoration and conversion of the magnificent 15th century barn for Nyetimber Vineyards in West Sussex.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Roberto Prieto-Labrador MA, PCIfA on behalf of Manorwood to accompany an application relating to a proposal at Little St Mary's, Bramber.

1.2 Little St Mary's is a Grade II Listed Building located on the north side of The Street in the centre of Bramber, West Sussex, and opposite the Grade I Listed St Mary's House.

1.3 The building originated as a 2-bay structure, possibly as a detached kitchen associated to either St Mary's Lodge or St Mary's House. Its current form is the result of substantial alterations carried out between the 17th and 20th centuries.

1.4 The building has been neglected for a number of years. This has led to the severe decay to the building, which now requires significant works to ensure its long-term preservation and use as a residential dwelling.

1.5 The property has been recently acquired by the applicant, who is keen to make the building a modern residential dwelling by providing the investment that the building requires to ensure its preservation.

1.6 This report, therefore, accompanies an application seeking planning permission and Listed Building Consent for the repair works that the building requires. A detailed Specification and Method Statement has been prepared to complement this report and should be read in conjunction with it.

1.7 Additionally, a number of internal and external alterations are also included to improve the usability of the building as a modern residential dwelling and enhance, where possible, its character.

1.8 Historic maps has been consulted to better understand the development of the site. The maps are included in Section 4 of this report.

1.9 This Heritage Statement includes a Significance Assessment, which identifies the relative heritage value of the identified heritage assets (i.e., the listed building). It also includes an Impact Assessment, which evaluates the potential effect of the proposed scheme on the significance of the heritage asset, including the contribution made by its setting. This approach to impact assessment is required to comply with the provisions of the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2024), and the requirements of the Local Planning Authority.

1.10 The relevant Historic Environment Record (HER) has been consulted in the preparation of this report, in accordance with paragraph 207 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2024).



Location of Little St Mary's

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2.1 Little St Mary's is part of a larger statutory Listed Building designated in May 1980 under the name Little St Mary's St Mary's Lodge. The listing reads:

> **LITTLE ST MARY'S ST MARY'S LODGE**
>
> **Location** Bramber, West Sussex, BN44 3WE
>
> **District** Horsham (District Authority)
>
> **Date Listed** 9th May 1980
>
> **List Entry No** 1353966
>
> **Grade** II
>
> **Description** St Mary's Lodge has the date 1620 on it. C17 timber-framed building refronted with flints with red brick dressings and quoins. Tiled roof in two sections, west section hipped. Casement windows. Blocked doorway in St Mary's Lodge beneath the datestone. This has the initials P I E. Blocked original window with wooden mullions at east end of first floor of Little St Mary's.



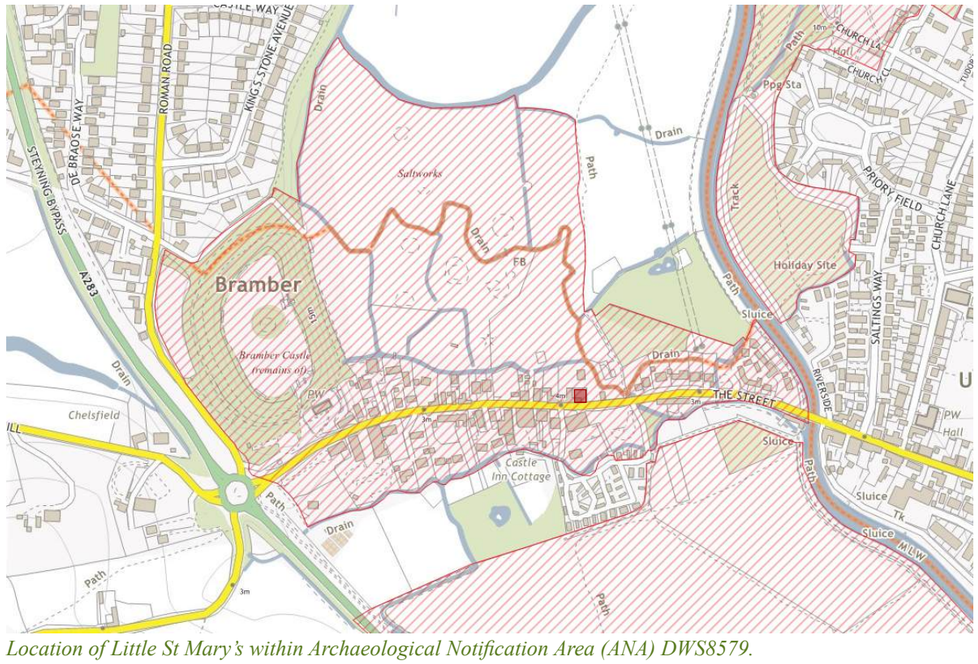
Grade II Listed St Mary's Lodge (left) and Little St Mary's (right).

CONSERVATION AREA AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL NOTIFICATION AREA (ANA)

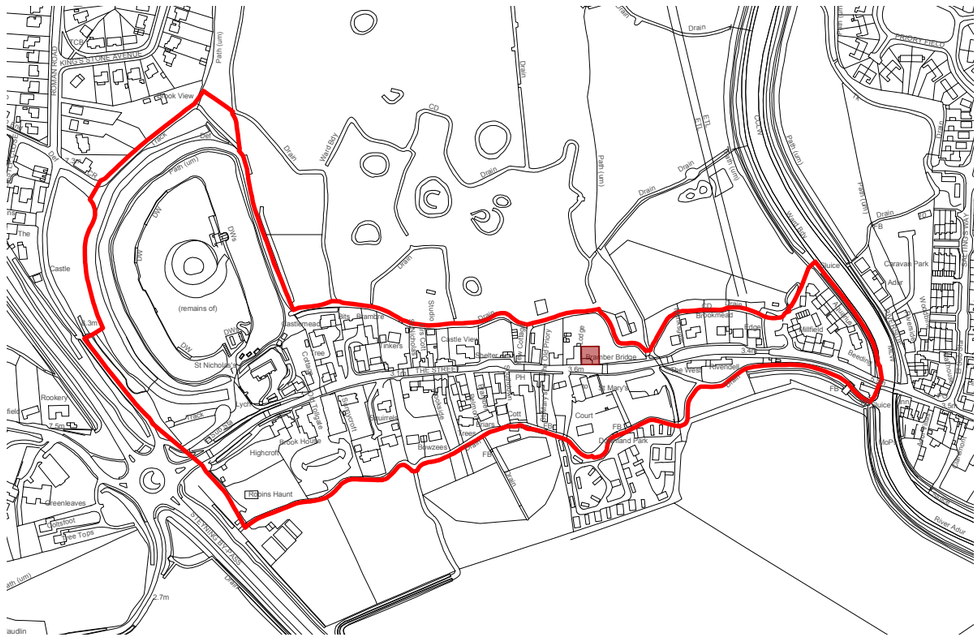
2.2 Little St Marys is located within the boundaries of Archaeological Notification Area (ANA) DWS8579 - Bramber Historic Core and Medieval Salt Working and Occupation.

2.3 Little St Marys is located within the Bramber Conservation Area. The character of the Area is described in the Bramber Conservation Area Appraisal published by Horsham District Council in December 1997 as follows:

> The gradual development and re-development of The Street has resulted in a variety of building styles and materials.
>
> The oldest buildings, many on timber frames, retain a traditional scale and detailing. Generally 1 - 1½ storeys with dormer windows, except for St Mary's House. The buildings abut the road and are faced in field flint, brick, plaster or are tile hung. Windows are small wooden casements with brick dressings and glazing barns or leadwork. Roofs are often hip or half hip in hand fired clay tiles or Horsham stone. Catslide extensions are a feature.
>
> The larger scale, 19th century, two storey buildings are mainly in brick, faced in render or pebble dashed Portland cement. There are also a number of distinctive field flint buildings. Windows are large, either vertical sash or wooden casements set within "bay" frontages. Low pitched slate roofs add contrast, often decorated with terracotta finials and brick or render chimneys. The buildings often have small front gardens with brick or flint wals, iron railings or hedges.



Location of Little St Mary's within Archaeological Notification Area (ANA) DWS8579.



Location of Little St Mary's within the Bramber Conservation Area.

Early 20th century buildings are mainly single storey dormer built in brick, which is often painted, with small front gardens, driveways and garages. Doors are simple and windows are mainly wooden casements with glazing bars, or leadwork. Roofs are gable or half-hip, mainly in tile.

Buildings dating from later this century are predominantly two storey. Brick is dominant, with render, weatherboarding or tile hanging on upper storey's, with modern doors and windows. Roofs are gable or hip on clay pantile or tile.

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3 PROPOSALS

3.1 The proposal comprises a programme of conservation and repair works that the building requires in order to ensure its long-term preservation. These also include structural works to the roof.

3.2 A detailed Specification and Method Statement has also been prepared by Manorwood to complement this report and it should be read in conjunction with it.

3.3 Additionally, the scheme proposes a number of internal and external alterations to improve the usability of the building as a modern residential dwelling and enhance, where possible, its character. These changes can be summarised as follows:

External

- Removal of 19th century chimney stack.
- Replacement of 20th century oriel window with new flush casement window.

Internal

- Relocation of ground floor doorway.
- Replacement of concrete floor with limecrete floor.
- Relocation of bathroom.
- Relocation of staircase.

3.4 Further details of the nature and extent of the proposed repairs and alterations are found in the accompanying plans, which should be read in conjunction with this report.

3.4 The proposal and its potential impact on the significance of the Listed Building, its curtilage and its setting are discussed in Section 6 of this report.

4.1 This section provides the historic background of Little St Mary's. It refers to a number of historic images of the building, which have been included in the appendix at the end of this report.

4.2 According to Historic England's listing, Little St Mary's is a 17th-century building, as suggested by its masonry external walls. However, a detailed survey carried out by Manorwood indicates that the building was originally timber-framed and constructed during the late medieval period, most likely in the late 15th or early 16th century.

4.3 The original building comprised the two westernmost bays of the existing structure. This small building was timber-framed, although the frame rested upon a tall flint plinth that rose to just over half the height of the ground floor. This arrangement remains visible in the rear wall of the building, now encapsulated by the rear lean-to. The panels were infilled with a mixture of daub and rubble flint; a section of the original panel infill survives in the east elevation, now within the infill connecting Little St Mary's and St Mary's Lodge.

4.4 Little St Mary's is now attached to the adjacent building, St Mary's Lodge. The survey, however, confirms that both buildings were originally detached, separated by a narrow passage.

4.5 The roof structure was unusually simple for this period, consisting of side purlins with collars. The west end of the roof was originally gabled, whilst the east end was hipped, as indicated by the surviving hip truss and the jack collar forming a gablet at the apex.

4.6 The rafters are heavily sooted throughout the two original bays, indicating the presence of an open hearth. The greatest soot deposits gather on the hip rafters and particularly the gablet, suggesting that smoke from the hearth originally escaped through this feature.

4.7 Historic drawings and photographs indicate that both Little St Mary's and St Mary's Lodge were originally thatched.

4.8 Internally, the space was subdivided by a central partition extending to the tie beam. However, there is insufficient physical evidence to determine whether one of the bays was originally floored. It appears that both bays were open to the roof.

4.9 Based on the building's dimensions, its layout, features and proximity to both St Mary's Lodge and St Mary's House, it appears that the building did not initially function as a dwelling, but rather as a detached kitchen serving one or both of these neighbouring properties.

4.10 The building was likely converted into a residential dwelling during the early 17th century. During this conversion, a chimney stack was added to the west end of the house, serving a ground-floor inglenook and a first-floor fireplace. The building was also extended eastwards by the addition of an extra bay, which led to the extension of the roof structure. The original jack rafters seem to have been reused to create the existing half-hip end, as indicated by the heavy soot deposits here, whilst the rest of the roof over the new bay remains clean.



Original late C15/early C16 framing (left) and panel infill (right).



Original late C15/early C16 internal partition (left) and sooted roof structure (right).




C17 inglenook (left) and C17 framing of additional bay (right).




C17 roof structure with reclaimed hip and jack rafters (left) and datestone in St Mary's Lodge (right).

4.11 A surviving mullioned window in the front elevation of this new bay suggests that the building still had unglazed windows at this time.

4.12 A datestone in St Mary's Lodge bearing the date 1620 and the initials I.P.E. likely marks the date of these alterations. Indeed, the flintwork used to re-front Little St Mary's and its laying style closely match that of St Mary's Lodge. The initials appear to refer to John Pellat (d. 1628), one of Bramber's churchwardens—distinguished from his son John as "the elder" or "senior" in contemporary documents—and his wife Elizabeth (d. 1620).

4.13 The lean-to running along the rear elevation appears to have been constructed later, possibly in the late 17th or 18th century, as suggested by the weathered timbers to the rear of the new bay.

4.14 An 1845 drawing of The Street shows Little St Mary's with a lean-to at the east end and an external chimney stack on the south elevation of the new bay. However, this lean-to appears to have been removed by the end of the 19th century, as it does not appear in a photograph from 1900. By that time, the thatched roof had been replaced with clay tiles.

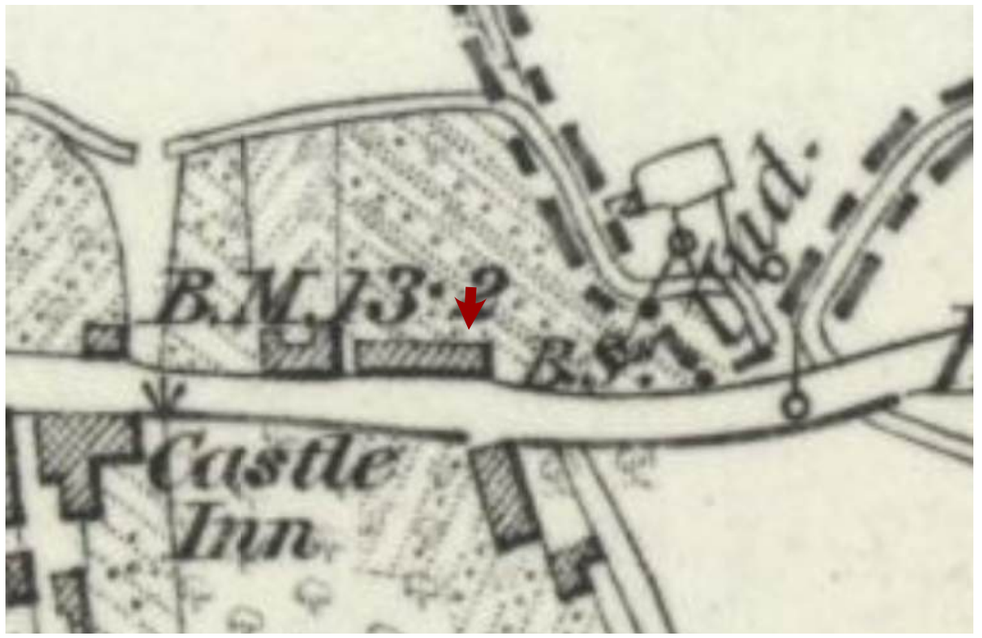
4.15 The last significant alterations to the building occurred during the 20th century. The original front door on the south elevation was partially blocked and converted into a triangular oriel window, likely between 1915 and 1925—a period when such windows were popular due to influences from the late Arts and Crafts movement and Art Deco.

4.16 The 17th-century joists forming the first floor were also replaced during the 20th century, leaving only the original bridging beams intact.

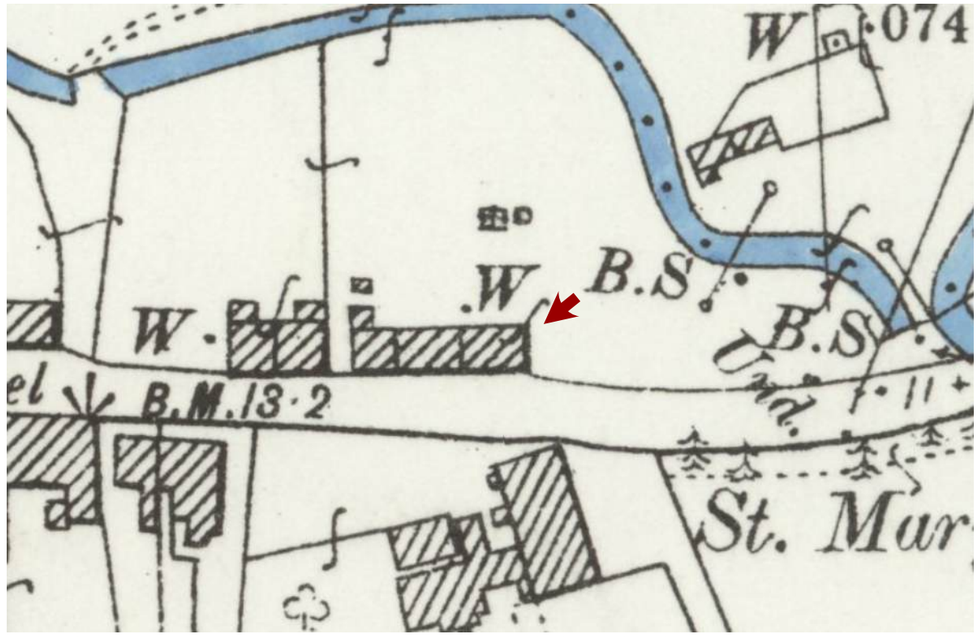
4.17 The dormer windows represent the most recent external alterations. These appear to have been inserted during the mid- to late 20th century.



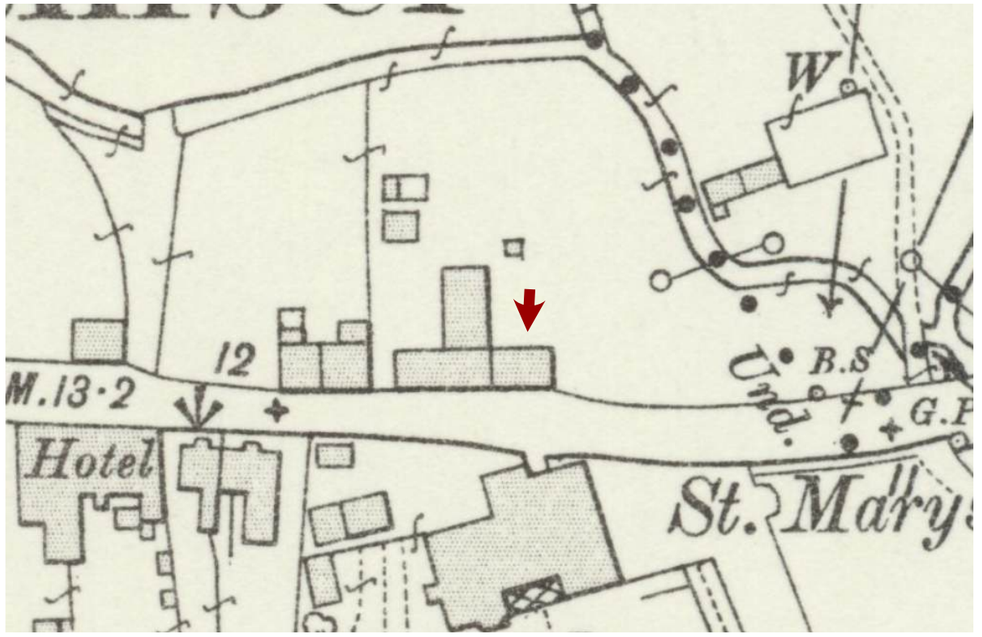
Detail of Bramber Tithe Map showing Little St Mary's, 1841 (TheGenealogist).



Detail of Ordnance Survey showing Little St Mary's, 1879 (National Library of Scotland).

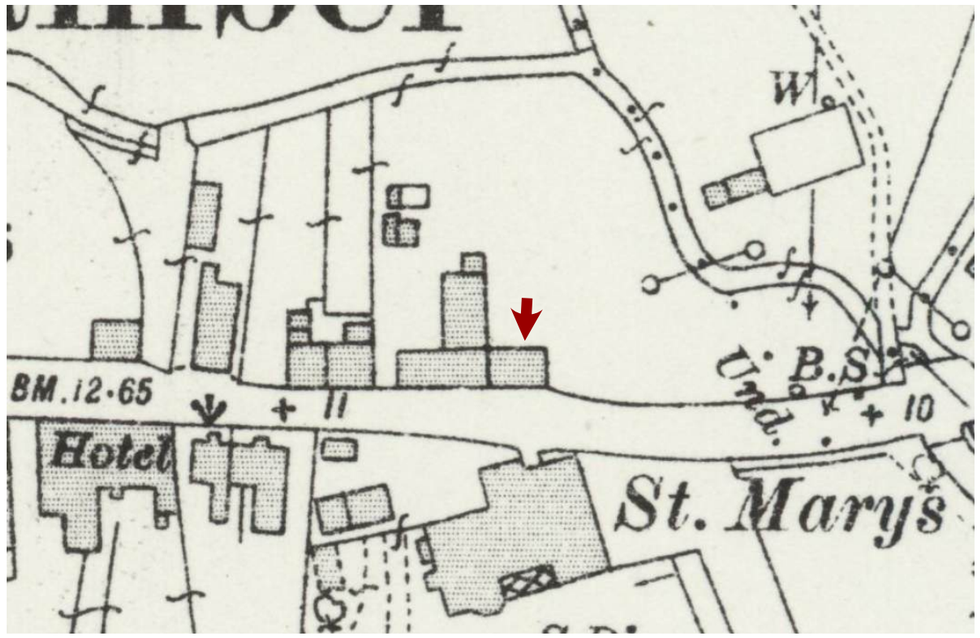


Detail of Ordnance Survey showing Little St Mary's, 1897 (National Library of Scotland).



Detail of Ordnance Survey showing Little St Mary's, 1909 (National Library of Scotland).

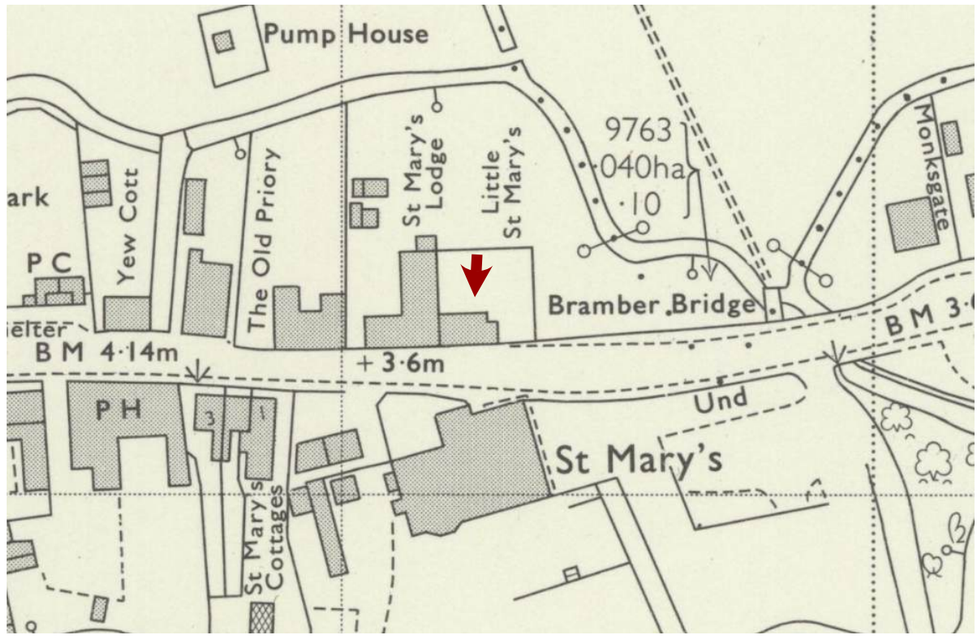
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Detail of Ordnance Survey showing Little St Mary's, 1962 (National Library of Scotland).



Detail of Ordnance Survey showing Little St Mary's, 1949 (National Library of Scotland).



Detail of Ordnance Survey showing Little St Mary's, 1970 (National Library of Scotland).



Satellite View of Little St Mary's, 2022 (© Google Earth).

5.1 The following is an assessment of the significance of Little St Mary's according to the range of heritage values as outlined in Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance published by Historic England in 2008. These values are distilled under the following headings: evidential value, historical value, aesthetic value and communal value.

5.2 This assessment of significance has been used to inform the proposals in order to minimise the impact on the special interest of the Listed Building and its setting, and where possible, to take opportunities to enhance their special interest.

EVIDENTIAL VALUE

5.3 Evidential value is described by Historic England as "physical remains" and "evidence of past human activity" and is derived from one's ability to interpret the history and historic evolution of a building through visible and tangible features.

5.4 Little St Mary's holds considerable evidential value, primarily in its survival as a late medieval timber-framed building. Despite later modifications, significant fabric remains from its original construction, including the timber frame on a flint plinth, heavily sooted rafters, and panel infill surviving in the east elevation.

5.5 The roof structure, particularly the surviving hip truss and gablet, offers valuable evidence for understanding construction techniques of the period. The sooted rafters provide an insight into the building's original function as an open-hall structure with an open hearth.

5.6 These physical remains provide valuable information about vernacular construction, domestic arrangements, and the evolution of small service buildings in rural Sussex.

HISTORICAL VALUE

5.7 Historic England considers that historic value "derives from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present". This is generally regarded as either illustrative value whereby the site can be perceived to represent a period in history, or associative value, where a connection with an event or person can contribute to the historic significance of a site.

5.8 The building's historical value lies in its association with the broader narrative of Bramber's domestic and community life from the late medieval period through to the 20th century.

5.9 The probable use of the building as a detached kitchen serving the adjacent properties of St Mary's Lodge or St Mary's House adds to the understanding of the relationship between domestic service structures and principal residences.

5.10 The early 17th-century conversion to a dwelling and the association with John Pellat—a local churchwarden—further enhance the building's local historical significance.

5.11 Later alterations, such as the addition of a lean-to, the re-fronting in flint, and 20th-century changes like the dormer windows, illustrate the building's continued adaptation over time, reflecting broader patterns of rural domestic life and architectural change.

AESTHETIC VALUE

5.12 Aesthetic value according to Historic England "derives from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place". This value can be attributed to conscious design whether it be predetermined by an architect or the work of a craftsman and can also encompass historic and evolutionary changes to a building.

5.13 Little St Mary's displays a layered aesthetic value, arising from the cumulative effects of centuries of use and adaptation. Its simple yet robust timber frame, combined with the flint plinth and later masonry, reflects the vernacular character typical of the region. The interplay of historic materials—timber, flint, and tile—contributes to a pleasing patina of age and evidences the building's organic development.

5.14 The traditional craft skills and quality local natural materials used in the construction of the building on-site intrinsically relate to their surrounding landscape from where the materials were obtained.

COMMUNAL VALUE

5.15 Communal value "derives from the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory". This can be divided into commemorative and symbolic values, where the place may invoke emotion or contribute to an individual's or community's sense of place or social values, where a place can be a form of catalyst for memories associated with it.

5.16 Little St Mary's does not appear to possess evident communal value beyond the personal memories and experiences of those who inhabited and use the building and their relationships with the local community.

5.17 Nonetheless, the building is considered to hold a degree of symbolic communal value through its contribution to the historic streetscape of Bramber and its relationship with neighbouring properties. The building forms an integral part of the local townscape and contributes to the community's sense of place and identity. Its proximity to St Mary's Lodge and St Mary's House reinforces historic associations with the area's domestic heritage.

6.1 This section appraises the impact of the proposed works on Little St Mary's and the Bramber Conservation Area:

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL ALTERATIONS AND REPAIRS

6.2 The lack of maintenance and the use of inappropriate and unsympathetic materials in the building have led to significant deterioration, necessitating repair works to ensure the building's usability and long-term preservation.

6.3 In addition to the required repairs, several external and internal alterations are proposed, which will improve the usability of the building as a modern residential dwelling and will enhance, where possible, its character and special interest. This section summarises these works; however, further information is provided in the accompanying plans and the Specification and Method Statement, which should be read in conjunction with this report.

EXTERNAL.

Walls.

6.4 The use of impervious cement mortar in some areas of the building's walls, in place of traditional hot-mixed lime mortar, has restricted evaporation and trapped moisture, which has in turn caused damp issues inside the building.

6.5 The existing modern impervious materials are therefore considered incompatible with the building's historic nature. Their removal and replacement with appropriate, natural, and breathable materials (i.e. lime mortar) will help to prevent further decay and ensure the building's preservation.

6.6 The removal of the existing cement mortar will be undertaken carefully by hand to avoid further damage to the original fabric. This is particularly important in areas between the masonry walls and the exposed timber framing.

6.7 Following the removal of the cement mortar, any areas of decayed fabric, such as timber and historic masonry, will be repaired as necessary and made sound to prevent early failure. Further information about repairs to the timber framing and masonry walls is provided in the accompanying Specifications and Method Statement.

Fenestration.

6.8 As discussed in Section 4 of this report, the original front elevation of the building (south elevation) was partially blocked during the early 20th century and replaced with a triangular oriel window.

6.9 The modern form and appearance of the existing window are considered to be at odds with the traditional and vernacular character of the building and the Conservation Area.

6.10 It is therefore proposed to replace the existing oriel window with a new window set flush with the wall. The new window will be a timber-framed casement, matching the existing ones, to ensure that the character of the building and the Conservation Area is preserved and enhanced through the removal of the modern window.

6.11 All other windows in the building will be retained and repaired as necessary. To improve the building's thermal efficiency, the windows will be draught-proofed by inserting concealed compression seals matching the existing paint colour.

Removal of chimney stack.

6.12 The scheme proposes the removal of the existing chimney stack on the south elevation of the building.

6.13 Early images of the building (see Appendix 2) indicate that the chimney predates 1845. However, the chimney has suffered significant movement since its construction, owing to its height and narrow form, which has resulted in several interventions over the years.

6.14 The chimney is now obsolete and leans considerably to one side. It is therefore proposed to remove it. The removal will be undertaken carefully, from the top down, to prevent any damage to the earlier fabric of the building. Once dismantled, any areas of earlier masonry behind will be repaired and made good with matching materials, preserving the character of the building and the Conservation Area.

6.15 The removal of the chimney stack will also allow for a better appreciation of the surviving timber-mullioned window, contributing significantly to the special character of the building and the street scene.

Roof.

6.16 The roof has suffered notable decay, with missing tiles on both side slopes, leading to water ingress and deterioration of the roof timbers. Localised repairs to the roof structure, particularly to compromised rafters, will be necessary.

6.17 The entire roof will require re-covering. The existing clay tiles will be carefully removed and reused where sound, with any shortfall supplemented with traditional handmade clay tiles matching the existing ones in size, profile, and finish.

6.18 The existing 20th-century dormers are also in poor condition and require significant intervention. They will be rebuilt to match their existing form and appearance and located in their current positions to preserve the character of the building.

6.19 The existing rainwater goods will be replaced with larger-capacity cast iron-effect aluminium gutters and downpipes, which will preserve the character of the building while improving the drainage system's efficiency.

Structural works.

6.20 The removal of the roof covering and battens will allow for any necessary repairs to the roof structure. The roof has experienced significant movement and spreading, leading to numerous interventions and additions over the years to strengthen it.

6.21 A structural engineer specialising in historic buildings has inspected the roof and confirmed that it is not sound and that structural interventions are required.

6.22 After considering several solutions, it has been determined that the most sympathetic approach is to replace the existing undersized purlins with larger purlins to prevent the roof from spreading. These will span from the party wall onto existing load-bearing stud walls, cantilevered at the hip end to support the hip, with a short section of purlin on the hip itself to prevent the cantilevered purlins from twisting.

6.23 Although this approach will result in the loss of the existing purlins, it is a more sympathetic solution than inserting significant steel elements, which would be alien to the roof structure and obscure its legibility.

6.24 Overall, the proposed approach is considered the optimum solution to make the roof structurally sound while preserving its original character and form.

INTERNAL.

Walls.

6.25 Modern renders and plasters were identified on the external walls of the building's historic core. These impervious materials are further restricting the natural breathability of the building and are causing harm to the original fabric by trapping moisture.

6.26 The existing modern render and plaster will therefore be removed to assess the condition of the fabric behind and to undertake any necessary repairs. The walls will then be replastered using insulating lime plaster to reinstate the breathability of the building and improve its thermal efficiency.

6.27 The existing original timber-framed partitions have suffered significant decay, particularly to the sole plate and the foot of the studs, as they were encapsulated by the existing cement floor. Localised repairs to the studs are therefore proposed, along with the replacement of the sole plates, which are in very poor condition and beyond salvage.

6.28 On the first floor, the tie beams have been cut to form doorways. These will be strengthened using traditional steel strapping to ensure the structural integrity of the building.

Replacement of cement floor

6.29 The existing modern cement slab floor is an unsympathetic alteration that is inconsistent with the historic construction methods and materials of the building. Cement-based floors are dense and impermeable, preventing the natural movement of moisture through the floor and contributing to the entrapment of damp within adjacent historic walls. This has resulted in the rot and decay of the sole plates and studs forming the internal partition walls of the building. .

6.30 It is, therefore, proposed to replace the existing cement flooring with a limecre floor, which offers a more appropriate and sustainable solution. Limecrete is inherently permeable and allows moisture to evaporate naturally, thus helping to regulate internal humidity and reducing the risk of damage to historic materials. Moreover, limecrete is more flexible than cement and can accommodate minor movements in the building's structure without cracking.

6.31 The replacement of the existing cement slab with a limecrete floor aligns with best conservation practice as advocated by Historic England and other heritage bodies. It would restore the building's ability to "breathe" as originally intended, ensuring that the floor and walls work together to manage moisture effectively. This intervention will, therefore, ensure the long-term preservation and sustainability of the building, enhancing its historic character and significance

Relocation of stairs and reconfiguration of layout.

6.32 The scheme proposes a small number of alterations to the building's layout to make better use of the domestic space.

6.33 The existing modern staircase within the central bay will be relocated to the south-east corner of the bay. This approach aims to provide a better flow and safer access to the first floor, and to relocate the existing first-floor bathroom to the first floor of the central bay.

6.34 This approach will result in a small degree of subdivision, but one that will occupy the existing locations of partition walls. This means the legibility of the plan form will not be further obscured, thus preserving the special interest of the building.

6.35 The relocation of the staircase will not result in the loss of any historic fabric, as both the staircase and the joists to be trimmed are of modern construction. Consequently, the relocation will not affect the special interest of the building.

6.36 The relocation of the first-floor bathroom to the central bay will reinstate the original proportions of the easternmost bay and will provide a better flow of the first-floor area, by creating a landing area accessing the bathroom and the adjacent rooms. As the walls of the existing bathroom are of modern construction, their removal will not result in the loss of any historic fabric.

Installation of insulation.

6.37 A degree of internal insulation is also proposed to improve the thermal efficiency of the building.

6.38 The external masonry walls will be insulated using insulating lime plaster, ensuring that no original details, such as chamfer stops, are obscured. The first-floor rooms have modern skeiling ceilings that stop at collar level.

6.39 It is proposed to remove the existing skeiling ceilings to insulate the ceiling/loft area and improve the building's thermal efficiency. The proposed insulation will be inserted between and over the rafters and will consist of 35 mm of natural wood fibre insulated tongue-and-groove sarking board over the rafters and 60 mm of flexible wood fibre insulation between the rafters, finished with insulated plaster.

6.40 This approach will allow the first-floor areas of the building to be vaulted, exposing the roof structure and reinstating part of its original internal character.

7 CONCLUSION

7.1 The proposed scheme of works and alterations is based on a thorough understanding of the listed building, its historic development and significance and has been informed by desk-based research and on-site visits.

7.2 Internal and external repair and improvement works to the building will have a positive impact on the performance and character of the building and will ensure the building's long-term preservation and usability as a residential dwelling.

7.3 The impact of the internal and external alterations proposed in this report has been assessed and they are considered to preserve and, in some cases, enhance the special character of the building by reinstating original features and removing detracting elements.

7.4 When considered as a whole, the proposed scheme will not result in any detrimental effect or harm to the special interest of the Listed Building and the Conservation Area, as their traditional character will be preserved and, in some cases, enhanced.

7.5 The proposal is, therefore, compliant with respect to the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Area) Act 1990, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Horsham Local Plan.

APPENDIX 1: LEGISLATION AND POLICY CONTEXT

The primary legislation relating to Listed Buildings and their settings is set out in the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990:

> *Section 16(2) states "In considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works the local planning authority or the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses."*
>
> *Section 66(1) reads: "In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses."*

In relation to development within Conservation Areas, Section 72(1) reads: "*Special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area*."

Policy relating to the historic environment is set out at national level within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Policy relating to the historic environment is set out at local level within the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF).

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK (NPPF)

Chapter 16 (Paragraphs 202 to 221) of the NPPF updated and adopted in December 2024 constitute the Government's national guidance and policy regarding development relating to the historic environment.

The NPPF is a material consideration and states that applications are to be determined in accordance with the local framework unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The NPPF seeks to conserve and enhance the historic environment with much emphasis on "significance", defined in Annex 2 as:

> *"The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting. For World Heritage Sites, the cultural value described within each site's Statement of Outstanding Universal Value forms part of its significance."*

Setting is defined in Annex 2 as:

> *"The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral."*

Annex 2 defines Conservation (for heritage policy) as:

> *"The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance."*

This definition is important as it distinguishes conservation from preservation and puts an emphasis on proactively managing change rather than reactively resisting it.

LOCAL POLICY – HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL

The site lies within the boundary of the Horsham District Council Authority. The Horsham District Planning Framework – Horsham District's Local Plan is the overarching planning document for Horsham district outside the South Downs National Park (SDNP) and replaces the Core Strategy and General Development Control Policies documents which were adopted in 2007. This document was adopted in November 2015 and sets out the planning strategy for the years up to 2031.

Policy 34 of the HDPF relates to the Historic Environment:

> **Policy 34 – Cultural and Heritage Assets**
>
> 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. Applications for such development will be required to:
>
> 1. Make reference to the significance of the asset, including drawing from research and documentation such as the West Sussex Historic Environment Record;
> 2. Reflect the current best practice guidance produced by English Heritage and Conservation Area Character Statements;
> 3. 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;
> 4. 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;
> 5. Preserve, and ensure clear legibility of, locally distinctive vernacular building forms and their settings, features, fabric and materials;
> 6. Secure the viable and sustainable future of heritage assets through continued preservation by uses that are consistent with the significance of the heritage asset;
> 7. Retain and improves the setting of heritage assets, including views, public rights of way, trees and landscape features, including historic public realm features; and
> 8. 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.

APPENDIX 2: HISTORIC IMAGES



Little St Mary's in 1845.



Little St Mary's in 1891.



Little St Mary's in 1900.



Little St Mary's in 1964 (© Historic England).

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