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DC/SO/1331

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Lemon Meadow
Turners Hill Road
Crawley Down
RH10 4EY

November 2025



Plate 1: Lemon Meadow - front elevation

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1. Introduction

This Design and Access Statement accompanies a retrospective Listed Building Consent application for the replacement of roof tiles at Lemon Meadow, a Grade II listed property forming part of a sixteenth-century Wealden Hall House. The works became necessary when the previously approved roof covering, installed under consent in 2019–2020, began to fail significantly. Tiles deteriorated rapidly, leading to delamination, surface loss, and instability, which raised concerns for both weather-tightness and safety.

The intention of this statement is to explain the background to the work, the reasoning behind the choice of replacement materials, and the manner in which the intervention has preserved the architectural and historic character of the listed building.

2. Site and Heritage Context

Lemon Meadow forms one half of a traditional Wealden Hall House and is listed at Grade II, reflecting its architectural and historic interest. The building retains a clear expression of the vernacular, with its timber frame, brick and tile-hung elevations, and a clay-tiled roof that contributes significantly to the property's special character. The form of the roof and the use of handmade clay tiles are key components of the building's identity and are central to the list description.

The property sits in a rural setting in Crawley Down and is closely associated with its adjoining counterpart, Yew Tree Cottage, from which it was subdivided. The group value and consistency of appearance between the two properties enhance the significance of the building and its surroundings. The accompanying Heritage Statement provides a detailed assessment of this significance, confirming the importance of the roofscape in the building's overall historic interest.

3. Design Approach

The replacement of the roof tiles was prompted by the unexpected failure of the Sahtas Brookhurst Restoration Mix tiles that had been used in the earlier, consented reroofing works. Over a period of three to four years, accelerated deterioration became apparent. Once scaffolding was erected, the extent of the failure was more severe than had been visible from ground level, revealing widespread delamination and fragmentation. Repair of isolated areas was not viable, and full replacement was considered the only appropriate way to safeguard the historic fabric beneath.

The chosen replacement material is the Keymer Goxhill Dark Chestnut handmade clay tile. This product was selected because it offers a close visual match to the previously approved finish, has proven technical durability, and was available at short notice, allowing urgent work to proceed before further damage occurred. The design approach was conservative and based on reinstatement rather than alteration. The roof profile, ridge detailing, verge treatment, and overall form remain unchanged, ensuring continuity with the building's historic character. No changes were made to the underlying structure or to any original elements of the roof. The finished appearance is consistent with traditional clay-tiled roofs typical of Wealden vernacular architecture.

4. Access

The works were confined entirely to the roof and undertaken from scaffolding positioned within the curtilage of the property. The project did not involve any change to the building's internal or external access arrangements. Pedestrian and vehicular access remain as they were before the works took place, and there has been no effect on circulation or levels within the site. The completed works have no implications for accessibility, use, or movement patterns associated with the dwelling.

5. Impact on the Listed Building

The replacement of the defective roof covering has not harmed the significance of the listed building. On the contrary, the works have reinstated the intended appearance of a traditional clay-tiled roof and have prevented potential long-term deterioration to historic fabric. The new tiles replicate the form, colour, and texture of the failed tiles and restore the traditional roofscape that is intrinsic to the character of this sixteenth-century structure.

By retaining the historic roof form and using materials fully appropriate to the building's age, design, and setting, the works comply with national conservation principles, including the approach outlined in the NPPF and BS 7913. The accompanying Heritage Statement confirms that the intervention results in no adverse impact and that the significance of the building is preserved.

6. Conclusion

The replacement of the defective roof tiles at Lemon Meadow was an essential and carefully considered conservation measure. The works were carried out in response to genuine and urgent deterioration and were undertaken with the aim of protecting the building from further harm. The chosen materials are historically appropriate and restore the traditional appearance that was approved under the previous consent. The completed work preserves the architectural and historic character of this Grade II listed property and ensures its continued protection for the future.

For these reasons, retrospective Listed Building Consent is respectfully sought to regularise the works undertaken.