

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT & PLANNING SUPPORT STATEMENT

In relation to:

**‘Conversion of existing agricultural buildings
to form 1 No. dwelling house (including feed
and equestrian store), 1 No. holiday let and
associated garaging’.**

**Tars Farm, Church Lane, Barnham,
West Sussex, PO22 0DB**

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

Tars Farm, Church Lane, Barnham, West Sussex, PO22 0DB

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This proposal seeks planning permission for the conversion of existing agricultural buildings to form 1 No. dwelling house (including feed and equestrian store), 1 No. holiday let and associated garaging.

2.0 SITE CONTEXT

The application site is located within an area of agricultural land, positioned northwest of Tars Farmhouse and Church Lane, Barnham.

This application relates to a collection of redundant agricultural buildings, located on this area of agricultural land. The barns comprise a mixture of traditional flint barns and more recent breeze block constructions. The traditional barns have become disused and are falling into a dilapidation. The only flint barn with four walls still standing is the hovel, which could be retained if the roof is repaired; however without repair and conversion this building would fall into dilapidation. It is noted that the flint boundary walls also need some repair. The surrounding land has been recently used for grazing of cattle, but permission now is in place for equestrian uses to be carried out on this land.

The site currently has one natural access point which connects to Church lane, Barnham and also relates to the main farmhouse. **Fig 1** provides an aerial view of the site and its surroundings.



Fig 1. Aerial view of the site and its surroundings (courtesy of Google Map)

3.0 USE

This proposal will result in the conversion of agricultural buildings into 1 No. residential dwelling house (C3 use – residential), 1 No. holiday let and associated garaging in the form of 2 No. double garages.

4.0 AMOUNT

The proposal would result in the provision of 1 No. four bedroom dwelling house, which would be contained over two floors. This dwelling would have a ground floor area of 182.8m² and first floor area of 77m². Within the dwelling, there would also be an area of feed and equestrian storage; comprising 67.2m².

The holiday let would also be contained over two levels and would comprise a floor area of 108.7m² at ground floor level, and 61.7m² above.

2 No. double garages are proposed to the northern side of the site, which would comprise a total floor area of 74.8m².

5.0 LAYOUT

The new dwelling would be a two storey dwelling, comprising a living room, dining hall, kitchen, bedroom, en-suite, study and feed and equestrian store at ground floor level; with 3 No. bedrooms, bathroom and en-suite above.

The holiday let would also be contained over two levels; comprising a bedroom, wet room, living room, dining room, utility, kitchen, shower at ground floor level and 2 No. bedrooms, sitting area and bathroom above.

2 No. double garages would be positioned to the northern side of the buildings.

The detailed ground floor and first floor site layout are set out at **Fig 2** and **Fig 3** below. The proposals that are the subject of this application are depicted by a blue line.

There is sufficient space on site for ample private gardens to the dwelling house, as well as much open space around the holiday let. Our client would be happy for this to be conditioned accordingly.



RODWAY PLANNING CONSULTANCY

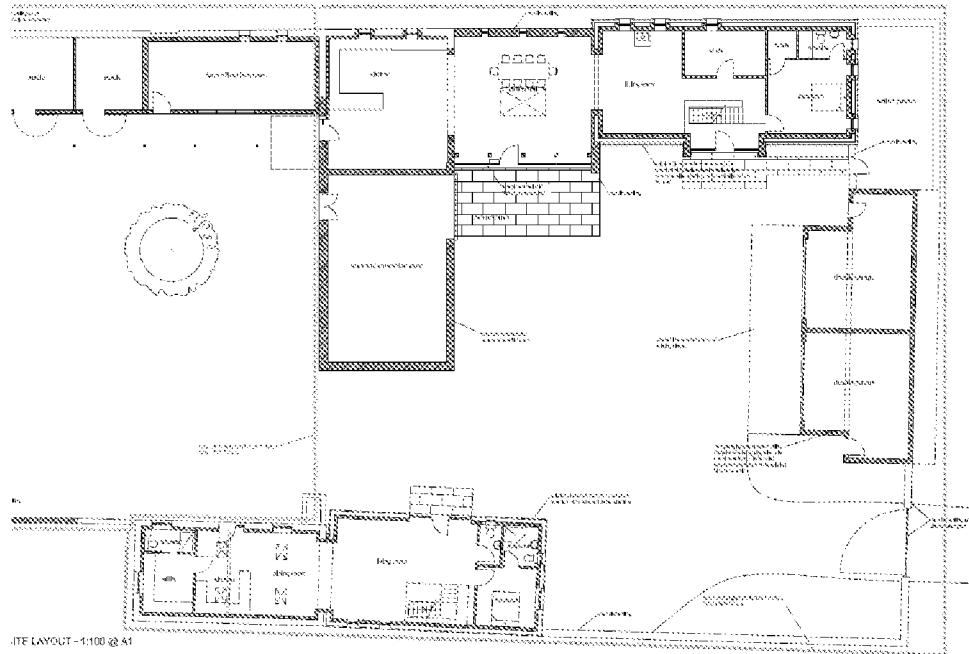


Fig 2. Extract from submitted proposed ground floor plan

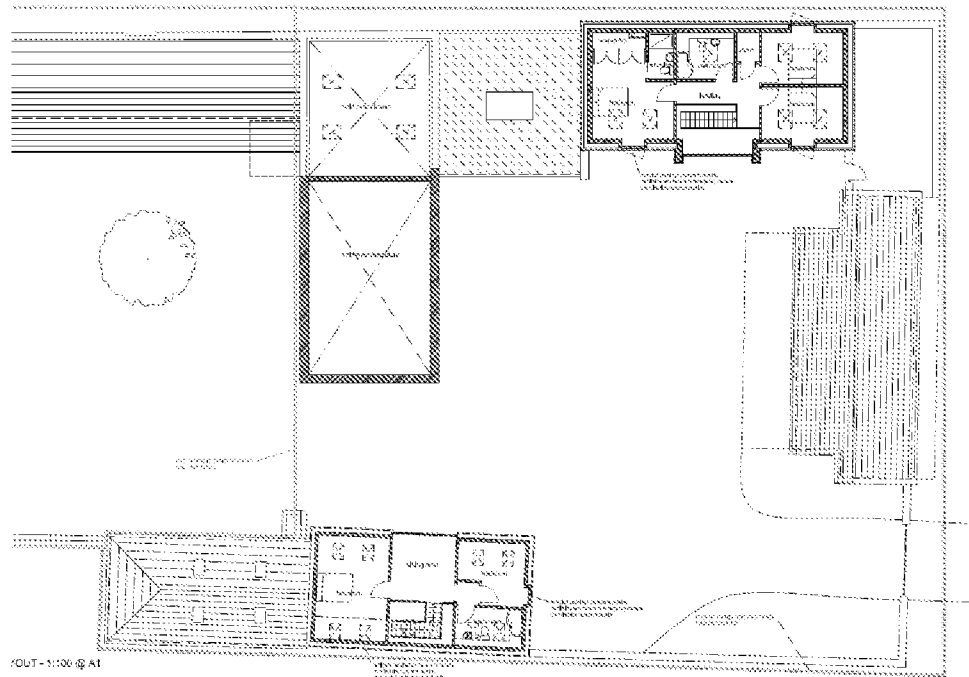


Fig 3. Extract from submitted proposed first floor plan



6.0 SCALE

The proposed conversion works to form 1 No. dwelling house and 1 No. holiday let would all be contained within existing buildings/ structures and over two levels.

The proposed garaging would comprise 2 No. single storey double garages.

7.0 LANDSCAPING

The application site is positioned to the northwest of Church Lane, with open fields to all sides. There are no protected trees or any other landscape features of significance located within or adjoining the application site.

No landscaping is proposed as part of this development; however our client would be happy for an appropriately worded landscaping condition to be attached to any planning permission.

8.0 APPEARANCE

The proposal involves the conversion and 'making good' of existing redundant farm buildings. Where possible, the original form of the existing buildings will be retained - with all work being kept to an absolute minimum.

The proposed elevation and sectional south east elevation, showing the new dwelling, holiday let and garaging are set out below at **Fig 4** and **Fig 5** respectively.

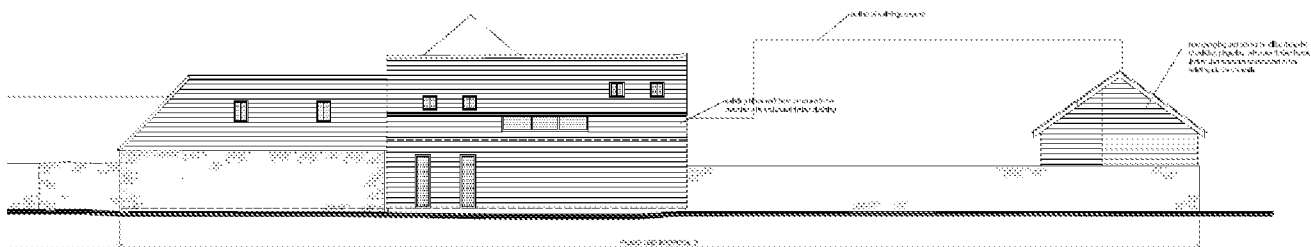


Fig 4. Proposed south east elevation

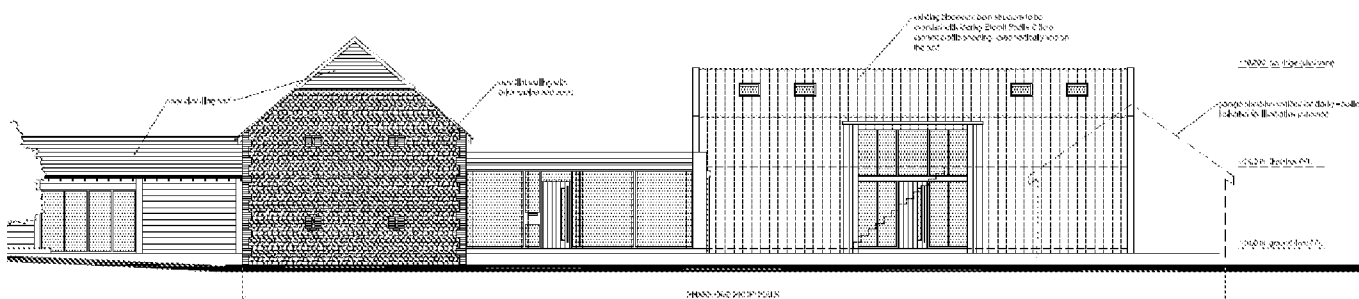


Fig 5. Proposed south east sectional elevation

It will be noted that the overall scale, form and height of the buildings will remain as close to their original form as possible; with all alterations being kept as minor as possible.

Great care has been taken in the design process to ensure that these alterations blend with the proportions and design of the existing building, rather than appearing incongruous. The existing building materials will not be altered and our client would be happy for conditions regarding materials to be imposed accordingly

Overall the design of the proposed works have been carefully and sensitively considered, in order to ensure that the buildings retain their traditional character and scale thereby creating visual enhancement to the application site and the wider rural scene.

9.0 ACCESS

The access to Tars Farmhouse from Church Lane leads through the site and the paddocks to further agricultural land beyond; including the collection of barns that are to be converted as part of this application (Tars Barns).

Please note that the access will be provided on an inclusive basis for all groups of residents and visitors.

PLANNING SUPPORT STATEMENT

1. INTRODUCTION

This Planning Statement is submitted in support of the above planning application. The statement describes the site, its surroundings and the proposal itself. The Planning Policy background is considered along with an assessment of the proposal in light of the relevant policies and all other material planning considerations. This Statement should be read in conjunction with the above Design & Access Statement.

2. THE PROPOSAL

This proposal seeks planning permission for the conversion of agricultural barns to form 1 no. dwelling house (including a feed and equestrian store), 1 No. holiday let and associated garaging. The location of these buildings are set out on the proposed site layout plan detailed at **fig 6** below.

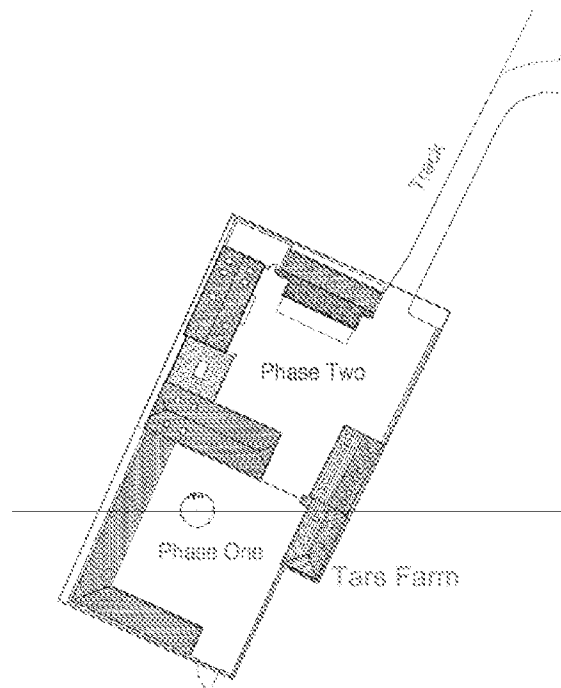


Fig 6. Proposed Site Layout

The building that is to be converted into a residential dwelling as part of this development, is an L-shaped barn building positioned to the west of the site; with the holiday let would be positioned opposite, to the east.

The four bedroom dwelling house will be two storeys in height; with a total floor area of 259.8m². An area for the storage of feed and equestrian storage; comprising 67.2m² would also be contained within this building.

The holiday let would also be contained over two levels and would comprise a total floor area of 170.4m².

There is ample space on site for the dwelling house to have a private garden area. Our client is happy for this to be conditioned accordingly.

2 No. double garages would be located to the northern side of the site, in the place of the former piggery. This structure is in need of the most repair work; and in some places total reconstruction. The garaging would utilise the footprint of the existing piggeries with new timber frame; however would comprise a timber clad structure constructed of the existing block work walls.

The site benefits from an existing access from Church Lane. The access would remain, with sufficient turning space available on site. The proposed garaging will provide 4 No. parking spaces on site; and there is also ample space on site to accommodate further cars in the unlikely event that they are required.

3. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

a. National Policy Context

(i) National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published on 27th March 2012, and at that time the policies in the Framework came into use, with immediate effect. This guidance is now the most-up-to date Government Guidance and replaces all planning policy statements/ guidance that were previously in place. This is with the exception of the ‘Good Practice Guide on Planning for Tourism’, which will be referred to in detailed below.

The focus of the new NPPF is achieving sustainable development, the definition of which is summarised in paragraph 6 as being the whole of paragraph’s 18-219 of the Framework. Paragraph 7 goes further as it specifies that there are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. Under the social role it states that the planning system should provide *“the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by creating a high quality built environment...”*. Under the economic role is states that it should contribute to *“building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation”*.

Under paragraph 11, the NPPF confirms that planning law requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan.

Paragraph 14 is an important element of the NPPF. It states that: *“at the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework is a **presumption in favour of sustainable development**, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking”*. It details that objectively assessed needs, such as housing, have to be met unless *“any adverse impact of doing so would significantly and*

demonstrably outweigh the benefits". This is assessed against all the policies of the NPPF, as a whole, or specific policies relating to SSSI, Green Belt, Local Green Space, AONB, Heritage Coast, National Park, designated heritage assets, flood risk locations and coastal erosion. It also states that decision makers should be *"approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay"*.

The NPPF advises that a set of 12 core land-use planning principles should underpin both plan-making and decision-taking, and these principles are listed under paragraph 17. Although the NPPF omits the wording that was present in the draft which referred to the default position of "yes" to applications for sustainable development, it does retain the significant change that requires a response to market signals. Each of the bullet points are important, but of particular note is no. 3 where it states that planning should *"proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes, business and industrial units, infrastructure and thriving local places that the country needs"*; no. 4 where it states the need to *"always seeks to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings"*; no. 5, where it details that account should be had of the character of different areas and no. 8 which seeks to encourage the *"effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed"*. Finally, no. 11 which requires development to be focused *"in locations which are or can be sustainable."*

Section 1 is entitled 'Building a strong, competitive economy'. Under paragraph 19, this guidance notes that *"the government is committed to ensuring that the planning system does everything it can to support sustainable economic growth. Planning should operate to encourage and not act as an impediment to sustainable growth. Therefore significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth through the planning system"*.

Section 3 relates specifically to 'supporting a prosperous rural economy'. Paragraph 28 reads as follows:-

“Planning policies should support economic growth in rural areas in order to create jobs and prosperity by taking a positive approach to sustainable new development. To promote a strong rural economy, local and neighbourhood plans should:

- Support the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well designed new buildings;*
- Promote the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;*
- Support sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments that benefit business in rural areas, communities and visitors, and which respect the character of the countryside. This should include supporting the provision and expansion of tourist and visitor facilities in appropriate locations where identified needs are not met by existing facilities in rural service centers; and*
- Promote the retention and development of local services and community facilities in villages, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship”.*

Section 4 is entitled ‘Promoting Sustainable Transport’. Under paragraph 29 it advises that different policies and measures are required in different communities and opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary from urban to rural areas. With reference to car parking, paragraph 39, states that if a LPA provides local parking standards, account should be had of *“the accessibility of the development; the type, mix and use of development; the availability of and opportunities for public transport; local car ownership levels; and an overall need to reduce the use of high-emission vehicles”.*

Section 6 of the NPPF is entitled ‘Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes’. It seeks to *“boost, significantly”* the supply of housing, whilst placing more reliance on windfall sites as a source of housing supply. Realistic historic windfall delivery rates and expected future trends are legitimate sources of supply. Paragraph 49 states *“Housing applications*

should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up-to-date if the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites”.

At Paragraph 51 this guidance states that *“Local planning authorities should identify and bring back into residential use empty housing and buildings in line with local housing and empty homes strategies and, where appropriate, acquire properties under compulsory purchase powers. They should normally approve planning applications for change to residential use and any associated development from commercial buildings...”*

Para 55 notes that Local Planning Authorities *“should avoid new isolated homes in the countryside unless there are special circumstances such as:*

- The essential need for a rural worker to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside; or*
- Where such development would represent the optimal visible use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of heritage assets; or*
- Where the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and lead to an enhancement to the immediate setting; or*
- The exceptional quality or innovative nature of the design of the dwelling”.*

Section 7 discusses the need for good design. Under paragraph 58 the NPPF provides what appears to be a clearer and more robust approach to design than in PPS1 paragraph 33 – 39.

The NPPF wishes to avoid unnecessary prescription or detail (paragraph 59), whilst the key criteria of scale, density, massing, height, landscape, layout, materials, access, relationship to neighbouring buildings and relation to the local area more generally remain. Paragraph 58 expands on this by stating that developments should: *“function*

well and add to the overall quality of the area... establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit... optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development, create and sustain an appropriate mix of uses... respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation; create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion; and are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping”.

Finally, the crucial caveat of PPS1 paragraph 35 remains within the NPPF. That is that good design goes far beyond aesthetic considerations, with paragraph 61 specifically referring to “*integration of new development into the natural and historic environment.*”

Under the ‘Decision taking’ section, it states that “*Local planning authorities should approach decision-taking in a positive way to foster the delivery of sustainable development*” (para. 186), whilst adding that “*Local planning authorities should look for solutions rather than problems, and decision-takers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible*” (para. 187).

The NPPF also underlines the retention of the plan led system (para. 196), and confirms that account should be had of market conditions when obligations are sought or revised (para. 205).

Annex 1 to the NPPF entitled ‘Implementation’ (para’s 208 -219) also contains important advice. It states that Local Plan Policies are not necessarily out of date because they were published before the NPPF. However, it advises that NPPF policies are to be taken into account from 27th March 2012 and in paragraph 213 these policies should be taken into account as soon as possible in new plans (para. 211). Importantly, “*for 12 months from the day of publication, decision-takers may continue to give full weight to relevant policies adopted since 2004 even if there is a limited degree of conflict with this Framework*”

(para. 214). After this 12 month period relevant local plan policies can still be given due weight, particularly if they accord with policies contained within the NPPF (para. 215).

At para. 216, the NPPF identifies the weight to be given to emerging plans, referring to “*stage in preparation of the emerging plan*”; “*extent of unresolved objections to particular policies*”; and, “*consistency of emerging policies with the policies in the NPPF*”.

(ii) The Government Good Practice Guide for Tourism (2006)

The Governments Good Practice Guide for Tourism emphasises the importance of tourism to the economy, the need for sustainable development, and that applications should be determined in line with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

At para 2.7, this guidance notes that “*the planning system, by taking a pro-active role in facilitating and promoting the implementation of good quality development, is crucial to ensuing that the tourism industry can develop and thrive, thereby maximising these valuable economic, social and environmental benefits. At the same time, the planning system aims to ensure that these benefits are achieved in the most sustainable manner possible*”.

Section 3.24 specifically relates to Tourism in rural areas, noting that the provision of essential facilities for visitors is vital for the development of the tourism in rural areas. It is acknowledged that tourism can:-

- Be a key element in rural and farm diversification;
- Help to revitalise market towns and villages;
- Support important rural services and facilities; and
- Underwrite environmental schemes and improvements to the built and natural environment.

This section goes on to state that *“RSS and LDF policies should therefore engender a positive approach to rural tourism proposals, applying the following principles:*

- *Wherever possible, tourist and visitor facilities should be housed in existing or replacement buildings, particularly where they are located outside existing settlements;*
- *In statutorily designated areas they should seek to conserve and enhance the qualities and features that justified the designation.*
- *Large-scale tourist proposals must be assessed against the whole range of sustainable development objectives. This includes not only their transport implications but also other suitability considerations such as how they assist rural regeneration and the well being of communities”.*

Para 5.1 notes that due to the variety of tourism developments, each proposal will need to be considered on a case-by-case basis. Nonetheless, the following points will apply to most developments:-

- Location – developments should be accessible to visitors and where they do not have an adverse impact upon sensitive environments;
- Design – Developments should be visually attractive, work in functional terms and use natural resources in an efficient manner;
- Fit into surroundings – Developments should respect their environment, being designed to have a positive impact upon landscape, the historical setting and ecology.

At Para 5.5, the government recognises the need for Planners to *“weigh up the benefits of a tourism proposal against any disadvantages arising from its location”*. Some of the key considerations are as follows:-

- *“Helps to protect or improve a specific site or general location. Many new proposals offer the opportunity for landscape enhancement....*
- *Contributes to tourism in the locality. New tourism developments will usually be beneficial to the local economy and complement the area’s tourism function;*

- *Provide a new facility for the local community as well as visitors;*
- *Assist more generally with diversification of rural economies; and where appropriate;*
- *Impacts on the vitality and viability of towns centres”.*

At Para’s 5.6 and 5.7, reference is made to the importance of good design and the positive impact it can have upon making places better for people. Further, achieving small-scale improvements to sustainability is encouraged, for example through the recycling of waste, using renewable energy and sourcing produce and materials locally.

At Annexe A, the guide recognises that *“Tourism accommodation takes many different forms, including hotels, guest houses and bed and breakfast premises, self-catering, touring and static caravans and camping, and caters for a variety of tastes and budgets. But all are capable of bringing economic benefit to the areas in which they are located. These benefits will need to be assessed alongside other issues such as suitability of the location in terms of its sustainability”.*

This guidance provides specific advice in relation to Hotel accommodation in rural areas; Budget hotels, motels and travel lodges; Holiday, touring caravan and chalet parks development and Staff accommodation. Therefore none of this guidance relates directly to the proposal. It is noted however, that Para 26 relates to other forms of self-catering accommodation, noting that *“PPS7 advises that local planning authorities should support the provision of other forms of self-catering holiday accommodation in rural areas where this would accord with sustainable development objectives. The re-use and conversion of existing non-residential buildings for this purpose may have added benefits e.g as a farm diversification scheme”.*

Finally, within Annexe B, the Government recommends that ‘holiday occupancy conditions’ are imposed, which allow developments to be used year round, whilst

preventing them becoming part of the local housing stock. These conditions are as follows:-

- (i) The caravans (or cabins/ chalets) are occupied for holiday purposes only;
- (ii) The caravans (or cabins/ chalets) shall not be occupied as a person's sole, or main place of residence;
- (iii) The owners/ operators shall maintain an up-to-date register of the names of all owners/occupiers of individual caravans/ log cabins/ chalets on the site, and of their main home addresses, and shall make this information available at all reasonable times to the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure that approved holiday accommodation is not used for unauthorised permanent residential accommodation. The register required in (iii) above shall normally be collected by the caravan site licence holiday or his/her nominated person.

Our client would be happy for the above conditions to be applied to any planning approval at this site.

(iii) Local Planning Policy

The Arun District Local Plan

The Arun District Local Plan was statutorily adopted in 2003. The NPPF states that Local Plans that were adopted prior to 2004 should be afforded more limited weight. As such, it is our view that Local Plan Policies should not be referred to unless wholly compliant with the guidance contained within the NPPF.

Nonetheless, for consistencies sake, the relevant saved local plan policies will be set out in detail below:-

Within Arun District, ADLP Policy GEN2 defines built-up area boundaries outside which Policy GEN3 resists development, in order to protect the countryside for its own sake.

Policy GEN 3 notes that *“outside the Built-Up Area, as defined on the Proposals Map, the countryside will be safeguarded for its own sake. Development will not be permitted unless:*

- (i) it meets the operational needs of agriculture, forestry, the extraction of minerals or the deposit of waste; or*
- (ii) for quiet, informal recreation; or*
- (iii) for the diversification of the rural economy; or*
- (iv) for essential road schemes; or*
- (v) it is in accordance with a policy in Sections 2 and 3 of the plan referring to a specific use or type of development.*

Permission will not be given for the extension of isolated groups of buildings or the consolidation of linear or sporadic development unless the proposal accords with criteria (i) to (iii) or (v)”.

Policy GEN7 seeks high quality design that responds to site characteristics and allows for safe movement of vehicles, giving priority to pedestrians.

Policy GEN9 relates to Foul and Surface Water Drainage; whilst GEN12 relates to parking in new development.

For housing, ADLP saved **Policy GEN5** sets a District target of 8,700 new dwellings between 1996 and 2011, a figure that was based on gross totals before losses in the former West Sussex County Structure Plan.

POLICY DEV1 relates to the conversion of rural buildings for industrial or business uses. This policies states that *“proposals for conversion of buildings for industrial or business uses outside the built up area will be permitted provided that:-*

- (i) The building is structurally sound, or permanent construction, and capable of conversion without rebuilding or significant alteration or extension;*

- (ii) The resultant building and use will not have an adverse effect on the rural character of the area in respect of the nature and level of activity likely to be generated including the resultant traffic level;*
- (iii) The resultant building is sympathetic to its setting in terms of form, bulk and visual design;*
- (iv) Where the building is of historic or architectural importance, there is no adverse effect on the character and appearance or features of architectural or historic interest, internally and externally, where the building possess, or its setting; and*
- (v) The traffic to be generated by the new use can be safely accommodated by the site access and the local road system”.*

Policy DEV2 relates to conversion of rural buildings for residential use. This policy states that “proposals for the conversion of buildings for residential use outside the built-up area will not be permitted unless:-

- (i) either, it has been demonstrated that reasonable attempts have been made to market and use the premises for business purposes, and the application must be supported by a statement of the efforts which have been made; or, residential conversion is a subordinate part of a scheme for business re-use;*
- (ii) the building is structurally sound, of permanent construction, and capable of conversion without rebuilding or significant alteration or extension;*
- (iii) the resultant building and use will not have an adverse effect on the rural character of the area and is sympathetic to its setting in terms of form, bulk and visual design. Particular regard will be given to the impact of any residential curtilage on the character of the countryside;*
- (iv) where the building is of historic or architectural importance, there is no adverse effect on the character and appearance or features of architectural or historic*

*interest, internally and externally, which the building possesses, or its setting;
and*

(v) the traffic to be generated by the new use can be safely accommodated by the site access and the local road system”.

Status of the Local Plan

In light of the NPPF, it is questionable how much weight should be afforded to the 2003 Local Plan. The NPPF clearly outlines its method of Implementation within Annex 1 of this document. At paragraph 211, the guidance notes that *“for the purposes of decision-taking, the policies in the Local Plan should not be considered out-of-date simply because they were adopted prior to the publication of this framework”*. However, at paragraph 214, the NPPF goes on to state that Local Plan Policies can only be given full weight if adopted since 2004. *“In other cases... due weight should be given to relevant policies in existing plans according to their degree of consistency with this framework”*.

We would therefore argue that the implications of paragraph 214 are that the policies of the 1996 Local Plan can be afforded no weight unless they are still explicitly consistent with relevant policies in the NPPF. In our view, this argument is strengthened because full weight can continue to be given to post-2004 Local Plan policies only if *“there is a limited degree of conflict (with NPPF)”*.

Emerging Local Plan

The Arun District Local Plan is an emerging plan which will provide a clear strategy for development in the District up to 2029 and form the context for future neighbourhood planning in Arun. It will set out the vision and objectives for the district, place-based site specific policies (including site allocations) and development management policies. The Arun Local Plan will be consistent with national policy, and will form the foundation for any future Neighbourhood Plans prepared by local communities in the District.

A version of this plan went to a special meeting of Arun District Council on the 29th May 2013. A number of the resolutions from the meeting were made; however the plan is still

some way from formal adoption.

Given the relative status of the emerging Local Plan, we consider that no weight can be afforded to this document at this time.

5.0 PLANNING APPRAISAL

a. Planning History

The Council's on-line planning register details the following planning history in relation to

(i) Tars Farm:-

- **Planning ref: EG/64/12/:** Change of use for 33 acres of land adjacent to Tars Farmhouse from Agriculture to Agriculture and Equestrian. The construction of a 50m x 30m outdoor training arena (Ménage) for the schooling of horses. Approved Conditionally.
- **Planning ref: BN/30/10/:** Erect a new stable block, tack room and hay store (re-submission of BN/25/10/). Approved Conditionally.

It is noted that this application is conditioned to be for the applicant's personal use and for any business purposes.

- **Planning ref: BN/25/10/:** Erect a new stable block, tack room and hay store. Refused.
- **Planning ref: BN/57/06/:** Single storey extension to living room and new ground floor wc/ shower and utility room. Approved Conditionally.
- **Planning ref: BN/8/72/:** Outline for single dwelling. Refused.

(ii) Adjoining Sites :-

- **Planning ref: BN/22/11/:** Proposed siting of a static caravan for residential occupation (this application is a Departure from the Development Plan). Approved

Conditionally.

b. Pre-application Discussions with the Council

Pre-application advice was sought from the Council for 'conversion (with rebuilding of Sussex barn) to form equestrian business, tourist accommodation and associated residential accommodation at Tars Barns and associated land r/o Church Lane, Barnham. A pre-application response was received from the Council via letter dated 2nd July 2013.

The proposals sought to reconstruct a flint barn to be used for residential accommodation for the site owner, convert the brick hovel (flint with brick dressings and slate roof) to holiday accommodation, convert a breeze block barn to holiday accommodation and retain a smaller breeze block barn for storage for a proposed change of use to stud farm, and to erect stables to replace the existing piggeries. It was noted that the proposals were therefore to change the use of the site from agricultural to a mixed use equestrian, residential use and commercial holiday accommodation.

It will be noted that these proposals have now been split into 2 applications (Phase 1 and Phase 2); with this one relating to 1 No. dwelling house, a holiday let and associated garaging (Phase 2).

Nonetheless the councils response is summarised below in full, for the sake of completeness:-

- Principle – *"The site lies in a countryside location outside the Built up Area Boundary, where the principle of development is considered unacceptable. Development Plan policies seek to exert a strict control over new development in the countryside to protect it for its own sake. Development will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances or where there is a strong justification for a countryside location. The Government's planning advice indicates that planning authorities should continue to ensure that the quality and character of the wider countryside is protected, and where possible enhanced. Arun District Council Local Plan Policies DEV1 and DEV2 will need to be adhered to with regard to the conversion of Rural*

Buildings for Industrial or Business Uses and Residential Use. It is important to note that the buildings must be structurally sound and capable of conversion without rebuilding or significant alteration or extension. Therefore only the two modern barns and the Hovel would qualify for any consideration under these policies. A full structural survey would be required with any application”.

- Design – In the absence of detailed plans, advice on design could not be provided. It should be noted however than the proposals should be compliant with Government Advise and GEN7 (i) and any conversion must be without significant alteration, extension or rebuild.
- Neighbour Amenity – Proposals should be compliant with Policy GEN7. The case officer stated that *“in this case, it is considered that the proposed development would be acceptable on the residential amenities of neighbouring properties because the residential properties are considered to be sufficiently separated from the development so that it would be unlikely to result in any significant loss of visual amenity or any overlooking or overshadowing”.*
- Landscape Comments: None.
- Drainage Engineers Comments: This area is known to be at risk from flooding from sewers and fluvial flooding and as such, detailed comments were made by the Councils drainage engineer.
- Environmental Health: Environmental health made no comments; however the Council notes that this land has the potential for contamination and therefore a site contamination report should be submitted with any application, along with any details of mitigation measures.
- Members raised concerns regarding flooding, when the application was presented Briefing Panel on 15th June.
- The Council made the following conclusion:- *“Based on the above comments I conclude that were an application for planning permission for the conversion of*

the building to a residential use, it would likely be recommended for refusal as a commercial use should be the first consideration and significant proof would be required as to the reason that a commercial use could not be achieved . Additionally, the only flint barn still standing is the Hovel and a structural survey would be required to justify that the building could be converted without significant alteration, rebuild or extension. Any rebuilding of dilapidated structures would not be permitted under policies DEV1 and DEV2.

It is noted from on site conversations and the details submitted that the applicant is seeking to expand the current personal equestrian use into a pony stud business. As the site is outside of the built up area boundary, a new dwelling would need to be fully justified. I would suggest that you use the test under Annexe A of the redundant PPS7 which is to be included as a new policy under the emerging Arun District Local Plan. The National Planning Policy Framework states in paragraph 55 that local planning authorities should avoid isolated homes in the countryside unless there are special circumstances and that development should re-use redundant or disused buildings. It is noted that the applicant currently lives on the site and whilst we would wish to support any genuine sustainable development of a rural business, a new dwelling could not be supported without a full justification”.

We are confident that our revisions to this proposal have now fully addressed the concerns of Mrs Leeson and this planning application now represents an acceptable form of development, that would fully comply with National and Local Policy guidance.

c. Principle of Development

The most up-to-date guidance is contained within the NPPF. Para 55 of the NPPF is supportive of rural conversions, noting that “*Local Planning Authorities should avoid new isolated homes in the countryside unless there are special circumstances such as:*

... where the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and lead to an

enhancement to the immediate setting”.

The application site is located outside the defined built up area boundary, as outlined by the Arun District Local Plan 2003 proposals map; where in line with saved Policy GEN3 of the ADLP new development will be resisted unless it complies with certain criteria.

In this instance, the holiday let would comply with criterion (iii) *‘for the diversification of the rural economy’*.

In addition, all of the proposals would fully comply with GEN3 (v) in that the proposals would be *‘in accordance with a policy in Sections 2 and 3 of the plan referring to a specific use or type of development’*. Namely, the proposals would comply with saved **Policy DEV1** (conversion of rural buildings for industrial or business uses) and saved **Policy DEV2** (conversion of rural buildings for residential use). These policies provides for the conversion of agricultural or other rural buildings in the countryside to industrial or business use (DEV1) or residential use (DEV2) , provided, inter alia, that the building’s form and general design are in keeping with the surroundings, and the structure is of sound construction and capable of conversion without significant rebuilding, modification or extension. Each of these points is fully addressed below.

Finally, the Council noted in their pre-application response that any buildings to be converted would need to be structurally sound and capable of conversion without rebuilding or significant alteration or extension. This application is accompanied by a full structural survey, which will be discussed in detailed below.

(i) Construction

A full structural survey has been carried out in relation to these building by McCarey Simmonds, consulting civil and structural engineers and accompanies this planning application.

The buildings in question are referred to as the west enclosure Northeast Piggery (Building 1), Northwest Barn (Building 2), West Shed (Building 3) and Southeast Barn

(Building 7).

The report makes the following conclusion regarding each building:-

Northeast Piggery (Building 1)

The footprint of these buildings are going to form the footprint of 2 No. single storey double garages. The report concludes that this was a single storey structure with extremely low eaves height, the walls of which had been constructed of single leaf dense concrete block work. The report concludes that *"given the extent of work required, in our opinion, it would be more economical to completely demolish and reconstruct"*.

Northwest Barn (Building 2)

This building will be converted into 1 No. four bedroom, two storey dwelling house. This is a single storey large barn of solid dense concrete wall construction supporting a corrugated concrete sheeted roof. The surveys were stated that the *"existing structure was in relatively good order and in our opinion economically worth retaining"*.

West Shed (Building 3)

This building would form part of the converting into a dwelling house, as detailed above. This is a single store mono pitched roof barn of timber construction, with timber framed walls to the northwest rear and the northeast side, both of which were corrugated metal sheet clad. The report outlined a number of areas that required 'making good'.

Southeast Barn (Building 7)

This building, together with the east barn (see below) will form the holiday let. This is a single storey small barn of flint masonry construction with a slate tiled covered timber partially trussed hip ended duo pitched roof. Recommendations for the conversion of the building were made.

East Barn (Building 8)

This building, together with the southeast barn (above) are proposed to be converted into the holiday let. This is a single storey medium sized barn of dense concrete block work construction with a modern prefabricated trussed duo pitched roof supporting profiled concrete tiles. It was stated that a concrete floor was present within the barn. Further, if the existing superstructure were to be retained then the masonry walls may require underpinning; although this would need to be confirmed.

The report concluded that *"generally a high percentage of the existing structures could be retained; however , the extent being retained is likely to be driven by economic considerations and the wish to retain as much of the flint/ barn character of the site. The majority of flint walls could be retained, however they are likely to require time consuming underpinning throughout. Where being retained, all buildings will need to be upgraded to comply with current Building Regulations"*.

Our client is committed to retaining as much of these building original form as possible and where possible, will comply with each of the points outlined in the structure survey. Therefore, although it is acknowledged that these buildings have not been in use for some time; it has been confirmed that they are of permanent construction and on the whole capable of conversion and this could be confirmed by a site visit from the case officer. It is recognised that the former piggery would require greater works; however the footprint of the building would be fully utilised and would provide garaging that would be essential for the dwelling and holiday let. The form of the original building and material would be reused where at all possible.

It should be recognised that the proposal will result in no significant alternations or extensions to the buildings. All works will be kept a minimal as possible, with the most significant change being the addition of roofing, where required.

In summary, it is clear that the vast majority of buildings are fully capable of conversion without the need for any significant works.

(ii) Bulk, Form and General Design

The existing attractive form of the buildings will be retained, as the level of internal accommodation proposed can be achieved without extending the building. My client is prepared to accept a condition removing permitted development powers for extensions to the dwelling house and holiday let, if this is required by the Council.

Although the buildings that are the subject of this proposal are not Listed, they do possess a distinctive rural character, and do make a positive contribution to the rural scene, and make an enhancement to the immediate setting, as is required by paragraph 55 of the NPPF. It is considered that the proposed conversion will not have a detrimental effect on the overall fabric and character of these historic buildings.

The conversion works have been carefully designed to ensure that it would preserve the buildings structural integrity, and any repair works will be carried out in a sensitive manner and involve appropriate materials. My client is happy for this to be conditioned accordingly.

It is our view, that the proposed alterations to the buildings are of a minor nature and in no way controversial or excessive. Instead the conversion works would be undertaken in a sensitive manner with the aim of conserving the buildings charm and appearance.

(iii) Type and Level of Activity

It is proposed to convert the buildings into 1 No. four bedroom independent residential unit, 1 No. holiday let and associated garages for the parking of vehicles.

This is ample space around this residential building to accommodate an area of private amenity space. My client is happy for the application to be conditioned accordingly.

The proposals would utilise an established access off the north west side of Church Lane, Barnham. It is our view that the rural character of the street scene will not be compromised by any additional traffic generated by the proposal.

In addition, the conversion works proposed to the buildings will not physically alter the

footprint of each of the buildings. Therefore any impact from the buildings themselves on neighbouring properties will be similar to that existing. In any case, the buildings are all positioned a considerable distance from any neighbouring property, being bordered by open fields to all sides. As such, it is our view that no adverse impacts will result from the proposed development.

It is envisaged that the proposed dwelling would have a minimal effect on the character of the area since traffic movements and activities associated with the use will be minimal. Within the site the rural character of the area will not in any way be compromised.

In addition, and as discussed above, it is not envisaged that the proposed residential and holiday let use will result in notable activity or disturbance. The use proposed is low key and will not demonstrably disrupt or cause nuisance to the detriment of any neighbouring properties amenities.

Therefore it is clear that as a result of the unique combination of siting, physical features and the design of the layout, the character of the area and residential amenities will be affected to a very limited extent.

(iv) Appearance and Setting

The building is set within an existing farm. With regard to the residential use, there will be a defined residential curtilage within the immediately vicinity of the site, which will not encroach on adjacent land uses either within or outside our clients control. The development will be undertaken in a sensitive manner that will not erode the important rural characteristics of the site.

It is recognised that the residential property proposed requires an appropriate level of domestic curtilage, but it is acknowledged that this has to be balanced against the need to protect the rural environment. Our client would therefore be happy for the LPA to impose a suitably worded condition relating to residential curtilage and associated boundary treatment; as well as a landscaping condition.

With regard to the holiday let, there is ample space on site to provide a suitable area of

private amenity space. Our client would therefore be agreeable to a condition being imposed accordingly.

It is proposed to utilise the existing access point off the north west side of Church Lane, Barnham to enable access to the proposed new residential unit and holiday let. The existing visibility splays and highway opening will be maintained. Therefore, the appearance of the site when viewed from Church Lane will be improved due to the refurbishment of currently redundant and disused buildings.

It must be noted that although the proposals clearly constitute a visual enhancement, as required by the NPPF, public views of the site (be they from Church Lane or the railway line to the north) can be described as distant, and/or obscured by existing built and natural features.

There is currently ample space on site for parking and turning of vehicles. The general approach that is proposed will ensure that the access drive, turning/parking areas, and the domestic garden area will not erode the rural character of the area.

It is concluded that the conversion of this rural barns to residential accommodation, holiday let, office and stables would be fully compliant with National and Local Policy and represent a high quality form of development, within this rural location.

d. Need

The application is accompanied by a business plan; which relates to the diversification of Tars Farm Ltd.

The plan sets out that there are currently two business entities operating from the Tars Farm location; which are as follows:-

- i. **Tars Farm Trading** - an agricultural/ landlord business partnership owned by Mr and Mrs Voller;
- ii. **Tars Farm Equestrian Stud Ltd** - an equine limited company solely owned by Mrs

Claire Voller from which all respected of the equestrian business are managed.

Both companies were set up in 2012 in advance of the purchase and the incorporation of the 33 acres of land to the adjoining farmhouse (completed in 2013).

The business plan fully justifies the expansion of the equestrian business, which is part of a separate (albeit linked) planning application. The plan notes that *"as the value of stud livestock will be high and the well being of the broodmares and young stock would be critical to the sustainability of the business, there is a requirement for the business owners/stud assistant to be resident onsite"*. As set out above, this will be achieved by co-joining and converting one of the existing breeze block barns with the dilapidated Sussex barn to form 1 No. four bedroom residential unit and additional barn facilities.

Subject to planning, it is anticipated that this development will commence in 2014/2015. The rationale behind this development and benefits are set out in full within the accompanying business plan.

In addition, and in order to maximise, utilise and improve the general outlook of the final set of the existing Tars Farm buildings, it is intended that (subject to planning) in Year 2014/15 the existing barn and flint hovel be converted to form a self-contained three bedroom holiday let that will accommodate up to six people. The business plan fully assesses the rationale behind this course of action; noting that the market catchment for a holiday let in this location is good.

e. Trees and Landscaping

Consultation with Arun District Council has confirmed that there are no trees protected by Tree Preservation Orders within or adjacent to the site and the site does not lie within a Conservation Area.

Further, no tree will be affected by the proposed conversion works.

No Landscaping is proposed as part of these proposals; however our client is happy for an appropriately worded condition to be imposed to any planning permission is the councils considers is necessary,

e. Biodiversity

This application is accompanied by a Barn Owl Survey, Bat Survey and Habitat Survey, which made the following conclusions.

With regard to the bat survey, no evidence of the presence of barn owl has been identified within the brick and flint barn to the east of the yard. it is thought that the barn is being used as a winter roost only. No other evidence of barn owl nesting was observed. It was recommended however that barn owl roosting opportunities are provided within the site to compensate for the loss of the roost as a result of the redevelopment of the site. Our client is happy for a condition to be imposed accordingly.

The barn buildings that are to be converted as part of this application were all found to have a low to medium potential for the roosting of bats. Mitigation measures are suggested.

With regard to the habitat survey, it was noted that the whole site has "*potential economic value for invertebrates reptiles, birds (including barn owls), bats and badgers. Protection measures and/ or further assessment plus mitigation and/ or compensation have been recommended for these species prior to development... Subject to the implementation of some or all of the enhancement measures given... it is likely that there could be an enhancement to the overall ecological value of the site*".

Our client is happy for conditions to be imposed regarding proposed mitigation measures, where the Council considers this necessary.

f. Flooding

This application is accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment from Environmental Assessment Services Limited. This states that the Arun District Councils Strategic Flood

Risk Assessment (SFRA) shows the proposed development are to lie within Flood Zone 1, low probability of flooding from fluvial and tidal) sources.

g. Access and Parking Arrangements

As detailed above, an existing access point from Church Lane will be utilised by the proposed development, and this provides sufficient visibility splays in both directions along Church Lane, as well as ample turning and parking space available on site.

Please note that the access will be provided on an inclusive basis for all groups of residents and visitors.

h. Sustainability

Paragraph 14 is an important element of the NPPF. It states that: *“at the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework is a **presumption in favour of sustainable development**, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking”*. It details that objectively assessed needs, such as housing, have to be met unless *“any adverse impact of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.”*

It is acknowledged that the site is located in a rural location; however it is located approximately 1 mile from Barnham village and the nearby village of Yapton and five miles from the town of Bognor Regis.

Barnham is a sustainable location; having its own train station and as such, excellent rail links to London and along the south coast; as well as strong road linkages to the A27 for car and bus use. The village is also home to a variety of shops and local facilities.

Church Lane is accessible from Barnham under the railway bridge or from Yapton Villages. Driving underneath the railway bridge is the only route from the site to Barnham Village centre, except for a public footpath from the conservation areas which runs northwards, crossing the branch and main railway lines, toward St. Phillip Howard secondary school.

6.0 CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, the proposed development is considered acceptable for the following reasons:

- This proposal seeks planning permission for the conversion of existing redundant agricultural barns for 1 No. dwelling (including feed and equestrian store), 1 No. holiday let and associated garaging.
- The Council has confirmed through pre-application discussions that the conversion of these buildings would be acceptable in principle.
- The application site is located outside the defined built up area boundary, as outlined by the Arun District Local Plan 2003 proposals map; where in line with saved Policy GEN3 of the ADLP new development will be resisted unless it complies with certain criteria.
- Para 55 of the NPPF is supportive of rural conversions, noting that *“Local Planning Authorities should avoid new isolated homes in the countryside unless there are special circumstances such as: ... where the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and lead to an enhancement to the immediate setting”*;
- At the local level, the holiday let would comply with criterion (iii) of saved policy **GEN3** of the ADLP which states that *“outside the Built-Up Area, as defined on the Proposals Map, the countryside will be safeguarded for its own sake. Development will not be permitted unless: (iii) for the diversification of the rural economy...”*
- In addition, all of the proposals would fully comply with **GEN3** (v) in that the proposals would be *‘in accordance with a policy in Sections 2 and 3 of the plan referring to a specific use or type of development’*. Namely, the proposals would comply with saved **Policy DEV1** (conversion of rural buildings for industrial or business uses) and saved **Policy DEV2** (conversion of rural buildings for residential use). These policies provides for the conversion of agricultural or other rural buildings in the countryside to industrial or business use (**DEV1**) or residential use

(DEV2) , provided, inter alia, that the building's form and general design are in keeping with the surroundings, and the structure is of sound construction and capable of conversion without significant rebuilding, modification or extension.

- The buildings are of permanent construction and capable of conversion. This application is accompanied by a full structural survey.
- No significant alterations or extensions are proposed to the buildings that are to be converted as part of the development, with the exception of the piggery which will create new garaging by utilising the existing footprint and block work of the building.
- It is our view, that the proposed alterations to the building are of a minor nature and in no way controversial or excessive. Instead the conversion works would be undertaken in a sensitive manner with the aim of conserving the buildings charm and appearance. As such, it is concluded that the proposed works would result in a visual enhancement to the immediate setting of this rural area.
- The proposal would utilise an existing vehicular access into the site. There is ample turning space and parking provision provided on site.
- The proposal will provide a high quality, sustainable development, which will set a positive benchmark for Barnham/Eastergate, be accessible now and in the future and be in accordance with planning policy and guidance;
- The proposal would make a small, albeit valuable contribution to the Councils housing numbers; and
- As the proposal accords with the aims and objectives of national and local guidance, the application site is a suitable for the proposed development and permission should therefore be granted.

February 2014