

Heritage Statement

Site Address: The Old Post Office, The Street, Thakeham, RH20 3EP

Applicant: Mr Capon

Agent: Timber Rooms Ltd

Local Planning Authority: Horsham District Council

Designation: Grade II Listed Building

Proposal: Erection of a single-storey garden building measuring approximately 33m² in an L-shape

1. Introduction

This Heritage Statement has been prepared in support of a planning application for the erection of a detached single-storey garden building within the curtilage of The Old Post Office, a Grade II listed property located within the historic village of Thakeham. The purpose of this statement is to assess the potential impact of the proposed development on the heritage significance of the listed building and its setting, in accordance with the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Section 16 of the NPPF (2023), and relevant policies within the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF).

2. Site and Heritage Context

The Old Post Office is a Grade II listed building fronting The Street in Thakeham. The property is of traditional vernacular form, likely dating from the 18th century, and exhibits characteristic features of local domestic architecture, including timber framing, brick infill and tiled roofing. The property sits within a modest domestic plot with a rear garden extending southwards. The garden is enclosed by hedging and mature planting, providing a degree of screening from neighbouring properties and the public realm. The immediate setting contributes to the appreciation of the listed building as a historic rural dwelling, although the rear garden itself is not of specific historic interest.

3. Planning History

Pre-application advice and a previous planning and listed building consent application were submitted under reference PP-12563338 for a garden building of similar form and appearance. The current proposal reflects design refinements in response to that earlier scheme, including a reduction in overall size and a reorientation of the building within the garden. No further pre-application advice has been sought for this revised proposal, as relevant guidance was already obtained during the earlier consultation process.

4. Proposed Development

The proposal seeks consent for the erection of a detached single-storey garden building with a total footprint of approximately 33m², arranged in an L-shape. The boundary elevations each measure approximately 7 metres, returning 3 metres at either end to form

the L-shaped plan. The building will be of modest height and traditional appearance, constructed using high-quality materials sympathetic to the main dwelling, such as:

- Timber cladding in a natural finish;
- Dark-stained timber joinery;
- Slate effect tiles for the roof covering;
- Discreet glazing to minimise visual intrusion.

The building will be used as a domestic garden room ancillary to the main dwelling, providing a flexible space for family and leisure use. The new orientation situates the structure within a discreet part of the garden, ensuring a reduced visual presence from the main house and neighbouring properties.

5. Assessment of Heritage Impact

5.1 Significance of the Heritage Asset

The significance of The Old Post Office lies primarily in its historic fabric, architectural character, and contribution to the historic streetscape of Thakeham. Its rear garden, while part of its curtilage, has evolved over time and does not contain features of particular historic or architectural interest.

5.2 Impact of the Proposal

The proposed garden building is modest, subservient, and clearly detached from the principal dwelling. Its reduced scale, sensitive materials, and discreet siting ensure that it does not compete with or detract from the historic form or appearance of the listed building. The new orientation further limits visual impact from both the principal elevation of The Old Post Office and the public realm along The Street. Views of the proposed structure will be largely contained within the private rear garden, screened by existing vegetation. Accordingly, the proposal preserves the setting and significance of the listed building in line with the requirements of Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and Paragraphs 209–217 of the NPPF (2023).

6. Justification and Conclusion

The proposed garden building represents a refined and reduced version of a previously considered scheme. The careful attention to siting, scale, and materials ensures that the development will preserve the special architectural and historic interest of The Old Post Office and its setting. There will be no harm to the significance of the heritage asset, either through physical alteration or change to its setting. The proposal is fully compliant with the heritage protection objectives of the NPPF and Horsham District Planning Framework Policies 33 and 34.

In conclusion, the proposed garden building is a sympathetic and proportionate addition to the curtilage of a Grade II listed property. It preserves the character, appearance, and setting of The Old Post Office, and therefore meets the statutory and policy requirements for development affecting listed buildings.