

Heritage Statement

Proposal: Replacement of Existing Hidden Valley Gutter

Property: 4 Marsh Hall Farm, Marsh Hall Lane, Thurstonland, HD4 6XB

Applicant: Mr Guy Denton

Date: 21st June 2025

1. Introduction

This heritage statement has been prepared in support of an application for listed building consent at 4 Marsh Hall Farm, Marsh Hall Lane, Thurstonland, HD4 6XB. The proposal involves the replacement of a deteriorated concealed lead valley gutter with a Glass Reinforced Plastic (GRP) system in dark grey. The works are necessary to prevent further water ingress and preserve the structural integrity of the Grade II listed property, in line with national and local heritage policy guidance.

2. Site Description

4 Marsh Hall Farm forms part of a group of historic buildings located in the rural village of Thurstonland, West Yorkshire. The building is designated Grade II and dates from circa 18th century. It is constructed in local sandstone with a stone slate roof and traditional vernacular detailing characteristic of West Yorkshire farmsteads.

The subject of this application is a hidden valley gutter, located between two adjoining roof pitches and completely concealed behind the stone copings which form a shallow parapet. The valley gutter is not visible from the public realm or any significant viewpoints, and plays a functional — not decorative — role in the building's fabric.

3. Heritage Significance

The heritage significance of 4 Marsh Hall Farm arises from:

- Its architectural character as a well-preserved example of West Yorkshire agricultural vernacular architecture.
- Its traditional materials, including sandstone walls, stone slate roofing, and timber joinery.
- Its group value as part of the historic Marsh Hall Farmstead complex.

The existing concealed lead gutter, while traditional in material, does not contribute to the visible architectural or historic character of the building due to its hidden location. Its

primary importance is functional — ensuring proper roof drainage and protecting the internal fabric of the building from water damage.

4. Condition of Existing Fabric

The current lead valley gutter is in poor condition, and over time cracks have formed in it due to movement caused by a continual process of shrinkage and expansion. This has resulted in long-term water ingress. Leaks have caused damp internally and raised concerns regarding rot in adjacent timbers. Patch repairs have proven ineffective over time, and a comprehensive replacement is now essential to prevent further deterioration of the building fabric.

5. Proposed Works

To comprise the following:

- Remove and set aside 2 no ridges from either side of valley gutter.
- Strip back and set aside approx. 1 mtr of stone slates from either side of valley gutter.
- Remove and dispose of defective laths and felt to above mentioned area.
- Remove defective section of lead and valley boards if required.
- Supply and install new OSB boarding to valley sections mechanically fixed.
- Supply and apply Flexible GRP system inclusive of all associated matting, additives and primers. Gutter will be dark grey in appearance and shaped to replicate the form and capacity of the original lead. The new gutter will be fitted in the same location, with no alteration to the external appearance of the building.
- Supply and install new Laths and breathable felt to above mentioned area to deliver into new valley gutter.
- Reinstate Stone slate back to original inclusive of allowance for replacements of damaged/defective ones.
- Rebed and repoint Previously set aside coping stones using relevant Sand and cement mortar mix inclusive of Collaring.
- All works will be carried out in accordance with good conservation practice by contractors experienced in heritage properties.

6. Impact on Significance

There will be no harm to the heritage significance of 4 Marsh Hall Farm:

- The new GRP gutter will be entirely concealed behind existing parapets, with no visual impact.
- The new material will provide a durable and discreet solution, helping to protect the listed building from further damage while maintaining the appearance of the roof structure.
- The intervention is reversible, allowing for future reinstatement of traditional lead if desired.

This work is consistent with the principles of minimum intervention and like-for-like replacement in non-visible areas, as supported by Historic England guidance and Paragraphs 196–198 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

7. Justification

This application is necessary and appropriate because:

- The lead gutter is failing, causing internal damage and posing a risk to the long-term fabric of the listed building.
- GRP is an established conservation-grade material for non-visible roof valleys where longevity, watertightness, and low maintenance are critical.
- The proposal avoids unnecessary disturbance of historic fabric and is invisible from the exterior.

8. Conclusion

The proposed works to replace the hidden lead valley gutter with a dark grey GRP alternative will preserve the fabric and significance of 4 Marsh Hall Farm. The change will have no visual or architectural impact and is fully in line with conservation best practices. As such, listed building consent is respectfully requested for this minor but necessary intervention.