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**Friends Green Farmhouse  
Damask Green Road, Weston, Herts, SG4 7BU**

**Mr Papworth  
Job No. 1178**

**Design, Access & Heritage Statement**

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|-----------|----------|
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Architecture  
Measured Surveys  
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Project Management  
General Advice



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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

This Design, Access & Heritage Statement is provided in support of an application for the demolition of the 2018 extension at the above address, and construction of new single storey side extension and porch. Alongside this work is proposed a number of internal alterations including new stairs to existing loft, reopening of original window openings, relocation of kitchen, utility & WC, removal of modern render and repair/repointing of existing brickwork with lime mortar and render. It is a broad assessment of the existing building, the alterations proposed, access and the adopted policies related to this development.

This report is solely for the use of the local authority in determining the development application against which it is submitted, and is prepared due to the property being Grade II Listed.

## **2.0 BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE**

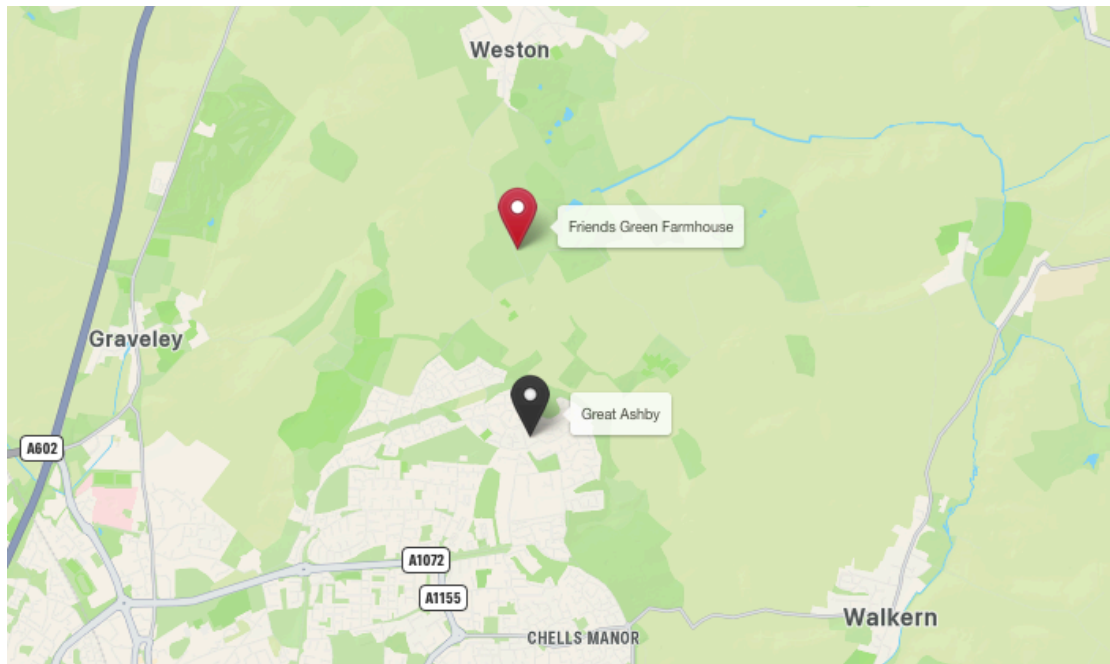
Friends Green Farmhouse ("the property") is a detached farmhouse sitting mid-way between the villages of Weston and Great Ashby, but its address is Weston. The farmhouse sits within a cluster of buildings, East & West barns to the North and Friends Green Porsche to the south. The next residential property is 170m to the south. The house fronts the road with agricultural land surrounding the area.

As a brief background, In 1983 a two storey side extension was granted and in 1985 a single storey side extension was also granted. In 2018 a new side extension was granted and constructed. The house is still in the same family ownership and this has provided additional information to the construction and changes since the granting of the earlier permissions. The Barns to the North of the farmhouse have both been granted permission for conversion to residential. East barn has been completed whilst West barn is still under construction.



### 3.0 LOCATION

The property is situated North of Stevenage and Great Ashby, and South of Weston, as indicated below:



### 4.0 USE

The property is a single private dwelling, and will remain so.

### 5.0 NEARBY HERITAGE ASSETS

The principal Heritage Asset affected by the works is, of course, Friends Green Farmhouse. The Official list entry reads as follows:

**Heritage Category:** Listed Building      **Grade:** II  
**List Entry Number:** 1102522      **Date first listed:** 28-May-1987  
**List Entry Name:** Friends Green Farmhouse

**Listing Text:** *Farmhouse. C17 or earlier W wing, N wing c.1700, later infill in angle C18 or C19. Timber frame roughcast with steep pitched old red tile roofs. A compact rectangular house near roadside facing W with 1 1/2-storeys W wing with 2 windows, 2 gabled dormers at the eaves, gabled projecting porch to lobby entrance beside large internal chimney with moulded brick capping to stack below 3 square shafts in line across the ridge the outer ones set diagonally, 2-lights flush casement windows. Ground floor probably has brick casing under the roughcast. 2-storeys, 2 windows higher N wing has NE corner fireplace to chimney now enclosed by 2-storey hipped and gabled infill in angle. Interior has axial beams, stair with splat balusters in SW corner of N wing.*



## 6.0 LAYOUT & SCALE

The proposed works have been conceived to respect the established form, hierarchy, and proportions of Friends Green Farmhouse, while enabling the building to meet the needs of contemporary family life. The new single-storey kitchen and utility extension will be positioned to one side of the property in a location that reads as a subsidiary addition to the main property, set back and form. Its footprint has been carefully limited so that it remains subservient to the principal farmhouse, both in height and massing, ensuring that the visual dominance of the historic building is maintained when viewed from all principal elevations and from the wider setting.

The proposed porch and entrance hall will replace a 2018 modern extension that lacks architectural coherence in its direct connection with the historic building. Its removal allows for a more sensitive design approach that reinstates a clearer sense of arrival to the house and restores balance to the front elevation. The new entrance structure is deliberately modest in scale, allowing the main body of the farmhouse to retain visual prominence.

Internally, the reorganisation of the ground floor - relocating the kitchen, utility, and WC - creates a more efficient and legible layout, improving circulation and connectivity between the principal living spaces and the garden. This arrangement reflects the way modern families use domestic spaces, without eroding the legibility of the historic plan form. The introduction of a new staircase to the existing loft space has been planned to avoid unnecessary intrusion into historic fabric, taking advantage of existing structural openings and spaces wherever possible (see photo right, below).



Historic openings that have been blocked in previous alterations will be sensitively reopened, reinstating the building's original proportions and allowing natural light to penetrate more deeply into the interior. Where ground-floor windows will sit within the new extension, these will be retained in situ, ensuring the continued visibility of the original fabric from within the building. The only window proposed for removal is a non-original unit dating from the 1980s, which has no historic or architectural significance. Overall, the proposed layout and scale ensure that the historic farmhouse remains the principal architectural element, with new works clearly legible as later, respectful additions.



## 7.0 APPEARANCE

The appearance of the proposals has been guided by a principle of visual harmony with the existing farmhouse, while clearly distinguishing between historic and new fabric. The new kitchen/utility extension will be constructed in high-quality brickwork, selected to closely match the size, tone, and texture of the existing walls once repaired. The bond, mortar profile, and pointing technique will replicate traditional detailing, using lime mortar to ensure visual and technical compatibility with the historic fabric. The extension will feature a simple pitched roof, subordinate in ridge height to the main house, and covered with clay tiles chosen to blend with the weathered appearance of the existing property.

The proposed porch and entrance hall has likewise been designed in a traditional manner, using matching brickwork and lime mortar, with a proportion and roof form that integrate naturally with the front elevation. The design avoids ornate or overtly contemporary features, instead favouring simple detailing that complements the restrained vernacular character of the farmhouse.



An important component of the proposals is the removal of modern, non-breathable cement render applied to parts of the original building in previous works. Its removal will not only restore the visual integrity of the exposed brickwork but will also allow the building to perform as intended, improving the long-term preservation of the fabric. Where brickwork repairs are required, these will be carried out using reclaimed or carefully matched new bricks, and all repointing will use traditional lime mortar. If brickwork is found to be in too poor a condition to repair, the height at which the exposed brickwork finishes be reduced to that deemed acceptable by the planning authority.

Reopening original window openings will allow the façade to regain its historic balance. New timber windows will be purpose-made to match traditional profiles and detailing, with slim glazing bars and painted finishes in historically sympathetic colours. Internally, the retention of existing ground-floor windows within the new extension will preserve important elements of the historic envelope. The replacement of the 1980s first-floor window with a more sympathetic design will further enhance the building's architectural coherence.



## **8.0 ACCESS & LANDSCAPING**

The proposals will not alter the existing vehicular access arrangements to Friends Green Farmhouse, which will remain as existing. The new porch and entrance hall will provide a clearer, more welcoming approach to the principal entrance, improving the legibility and usability of the arrival point for residents and visitors. Pathways and immediate thresholds will be finished in materials that complement the building's character and ensure safe, level access.

No changes are proposed to the wider garden or site landscaping. Existing planting, boundary treatments, and hardstanding areas will be retained (except to the rear of the new side extension, where the brick wall will form the new boundary), ensuring that the setting of the farmhouse remains unaltered and that the works have no adverse impact on the surrounding landscape character.

## **9.0 PREVIOUS APPLICATION**

The proposals submitted herewith were formed and designed following a previous application which was not looked on favourably by the planning team at the time.

Discussions and subsequent revisions to the scheme have - it is hoped - fully addressed the prior concerns over a large two-storey extension to the front of the property, and instead settled on a subservient and separately positioned extension with a glazed separating link between the host building and the new addition.

Most other internal proposals described within the earlier application - which were generally accepted - remain.

The applicant has listened to the advice offered by the planning team and puts forward now this revised application which still largely meets their needs but in a more sensitive heritage manner.



## 10.0 SUMMARY JUSTIFICATION IN TERMS OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

Friends Green Farmhouse is a Grade II listed building of recognised architectural and historic value. The proposed works have been developed with a clear understanding of its significance, informed by both its physical fabric and its contribution to the rural setting. The design approach is based on the principle of minimal intervention, ensuring that any changes either conserve or enhance the building's heritage values.

The proposals make a positive contribution to the long-term preservation and enjoyment of the property. The removal of the unsympathetic 2018 modern extension and its replacement with a proportionately smaller, more sympathetic porch restores visual balance to the principal elevation and improves the building's architectural coherence. The new kitchen/utility extension is deliberately sited and scaled to remain clearly subordinate and separate from the main house, ensuring that the historic form remains visually dominant.

Internally, the reorganisation of spaces and careful positioning of the new loft staircase enable the building to function effectively as a modern family home without compromising the legibility of the historic plan form. The retention of original windows within the new extension, the reopening of historic blocked openings, and the replacement of a non-original 1980s window all serve to enhance the building's authenticity and architectural integrity.

The use of traditional, breathable materials — including matching brickwork, lime mortar, and timber joinery — ensures that the proposals are technically compatible with the existing structure and in keeping with its historic character. The removal of modern cement render and its replacement with sensitive brick repairs and lime pointing will not only improve the building's appearance but also its physical performance, reducing long-term maintenance risks.

In heritage terms, the works result in the removal of intrusive modern fabric of little or no significance, the reinstatement of original features, and the addition of new elements that are sympathetic in scale, form, and materials. These interventions will sustain and, in key respects, enhance the significance of the listed building in accordance with the principles set out in local and national heritage policies.

The overall impact is considered to be positive, with the benefits to the building's fabric, appearance, and functional use outweighing any very limited alteration to historic fabric. The proposals therefore represent a well-judged balance between the needs of a modern household and the conservation of a heritage asset, and they should be supported as an appropriate and sensitive response to the building's historic status.



## 11.0 CONCLUSION

The proposed works to Friends Green Farmhouse have been developed with a clear understanding of the building's Grade II listed status and the need to balance modern living requirements with heritage conservation. The removal of unsympathetic later additions, reinstatement of historic features, and introduction of carefully designed new elements will enhance both the functionality and the architectural integrity of the property.

By retaining the building's historic form, respecting its scale and proportions, and using appropriate traditional materials, the proposals ensure that the farmhouse remains the dominant and most significant element within its setting. The works will have no adverse impact on the historic significance of the property and, in several respects, will result in a net heritage gain through the repair and reinstatement of original fabric.

The scheme represents a sensitive and well-judged response to the building's historic value, aligning with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework and relevant local policies for the conservation of heritage assets. Approval is therefore considered wholly justified.