



Planning, Design & Access Statement



Demolition of existing modern agricultural buildings and water tank.

Conversion, extension and alteration of traditional vernacular agricultural buildings and construction of three new dwellings and associated outbuildings to form a total of six dwellings.

Repair and re-pointing of existing flint walls, landscaping, SuDs ponds and parking provision

North Choller Farm, Barnham Lane, Walberton, BN18 0AX

August 2026



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1. Introduction

- 1.1. Manorwood have been instructed to prepare a full planning application for the demolition of existing modern agricultural buildings and water tank. The development will include the conversion, extension and alteration of five traditional vernacular agricultural buildings and construction of three new dwellings, to form a total of six dwellings. This will also include the repair and re-pointing of existing flint walls, landscaping, SuDs ponds and parking provision.
- 1.2. This proposal follows the approval of application, WA/36/26/PD, which sought Class Q prior approval for the conversion of the existing seven agricultural buildings to nine dwelling houses. Having reviewed the prior approval scheme for nine dwellings that could be implemented on the site, it was considered that there was an opportunity to provide a reduced density, higher quality residential re-development which responded more sympathetically to the rural farmstead character of the site.
- 1.3. Through the conversion of the traditional vernacular rural buildings and construction of three new buildings the proposed scheme would create a high quality scheme of six dwellings and a planning betterment in comparison to the previous approved prior approval for nine dwellings.
- 1.4. This Planning, Design & Access Statement will provide an assessment of the proposed development in relation to the principal planning matters to be considered in the context of national and local planning policy requirements.

2. Site Description

- 2.1. The application site measures 0.94ha and is located to the west of Barnham Lane and within the village of Walberton, see Figure 1 below.

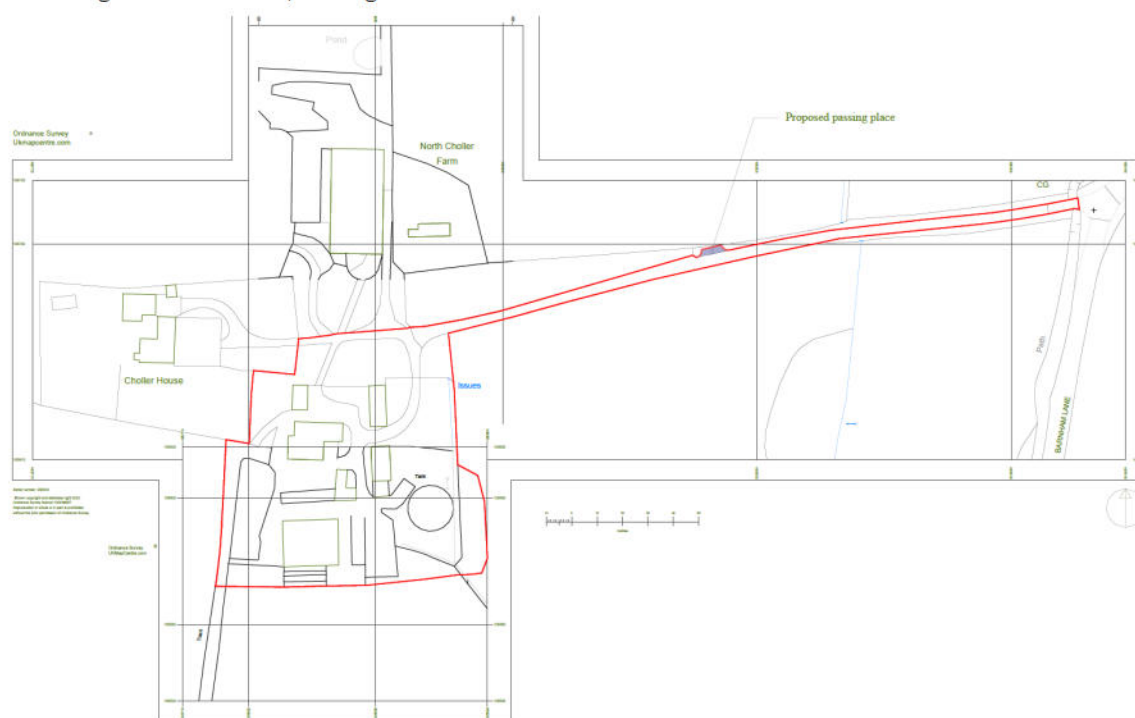


Figure 1: Location Plan identifying the site

- 2.2. The site forms part of a farmstead dating back to 1870's, comprising the Grade II listed, Choller Farm House located to the north-west and a group of farmstead buildings. The farmstead buildings subject to this application are a mix of traditional vernacular flint stone walled buildings and the more modern agricultural buildings and a slurry storage tank located in the southern part of the site. Their use as working buildings has gradually reduced as more modern farming practices have taken over.
- 2.3. A farm cottage was built to the north east of the site between 1910-1930 and sits adjacent to a milking parlour which was constructed in the 1960s or 1970s. The site is accessed via a single track from Barnham Lane to the east and there is a cycle and pedestrian path which crosses through the vehicular access providing connectivity to Walberton village to the north-east and Barnham to the south.
- 2.4. The immediate surrounds are rural, comprising open pasture land to the north and south. The site is located outside any built-up area boundary and within a designated gap between the two settlements of Barnham and Walberton. The village of Barnham is located 488m to the south of the site and the village of Walberton is located approximately 323m to the north-east of the site. Adjacent to the west of Barnham Lane is a pedestrian and cycle path which provides access into Walberton village and south to Barnham village.
- 2.5. The site is within Flood Zone 1. There is an area of surface water flood risk in the south-eastern part of the site, where the existing water tank is located.

3. Background & Relevant Planning History

- 3.1. The most relevant planning history relates to application, WA/36/26/PD, which corresponds to the Class Q prior approval for the conversion of existing 7 agricultural buildings into 9 No dwelling houses. Prior approval was granted on the 25th June 2026.



Figure 2: Site layout of previous prior approval WA/36/26/PD

- 3.2. Some informal pre-application advice has been received from the Council's Conservation Officer in relation to the current proposal. The initial preliminary design incorporated 2 No. two storey cottages within the location of plots 5 and 6. In response to this the Conservation Officer queried whether an estate style cottages might appear more in keeping with the rural farmstead.
- 3.3. The Manorwood team explored the option of estate style cottages within plots 5 and 6, however these designs appeared too domestic in appearance. This revised design has therefore replaced plots 5 and 6 with an 'L' shaped barn which will relate more sympathetically to the farmstead character of buildings within the wider site.

4. Proposal

- 4.1. The applications seek full planning permission for the demolition of existing modern agricultural buildings and water tank. The development will include the conversion, extension and alteration of five traditional vernacular agricultural buildings and construction of three new dwellings, to form a total of six dwellings. This will also include the construction of associated bin and cycle stores, parking, landscaping and biodiversity enhancements.
- 4.2. The layout has been guided by the retention and conversion of the five existing vernacular farmstead buildings in the front northern part of the site. With the modern farm buildings and water tank in the southern part of the site to be demolished and replaced with three new-build dwellings.



Figure 3: Proposed Layout

Plot 1 – Barn and outbuilding conversion to 1 No. 5 bed dwelling

- 4.3. The proposal seeks to convert the largest vernacular barn on the site to 1 No. 4 bedroom dwelling. The smaller single storey building to the north of the barn would be converted to provide a fifth additional guest bedroom and ensuite bathroom. A modest single storey link extension is proposed between the two buildings. The link will incorporate dark stained timber vertical cladding to the exterior walls and a black metal standing seam roof.
- 4.4. A mezzanine floor will be inserted within the barn with the central part of the barn being kept open and at full height. Repairs will be conducted to the existing roof structure with the masonry walls re-pointed and repaired using lime mortar and the barn insulated. New windows and doors are proposed which will incorporate black slimline metal fenestration.
- 4.5. The converted barn would utilise the existing access driveway to the north from the main farm track. Parking for four cars would be located in the courtyard to the north of the barn, along with a small storage shed for bike and bin storage.



Figure 4: Plot 1, Barn & Outbuilding conversion

Plot 2 – Outbuilding conversion to 1 No. 3 bed dwelling

- 4.6. The proposal seeks to convert and extend the single storey storage outbuilding to 1 No. 3 bedroom dwelling. The proposed single storey extension would be located to the west of the existing building to form an 'L' shaped building which would replicate a previous addition to the building that has since been demolished. The extension would have dark stained vertical timber cladding forming sat upon rebuilt existing flintwork walls to the exterior north walls and a clay tiled roof to match the existing roof of the building. New windows and doors are proposed which will incorporate black slimline metal fenestration. Rainwater goods will comprise black heritage aluminium.
- 4.7. Plots 2 and 3 would be accessed from an existing access driveway to the north from the main farm track. Parking for three cars would be located to the north-east of the converted building, along with a small storage shed for bike and bin storage.



Figure 5: Plot 2, Outbuilding conversion

Plot 3 – Outbuilding conversion to 1 No. 3 bed dwelling

- 4.8. Similar to Plot 2, the existing single storey storage outbuilding will be converted and extended to form a 1 No. 3 bedroom dwelling. The existing connected brick and masonry buildings to the west of the main outbuilding will be adapted with the part of the building demolished and then this will be converted to comprise a small home office or guest bedroom associated with the dwelling in Plot 3.
- 4.9. The proposed single storey extension to the main dwelling would be located to the west of the existing building to form an 'L' shaped building. The extension would have dark stained vertical timber cladding to the exterior walls and a slate tiled roof to match the existing roof of the building. New windows and doors are proposed which will incorporate black slimline metal fenestration. Rainwater goods will comprise black heritage aluminium.



Figure 6: Plot 3, Outbuilding conversion to dwelling



Figure 7: Vernacular outbuilding to be converted as ancillary office to serve dwelling in Plot 3

Plot 4 – 1 No. 4 bed dwelling

- 4.10. The proposal would involve the removal of the water tank in the south-eastern corner of site and construction of 1 No. 4 bed dwelling. The dwelling would incorporate an 'L' shaped dwelling, incorporating 1.5 storeys in height. The building would incorporate brickwork to the higher section of the building with a clay tiled half hipped roof. The single storey part of the building would incorporate dark stained vertical timber cladding. New windows and doors are proposed which will incorporate black slimline metal fenestration.
- 4.11. This dwelling would use the same shared internal access driveway as Plots 2, 3, 5 & 6 and incorporate parking on the driveway to the north-west of the dwelling.



Figure 8: Water tank to be removed and replaced with L shaped barn

Plots 5 & 6 – 2 No. 4 bed dwellings

- 4.12. The proposal would involve the removal of the modern large agricultural barn and two other smaller outbuildings in the southern part of the site and the construction of 2 No. 4 bed dwellings. The building forming plots 5 and 6 will comprise an 'L' shape forming a pair of semi-detached 1.5 storey high properties. The dwellings would incorporate horizontal dark stained timber weatherboarding and brick to the exterior walls and clay tiled roof.

The dwellings would use the same shared internal access driveway as Plots 2, 3, & 4 and incorporate parking on their driveways to the north and east. Small sheds serving each plot would provide storage for bikes and bins.



Figure 9: Plot 5 & 6, existing large modern barn to be demolished

Landscaping & Enhancements

The proposal would retain all existing flint walls which enclose the farmstead, repairing and re-pointing them in lime mortar to enhance the historic farmstead character of the site.



Figure 10: Existing flint walls will be retained and repaired with lime mortar

Three SuDs ponds are proposed in conjunction with the development, along with trees, hedgerows and grassing of the areas surrounding the buildings. This will relate sympathetically to the character of the surrounding rural area, whilst enhancing the quality and design of the residential scheme. New areas of hardstanding will be appropriately landscaped with a material that reflects the rural character of the area, limestone gravel for example.

5. Planning Policy

- 5.1. Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Act 2004 and Section 70 (2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the policies of the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

- 2: Achieving Sustainable Development
- 4: Decision Making
- 12: Achieving Well Designed Places
- 16: Conserving the Historic Environment

Local Planning Policy

- 5.2. The statutory development plan documents relevant to these applications comprise:

- Arun Local Plan 2011-2031 (July 2018)
- Arun Design Guide SPD (2024)
- Walberton Neighbourhood Plan 2019-2031 (March 2021)
- West Sussex Waste Local Plan (2014)
- West Sussex Minerals Local Plan (2018)

- 5.3. Arun District Council are at the early stages of their Local Plan Review, having undertaken an Issues & Options Consultation in 2024 and are currently preparing key evidence documents for their Local Plan.

- 5.4. The planning policies relevant to these applications include:

Arun Local Plan

- SD SP1 Sustainable Development
- SD SP1a Strategic Approach
- C SP1 Countryside
- SD SP3 Gaps Between Settlements
- LAN DM1 Protection of Landscape Character
- H SP1 The Housing Requirement
- H DM1 Housing Mix
- H DM4 Conversion of Rural Buildings for Residential Use
- D SP1 Design
- D DM1 Aspects of Form and Design Quality
- D DM2 Internal Space Standards
- D DM4 Extensions and Alterations to Existing Buildings (Residential & Non-Residential)
- ECC SP1 Adapting to Climate Change
- ECC SP2 Energy & Climate Change Mitigation
- HER SP1 The Historic Environment
- HER DM2 Locally Listed Buildings or Structures of Character
- ENV SP1 Natural Environment
- ENV DM1 Designated Sites of Biodiversity or Geological Importance
- ENV DM5 Development & Biodiversity
- W DM2 Flood Risk
- W DM3 SuDs

- QE DM4 Contaminated Land

Walberton Neighbourhood Plan

- Policy VE5 Buildings and Structures of Special Character
- Policy VE 7 Surface Water Management
- Policy VE 8 'Unlit village'
- Policy VE10 Biodiversity Corridors
- Policy VE13 Distinctive views and vistas
- Policy HP1 Built Up Area Boundary (BUAB)
- Policy HP2 Windfall Sites
- Policy HP6 Housing Mix and Construction
- Policy HP 11 Housing Density
- Policy HP 13 Design Guidance

6. Planning Assessment

- 6.1. This section sets out the merits of the proposal and its compliance with national and local planning policy.

7. Principle of Development

- 7.1. Policy SD SP1a of the Arun Local Plan (ALP) sets out the Council's Strategic Approach to Development, specifying that the aim is to maintain the unique character of the District whilst ensuring the needs of the community are met through sustainable growth and provision of suitable services.
- 7.2. Policy C SP1 of the ALP and policy HP1 of the Walberton Neighbourhood Plan (WNP) states that outside the built-up area boundaries land will be defined as countryside and will be recognised for its intrinsic character and beauty. Development is expected to meet at least one of the listed criteria within the policy. The conversion of the existing rural buildings to residential use would comply with this criteria C SP1(f) within this policy.
- 7.3. Policy H DM4 of the ALP confirms that proposals for the conversion of rural buildings for residential use outside the built up area will be permitted providing that specific criteria listed in the policy are met. In this case the buildings subject to conversion are traditional vernacular rural buildings dating from circa the mid-19th century and are considered to be non-designated heritage assets (NDHAs). The proposed conversion of the NDHA buildings would provide a future use for the agricultural buildings, ensuring their preservation and future maintenance in a manner that respects their traditional vernacular character and their farmstead setting. This is a significant benefit which weighs heavily in favour of the development.
- 7.4. The application is supported by a report from a qualified Structural Engineer which confirms that the buildings to be converted are structurally sound for conversion to residential use without the need for wholesale demolition or significant re-building. The proposed alterations and extensions to the existing buildings have been carefully designed to ensure no harm to the traditional rural character and appearance of the NDHAs or the surrounding landscape. The traffic generated from the proposed development can be safely accommodated from the existing access from Barnham Lane. The proposal therefore complies with the requirements of policy H DM4 of the ALP.
- 7.5. In relation to the three new build dwellings proposed, it is acknowledged that the proposal would create an element of conflict with the development strategy of the ALP and WNP which seeks to direct new residential development within the built-up areas or within policy allocated sites. However, prior approval has previously been granted for the conversion of the seven existing buildings on the site to nine dwellings which could be implemented following the discharge of conditions attached to decision notice, WA/36/26/PD. This fallback position which would enable nine dwellings to be created on the site is a material consideration in relation to this revised proposal.
- 7.6. The proposed development would create a total of six dwellings and therefore a reduction of three dwellings in comparison to the prior approval scheme. The proposed scheme would provide a planning betterment which would reduce the density of development, whilst also improving the overall design, layout and its relationship to the wider rural landscape character of the area. The layout in this proposal enables the NDHA buildings to be more appropriately repurposed and retained, and removes the more modern buildings that in some areas are in tight proximity to the existing buildings. The demolition of the existing modern buildings will therefore allow for improved appreciation of the existing vernacular farmstead buildings within the site.

- 7.7. In addition to this it is noted that the Council cannot currently demonstrate a five year housing land supply and the policies within the ALP relating to housing are considered to be out of date. The provisions of paragraph 11d of the NPPF relating to the presumption in favour of development and the tilted balance is therefore engaged. There are no reasons relating to paragraph 11d(i), footnote 7 matters that would provide a strong reason for refusal. The WNP allocates housing sites for development, however the plan is now over five years old and therefore paragraph 14 of the NPPF is not relevant.
- 7.8. The provision of six dwellings would provide a small but meaningful contribution to the Council's housing land supply which should be afforded significant weight in the planning balance. Conclusions relating to planning balance will be summarised following the assessment of development proposal in relation to all material considerations in the headed sections below.

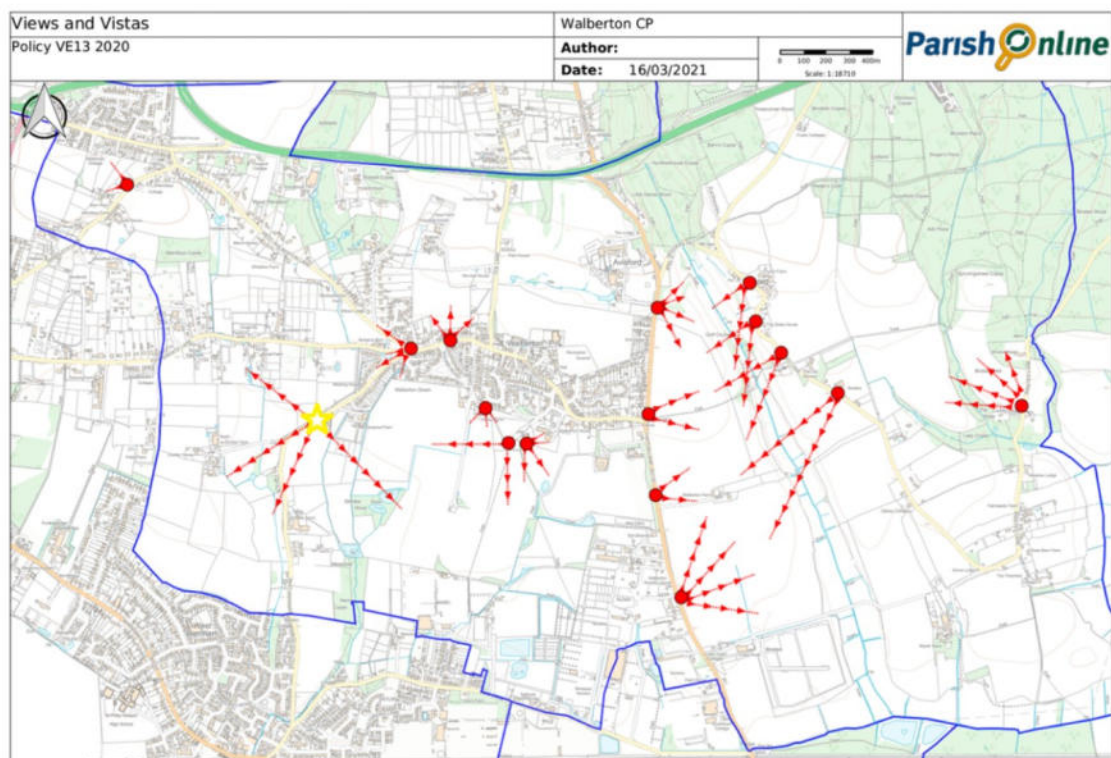
8. Heritage

- 8.1. The Local Planning Authority have a duty to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building, its setting, or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses (Sections 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990). This requirement is reinforced by the Framework, which at Chapter 16, sets the national agenda for 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment'.
- 8.2. Policy HER SP1 of the ALP requires proposals to conserve and enhance the historic environment. This policy requires non-designated heritage assets and their settings to be conserved and enhanced in a manner appropriate to their significance and contribution to the historic environment in line with the requirements of the NPPF. This policy also confirms that the re-use of under-used historic buildings will be encouraged where it contributes positively to their conservation.
- 8.3. The application is supported by a Heritage Statement prepared by Manorwood which includes analysis of the significance of the farm buildings and their settings and an impact assessment which considers the potential impacts of the proposed scheme on this significance.
- 8.4. The Heritage Statement advises that the 19th century buildings to be converted have historic significance and group value as a collection of surviving barns within the historic farmstead. The buildings also have lower levels of archaeological and architectural interest. The Heritage Statement confirms that the existing modern 20th and 21st century buildings dilutes the ability to see the traditional barns in their historic context.
- 8.5. Choller Farm House to the north-west of the site has archaeological, architectural and historic interest. Its historic interest is derived from its former use as a farmhouse and its connection with the farmstead buildings forming the application site.
- 8.6. The historic farmstead buildings are to be retained and converted to residential use which would provide them with a long-term viable use and support their ongoing maintenance.
- 8.7. The proposals would preserve the scale, form and appearance of the traditional barns, and in part, resurrect their historic form, understood through research and historic mapping, which would ensure they remain legible as a group of structures which evolved in use as part of the agricultural heritage of Choller Farm.
- 8.8. The modern farm buildings hold no significance, particularly the large building to the south of the former threshing barn and the large water tank. The removal of these buildings will enhance the historic setting of the farmstead, through the opening up of views of the historic farmstead buildings.
- 8.9. The proposed two additional 'L' shaped buildings forming three dwellings within plots 4-6 would provide form of development that is sympathetic to the historic farmstead character of the site. The new buildings have been designed to respond to and reflect the materiality and form of the historic farm buildings, and the layout of the farmstead. This along with sensitive extension and repair of the existing vernacular buildings and farmyard flint walls in lime mortar would enhance the historic farmstead character and appearance of the site.
- 8.10. The form and relationship of the new buildings sitting alongside the traditional barns and the former farmhouse, would echo the character of the farmstead, and avoid altering the composition of the farmstead in a way that would result in harm to the setting of the historic barns.

- 8.11. The enhanced setting achieved through the demolition of buildings and the proposed landscaping would also benefit the wider setting of the listed building, Choller Farm House. No built development is proposed to the west or south of the threshing barn, and with the removal of the late 20th century barns, the proposals provide an open aspect to the south-east of Choller Farm House which ensures that the former farmyard remains detached in context of the former farmhouse (which itself derives only a limited degree of significance from the agricultural buildings and former farmyard as it is understood today). The siting of the new buildings away from Choller Farm House and sympathetic nature of the proposed extensions and alterations to the traditional barns, would ensure that the setting of Choller Farm House is preserved.
- 8.12. The proposals are therefore considered to be fully compliant with the statutory duties set out in Sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the relevant heritage policies of the NPPF, Arun Local Plan and Walberton Neighbourhood Plan, concerning the sustainable management and enhancement of the historic environment.

9. Design, Landscape & Views

- 9.1. Policies D SP1, D DM1 and D DM2 of the ALP and policy HP 13 of the WNP relate to design of developments and advises that proposals should make the best possible use of available land by reflecting or improving upon the character of the site and its surroundings. Development should be of a high quality of design and contribute to local character by creating a sense of place.
- 9.2. Section N of the Arun Design Guide SPD relates to building conversions, specifying that it is important to ensure that under-utilised, redundant, and derelict buildings do not remain vacant and should enjoy a new lease of life through sensitive conversion. This proposal will enable three NDHAs to be re-used through appropriate conversion which will ensure the preservation of these vernacular rural buildings.
- 9.3. The site is also located within a local gap between the settlements of Walberton to the north-east and Barnham to the south. Policy SD SP3 seeks to prevent the open and undeveloped nature of the local gaps and prevent coalescence of settlements. The subtext to this policy confirms that *“the purpose of this designation is not intended to rule out all development but to allow for appropriate, small scale development, which is in keeping with the rural nature of the gaps.”*
- 9.4. The proposed development will be contained within the existing farmyard formed of a large hardstanding with a cluster of historic vernacular agricultural buildings and more modern farm buildings. As the proposed development would be contained within the envelope of the existing farmstead and in a similar location to the existing built form on the site, it would not cause any additional reduction in the openness of the gap between the villages of Barnham and Walberton.
- 9.5. Policy VE13 2020 of the WNP states that development should respect the important views and vistas within Walberton village. The yellow star on the map extract from the WNP below shows an important view from Barnham Lane looking west towards North Choller Farm.



- 9.6. In addition to the views from Barnham Lane from the east, there is a cycle and pedestrian path which runs adjacent to Barnham Lane extending in both a southerly and northerly direction with some glimpses of the existing farm buildings possible through the more open fields surrounding North Choller Farm.
- 9.7. The proposed development, particularly the new buildings within plots 4-6 will result in a degree of visual change from that of a farm with large agricultural buildings on its southern periphery to a more residential character. The proposal will however result in an improvement to the appearance of the site with the removal of the large modern agricultural buildings, some of which are in close proximity to the NDHAs. The removal of the modern agricultural buildings will enable better appreciation of the existing vernacular buildings to be converted.
- 9.8. The new build development has been designed to reflect the rural character of the surroundings with a traditional residential farmstead typology. The proposed design of the buildings within plots 5 and 6 have been developed and revised in response to initial advice from the Council's Conservation Officer.
- 9.9. The dwellings within plots 4, 5 and 6 will incorporate a traditional 'L' shaped design which will complement the converted and extended dwellings in plots 2 and 3. The layout of the new build part of the scheme is reflective of a rural farmstead arrangement of buildings which relates sympathetically to the existing vernacular buildings on the site and the surrounding rural landscape character. The extensions to the existing buildings within plots 1, 2 and 3 have been designed to remain in keeping with the scale, form, appearance and materials of the existing traditional rural buildings.
- 9.10. The proposed buildings will incorporate a mix of timber cladding and brick to the elevations with clay tiles to the roofs. The material palette has been chosen to relate sympathetically to the existing buildings within the site and the surrounding character of the area.
- 9.11. The landscaping will similarly reflect the rural character of the area, with the areas of hardstanding incorporating a limestone gravel or similar and three SuDs ponds, trees and soft planting. The existing flint walls enclosing the farmstead will be retained and repaired, with any repointing undertaken in a limestone mortar mix.
- 9.12. The proposed development will provide a significant enhancement to the overall rural landscape character and appearance of the site in accordance with the guidance of the Arun Design Guide SPD and the relevant design policies within the ALP and the WNP.

10. Flooding

- 10.1. Policy W DM2 Flood states that development will only be permitted in areas of flood risk where specific criteria are met. This includes compliance with National Planning Policy Guidance relating to flood risk and demonstration through an Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) that the development will be safe, including access and egress, without increasing flood risk elsewhere.
- 10.2. The application is supported by an FRA and a Surface Water & Foul Drainage Strategy prepared by Aegaea. The site is located within Flood Zone 1 which denotes a low risk of fluvial flooding. Flood Zone 2 extents are located approximately 25m to the south-east of the site.
- 10.3. There are areas within the site that would be affected by future flood risk and to better understand the future pluvial risk to the site, a pluvial hydrological assessment and pluvial hydraulic modelling has been undertaken in line with the Environment Agency guidance.

- 10.4. During the modelled design 1 in 100 +45%CC pluvial flood event, the plots are affected by flood depths between 0.06m and 0.43m.
- 10.5. Whilst there would be some risk from surface water flooding to the plots the FRA confirms that this risk can be appropriately mitigated through design measures, and the raising of Finished Floor Level (FFL) in line with the EA Standing Advice.
- 10.6. To limit flood risk on and off site a bund (approximately 0.6m in height) is to be built between Plots 4, 5 and 6, a bund at the south east of the site (approximately 0.40m in height) and the internal access road has been raised by approximately 0.45m. These features will comprise low increase to some of the existing levels within the site.
- 10.7. The FRA therefore demonstrates that the proposed development is at low risk of flooding from all analysed sources with the addition of FFL raising and mitigation measures. The detailed modelling also shows the development has a negligible increase in flood risk elsewhere. The proposal would therefore comply with the requirements of national and local planning policy relating to flood risk.

11. Surface Water and Foul Drainage

- 11.1. In accordance with the drainage hierarchy the proposed drainage strategy for the development proposes to discharge surface water from the development into the watercourse at the south-east corner of the site.
- 11.2. The proposal also includes the use of various SuDs measures to reduce and control surface water flows in the design of the scheme in accordance with national and local planning policy. Surface water generated from the proposed development would be managed on site via a geo-cellular storage tanks and permeable paving. Surface water will be restricted to a maximum of 5.0 l/s by a vortex flow control prior to discharging to a proposed headwall structure in the southeast corner of the site.
- 11.3. In relation to foul drainage, the proposed development would be served by a gravity foul drainage system sending flows to a package treatment plant on the site. A connection to the public foul sewer was investigated but was considered unlikely to be achievable as detailed in the Drainage Strategy. The proposed foul drainage strategy meets the second tier of the Building Regs Document H and Environment Agency hierarchy.
- 11.4. The proposed surface water and foul drainage strategy would ensure that the proposed residential development is served by suitable drainage that would accord with the drainage hierarchies and national and local planning policy.

12. Ecology

- 12.1. Policy ENV DM5 of the ALP requires detailed surveys where there is evidence of protected species on development sites. This policy seeks to protect existing habitats on site and provide a net gain in biodiversity.
- 12.2. The application is supported by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA), Bat Emergence Surveys, GCN eDNA Survey and Reptile Presence/Likely Absence Survey prepared by the Ecology Partnership. The PEA carried out in March 2026 outlined that the site had the potential for bats, GCN and reptiles and therefore further surveys were recommended and undertaken.
- 12.3. In relation to bats the following emergence surveys were undertaken between the period 12th May to 23rd June 2026.
 - Buildings 1, 3 and 8 - One emergence survey (low bat roost potential)
 - Buildings 2 and 8 - Two emergence surveys (moderate bat roost potential)
 - Building 5- Three emergence surveys (high bat roost potential)
- 12.4. The emergence survey results confirmed that there was activity by Common and Soprano Pipistrelle bats around the buildings but no bat roosts within the existing buildings. Key recommendations relating to the proposed development for bats related to a bat sensitive lighting strategy which will be integrated into the scheme to ensure that the proposed development of the site does not cause harm to bats using the wider site. This could be secured by planning condition prior to the occupation of the development.
- 12.5. The eDNA survey tested one of the three ponds within the vicinity of the site. The two other ponds were dry when examined at the PEA stage. The eDNA survey was carried out in April 2026 and confirmed the likely absence of GCN. No further surveys or recommendations were therefore made by the Ecologist.
- 12.6. The Reptile Survey comprised seven visits during the period 1st May to 12th June 2026 and confirmed no identified reptiles on the site. No further surveys or recommendations were therefore made by the Ecologist.
- 12.7. A number of ecological enhancements were recommended in the PEA and survey reports. These include the provision of bat tubes or boxes, replacement barn owl boxes, log piles for reptiles, and hedgehog boxes. The incorporation of these will provide ecological enhancements on the site and will meet the requirements of policy ENV DM5 of the ALP.

13. Biodiversity

- 13.1. The Environment Act 2021 and other secondary legislation requires a minimum of 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) to be achieved on all developments, and this is echoed in the SDNPA's Biodiversity Net Gain Tan (March 2025). Policy ENV DM5 of the ALP pre-dates the statutory legislation for states that the Council will maximise opportunities to achieve a net gain in biodiversity.
- 13.2. A BNG Repot and BNG Metric has been submitted in support of this application. The BNG Report confirms that the BNG baseline of the site is 3.69 habitat units. There are no hedgerow units or watercourse units on the existing site.
- 13.3. Two trees have previously been felled in the northern part of the site due to safety reasons and these have been accounted for in the BNG Metric.
- 13.4. The BNG Assessment concludes that the proposed scheme would result in a deficit of 1.62 habitat units and a biodiversity net change of -33.80% if no further action was taken.
- 13.5. In order to ensure that the proposed development would contribute positively to the biodiversity and meet the statutory requirement for 10% biodiversity net gain, our client has confirmed that he will be looking to purchase off-site biodiversity credits. The following units will be purchased from an off-site provider:
 - 1.12 units of individual trees, of higher distinctiveness habitat; and
 - 0.54 units of other broad-leaved woodland, or higher distinctiveness habitat
- 13.6. Indicative planting schemes are outlined in the BNG Report and these include modified grassland, SuDs basins with wildflower mix, individual trees and the ecological enhancements. These may be subject to change and final details will likely be secured by planning condition. All habitat proposed will however be low distinctiveness, and does not constitute a significant onsite enhancement, as such a Section 106 agreement is not therefore considered to be required.



14. Amenity

- 14.1. Policy D DM1 of the ALP requires development to have minimal impact to users and occupiers of nearby property and land.
- 14.2. The proposed dwellings within the scheme would be well distanced to the closest existing residential property of Choller House Farm to the north-west which would be distanced approximately 47m at the closest point from Plot 1 within the development. The development would be distanced approximately 55m from the neighbouring dwelling to the north-east of the application site. Given the separation distances it is not considered that the proposal would cause any harm to the occupiers of the neighbouring properties.
- 14.3. The farm buildings to the north are distanced in excess of 50m from the site and their agricultural use would not cause any harm to the occupiers of the proposed dwellings in terms of noise. It is noted that the neighbouring properties of Choller House Farm and the existing residential dwelling to the north-east are situated in closer proximity to the existing farm buildings to the north and there is no issue with noise.
- 14.4. In terms of the amenities for occupiers of the proposed development, the proposed dwellings would adhere to the National Space Standards. Given the fixed position of the buildings to be converted, the position of any new windows and doors have been carefully positioned to avoid any loss of amenity to occupiers of the dwellings within the development. For example, the first floor bedroom window in the eastern elevation of the barn in plot 1 has been obscure glazed and fixed opening to avoid loss of privacy to the rear gardens of plots 2 and 3.
- 14.5. It is acknowledged that the depths of gardens for plots 4 and 5 would not meet the specific requirement of 10.5m set out in the Arun Design SPD. The size and location of garden spaces have however been dictated to by the position of the existing vernacular buildings on the site and position of new buildings and their gardens designed to reflect the existing farmstead layout. The site does not lend itself to a traditional housing layout typology with standard garden depth. The result of this would be appear more urban in terms of layout.
- 14.6. The dwellings have been designed with cycle and bin storage facilities which have been integrated into the design of the existing dwellings where possible.
- 14.7. The proposal would protect a high standard of amenities for the future occupiers of the proposed dwellings in compliance with the local planning policies and guidance documents.

15. Transport & Parking

- 15.1. The proposed development would utilise the existing shared access track from Barnham Lane which currently services two residential dwellings and existing farm buildings. Plot 1 would have its own driveway and plots 2-6 would use a shared driveway which extends southwards in the site.
- 15.2. The existing vehicular access provides suitable and safe access and egress into the site from the public highway with adequate visibility splays. The existing access is used by both residential and agricultural vehicles using the North Choller Farm site. The proposed residential use of the site would reduce the number of agricultural vehicle movements and the number of movements associated with six dwellings would not be harmful to the operation of the highway network.
- 15.3. The proposed development would provide driveways for each dwelling capable of parking three cars and would therefore meet the requirements of the West Sussex County Council Parking Standards for New Developments (2020). Adequate space for the turning of vehicles, including larger vehicles have been provided within the site as shown on the site block plan. Provision has also been made for cycle storage as shown on the drawings submitted.

16. Contamination

- 16.1. A Phase 2 Contamination Report has been submitted with the application. The submitted Land Quality: Phase 2 Assessment includes a Preliminary Risk Assessment, Site Investigation Scheme and Remediation Strategy.
- 16.2. This Assessment confirms that contamination risks relate to the former agricultural use of the site. The proposed development will remove the ongoing agricultural sources, comprising the slurry tank, run-off from cattle using the yard areas and building, and fertiliser inputs, and will replace the impacted yards and hardstanding with a controlled built environment.
- 16.3. The residual risks relating to contamination arises predominantly from the demolition and redevelopment of the site, and the Risk Management Strategy to be adopted for the development is outlined in sections 8.4 and 8.5 of report. Some of the controls outlined in the strategy have been addressed further in the CEMP submitted with this application.

17. Planning Balance & Conclusion

- 17.1. It can be concluded that the principle of conversion of the existing five traditional vernacular non designated heritage assets is acceptable in local planning policy terms.
- 17.2. The three new build dwellings would present an element of conflict with the development strategy within the ALP. However, the conversion of the traditional vernacular rural buildings and construction of three new buildings would create a high quality scheme of six dwellings and a considerable planning betterment in comparison to the previous approved prior approval for nine dwellings. The provision of six dwellings would also provide a meaningful contribution to the Council's lack of five year housing land supply and should be afforded significant weight in the planning balance.
- 17.3. The proposed conversion of the NDHA buildings would provide a future use for the agricultural buildings, ensuring their preservation and future maintenance in a manner that respects their traditional vernacular character and their farmstead setting. This also should be provided significant weight in the planning balance.
- 17.4. The proposed ecological enhancements and biodiversity net gain enhancement through purchase of off-site credits would provide moderate environmental benefits.
- 17.5. The proposal will result in an improvement to the appearance of the site with the removal of the large modern agricultural buildings, enabling better appreciation of the existing vernacular buildings to be converted. The development has been designed to reflect the farmstead character of the site and responds sympathetically to the rural character of the wider locality, and would demonstrate a significant improvement to the existing modern farm buildings and silage tank.
- 17.6. When considered in the planning balance, it can be concluded that the significant benefits of this amended scheme considerably outweigh any localised visual change to the site. The development should therefore be approved without delay.