

Rusling End Farmhouse, SG4 8TD

Single-storey glazed infill link on north elevation and single-storey glazed link between Farmhouse and Henhouse on west elevation. Internal and external alterations to Henhouse and Stables to facilitate conversion to additional ancillary accommodation.

REF-03/25: Design & Access with Heritage Statement

Date: 05/03/2025

This document is submitted with the following accompanying documents:

Ref	Detail	Scale
REF-03/25-LOC	Location Map	1:1250@A3
REF-03/25-PHOTO	Photo Survey	A4
REF-03/25-G1.1	Redundant stables: Existing plan & elevations (external)	1:50@A3
REF-03/25-G1.2	Redundant stables: Internal Partition 1 (open store)	1:50@A3
REF-03/25-G1.3	Redundant stables: Internal Partition 2 (Oil tank room)	1:50@A3
REF-03/25-G1.4	Redundant stables: Internal Partition 3 (Log store)	1:50@A3
REF-03/25-G1.5	Henhouse: Existing plan & elevations (external)	1:50@A3
REF-03/25-G1.6	Henhouse: Existing plan & elevations (internal)	1:50@A3
REF-03/25-G1.7	Farmhouse: Existing elevation A	1:50@A3
REF-03/25-G1.8	Farmhouse: Existing elevation B – with levels	1:50@A3
REF-03/25-G2.1 revD	Proposed plan	1:50@A3
REF-03/25-G2.2 revD	Proposed elevations	1:50@A3
REF-03/25-G2.3 revD	Proposed 3d illustrations – isometric view	A3
REF-03/25-G3	Drainage	1:500@A4
REF-03/25-MAT	Notes on construction materials	A4
Census Information	Additional information	A4
Heritage Statement	From planning ref 18/00743/LBC	A4

1.0 Background information

The farmhouse is Grade II listed and its entry with Historic England is as follows:

"Farmhouse. C17 timber frame. Late C18 or early C19 red brick casing. Gable ends have some C17 flint and red brick chequered walling. Plain tile roof. 2 storeys. 5 windows, those of ground floor segmental headed. 2-light C20 casements. Door on right centre in c1970 tile-hung porch. External left chimney stack. Rear gabled projection on right with some exposed timber framing. Interior has exposed beams and joists forming 3-4 bays."

Planning history:

18/00742/FP - Conversion of two existing outbuildings to create one 2-bed dwelling with separate vehicular access and one 1-bed ancillary annex (to existing farmhouse)

18/00743/LBC - Internal and external alterations to 2no. outbuildings to facilitate conversion of 1no. outbuilding to 1-bed ancillary annex (to existing farmhouse) and 1no. outbuilding to 2-bed dwelling with separate vehicular access.

2023 Property divided for sale

24/00720/FP - Retention of subdivision of site, ancillary hard and soft landscaping works and partial change of use of ancillary land to residential curtilage. Retention of conversion of barn

into 1 No. residential dwelling including external alterations, installation of flue and air source heat pump

24/00870/LBC - Retention of internal and external alterations to curtilage listed barn to facilitate conversion into one dwelling

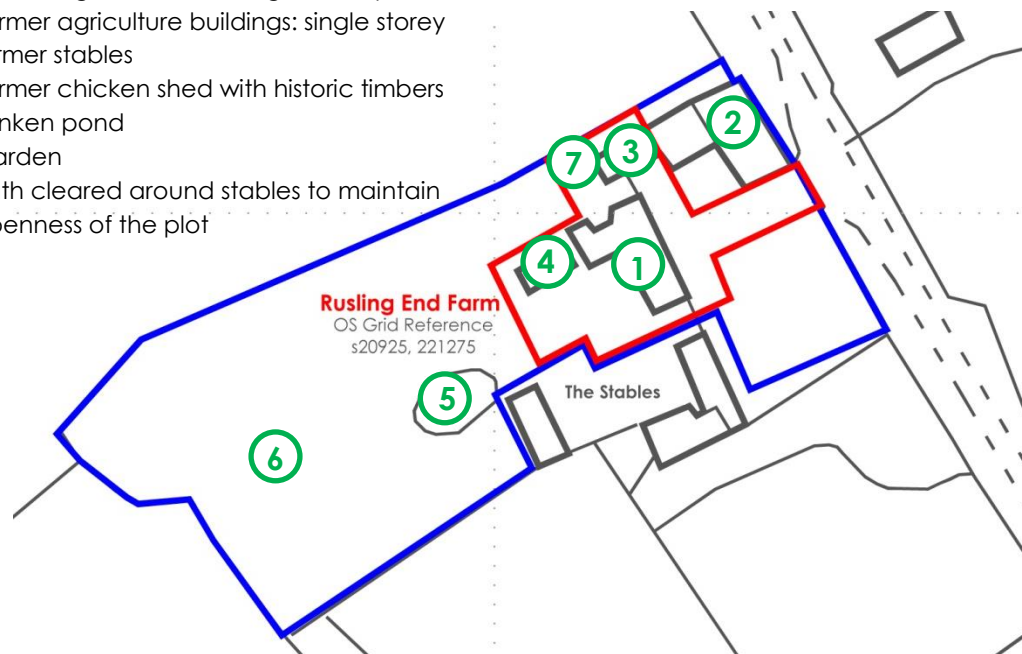
24/01988/PREH – Pre-app for this planning application

2.0 Existing use

The names of each element listed here are gleaned from the descriptions in the **heritage report** prepared by Stephen Bradwell, MA MRTPI IHBC in the planning application approved in 2018 (ref: **18/00743/LBC**)

The existing site comprises of:

- 1) Principle Farmhouse (listing 1295648)
- 2) Former agriculture buildings: 2storey cart shed
- 3) Former agriculture buildings: single storey former stables
- 4) Former chicken shed with historic timbers
- 5) Sunken pond
- 6) Garden
- 7) Path cleared around stables to maintain openness of the plot



3.0 Proposed Use & Heritage Justification

We have engaged in the pre-app process – **ref 24/01988/PREH** and have worked with the conservation planner and planning officer to a workable proposal.

ITEM 1: Glass infill/Conservatory

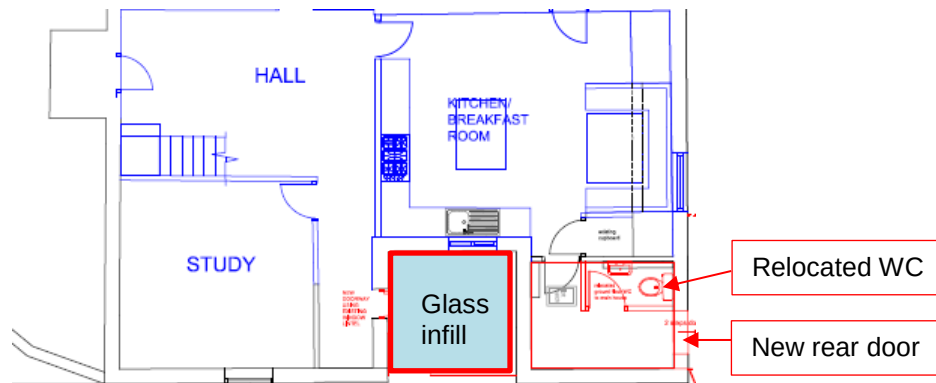
The existing lean-to construction on the main farmhouse was originally of single skin brick with asbestos sheet roof used to house an old boiler, accessible from the exterior of the main farmhouse.

As an outbuilding, this was probably left largely unmaintained and suspected to have rotted away or collapsed. The lean-to in its current state was rebuilt in 1970's (before its first listing in 1984) by the Hamid family (owners at the time) on the same footprint as the original.

As such, the construction is a modern sympathetic construction.
(Source: David Hamid & Godfrey Henwood – previous owners)



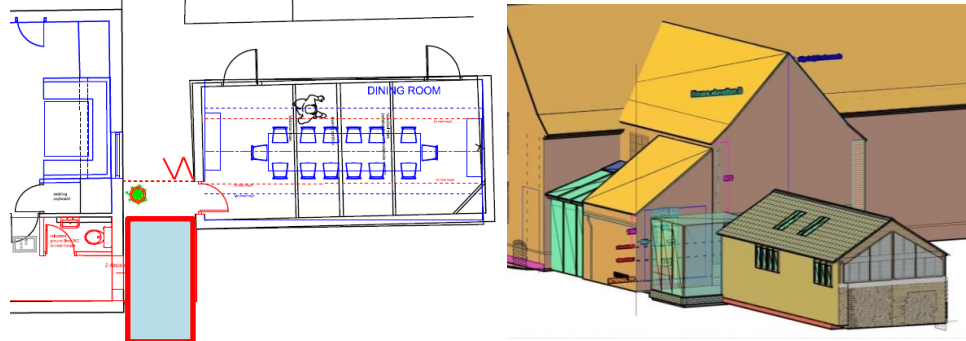
We propose to create a glazed infill in the existing recess formed by the lean-to and main farmhouse. The outermost wall of the glazed infill conservatory will be set back from the existing lean-to's north face so it will be subservient to this existing structure and a doorway made using the existing window from the existing WC. The existing WC will be relocated so that it works better with the new layout.



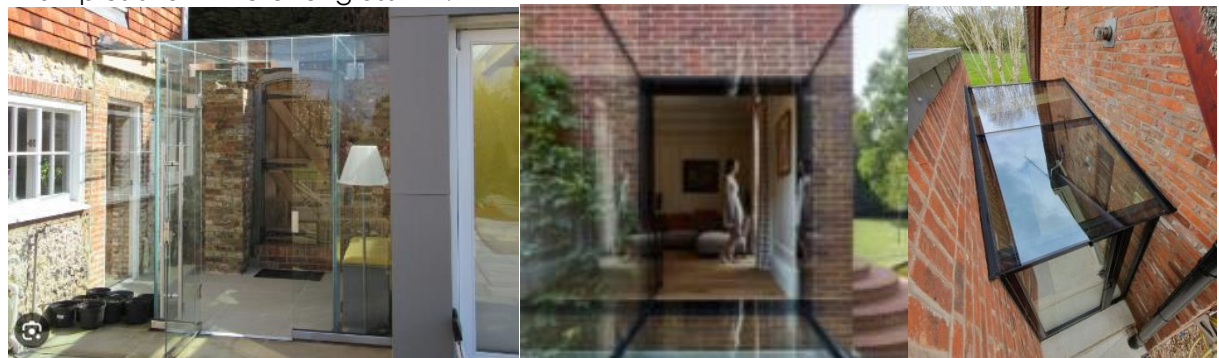
ITEM 2: Glass link to Henhouse

The glass link to the henhouse has been amended to reduce the amount of glazing overall as suggested during pre-app, and so that the view of the entire north elevation of the henhouse remains unobstructed. The contrasting glass link will be designed and constructed so that it will not harm the fabric of the existing structures and can be entirely removed at any point in the future, again without harm to the structures.

The new door opening made by removing the brickwork under the existing window would be a useful addition, regardless of if the glass link is there or not. This can be done sympathetically with a farmhouse door so that should the glass link be removed at any stage, the door would not look out of context, thus "futureproofing" this detail. The opening would be made in the lean-to which has now been confirmed as being constructed in the 1970's.



Examples shown here for glass link:

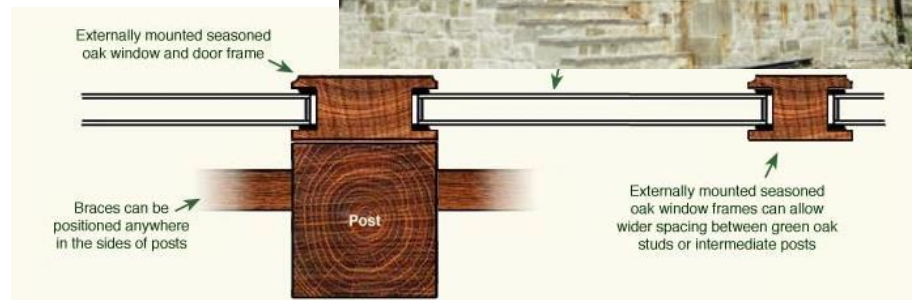


ITEM 3: Henhouse change of use

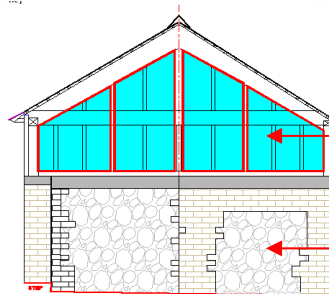
The henhouse is currently a ramshackled shed but would make a characterful dining room leading from the kitchen. The design has been amended with reduced glazing to suit the comments from the pre-app consultation which is now deemed more acceptable.

The applicant would like to keep the far gable end glazed to allow natural light and view to the garden. We propose to do this sympathetically by the preferred method of "face glazing", which will help to protect the historic timber framework as well as show off its beauty. Examples are shown below.

The gable end does not overlook any adjoining property and cannot be seen from any public rights of way.



Interior showing timber frame detail



Existing timber frame preserved and protected behind face glazing

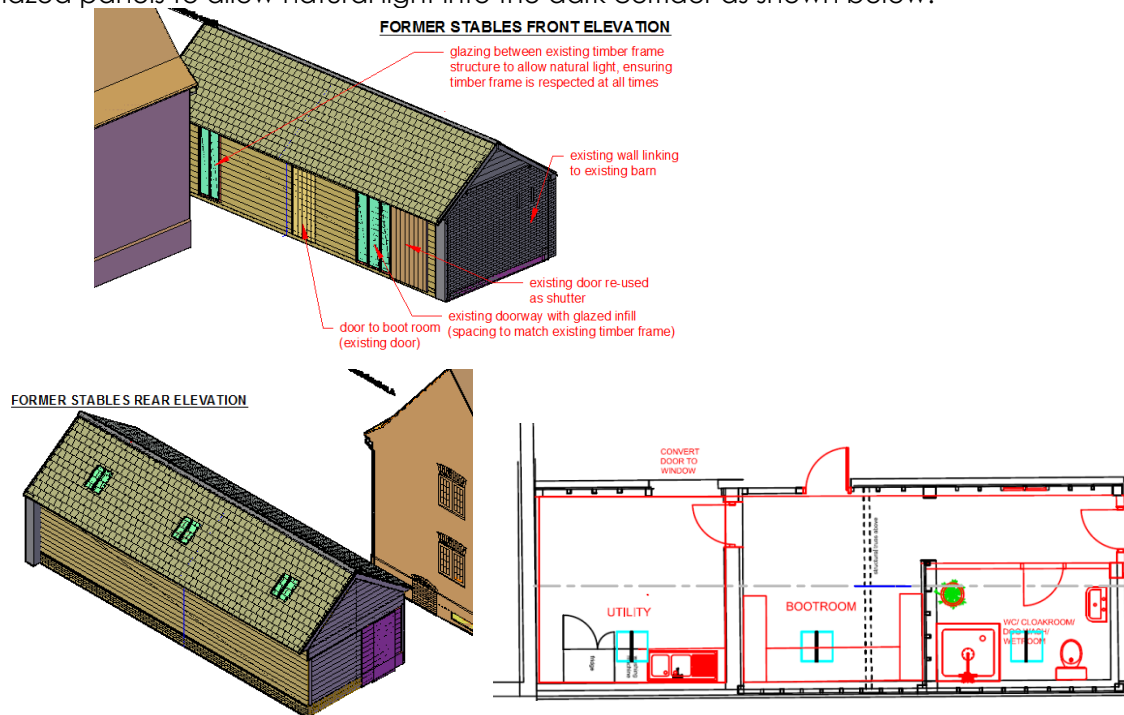
Brick & flint wall to be retained and repaired as necessary

ITEM 4: Conversion of existing stables to utility area

The existing utility room is sited in the lean-to extension mentioned in Item 1 above. In its current form (6.3m²) feels cramped and cluttered for this size of house.



The new proposed utility room would be 10m² in the stable block which is currently deteriorating and in need of repair to ensure its survival. No comments were made with regards to this aspect of the design which will be contained in the current footprint of the redundant stable block. The external appearance will remain similar in appearance, save for a few sympathetically face-glazed panels to allow natural light into the dark corridor as shown below.



4.0 Planning Policies

NPPF Section 5 – Delivering a sufficient supply of homes

84. Planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless one or more of the following circumstances apply:

- a) there is an essential need for a rural worker, including those taking majority control of a farm business, to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside;
- b) the development would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of heritage assets;
- c) the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and enhance its immediate setting;
- d) the development would involve the subdivision of an existing residential building; or
- e) the design is of exceptional quality, in that it:
 - i. is truly outstanding, reflecting the highest standards in architecture, and would help to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas; and
 - ii. would significantly enhance its immediate setting, and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area.

The proposals would involve the conversion, repair and renovation of redundant assets of this heritage property, so that they are properly maintained and preserved as part of the daily upkeep of the main farmhouse as a comfortable home.

The designs have been developed with the input of the conservation planner and planning officer to an acceptable scheme which is sympathetic to the historic and rural setting.

NPPF Section 9 – Promoting sustainable transport

116. Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or if the residual cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigations would be severe, taking into account all reasonable future scenarios.

118. All developments that will generate significant amounts of movement should be required to provide a travel plan, and the application should be supported by a vision-led transport statement or assessment so that the likely impacts of the proposal can be assessed.

There are no changes to be made to the number of residential units or vehicular movements in this proposal. The existing highways access will continue to be used as it is.

NPPF Section 11 – Making effective use of land

124. Planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions

125 (d) promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings, especially if this would help meet identified needs for housing where land supply is constrained and available sites could be used more effectively

Footnotes:

(50) As part of this approach, plans and decisions should support efforts to identify and bring back into residential use empty homes and other buildings, supported by the use of compulsory purchase powers where appropriate.

The proposals bring back into use neglected and redundant structures previously used for farming activities but now discontinued.

NPPF Section 12– Achieving well-designed places

35. 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;
- (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 ⁵¹; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

137. Design quality should be considered throughout the evolution and assessment of individual proposals. Early discussion between applicants, the local planning authority and local community about the design style of emerging schemes is important for clarifying expectations and reconciling local commercial interests. Applicants should, where applicable, provide sufficient information to demonstrate how their proposals will meet the design expectations set out in local and national policy, and should work closely with those affected by their proposals to evolve designs that take into account the views of the community. Applicants that can demonstrate early, proactive and effective engagement with the community should be looked on more favourable than those that cannot

The proposals enhance the original assets by providing a variety of usable enclosed spaces for the home owner without causing detrimental impact on the site as a whole. The scheme has been adapted following pre-app consultation to achieve a design maintains the openness of the site while providing change of use to structures which are in need of care and attention.

NPPF Section 13– Protecting green belt land

155. The development of homes, commercial and other development in the Green Belt should also not be regarded as inappropriate where all the following apply:

- a. The development would utilise grey belt land and would not fundamentally undermine the purposes (taken together) of the remaining Green Belt across the area of the plan;
- b. There is a demonstrable unmet need for the type of development proposed ⁵⁶;
- c. The development would be in a sustainable location, with particular reference to [paragraphs 110 and 115 of this Framework] ⁵⁷; and
- d. Where applicable the development proposed meets the ‘Golden Rules’ requirements set out in paragraphs 156-157 below.

The proposals do not make any changes to the Green Belt boundary and lie wholly within the boundary lines already established.

Paragraphs 156-157 refer to major developments and affordable housing so are not applicable in this case.

NPPF Section 15– Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

187. Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

- a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);
- b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most

- versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;
- c) maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate;
- d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures and incorporating features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs;
- e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and
- f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.

The scheme respects the historic context and setting by preserving the openness of the garden area and being carefully designed so that the glass link is kept minimal and is reversible at any time, causing no harm to the original fabric of the structures.

NPPF Section 15– Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

- 203.** Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats
- 208.** Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset’s conservation and any aspect of the proposal
- 210.** 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.

Providing a purpose for daily enjoyment is the best way to ensure that a structure is well maintained and to protect it from further neglect. The minor changes detailed in this application will fulfil those criteria, further enhancing the property for future enjoyment and preservation.

NHDC 2011-2031 Policy SP1 – Sustainable development in North Hertfordshire

This Plan supports the principles of sustainable development within North Hertfordshire. We will:

- c) Grant planning permission for proposals that, individually or cumulatively:
 - iii) create high-quality developments that respect and improve their surroundings and provide opportunities for healthy lifestyle choices;
 - iv) protect key elements of North Hertfordshire’s environment including biodiversity, important landscapes, heritage assets and green infrastructure (including the water environment);

Government policy is clear that the purpose of planning is to help achieve sustainable development. This means improving our lives today while not compromising our ability to do so in the future. It means supporting growth whilst protecting key elements of the natural and historic environment

The farmhouse is now part of the higher quality housing mix and as such, the owner will seek to make best use of the assets in ownership to best enhance the property as well as lifestyle. The proposals in this application are modest and provide improvements which keep up to modern ways of enjoying the abandoned structures.

They are set well within the domesticated footprint of the site and will not harm the overall setting or biodiversity in the area.

NHDC 2011-2031 Policy SP2 – Settlement Hierarchy and Spatial Distribution

4.21 Our Sustainability Appraisal says that our policy will have a range of positive effects in seeking to focus new development within or adjoining existing settlements. There may be some potential negative impacts in terms of interaction with existing residential areas and environmental aspects due to development being on greenfield sites. However, these impacts can be mitigated and addressed through design and layout considerations and other policies in this Plan.

This policy relates to new housing provision and is not applicable to this proposal. However, we acknowledge the statement about design and layout considerations which are addressed by the other policies noted in this document.

NHDC 2011-2031 Policy SP5 – Countryside and Green Belt

4.61 Proposals for development within the Green Belt will be considered against national policy. Where the proposed use can be considered acceptable in principle, we will use the detailed policies of this Plan to determine whether permission should be granted.

This has been addressed in the section for ***NPPF Section 13: Protecting Green Belt Land***

NHDC 2011-2031 Policy SP6 – Sustainable Transport

We will deliver accessibility improvements and promote the use of sustainable transport modes insofar as reasonable and practicable. We will:

- e) Assess development proposals against the parking standards set out in this Plan and having regard to relevant supplementary advice;
- f) Require applicants to provide assessments, plans and supporting documents to demonstrate the safety and sustainability of their proposals; and
- g) Protect existing rights of way, cycling and equestrian routes and, should diversion be unavoidable, require replacement routes to the satisfaction of the Council.

The number of residential units remains unchanged and so this will not affect the number of parking and/or vehicular movements which will also remain as existing. No impact will be made on existing rights of way, cycling or equestrian routes.

NHDC 2011-2031 Policy SP8 – Housing

4.120 Our Sustainability Appraisal concludes that this policy provides clarity about the scale and location of housing which will be delivered in North Hertfordshire up to 2031. As well as securing long-term housing supply, stipulating the type and mix of housing required, the policy should help to support economic growth in the District through increasing local demand and spend and by creating jobs in construction and other development-related industry.

Rustling End Farmhouse is a long established home in the North Herts rural setting. Its quality and historic value plays a very important part in the housing mix in this desirable area. Therefore, it is important that the homeowner is able to make improvements and enhancements to ensure that this remains a valuable asset to the area.

NHDC 2011-2031 Policy SP9 – Design and Sustainability

4.121 Design is central to good planning. The achievement of high quality, sustainable design is required by Government guidance. Planning policies should promote high quality, inclusive design in

layouts and buildings in terms of function and impact. Design which does not make the most of opportunities to improve the character and quality of an area should be refused.

These small alterations provide a sustainable future for the redundant structures associated with the farmhouse, making the most of these existing assets and ensuring their survival.

NHDC 2011-2031 Policy SP12 – Green Infrastructure, Biodiversity and Landscape

4.156 North Hertfordshire has a varied and attractive natural environment which is under increasing pressure from development, recreational uses and changing agricultural practices, particularly in the areas which are adjacent to the towns and villages.

4.157 The natural environment forms the setting to the towns and villages in which people live, work and spend their leisure time. Where possible, it should be protected and enhanced in the future to maintain the existing high quality of life that people in the District enjoy.

The proposals are minor in scale, and are contained in the domestic footprint of the site to enhance the quiet enjoyment of this home in the North Herts countryside.

NHDC 2011-2031 Policy SP13 – Historical Environment

4.172 National policy seeks to conserve the historic environment which contributes to the local distinctiveness of the area, but also to facilitate development where it would not lead to substantial harm. In addition to this, the historic environment is among environmental matters that must be considered when pursuing sustainable development. The Council will take a positive and pro active approach to this historic environment. This section is our heritage strategy setting out the main features of the historic environment in North Hertfordshire.

We have engaged with the council's pre-app process and the proposals submitted in this application are a direct result of those consultations. The utmost care will be made to protect and preserve the historical assets at all times.

NHDC 2011-2031 Policy T1– Assessment of Transport Matters

Planning permission will be granted provided that:

- a) Development would not lead to highway safety problems or cause unacceptable impacts upon the highway network;

No changes will be made to existing highway access

NHDC 2011-2031 Policy T2– parking

Planning permission will be granted provided that:

- a) Parking for residential development is provided in accordance with the minimum standards set out in Appendix 4 of this Plan;

No changes will be made to existing number of dwellings or parking on the site

NHDC 2011-2031 Policy D1– Sustainable Design

9.1 National guidance states that planning should achieve high quality and inclusive design for all development. Development proposals should consider the potential for minimising their impact on the environment both during construction and throughout the life of the development whilst creating development that responds to and enhances its surroundings. It's also recognised that good quality design is essential for health and well-being.

9.2 Development must respond positively to the site and the local context taking into consideration

position, orientation, scale, height, layout, massing, detailing and use of materials.

9.9 The potential for future changes in technology and lifestyles should be considered when planning and designing schemes to ensure flexibility in the use of buildings throughout their life.

The plans have been developed with the pre-app process to minimise the impact on the existing landscape both with historical and environmental context. It is designed to enhance the enjoyment of the property by the tenant, and also for any additions to be sympathetically installed so they may be removed and restored to the current state.

NHDC 2011-2031 Policy D2– House extensions, replacement dwellings and outbuildings

Planning permission for house extensions will be granted where:

- a) The extension is sympathetic to the existing house in height, form, proportions, roof type, window details, materials and the orientation of the main dwelling; and
- b) The extensions do not dominate adjoining properties and:
 - i. it is well related to the floor levels of adjoining properties,
 - ii. there is an appropriate distance between the proposed extension and the windows of the adjoining properties; and
 - iii. spacing between buildings ensures there is no harm to the character and appearance of the streetscene.

The glazed infill will be set back from the existing lean-to so they are subservient. The glass structures for both the infill and link to the henhouse (new dining room) have been chosen to provide a visual difference to distinguish the proposed additions, therefore respecting the existing constructions.

NHDC 2011-2031 Policy D3– Protecting living conditions

9.19 All development has the potential to have an adverse impact on its neighbours, in a wide variety of ways. Such harm may arise from traffic generation, parking, loss of daylight and sunlight, noise, overlooking, pollution (including light pollution) and dominance as well as other issues.

There will be no impact on neighbouring properties as they do not overlook any adjacent properties. There will not be in change in activity of the site which will remain a single dwelling.

NHDC 2011-2031 Policy D4– Air quality

Planning permission will be granted provided that development proposals:

- a) Give consideration to the potential or actual impact on local air quality, both during the demolition/ construction phase and as a result of its final occupation and use;

Construction will be carried out by specialist contractors with care and consideration to all, including minimisation of any pollution or waste, to provide high quality construction that will be elegant, sympathetic and reversible.

NHDC 2011-2031 Policy NE2– Landscape

Planning permission will be granted for development proposals that:

- a) Respect the sensitivities of the relevant landscape character area and have regard to the guidelines identified for built development and landscape management;
- b) Do not cause unacceptable harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area or the landscape character area in which the site is located, taking account of any suitable mitigation measures necessary to achieve this;

- c) Are designed and located to ensure the health and future retention of important landscape features; and
- d) Have considered the long-term management and maintenance of any existing and proposed landscaping.

The proposals comply with all of the above

NHDC 2011-2031 Policy NE4– Biodiversity and Geological Sites

Planning permission will only be granted for development proposals that appropriately protect, enhance and manage biodiversity in accordance with the hierarchy and status of designations and features listed in Policy SP12.

BNG exemptions:

Developments below the threshold

A development that does not impact a priority habitat and impacts less than:

- 25 square metres (5m by 5m) of on-site habitat
- 5 metres of on-site linear habitats such as hedgerows

Glass infill/conservatory = 6.5m²

Glass link to new dining room = 6.2m²

Total new footprint = 12.7m²

The new areas do not impact a priority habitat and is less than 25m².

It is therefore exempt from BNG requirements.

NHDC 2011-2031 Policy HE1– Designed heritage assets

Planning applications relating to Designated heritage Assets or their setting shall be accompanied by a Heritage Assessment/Justification Statement that:

- i. Assesses the significance of heritage assets, including their setting; ii. Justifies and details the impacts of any proposal upon the significance of the designated heritage asset(s); and
- iii. Informs any necessary measures to minimise or mitigate against any identified harms.

Planning permission for development proposals affecting Designated Heritage Assets or their setting will be granted where they (as applicable):

- a) Enable the heritage asset to be used in a manner that secures its conservation and preserves its significance;
- b) Incorporate a palette of materials that make a positive contribution to local character or distinctiveness, where it is appropriate and justified; and
- c) Will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset, and this harm is outweighed by the public benefits of the development, including securing the asset's optimum viable use.

The Heritage Statement that was submitted with the planning permission obtained in 2018 (planning ref **18/00743/LBC**) is still relevant to this application as it addresses the whole site including "The stables" which is now a separate property (please refer to plan in Section 2 of this document)

The fact that the henhouse is not mentioned in the heritage statement indicates that it has no historical importance in the view of the surveyor.

In addition, the site is acknowledged by planning to be a domesticated area and therefore unlikely to have any archaeological assets.

5.0 Summary

Overall, the small scale of the developments will have minimal impact on the location in Green Belt

It is sympathetic in design, keeping the openness of the existing garden landscape, using glass so that the existing buildings are able to be seen through any additions and so the character and appearance of the local area and host dwelling will not be harmed but respected.

The proposals give new purpose to abandoned and neglected structures that have long lost their use. They are currently cold, damp and run down, the former stables edging towards collapse if not repaired soon.

There will be no detrimental impact on neighbour's amenity and no change of use of the site as a whole, which will remain as a single dwelling unit.

The historic fabric will be protected and conserved, and sympathetically repaired where necessary to ensure their survival.

Any glazed additions will be able to be deconstructed at any time, so that the property can be restored back to its current state, maintaining the view that *"We are only custodians for those that come after us"*.