

Land at Sir Robert's Farm  
Goose Green Lane  
Pulborough  
West Sussex

## Design and Access Statement

In connection with:

The demolition of a building (with extant planning permission for change of use to a residential dwelling under ref. DC/23/1550) and the erection of a replacement barn-style four-bed residential dwelling with a detached garage, together with associated access and change of use of land from paddock to residential curtilage.

At:

Sir Robert's Farm  
Goose Green Lane  
Pulborough  
West Sussex RH20 2LW

## 1 INTRODUCTION

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared in support of a planning application for:

**The demolition of a building (with extant planning permission for change of use to a residential dwelling under ref. DC/23/1550) and erection of a replacement barn-style four-bed residential dwelling with a detached garage; together with associated access and change of use of land from paddock to residential curtilage.**

This Design and Access Statement sets out the aims of the proposal, the steps taken to appraise the context of the site and explains the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the proposed development.

This Statement has been prepared in accordance with the:

- Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015;
- National Planning Practice Guidance (as revised);
- National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024); and
- Horsham District Planning Framework (November 2015),

and objectively demonstrates the commitment of the owner to achieving good design, sustainable development and otherwise meeting the requirements of planning policy and legislation. Specifically, it demonstrates compliance with the Horsham District Planning Framework by explicitly addressing key policies, including Policy 2 (Strategic Policy: Sustainable Development), Policy 3 (Strategic Policy: Development in the Countryside), Policy 26 (Strategic Policy: Good Design), and Policy 31 (Strategic Policy: Climate Change), which are central to the District's planning objectives.

This Statement should be read in conjunction with the planning application and associated planning drawings and supporting statements.

### 1.1 The Site and Location

Sir Robert's Farm (the "**Property**", outlined red in Figure 1) is a holding of approximately 5.26ha/13ac comprising pastureland, woodland and buildings of various uses. It is located to the North-East side of the B2133, Goose Green Lane, approximately 200m to the North-East of the junction with Cray's Lane. The Property lies approximately one mile from Thakeham Village.

### 1.2 Access

The Property has the benefit of two existing vehicular access points connecting to the local road network (Goose Green Lane), approximately at the South-East and South-West corners of the Property (identified by blue arrows on Figure 1).

### 1.3 The Existing Buildings on the Property and Associated Planning History

The existing buildings on the Property comprise (numbers correspond to numbered buildings in Figure 1):

1. **Sir Robert's Bungalow** - A Use Class C3 dwelling house. The building comprises a pitched clay single storey bungalow of timber construction and a flat roofed extension. The accommodation comprises 4 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, living room and kitchen. It has an approximate gross external area of 119.6m<sup>2</sup>. In this document, this building is referred to as the "**Bungalow**". The Bungalow has full planning permission for its demolition, change of land use from paddock to residential curtilage, and replacement with a four-bedroom two storey barn-style residential dwelling and detached garage (see DC/25/0040). This

followed the applicant securing a fallback position comprising prior approval for the addition of a second storey extension (DC/24/1295) and a single storey 8m rear extension (DC/24/1664) and is similar therefore in context to this application. The replacement dwelling and associated approved curtilage is labelled as “**Plot 3**”.

2. **Sir Robert's Cottage** - A Use Class C3 dwelling house. The building comprises a pitched roof single storey bungalow. The accommodation comprises a combined living room/kitchen, one bedroom and one bathroom. It has an approximate gross external area of 45.0m<sup>2</sup>. In this document, this building is referred to as the “**Cottage**”. The Cottage has full planning permission for its demolition, change of land use from paddock to residential curtilage, and replacement with a three-bedroom two storey farmhouse style residential dwelling and detached garage (see DC/25/1394). This followed the applicant securing a fallback position comprising prior approval for the addition of a second storey extension (DC/24/1312) and a single storey 8m rear extension (DC/25/0597) and is similar therefore in context to this application. The replacement dwelling and associated curtilage is labelled as “**Plot 2**”.
3. **Sussex Barn** - An L-shaped traditional barn of timber construction with masonry infill and weatherboard cladding with a clay tiled roof. In this Statement, this building is referred to as the “**Sussex Barn**”. The Sussex Barn has full extant planning permission under Ref. [DC/23/1546](#) for conversion to a three-bedroom residential dwelling. All conditions have been discharged and the development has commenced. No changes are proposed to the Sussex Barn under this application. The Sussex Barn and proposed associated curtilage is labelled as “**Plot 1**”.
4. **Workshop** - The building comprises a timber shed with a corrugated roof and a concrete floor. The building measures 5.5m x 17.4m and has an approximate gross external area of 95.7m<sup>2</sup>. In this document, this building is referred to as the “**Workshop**” (referred to as the Chicken Shed in technical surveys). The Workshop has full planning permission for its demolition, change of land use from paddock to residential curtilage, and replacement with a three-bedroom two storey farmhouse style residential dwelling and detached garage (see DC/25/1394). This followed the applicant securing a fallback position comprising full extant planning permission under Ref. [DC/23/1549](#) for change of use to a three-bedroom residential dwelling house (Class C3) and associated minor alterations. The replacement dwelling and associated curtilage is labelled as “**Plot 5**”.
5. **Garages** - The building is of concrete block construction with a mono-pitch corrugated roof and a concrete floor measuring approximately 6.1m x 13.9m. In this document, this building is referred to as the “**Garages**” (referred to as the Dutch Barn in technical surveys). The Garages have full extant planning permission under Ref. [DC/23/1550](#) for change of use to a one-bedroom residential dwellinghouse (Class C3) and associated minor alterations. This application comprises the proposed demolition of the Garages, and replacement with a four-bedroom single storey barn-style dwelling, detached garage and associated residential curtilage.

The above buildings are located approximately in the South-West corner of the Property and are accessible off Goose Green Lane. Descriptions of the Bungalow, Cottage and Workshop are provided for context only.



Figure 1 - Block Plan of existing buildings at Sir Robert's Farm. Property extent edged in red.

## 2 GARAGES FALLBACK POSITION

The proposed development comprises:

- (a) the demolition of the Garages, and replacement with a single-storey, four-bedroom, barn-style dwelling, together with detached garaging and associated access, curtilage and landscaping; and
- (b) the re-defining of the curtilage of the Sussex Barn.

The fallback position represents a significant material consideration in the assessment of this planning application. As established in the Court of Appeal judgment of *Mansell v Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council* [2017] EWCA Civ 1314, the prospect of implementing a fallback development does not need to be probable or likely; a mere possibility is sufficient for it to be considered material.

The Garages benefit from full extant planning permission for: change of use (currently Use Class B1(c)) to a one-bedroom residential dwelling house (Use Class C3) ([DC/23/1550](#)). This permission is capable of immediate commencement with no pre-commencement conditions.

These rights constitute a substantial and material fallback position without the need for full planning permission. This aligns with the principle set forth in *Gambone v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government* [2014] EWHC 952 (Admin), which outlines a two-stage approach for considering fallback positions: first determining whether it is a material consideration, and then deciding what weight should be attributed to it.

The proposal for a single-storey barn-style dwelling, detached garage, access and landscaping offers substantial improvements over the potential fallback development, including: a more cohesive and architecturally appropriate design for the rural setting; improved amenity space (both for the Garages and the Sussex Barn) and improved energy efficiency and sustainability features.

These improvements constitute clear public benefits, which are key factors in successfully applying the fallback argument.

It is important to note that, as per the ruling in *R v Secretary of State for the Environment and Havering BC* [1998], the fallback position meets the three established tests:

- i. There is a legal right to implement the fallback position established through multiple permitted development rights.
- ii. There is a real prospect of the fallback being implemented, as evidenced by the prior approval for the second story and rear extension.
- iii. The proposed development has been compared to the potential fallback scenarios.

Precedent can also be drawn from the Planning Authority's recent approval of:

1. The demolition of the adjacent Bungalow and replacement with a four-bedroom, two-storey Sussex barn-style residential dwelling (see DC/25/0040); and
2. The demolition of both the adjacent Cottage and Workshop, and respective replacement with a three-bedroom two storey farmhouse style residential dwelling, and a three bedroom, single-storey barn-style residential together with associated detached garaging, access and curtilage (see DC/25/1394).

Both of these applications were supported by the Planning Authority in principle, design and appearance.

Therefore, it is respectfully requested that significant weight be given to the fallback position when assessing this application. The combined effect of the permitted development rights provides a robust baseline for evaluating the merits of the proposed development, demonstrating that the new barn-style dwelling, garage, access and landscaping represent a more favourable outcome in terms of design, amenity, energy efficiency, and overall impact on the local area.

### **3 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**

This section provides an overview summary of the proposed development, but should be read in conjunction with the submitted drawings.



*Figure 2 – Proposed Property Layout*

### **3.1 Layout**

#### **3.1.1 The garages Replacement**

The proposed Garages replacement building, will be located approximately 60m East of the existing Garages building location. Its orientation will turn approximately 90 degrees, matching the approximate orientation of the approved property on Plot 5, resulting in the front elevation of the building facing (but set back from) the B2133, Goose Green Lane.

The proposed three-port garage would be located in front, at 90 degrees, South-East of the dwelling.

### **3.2 Access**

The proposed Garages replacement dwelling would continue to utilise the South-West access point from the public highway. The replacement dwelling will be accessed via the permeable access track to Plots 2, 3 and 5 (as permitted under DC/25/0040 and DC/25/1394 respectively). See drawings for more details. The access track will be constructed from permeable material.

The revised access is considered a material improvement over the existing access to the Garages which currently passes through a narrow access track to the West of the Sussex Barn, which would inevitably cause disruption to future residents of the Sussex Barn.

The access track will accord to Building Regulations Approved Document B (Fire Safety). The access will enable Fire Appliance access to within 45m of all parts of the dwellings. It will have a load bearing capacity of no less than 18 tonnes axial weight, a width of 3.7m, a corner radius of no less than 7.75m and shall provide for a turning circle of at least 16.8m (this has resulted in the building being situated slightly further North). These dimensions and specifications are designed to fully meet or exceed the requirements of Building Regulations Approved Document B (Fire Safety) and all relevant local fire

service access requirements for multiple dwellings, ensuring safe and efficient emergency vehicle access to both proposed dwellings and thereby fully addressing public safety policy objectives.

### **3.3 Curtilage**

#### **3.3.1 The Garages Relocation**

The curtilage for the Garages replacement dwelling is shown edged red and labelled as "Plot 4" in the associated drawings. The curtilage will comprise a change in use of paddock land to the North of the existing Workshop site. The proposed curtilage is 0.275 hectares.

#### **3.3.2 The Sussex Barn**

As this proposal includes the demolition of the Garages and the relocation of the replacement dwelling, it is proposed that the curtilage of the Sussex Barn is revised to include the area previously covered by the Garages. The revised curtilage of the Sussex Barn is edged red and labelled as "Plot 1". The resulting curtilage of Plot 1 is 0.20 hectares.

#### **3.3.3 Curtilage General**

The proposed development includes a redefinition of the residential curtilages of the Garages and Sussex Barn.

The paddock North of the Bungalow (Plot 3) is not currently used for agricultural purposes. It has been enjoyed as part of the existing residential use of both the Bungalow and the Cottage (regularly mowed, maintained etc.) for many years, and as such could be demonstrated as comprising residential curtilage currently. The Applicant submits this application requesting change of use of this land, for the avoidance of doubt and in order to establish a certain permitted use, without prejudice to the fact that the land could currently be demonstrated as being within the residential curtilage of one or more residential buildings on the Property.

These changes are necessary to accommodate the replacement dwellings and proposed garaging and access track, while maintaining an appropriate setting for the proposed dwellings. The curtilages have been carefully considered to ensure they are proportionate to their associated dwellings, follow the natural landscape, provide adequate amenity space for future residents, and do not adversely affect the landscape character or intrude into the surrounding countryside.

The proposed curtilages for Plot 4 (0.27ha) is demonstrably proportionate to the scale of the replacement dwellings and is designed to avoid unnecessary encroachment onto agricultural land, aligning with Horsham District Local Plan Policy 3 (Development in the Countryside) which seeks to protect the character and setting of the rural area. The Planning Authority accepted and agreed with this in relation the adjacent approvals of Plots 2 and 5 (see DC/25/1394) and this proposal is of a similar size, scale and location. The resulting curtilage of Plot 1 is 0.20ha.

The configuration integrates existing hedgerows and natural features, minimizes visual impact and ensures that the "openness and setting of the countryside" is maintained by creating a logical and clearly defined edge between residential and rural areas without urbanising the landscape.

The Plot 4 curtilage has been designed to follow natural features where possible, such as existing hedgerows or tree lines, to minimize visual impact and integrate seamlessly with the local landscape. Where new boundaries are required, they will be formed using traditional materials and planting schemes that are in keeping with the rural character of the area.

The defined curtilages will allow for:

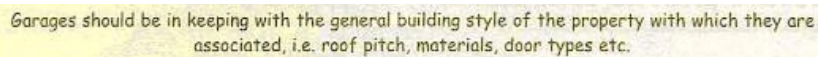
- Improved, and individual access to each of the properties;
- Enhanced landscaping and garden areas;
- Improved privacy and amenity space;
- Improved access;
- Appropriate siting of the dwellings and garaging.

Care has been taken to ensure that the defined curtilages do not encroach unnecessarily onto agricultural land or areas of ecological importance. The boundaries have been positioned to create a logical and well-defined edge to the residential areas, maintaining a clear distinction between the domestic space and the wider countryside.

This redefinition of the curtilages is essential to the overall design concept and will contribute to the creation of a high-quality, sustainable development that respects its rural setting while meeting the needs of modern living.

### 3.4 Parking

The proposed replacement dwelling includes a spacious three-port detached garage, designed to accommodate modern living needs and promote sustainable transportation options. Two of the ports in the garage building will feature doors, providing secure storage for vehicles, while one will remain open, offering flexibility for various uses. The garage has been designed to incorporate three electric vehicle (EV) charging points, one for each port, future-proofing the property and encouraging the adoption of low-emission vehicles. These charging points will be easily accessible and located close to where vehicles will be parked, ensuring convenience for users.



Garages should be in keeping with the general building style of the property with which they are associated, i.e. roof pitch, materials, door types etc.

*Figure 3 - Extract from Thakeham Design Statement*

In addition to vehicle storage, the garage will include dedicated bicycle storage areas, promoting active travel and aligning with sustainable transport objectives. The bicycle storage will be designed to accommodate a variety of cycle types, including non-standard cycles, with appropriate spacing and access considerations. The design also incorporates adequate lighting and security measures to protect both vehicles and bicycles.

### 3.5 Bin Storage

The proposed development includes carefully designed bin storage facilities that align with best practices for waste management. The bin storage areas will be conveniently located on the North elevation of the garage unit and will be situated within 10 meters of the respective dwellings, ensuring easy access for residents. The storage areas will have a solid, slightly inclined floor with drainage to prevent liquid pooling and potential odour issues.

To maintain visual appeal, the bin storage has been designed to not dominate the frontage or take visual priority over the main building. It will be sufficiently enclosed, including the roof space, to prevent unauthorized use and will feature appropriate lighting for security and ease of use.

The bin storage area will be sized to accommodate the required number of bins for refuse and recycling, with enough space for residents to access each bin individually.

A clear, flat access path at least 800mm wide will be provided between the storage area and the collection point, avoiding steps and other obstacles. This path will facilitate easy movement of bins for collection days.



These measures will ensure efficient waste management and contribute to the overall cleanliness and functionality of the development.

### 3.6 Character and Appearance

The site is located in a rural setting. The proposed replacement building designs takes inspiration from rural properties within the Thakeham Parish and surrounding areas and is sensitive to the Thakeham Parish Village Design Statement.

The proposed Garages replacement comprises a single storey 'chicken shed' style barn, taking inspiration from the original design of the Workshop building and its permitted replacement (DC/25/1394) including a long-spanning simple roof form and gable ends. This single-storey elongated form is specifically chosen to maintain a subordinate role in the landscape, reflecting the hierarchy of farmstead forms encouraged by local design guidance and preventing it from appearing incongruous or overly dominant, consistent with the Thakeham Parish Village Design Statement's focus on maintaining rural scale and character.

The proposed replacement building will use a pallet of local vernacular materials typical of those used on traditional Sussex farmsteads, including: slate grey standing seam roof, dark timber feather edge weatherboard cladding and Sussex clay bricks. A standing seam roof has been selected to reflect the utilitarian nature of the Garages being replaced, and to introduce a controlled mix of architectural styles common in rural farmsteads.



*Figure 4 - Extract from Thakeham Design Statement*

### 3.7 Landscaping

The landscaping scheme for this development has been carefully designed to complement and enhance the local context, respecting the existing landscape character and adhering to neighbourhood guidance. Our approach aims to create a harmonious integration of the new development with its rural surroundings while promoting biodiversity and sustainable practices.

The design draws inspiration from the surrounding countryside, incorporating elements that reflect the local vernacular and natural environment. We have considered the typical species found in the area, the traditional boundary treatments, and the overall rural aesthetic to ensure our landscaping seamlessly blends with the existing landscape character.

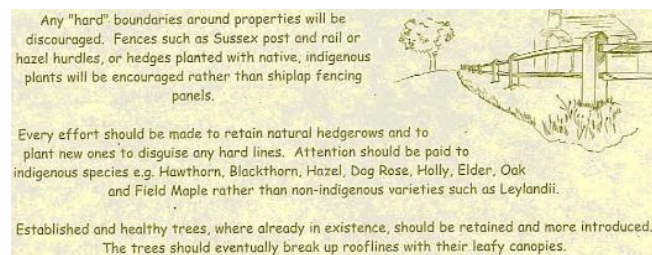
The approach to all boundaries will be to provide chestnut post and rail fencing, a traditional and visually appealing choice that aligns with the rural setting. This fencing will be complemented by native hedgerow and tree planting, which will serve multiple purposes:

- Enhance privacy and security
- Create natural wildlife corridors
- Improve air quality and reduce noise pollution

- Provide visual interest and seasonal variation

Native species selected for hedgerows and trees will include a mix of deciduous and evergreen plants, ensuring year-round interest and maximizing ecological benefits. Species may include hawthorn, field maple, dogwood, and holly, among others, depending on soil conditions and local biodiversity goals.

Subject to those trees proposed for removal as detailed in section 4.6 below, all other existing trees and hedgerows on the site will be retained, preserving the established character of the area and maintaining valuable habitats for local wildlife. These mature landscape features will be incorporated into the overall design, creating a sense of immediate maturity and continuity with the surrounding environment.



*Figure 5 - Extract from Thakeham Design Statement*

### 3.8 Sustainability

The proposed development demonstrates a strong commitment to sustainability and environmental responsibility, significantly enhancing the eco-credentials of the site. The new single-story barn-style dwelling will be constructed using high-performance, thermally efficient materials and incorporate state-of-the-art insulation techniques, resulting in a building that far exceeds current energy efficiency standards.

The project is designed to achieve an estimated Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of 'A', significantly reducing energy demand and corresponding operational carbon emissions. This represents a projected reduction of over 70% in the operational carbon footprint compared to a standard new build of similar size, demonstrating clear alignment with Horsham District Local Plan Policy 31 (Climate Change) and national targets.

The design includes a South-West and North-East-facing roof elevations optimized for solar panel installation, with an integrated battery storage system to maximize renewable energy utilization. Ground source heat pumps will provide low-carbon heating and hot water.

The permeable access track and sustainable drainage solutions will effectively manage surface water runoff, contributing to flood resilience.

Additionally, the landscaping plan incorporates native species to enhance biodiversity, and the garage includes electric vehicle charging points to support sustainable transportation.

These features collectively ensure that the new development will have a significantly lower carbon footprint and reduced environmental impact compared to the existing bungalow, aligning with both local and national sustainability goals.

This proposed development is a self-build project on a site measuring less than 0.5 hectares. In accordance with current planning requirements, developments of this scale are not required to submit a formal Biodiversity Net Gain assessment under the Environment Act 2021, as the statutory BNG duty

applies primarily to sites exceeding this threshold or those specifically conditioned by the local planning authority. However, to align with the spirit of the Environment Act 2021 and Horsham District's environmental policies (such as Policy 32: Biodiversity and Geodiversity), the project voluntarily commits to enhancing biodiversity through the extensive planting of native hedgerows and trees. The creation of wildlife corridors and the careful selection of native species (such as hawthorn, field maple, dogwood, and holly) are projected to deliver a tangible ecological uplift across the site. While not formally quantified for a statutory BNG, the estimated increase in linear habitat and native planting significantly contributes to the overall ecological value of the site.

### **3.9 Heritage Statement**

Following a thorough assessment of the site and its surroundings, including consultation of the National Heritage List for England and the local Historic Environment Record, we can confirm that:

- There are no Listed Buildings within the site or its immediate vicinity.
- The site is not located within a Conservation Area.
- The site does not fall within or adjacent to any Scheduled Ancient Monuments.
- There are no known archaeological remains or finds recorded on the site.
- The site is not within a Registered Park or Garden.
- There are no locally listed buildings identified by the local authority that would be affected by the proposed development.

The site includes a historic farm building (Sir Roberts Barn (i.e. the Sussex Barn)). It is included in the West Sussex Historic Environment Record and recorded as a historic outfarm. This does meet the criteria for identification as non-designated heritage assets.

The Sir Roberts Barn (the Sussex Barn) has extant permission for conversion to a residential dwelling, and that conversion has commenced, with the roof replacement having recently been completed. It also has permission for a rear extension.

The Garages lies within approximately 13m from the North-West corner of the Sussex Barn (reducing to approx. 9m following the permitted rear extension).

The Garages benefits from extant permission for conversion to a residential dwelling.

The current proposal seeks to replace the Garages with a relocated residential dwelling. The replacement dwelling will sit a further distance from the Sussex Barn, improving amenity space for the converted barn as a residence. The approved conversion of the Garages would potentially have a greater negative impact on the Barn than the proposed scheme, which sites the replacement dwelling at a suitable distance from the Barn, and the design reflects that of a traditional farm building. The replacement and relocation of the Garages would have minimal impact on the Sussex Barn with any impact reasonably to be considered positive.

The Applicant submits that this should be acceptable taking a proportionate approach given the nature of the non-designated heritage asset and the proposed development. The Applicant's commitment more generally to the retention of the Sussex Barn and its preservation through conversion should also be also seen favourably. Without such development, the Sussex would have inevitably otherwise have become derelict.

Name: Oak Farm (Sir Roberts Barn) Historic Outfarm, Thakeham  
HER Ref: MWS12668  
Type of record: Monument

**Designations - none recorded**

**Summary**

Oak Farm (Sir Roberts Barn), Thakeham, has been identified as a Historic Outfarm dating to the 19th century.

Grid Reference: TQ 1190 1841  
Parish: Thakeham, Horsham, West Sussex  
Map: [Show location on Streetmap](#)

**Monument Types**

OUTFARM (Built, Post Medieval - 1800 AD to 1899 AD)

**Sources**

<1> Unpublished document: Forum Heritage Services. 2006. Historic Farmsteads & Landscape Character in West Sussex.

**Associated Events**

Historic Farmsteads and Landscape Character in West Sussex

**Associated Monuments - none recorded**

**Associated Finds - none recorded**

*Figure 6 - West Sussex HER Record Extract*

### 3.10 Size and Scale

	Existing	Proposed Replacement
Storeys	1	1
Gross External Area	86.2m <sup>2</sup>	312.8.0m <sup>2</sup>
Total Height	4.0m	5.4m
Gross Internal Floor Area	80.3m <sup>2</sup>	298.8m <sup>2</sup>

Whilst the proposed Garage replacement building is larger in terms of height and floorspace than the current building, it is comparable in size compared to the other permitted dwellings on the Property, proportionate to the proposed curtilage, and similar to local properties.

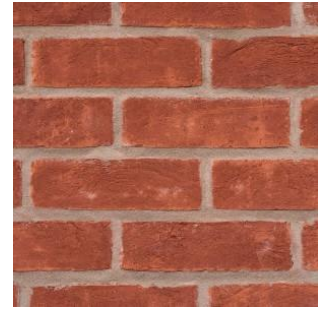
### 3.11 Proposed Materials

The proposed replacement buildings will use a pallet of local materials including slate grey standing seam roof, timber cladding and Sussex clay bricks.

#### 3.11.1 Walls

Ever since Roman times flint has been an important building material in the South-East of England. Flint work is one of the key features in the distinctive appearance of the villages and towns of Sussex.

- Bricks – Handmade Sussex red clay bricks



- Black timber feather edge cladding



### 3.11.2 Roof

- Slate grey, standing seam roof

### 3.11.3 Windows

- Powder coated black/white aluminium casement windows.

### 3.11.4 Entrance Doors

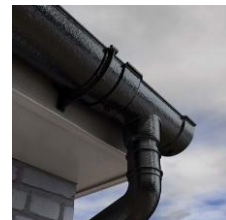
- Hardwood/oak.

### 3.11.5 Bifold/sliding doors

- Powder coated black aluminium.

### 3.11.6 Guttering

- Black cast aluminium (heritage range), half round profile with round downpipe.



### 3.11.7 Garage/Car Port

- Oak framing with plinth wall in flint framed with red brick. Feather edge timber cladding above.



### 3.11.8 Landscaping

- Steps and paths – Flagstones with stone/brick risers
- Terraces – Limestone pavers with stone/brick risers
- Driveway gates – 5-bar oak gates
- Fencing – chestnut post/rail
- Parking and turning areas – permeable gravel surface



## **4 SURVEYS**

### **4.1 Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA)**

The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of the Site (dated August 25, 2022) by Phlorum Limited concluded that the Garages (referred to as Dutch Barn in the PEA) were considered to have a negligible potential for roosting bats. No further surveys were recommended in relation to the Garage. The report recommended, a precautionary approach to site clearance was recommended for breeding birds, [REDACTED] hazel dormice, stag beetles, and hedgehogs to minimize adverse impacts.

### **4.2 Asbestos Refurbishment & Demolition Survey**

An Asbestos Refurbishment & Demolition Survey (dated June 16, 2022) specifically for the Garages identified the presence of asbestos cement panels in its roof and upper cladding. These materials were identified as containing Chrysotile (white asbestos) with a substantial content (2-50%). The survey concluded that these asbestos cement materials could be managed and monitored if left in situ; however, if removal is planned, it must be carried out by a licensed asbestos removal contractor. The overall risk associated with these materials was assessed as "Low".

### **4.3 Preliminary Risk Assessment (PRA) - Land Contamination**

The Preliminary Risk Assessment for land contamination (dated June 13, 2022), which focused on the redevelopment of the Garages into a residential dwelling, highlighted the potential asbestos roofing of the Garage as a high risk for asbestos inhalation. The report recommended an asbestos survey specifically for the buildings planned for development to assess the presence of asbestos prior to any demolition or conversion works. Despite this, the overall risk of land contamination at the site, including for the Garages, was considered "Low", assuming its redevelopment into a residential dwelling with surrounding structures and open green space. Notwithstanding the above, the proposal is to relocate the dwelling to the North-East of the surveyed area.

### **4.4 Tree Survey**

Detailed Tree Surveys have been conducted for the Site, providing an assessment of individual trees and groups of trees in accordance with British Standard 5837:2012 'Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction – Recommendations'. Each tree was evaluated based on its species, height, stem diameter, crown clearance, life stage, remaining contribution, physiological and structural condition, and public amenity value. Trees were assigned a retention category (U, C1, C2, B1, B2), indicating their quality and value. The survey also outlines a phased approach for tree works, including pre-commencement installation of tree protection fencing, maintaining protection during demolition and construction, and removal of protection post-development. Overall, the survey provides a comprehensive baseline for managing existing tree stock and informing the landscape design within the development.

No trees are proposed to be removed as part of this application.

Tree protection measures will be implemented as per the recommendations in the submitted Arboricultural Survey, Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Method Statement.

## **5 SUMMARY OF BENEFITS OVER THE FALLBACK POSITION SCHEMES**

### **Construction, Sustainability, Access and Amenity**

The proposed development seeks to demolish, relocate and replace the existing Garages building, which currently benefits from extant approval for conversion to a one-bedroom dwelling.

The fallback scheme, while implementable under the existing consent, would essentially retain the form and character of the Garages with only limited upgrades. In this form, the building would deliver a dwelling of poor design quality, offering little enhancement to the building fabric or its setting.

Energy efficiency gains under the fallback approval would also be minimal, constrained by the retained construction and envelope.

By contrast, the proposed scheme delivers clear improvements in multiple respects. The works will enable a dwelling of far greater energy efficiency, incorporating modern insulation, construction techniques and detailing suited to long-term performance. The proposal also secures improved standards of construction, overcoming the inherent limitations of the existing Garages fabric.

In addition, the current scheme includes an increase in curtilage, providing more generous amenity space appropriate for a family home and improving the overall usability of the site. Vehicular access and parking arrangements have likewise been reviewed and enhanced, offering safer, more convenient facilities than the fallback scheme would achieve.

The current proximity of the Garages and the Sussex Barn impacts negatively on the amenity space of both the Sussex Barn and the Garages for future residents. Access to the Garages, will inevitably disturb future residents of the Sussex Barn. The proposed scheme establishes far more appropriate amenity space for each of the dwellings and access that does not intrude on the peace and privacy of the future residents.

Taken together, these enhancements represent a significantly more positive outcome than the extant fallback, contributing to the sustainability, residential quality, and long-term viability of the Garage's reuse.

Overall, the proposed development offers significant improvements over the fallback position:

#### **Architectural Character and Materials**

The proposed development seeks to replace the existing Garages with a new building that respond positively to the rural West Sussex context, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) objective to achieve well-designed places and Local Plan policies protecting the countryside and promoting sustainable development:

- A single-storey elongated form inspired by traditional agricultural outbuildings, supporting Local Plan aims to retain rural character while allowing sensitive re-use of existing structures. This design approach, featuring a long-spanning simple roof form and gable ends, reflects the 'chicken-shed' typology observed in the Thakeham Parish Village Design Statement, contributing to the site's overall farmstead aesthetic and maintaining a subordinate architectural role.
- Traditional timber cladding and discreet roofing materials enable the building to integrate visually into the landscape, consistent with policies protecting the openness and character of the countryside.
- The design respects the hierarchy of farmstead forms, reflecting a balanced relationship between principal dwelling and ancillary building, encouraged in design guidance.
- Together, these new buildings create a cohesive rural ensemble that upholds the character and distinctiveness of the area as required by the NPPF and local development policies.

#### **Spatial and Functional Improvements**

Unlike fallback schemes which would perpetuate inefficient and unsympathetic layouts, the new design supports the NPPF's objective of delivering functional and adaptable homes. The chicken-shed style dwelling offers accessible, single-storey accommodation, meeting growing demands for adaptable housing in rural settings as encouraged by Horsham District Local Plan rural housing policies.



### **Energy Efficiency and Sustainability**

The proposal aligns with the NPPF's commitment to reducing carbon emissions and promoting energy efficiency in new developments:

High-performance insulation and modern building fabric exceed current building regulations, supporting the Horsham District Local Plan sustainable design requirements. The projected 'A' EPC rating and estimated over 70% reduction in operational carbon footprint compared to a standard new build demonstrate a strong quantifiable commitment to these goals, contributing significantly to climate action priorities.

Renewable energy technologies such as solar panels and heat pumps will significantly reduce the dwellings' carbon footprints, aligning with national and local climate action priorities.

The building orientation and natural light strategy reduce reliance on artificial lighting, further supporting energy efficiency goals.

### **Visual Impact and Local Context**

The development clearly improves on fallback outcomes by promoting the NPPF's objective to protect and enhance valued landscapes and historic character:

- The chicken-shed dwelling's subordinate scale and agricultural aesthetic protect the openness and setting of the countryside, consistent with countryside protection policy.
- Avoidance of flat or single pitched roofs and incongruous additions improves visual coherence, meeting design guidance requirements for development sensitive to context and surroundings.

### **Summary**

This proposal to replace the existing Garages with a single-storey chicken-shed style dwelling represents a significant enhancement over the fallback position by:

- Delivering high-quality, locally rooted architectural design in line with NPPF and Horsham District Local Plan principles.
- Providing energy efficient, sustainable dwellings that address climate change and resource use policies. This includes a quantified commitment to achieving an 'A' EPC rating and significant carbon footprint reduction, directly supporting Policy 31 (Climate Change).
- Enhancing spatial quality, amenity provision, access, and adaptability in line with national housing objectives.
- Protecting and enhancing rural character, landscape quality, and historic context as set out in planning policy. The proposed landscaping, with native hedgerows and trees, also offers voluntary biodiversity enhancement beyond statutory requirements, further strengthening the ecological contribution as per Policy 31 (Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity).

Overall, the scheme successfully integrates the principles of sustainable development, good design, and countryside protection required by national and local planning policy frameworks, offering a long-term positive contribution to the site and its setting.