LONDON OFFICE

Mr Steve Astles
Horsham District Council
Albery House
Springfield Road
Horsham
West Sussex
RH12 2GB

[redacted]

Our ref: P01594405; L01594409

14th August 2025

Dear Mr Astles

Arrangements for Handling Heritage Applications Direction 2015
& T&CP (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015
& Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Regulations 1990

NETHERLEDYS, BLACKBRIDGE LANE, HORSHAM, WEST SUSSEX RH12 1SD
Application Nos DC/25/0937; DC/25/0938

Thank you for your letters of 8th August 2025 regarding amendments to the above applications for listed building consent and planning permission. On the basis of the information available to date, we offer the following advice to assist your authority in determining the applications.

Background

Historic England provided written advice on the original applications on 9th July 2025. In that letter, we raised concerns about the harm that the scheme would cause to the significance of this grade II* listed building, due to the size of the proposed extension and unsympathetic design.

We recommended revisions to the design and scale to achieve an extension more appropriately responsive to the historic context.

Historic England Advice

We repeat below sections of our previous advice letter for completeness and ease of reference.

Significance of the Site

Originally a farmhouse, the property is a rare surviving historic structure from Needles Farm, a once extensive farmstead around Blackbridge Lane, reputedly built using timbers salvaged from shipwrecks on the Needles rocks, off the Isle of Wight.

Historic England is subject to both the Freedom of Information Act (2000) and Environmental Information Regulations (2004). Any Information held by the organisation can be requested for release under this legislation.

Constructed as a unitary timber-framed house of 15th- or 16th-century origin, with a probable later west wing, the farmhouse was subsequently subdivided into two dwellings - Needles and Netherledys - while the surrounding farmland was redeveloped for housing in the 1950s.

The grade II* listing of Netherledys together with Needles reflects their historic and architectural significance, underpinned by survival of early fabric and plan form, and is a recognition of their importance as a unified composition.

Impact of the Revised Proposal on the Significance of the Site

Compared to the original submission, the amendments involve:

- a reduction in the width of the extension by approximately one metre;
- redesigning the annex to include an asymmetrically pitched tiled roof, along with a flat-roofed, lead-clad protrusion on its northern elevation.

The reduction of the eaves height on the northern slope, to reflect the listed building's roof pitch, has also led to a narrowing of the full-height glazed element on the eastern elevation.

However, while the amended roof form is more traditional, it would, in fact, heighten the visual impact against the backdrop of the main dwelling compared to the previous iteration. This is due to the raised pitch, which would almost entirely obscure the northern aspect of the host building, as well as introducing a bulky, visually incongruous lead-clad element. Neither of these elements would complement the architectural composition or character of the historic house.

In summary, the amended annexe would still remain large and imposing, reading as an unsympathetic and alien addition to the listed building.

Relevant Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, December 2024) sets out the government's policies for decision-making on planning proposals. Section 16 of the document specifies how the historic environment should be conserved and enhanced and makes it clear in paragraph 208 that conflicts between the conservation of the heritage asset and any aspect of the proposal should be avoided or minimised.

Paragraph 212 states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on a heritage asset, local planning authorities should give great weight to preserving the asset's significance, and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be.

Historic England is subject to both the Freedom of Information Act (2000) and Environmental Information Regulations (2004). Any Information held by the organisation can be requested for release under this legislation.

The NPPF requires any harm or loss to the significance of a designated heritage asset, from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting, to have clear and convincing justification (paragraph 213). It also requires decision makers to determine whether the harm is substantial, or less than substantial. If the harm is deemed to be less than substantial, paragraph 215 requires the harm to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

Relevant is also paragraph 219 which encourages local planning authorities to seek opportunities for new development within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance.

Historic England Position on the Amended Proposal

We consider that the amended proposal would still cause less than substantial harm to the significance of the listed building, in NPPF terms, and this harm would be within the lower half of that range.

We reiterate that reducing the length and height of the proposed new structure and adapting its design to reflect the overall composition and character of the historic building, would help reduce harm to significance and meet the requirements of paragraphs 208 and 210a of the NPPF.

We also recommend that the possibility of a lean-to extension be explored, following a proper assessment of any potential material impact on surviving historic fabric on the northern elevation of the listed building.

Recommendation

Historic England has concerns regarding the applications on heritage grounds.

We consider that the issues and safeguards outlined in our advice need to be addressed in order for the applications to meet the requirements of paragraphs 208 and 210a of the NPPF.

In determining these applications, you should bear in mind the statutory duty of sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings or their setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which they possess.

Your authority should take these representations into account and seek amendments, as set out in our advice. If there are any material changes to the proposals, or you would like further advice, please contact us.

Historic England is subject to both the Freedom of Information Act (2000) and Environmental Information Regulations (2004). Any Information held by the organisation can be requested for release under this legislation.

Yours sincerely

Luciana Gallo

Luciana Gallo RIBA PhD FSA
Assistant Inspector of Historic Buildings and Areas
London and South East Regions Group
[redacted]

Historic England is subject to both the Freedom of Information Act (2000) and Environmental Information Regulations (2004). Any Information held by the organisation can be requested for release under this legislation.