



Design and Access Statement

Extension to annex for multigenerational living

Wellhouse Farm, Wellhouse Lane, Burgess Hill, RH15 0BN

August 2025



1. Introduction

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared to accompany a householder planning application for a single-storey extension to an existing annex. The proposal aims to support multigenerational living by enabling the cohabitation of two households, enhancing both social cohesion and lifestyle flexibility. The extension incorporates a shared garden room, shared garden and patio, front porch, and roof gable bay alteration with glazing to enhance the relationship with the garden.

The design is sensitive to the existing context, using materials and architectural forms already present on-site to ensure coherence and architectural integrity. This statement references relevant policies from the MSDC Design Guide and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

2. Assessment

The former dairy building was granted approval for conversion to ancillary accommodation in 2013. It is positioned adjacent to the main dwelling on a gently sloping site, which benefits from established topography and mature boundary vegetation. Due to its single-storey height and discreet siting, the annex remains largely hidden from both the public footpath and the private lane. The presence of dense planting and its distance from neighbouring properties ensure that any impact on neighbouring amenity is negligible.

This scheme responds to the growing demand for multigenerational living, aligning with NPPF Paragraph 8(b) by contributing to a diverse housing mix that meets present and future needs. Shared internal and external spaces are designed to foster intergenerational cohesion while maintaining individual privacy.

3. Involvement

The proposal has been developed in collaboration with the two households intending to share the dwelling, incorporating insights into daily use patterns and lifestyle requirements. The design process was also informed by careful review of MSDC Design Guide policies and best practices in rural vernacular architecture.

4. Evaluation

Key design objectives include:

- Enhancing accessibility and shared use between annex and main house.
- Maintaining visual subservience to the host buildings.
- Minimising visual impact from the public realm and neighbouring properties.
- Using sustainable and locally contextual materials.
- Reinforcing architectural character drawn from former agricultural structures.



5. Design Proposals

Use: Continued residential use of the annex, with reconfigured accommodation including one bedroom, an office, and a shared garden room to support communal living.

Amount: Single-storey flat roof extension, porch, and roof gable with glazing.

Layout: Stepped plan respects topography and facilitates movement between annex and house.

Scale: Subservient and low-impact design with flat roof.

Appearance: Chimney form inspired by agricultural past; matching materials and contemporary detailing.

Landscaping: Enhanced shared garden and patio with direct access from both dwellings.

6. Access

Vehicular Access:

No changes are proposed to existing vehicular arrangements. The extension remains easily accessible from the existing driveway and parking area that serve both the main dwelling and the annex.

Inclusive Access:

The annex will retain its split-level configuration, with an upper and lower ground floor layout preserved. While the extension is designed to be step-free where possible, the internal split-level arrangement reflects the natural topography of the site and the original structure. Where appropriate, level changes are managed with gentle transitions, and hallway circulation is designed to allow for ease of movement between levels.

This approach maintains the character of the original annex while ensuring practical and inclusive access throughout the newly configured and extended living areas.



7. Policy Compliance

DG7 – Responding to topography and strategic views:

The stepped layout and flat roof respect the natural slope of the site and protect key views from the main dwelling.

DG38 – Design buildings with architectural integrity and a sense of place:

The design references the former agricultural character of the annex, using forms such as the expressed columns as the chimney and materials featuring on the existing structure.

DG46 – Provide attractive and usable external amenity space for all homes:

The scheme enhances outdoor living with direct access to the shared garden from both dwellings, creating a fluid relationship between interior and exterior spaces.

DG49 – General principles for extensions:

The main house and annex are of distinct architectural styles, presenting a unique design challenge. The contemporary approach adopted for the extension enables a creative and well-considered architectural response that draws carefully from the defining characteristics of both buildings. This has resulted in a new addition that is neither a direct copy nor in conflict with its neighbours, but one that instead responds respectfully to each building's character.

Through careful attention to scale, materiality, and proportion, the extension acts as a transitional element, harmonising the visual language of the annex and the main house. The design uses key cues—such as material finishes, roof form, and opening proportions—to establish a coherent architectural dialogue across the site, while still expressing a distinct contemporary identity.

DG51 – Rear Extensions:

As the extension is not visible from the public street, a contemporary architectural approach is appropriate. Its design reflects sensitivity to the character of the existing buildings and their relationship to site boundaries.

The use of contemporary detailing, influenced by key elements of the main dwelling and annex, allows the new extension to coexist within its context. This is particularly critical due to the proximity between the proposed extension and the main house.

DG52 – Roof Extensions:

The new roof gable does not raise the ridge height and is designed in keeping with the scale, slope and character of the existing structure, ensuring minimal visual disruption.



NPPF Paragraph 8(b):

The proposed extension promotes social sustainability by supporting a multigenerational living arrangement and flexible accommodation.

NPPF Paragraph 8(c):

The development facilitates cohabitation which encourages efficient land use and environmental sustainability through shared resources and reduced footprint.

NPPF Paragraph 131:

The proposal is well-designed and includes sustainability improvements, such as modern heating upgrades and improved thermal performance, contributing positively to the built environment.

8. Conclusion

The proposed extension demonstrates a well-considered response to the existing context, supporting multigenerational living in a sustainable, inclusive, and aesthetically coherent manner. It aligns with both local and national policy objectives and enhances the usability and character of the site without detriment to neighbours or visual amenity.