



Planning, Heritage, Design and Access Statement

For the erection of a replacement agricultural and equestrian building (revised scheme), and the erection of a new garden building

At

Chamberlains Farm

Whitnage

Tiverton

EX16 7DT

Land NGR: 302828 115642

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Introduction

This planning statement has been prepared to support a full planning application submitted to Mid Devon District Council for the erection of a replacement agricultural and equestrian building (revised scheme), and the erection of a new garden building at Chamberlains Farm, Whitnage, Tiverton, EX16 7DT.

Chamberlains Farmhouse became a Grade II listed building in 1988 under the Planning Act 1990 (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) as amended for its special architectural or historic interest (list entry number 1307015). The former agricultural building to be replaced was not curtilage listed and the proposed works do not require listed building consent.

Planning permission was granted under application 18/01905/FULL for the replacement agricultural and equestrian building, alongside the erection of the car port, garage and office building and alterations to improve the existing access. This planning permission is a live permission and ground works have commenced.

This application has been made as the replacement agricultural and equestrian barn cannot be built out in its original approved location due to the discovery of a council road surface water drainage pipe sited in the wrong place in accordance with existing plans, and therefore the applicant is seeking approval for the relocation of the barn slightly further to the west away from the pipe(s).

Additionally, it is proposed to alter the proposed materials for the equestrian and agricultural barn from timber cladding to black metal cladding, and to erect a garden building which will provide the applicant with the additional amenity space to complement the existing dwelling.

The proposed changes to the scheme are not considered to be significant and are considered to comply with the relevant adopted Local Plan policies. The proposed changes and erection of the garden building will also result in no additional harm being created upon the Grade II listed farmhouse as an appropriate form of development in this location.

The Site and Surrounding Area

Chamberlains Farm is set towards the eastern side of the Mid Devon district. The site is located as part of the small settlement of Whitnage which lies approximately 5.5 miles from the nearest main town of Tiverton. The proposal site extends off from Whitnage Road which runs adjacent to the site on the western side.

The farm lies outside of any defined settlement limit, and therefore in policy terms the land is 'countryside' landscape and is characterised by medium sized fields bounded by mature hedgerows and woodland tracts. This is reflective of the traditional character of the Mid Devon rural landscape.

The Site Location



Site Location at Chamberlains Farm (Image reproduced from Google Maps 2022)

The main Grade II listed farmhouse is situated on the western side of the landholding, with the existing agricultural building formerly situated towards the northern side, however this

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building did not form part of the curtilage. The remainder of the land is open greenspace which is used as paddocks.

The site is bordered by a mix of residential dwellings, open countryside landscape and agricultural buildings. The proposed development site does feature some existing natural screening from tree and hedgerow cover and the land features a relatively flat topography where the buildings are proposed to be sited.

Whilst the main farmhouse is subject to a grade II listed status, the farm is not located within an AONB or special designated landscape, nor is it part of a conservation area. Additionally, the site is situated within flood zone 1.

Planning History

After researching the Mid Devon District Council website planning history, it shows that numerous planning applications have been made in relation to the site at Chamberlains prior to the submission of this full application; these are presented in the table below.

Date	Type of Application	Decision	Reference
1988	Listed building consent for the replacement of metal boiler flue with chimney	Approved	88/02450/LBC
2010	Listed building consent for alteration to link annexe to house	Approved	10/01752/LBC
2014	Listed building consent for sub-division of bedroom and bathroom	Approved	14/00244/LBC
2014	Conversion of barn/stable to dwelling and formation of access	Withdrawn	14/00675/FULL
2014	Listed building consent for conversion of a barn/stable to dwelling and formation of access	Withdrawn	14/00676/LBC

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2014	Conversion of barn/stable to dwelling and re-instatement of vehicular and pedestrian access (revised scheme)	Approved	14/01390/FULL
2014	Listed building consent for conversion of barn/stable to dwelling and reinstatement of vehicular and pedestrian access	Approved	14/01391/FULL
2018	Erection of carport with office, replacement agricultural/equestrian building and alterations to existing access	Approved	18/01905/FULL

Policy Context

The following section of this statement highlights the current national and local planning policies which are relevant to the determination of the proposed development.

National Policy Context

Revised National Planning Policy Framework

Under Chapter 12 – Achieving well-designed places, Paragraph 130 states that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

- a) *will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
- b) *are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*
- c) *are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);*
- d) *establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;*

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- e) *optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and*
- f) *create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.*

Finally, with the main farmhouse a Grade II listed building, NPPF Paragraphs 194 and 197 states that *in determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.*

In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- a) *the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
- b) *the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and*
- c) *the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.*

Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

Local Policy Context

Mid Devon District Council voted on the 29th July 2020 to adopt the Local Plan 2013-2033 following the receipt of the Planning Inspectors report which concluded that the plan was 'sound'. The policies within this adopted plan carry full weight in the determination of planning applications, with the relevant policies for this application being the following.

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S9 – Environment

Development will sustain the distinctive quality, character and diversity of Mid Devon's environmental assets and minimise the impact of development on climate change through:

- a) *High quality sustainable design which reinforces the character and distinctiveness of Mid Devon's historic built environment, mitigates and adapts to climate change and creates attractive places*
- b) *The efficient use and conservation of natural resources of land, water and energy, minimising pollution and preserving the quality and productivity of the best and most versatile agricultural land where possible*
- c) *The provision of measures to reduce the risk of flooding to life and property, requiring sustainable drainage systems including provisions for future maintenance, guiding development to locations of lowest flood risk by applying a sequential test where appropriate, and avoiding an increase in flood risk elsewhere;*
- d) *Renewable energy development in locations where there is an acceptable local impact, including visual, on nearby residents, landscape character and wildlife balanced with the wider sustainability benefits of renewable energy;*
- e) *The preservation and enhancement of the distinctive qualities of Mid Devon's natural landscape, supporting opportunities identified within landscape character areas. Within the Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and within the setting of the Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and Exmoor and Dartmoor National Parks, the primary objective will be to protect the special qualities of that landscape and its setting;*
- f) *The protection and enhancement of designated sites of international, national and local biodiversity and geodiversity importance. On both designated sites and undesignated sites, development will support opportunities for protecting and enhancing species populations and lining habitats. If significant harm resulting from development cannot be avoided impacts should be adequately mitigated. Compensation measures will only be considered where appropriate as a last resort; and*
- g) *The preservation and enhancement of Mid Devon's cultural and historic environment, and the protection of sites, buildings, areas and features of recognised national and local importance such as listed buildings, conservation areas, scheduled monuments and local heritage assets.*

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S14 – Countryside

Development outside settlements will preserve and where possible enhance the character, appearance and biodiversity of the countryside whilst promoting sustainable diversification of the rural economy. Detailed development policies will permit agricultural and other appropriate rural uses, subject to the following criteria:

- c) Appropriately scaled and designed extensions and other physical alterations to existing buildings*
- d) Agricultural and equestrian development*

DM1 – High Quality Design

Designs of new development must be of high quality, based upon and demonstrating the following principles:

- a) Clear understanding of the characteristics of the site, its wider context and the surrounding area;*
- b) Efficient and effective use of the site, having regard to criterion (a);*
- c) Positive contribution to local character including any heritage or biodiversity assets and the setting of heritage assets;*
- d) Creation of safe and accessible places that also encourage and enable sustainable modes of travel such as walking and cycling;*
- e) Visually attractive places that are well integrated with surrounding buildings, streets and landscapes, and do not have an unacceptably adverse effect on the privacy and amenity of the proposed or neighbouring properties and uses, taking account of:
 - i) Architecture ii) Siting, layout, scale and massing iii) Orientation and fenestration iv) Materials, landscaping and green infrastructure**
- f) Appropriate drainage including sustainable drainage systems (SUDS), including arrangements for future maintenance, and connection of foul drainage to a mains sewer where available.*
- g) Adequate levels of daylight, sunlight and privacy to private amenity spaces and principal windows;*
- h) Suitably sized rooms and overall floorspaces which allows for adequate storage and movement within the building together as set out in the Nationally Described Space Standard with external spaces for recycling, refuse and cycle storage; and*
- i) On sites of 10 houses or more the provision of 20% of dwellings built to Level 2 of Building Regulations Part M' access to and use of dwellings'.*

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DM5 – Parking

Development must provide an appropriate level of parking, taking into account the accessibility of the site, the availability of public transport, and the type, mix and use of the development.

DM11 – Residential Extensions and Ancillary Development

Extensions to existing dwellings and other ancillary development will be permitted provided that they:

- a) Respect the character, scale, setting and design of existing dwellings;*
- b) Will not result in over-development of the dwelling curtilage; and*
- c) Will not have a significantly adverse impact on the living conditions of occupants of neighbouring properties.*

DM20 – Agricultural Development

Agricultural development will be permitted where:

- a) The development is reasonably necessary to support farming activity on that farm or in the immediate agricultural community;*
- b) The development is sensitively located to limit any adverse effects on the living conditions of local residents and is well-designed, respecting the character and appearance of the area;*
- c) The development will not have an unacceptable adverse impact on the environment; and*
- d) The development will not have an unacceptable traffic impact on the local road network.*

DM21 – Equestrian Development

Horse-related facilities and equestrian enterprises in the countryside will be permitted where they are well integrated with their surroundings, being of appropriate location, scale, design and materials so as not to harm the character and landscape of the rural area or the amenity of nearby residents. Equestrian development must not result in an unacceptable increase in traffic on the local highway network.

DM25 – Development Affecting Heritage Assets

Heritage assets and their settings are an irreplaceable resource. Accordingly, the Council will:

- a) Apply a presumption in favour of preserving or enhancing all designated heritage assets and their settings;*
- b) Require development proposals likely to affect the significance of heritage assets, including new buildings, alterations, extensions, changes of use and demolitions, to consider their significance, character, setting (including views to or from), appearance, design, layout and local distinctiveness, and the opportunities to enhance them;*
- c) Only approve proposals that would lead to substantial harm or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset where it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss or the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework are met;*
- d) Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use; and*
- e) Require developers to make a proportionate but systematic assessment of any impact on the setting and thereby the significance of heritage asset(s).*

Taking into account these national and local core policies, the proposal is considered to fall within the above policy description as an appropriate form of rural development as the remainder of this statement will justify.

The Use and Case for Permission

The applicant and owner of the land is seeking the proposed development to complement the existing residential, equestrian and agricultural uses of the land at Chamberlains. The original application was approved – reference 18/01905/FULL, with the applicant seeking approval for a revised scheme with some minor changes now proposed.

The only changes proposed from the original scheme are to relocate and reorientate the agricultural and equestrian building further to the west and by 180 degrees due to the discovery of a council road surface water drainpipe underneath the original approved position for the barn, and therefore the proposed new location is an essential requirement in order for the barn to be built out.

Additionally, it is proposed to change the external materials for the barn from timber cladding to a black metal cladding will not only remain in keeping with the other approved car port and garage building and the proposed garden building but will also be a much more cost-effective material option.

It is proposed to erect a small garden building to the eastern side of the house to provide the applicant with the additional external amenity space required which full complies with the requirements from policy DM11, with no other usable outbuildings available within the site as the small existing shed is fully in use.

All other details as part of this submission in terms of the agricultural and equestrian need, the justification and other information such as the design and appearance of the buildings remain unaltered and the same as the previous submission, with no significance change to the scheme proposed. The relocation of the barn, whilst a little closer to the farmhouse and neighbouring site is minimal and will result in no loss of residential amenity, and there is no new visual harm created when compared to what could already be seen on site.

The proposed revised designs for the barn and the proposed garden building will integrate well and remain in keeping with the context of the existing site and surrounding rural landscape, providing a suitably scaled development which meets the applicant's needs.

The proposed materials allow the development to reflect the rural character and agricultural grain of the locality, ensuring there is no loss of visual amenity to site, with the designs ensuring the development does not detract from the appearance or hierarchy of the main farmhouse which is the dominant visual draw at Chamberlains Farm. It is considered that no unacceptable impacts or harm would be created upon the main primary asset of the farmhouse or its surrounding land, with the benefits of the proposal outweighing any adverse impacts.

Overall, the revised scheme is considered to full comply with the requirements from Local Plan policies S9, S14, DM1, DM5, DM11, DM20, DM21 and DM25 effectively with no significant or adverse change proposed and therefore it is considered that full planning permission should be granted.

Layout and Scale

In terms of the layout of the site, the replacement agricultural and equestrian barn will be relocated slightly further to the west of the formerly approved location due to there being a council road surface water drainage pipe underneath. The proposed location of the garden building is to the east of the main farmhouse. With regards to the scale and size of the development, there is no change proposed in the size of the replacement barn than from what has already been approved under 18/01905/FULL.

The size of the proposed garden building will measure to be a maximum of 6.7 metres in length (22ft) by 3.05 metres in width (8ft) to provide a modestly scaled and largely subservient outbuilding which is ancillary to the main house.

The buildings are commensurate in size for the internal space required by the applicant and are appropriate for their intended use and purposes, with no overdevelopment or overbearing impacts created to fully comply with Local Plan policies S9, S14, DM1, DM11, DM20 and DM21. There is no real change in the scale of the development that from what has already been approved.

Appearance

As importantly highlighted within the NPPF and Local Plan policies, the design of development should retain local distinctiveness, enhancing the appearance of the rural countryside to integrate well with the existing character of the site and the primary surrounding landscape.

With regards to the materials, size and overall appearance of the development, the only change from the original scheme is the relocation and re-orientation of the barn and the change in cladding materials from timber to black metal cladding, which proposes no significant change from what could already be seen on site. This material change rather allows the barn to remain more in keeping with the approved car port and garage building which features a black painted finish.

The proposed use of black metal cladding is a more cost-effective option for the applicant whilst still an aesthetically pleasing choice to allow the building to still remain in keeping with its surroundings, again posing no significant change from what has been approved already.

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The proposed change in the location and orientation of the barn will also pose no significant visual change, and this is considered necessary due to the surface water pipe discovered underneath the former approved location. The barn is not moving a significant amount and will pose no additional visual harm or adverse impacts as a result. The re-orientation of the barn will provide greater ease of access to the building.

The revised scheme is still considered to reflect the rural and agricultural grain of the locality, ensuring there is no reduction in the visual amenity of the site, nor is there any harm created upon the wider setting and character of the listed farmhouse in line with policy DM25.

Therefore, the proposal allows the development to remain in keeping with the existing site context and the primary surrounding countryside landscape in a contextually sensitive manner. The predominant use of metal roofing is reflective of the surrounding rural environment with these materials used in many agricultural buildings and farming practices. The appearance of the garden outbuilding will also feature a Malvern green clad finish and tiled roof to remain in keeping with the site and its surrounding landscape.

The buildings have been designed with both form and function at the forefront to reflect core design principles, with a simple agricultural barn style considered most appropriate to ensure that the appearance of the development does not detract from the main character, setting and appearance of the farmhouse which is dominant visual draw on site.

The relocation of the barn slightly further to the west still allows it to be sited nearby to the northern hedgerow boundary where it benefits from some natural screening. Whilst there are some neighbouring dwellings and occupants, the buildings are located a suitable distance away and this appropriately minimises and risk of a reduction in residential amenity.

Overall, the proposed development successfully retains the character of the site and its wider setting to ensure there is no loss of visual amenity to the site at Chamberlains Farm to adhere to local plan policies S9, S14, DM1, DM11, DM20, DM21, and DM25 effectively.

Landscaping

Apart from the siting of the buildings themselves, no additional landscaping is proposed or considered necessary. The hedgerows, grassland and natural features around the site will otherwise be retained as the existing. By retaining these natural features, the rural character of the site is preserved, and the proposed development will create no adverse impacts upon the landscape, environmental assets or biodiversity to adhere to policies S9, S14 and DM1 effectively.

Access, Parking and Transport

In line with the Local Plan policy requirements from DM1 and DM5, development should importantly create a suitable, safe and accessible place with appropriate parking taking into account the type, mix and use of the development. Proposals should ensure there is no damage to the surrounding area, and that the road network can adequately support the proposed use.

As a result of the development, no changes are proposed to the existing parking arrangements for the dwelling, with no loss of any parking spaces to comply with policy DM5. The proposal will utilise the existing vehicular access to the site and the gateway to the main paddocks. The proposed re-orientation of the barn will allow for a greater ease of access to the barn from the driveway and main field gate.

No changes are proposed to the existing access arrangements to the site, with the improvements to the existing main access formerly approved under the previous application. The development and proposed private equestrian uses will create no additional journeys to the site than it already sees, with no detriment created upon the adjoining highways networks. As such, the scheme fully adheres to local plan policies DM1, DM5, DM20, and DM21 effectively.

Surface Water Drainage

Surface water is proposed to run into a soakaway on site. Guttering will be provided around the roofline of the buildings to allow any surface water run off to feed into the soakaway

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effectively. The site is also located within flood zone 1 and therefore there are no adverse impacts posed in terms of flooding. As such, surface water drainage strategy for the proposal sustainably adheres to Local Plan policy DM1.

Heritage Statement:

The Heritage Asset and Development

Chamberlains Farmhouse was first listed at Grade II on the 17th March 1988 under the Planning Act 1990 (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) as amended for its special architectural or historic interest (list entry number 1307015).

The reason for its designation is the following:

Architectural interest – an example of a three-room, cross passage Devon house with surviving evidence of the original floor plan, survival of a significant proportion of historic fabric, and for the quality of the surviving internal plank and muntin screen, with jettied floor above.

Historic interest – the building possesses considerable historic interest as an example of its type, showing evolution over time from a single storey dwelling open to the roof, to later inserted upper floors.

The listing describes the building as a multi-phase farmhouse dating originally from the C16. Chamberlains Farmhouse and Willow Barn, which is situated to the southern side are now two individual properties, but formerly was a farmhouse with attached stable range, with the stable converted to a dwelling in 2016 which is now excluded from the listing. The main appearance of the farmhouse relates to the rendered cob walls and thatched roof.

With the stable range (Willow Barn) attached at the southern end, this was previously the stable range for the farm, appearing in its present form to date largely from the early C20, the present single range of barns in this location do not appear until the mid-C20, now converted as a separate dwelling. Many alterations and additions have been made to the farmhouse and to the buildings within its curtilage over time. Typical of most list descriptions,

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no mention is made of the greater extent and setting of the outbuildings or barns with the farmhouse.

The agricultural building which existed on site did not form part of the curtilage of the farmhouse. The proposed development already approved under 18/01905/FULL was determined to create no harm upon this heritage asset, and it is considered that the proposed changes under this revised scheme also result in no additional harm being created to fully comply with Local Plan policy DM25.

Significance of the Heritage Assets

Assessing the significance of heritage assets can be carried out using the guidance laid out in Historic England's document 'Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance' (April 2008). There are four types of significance – evidential, historical, aesthetic, and communal. Chamberlain Farmhouse has:

- Medium levels of evidential value – due to its age and retention of very early building fabric, the house is a valuable and increasingly rare heritage asset
- Mediums levels of historic value – it is typical of Devon farmhouses, their plan and built forms and whilst not rare in this respect it is nonetheless typical of a rural Devonian tradition
- High levels of aesthetic value – the house is set within a picturesque setting, its position within the rolling rural landscape, the very attractive visual appearance of the house all contribute to the value of the heritage asset
- No communal value – the value of this heritage asset is not associated with collected social of spiritual meaning

The Setting and the Assessment of Harm

When approaching the farmhouse from the adjoining Whitnage Road, the listed dwelling is the first building which can be viewed and is the main dominant visual draw from the main public vantage point along the roadside. The proposed changes to the development must ensure that there is no new harm created upon this wider setting of the farmhouse.

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Assessment of Harm

The NPPF identifies that levels of harm fall into two categories –

Substantial harm: substantial harm is tantamount to the total loss of heritage value. This could be demolition, alterations that completely obscure the value of the asset, destruction of the setting etc.

Less than substantial harm: less than substantial harm is a sliding scale of harm. This could be a loss of historic fabric, a change to the external or internal appearance of an asset, a change to the setting of the asset, or the extension to an asset to ensure viability of accommodation.

Not all change is harmful, yet it requires a balance approach to change and the levels of harm in relation the Planning Act 1990 which reiterates the need to have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings. The proposed development will result in no loss of any listed building or historic fabric, with the farmhouse considered the only building to encompass medium-high levels of heritage value. The former barn which existed on site was not a listed building not sited within the curtilage of the dwelling and was given little weight with regards to its preservation.

The proposed development to replace this agricultural and equestrian barn was due to the former barn not being suitable for a modern level of agricultural and stabling use that is proposed for the keeping of livestock and horses. The erection of the replacement barn, car port building and ancillary garden building ensures that there is no unacceptable impact created, with low levels of less than substantial harm created to the primary heritage asset of the farmhouse and its wider setting as demonstrated under the previous approved application 18/01905/FULL.

The proposed changes to the scheme are minor and does not adversely impact the character of the listed building and the visual appearance of the farm. The proposed barn will still be situated a suitable distance far enough from the farmhouse where it does not create any unacceptable harm to its setting, and the new garden building will provide a modestly

scaled ancillary development to complement the main dwelling rather than detracting from its setting and character.

As part of this proposal, in relation to the overall setting there will be no harm created upon the authenticity, visual appearance of the farmhouse and the site as a whole. The listed farmhouse will remain the dominant visual draw when approaching the site from public vantage points, with the proposed new buildings set well back into the site.

The development will not detrimentally impact upon the hierarchy of the buildings on site, but instead provides surrounding agricultural buildings more fit for modern agricultural/equestrian use and facilities ancillary to the main house to enhance the standard of amenity.

Overall, the proposed development is considered to pose no significant or unacceptable harm upon the value of the primary heritage asset, character or setting of the farm, mitigated by the sensitive siting, material choices and screening of the buildings. As such, the proposal complies with NPPF Paragraphs 197 and 197, and Local Plan policy DM25 to complement the existing residential, agricultural and private equestrian use of the land to create a positive contribution to this rural character and setting.

Conclusion

The proposed development for the replacement agricultural and equestrian building (revised scheme) and the proposed new garden building is considered to present an appropriately scaled and form of development in this location to complement the existing residential, equestrian, and agricultural uses on site at Chamberlains.

The proposed changes to the scheme by relocating and re-orientating the main barn due to the discovery of the council road surface water drainage pipe, alongside changing the proposed materials from timber cladding to black metal cladding are considered minor and considered acceptable, creating no significant change to the scheme which formerly received permission under 18/01905/FULL.

The proposed small-scale ancillary garden room remains fully compliant with Local Plan policies DM11 and DM25, providing the additional residential amenity space required. With the main listed farmhouse holding the greatest heritage value on site as the primary asset, it is considered that the proposed development will create very low levels of less than substantial harm, with no unacceptable harm posed to the character, appearance or setting of this asset.

Taking these factors into account, the proposal is deemed to comply with both the NPPF guidance and Local Plan policies S9, S14, DM1, DM5, DM11, DM20, DM21 and DM25 effectively and full planning permission should therefore be granted.