

Planning Statement



Site Name: Crouchlands Farm, Rickman's Lane, Plaistow RH14 0LE
 On behalf of: Artemis Land and Agriculture Ltd
 Date: June 2022

DLBP Ltd is registered in England & Wales at the above address, number 7229435.
 VAT registration number 260 6370 18.

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A. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

1. This Planning and Statement accompanies the full planning application at Crouchlands Farm, Rickman's Lane, Plaistow RH14 0LE ('the site') for:

The regeneration of Crouchlands Farm, comprising demolition of selected buildings, extension, refurbishment and remodelling of selected buildings and the erection of new buildings to provide up to a total of 17,169 sq m (including retained / refurbished existing buildings) comprising the existing farm hub (sui generis), a rural enterprise centre (Use Classes E, C1 and F1), a rural food and retail centre (Use Class E and F1), an equestrian centre (Use Class F2 and C1) and a glamping site (Use Class E and sui generis); provision of new hardstanding, pedestrian, cycle and vehicular access, circulation and parking, landscaping including new tree planting, maintenance and improvements to the Public Rights of Way, site infrastructure and ground remodelling.

2. The above development is referred to as the 'Whole Farm Plan'. The applicant is Artemis Land and Agriculture Ltd ('Artemis'). The Farm as owned by Artemis is approximately 194 ha in size, with the application site comprising 51 ha.
3. The Whole Farm Plan seeks to remediate and regenerate Crouchlands Farm by proposing high welfare, low impact and low intensity farming activity, mixed use rural diversification development, rural food and retail opportunities, AgriTech facilities, and the development of a range of premium leisure uses. These are to be taken forward via the five elements of the Whole Farm Plan, which are all intrinsically linked to one another and are as follows:
 - Farm hub - a small scale, high welfare, low impact, low intensity livestock operation at the north of the existing farm site, supported by approximately 2,000 sq m of refurbished agricultural buildings for over-wintering of livestock;
 - Rural Enterprise and Education Centre - the refurbished farm buildings to the south of the existing farm site would provide a range of commercial and education uses. This includes approximately 3,825 sq m use classes E and F1 together with the provision of approximately 230 sq m of live-work accommodation for students or staff who are staying at the site (use class C1);
 - Rural Food and Retail - these new buildings, to the south of the access road, would provide up to 1,922 sq m of retail space (use class E and F1), including the development of a farm shop, café and cookery school with an associated kitchen garden;
 - Equestrian Centre - this new leisure facility, also to the south of the main access road, would provide 40 livery boxes, indoor and outdoor arenas, a hay barn, circular horse walk, enclosed paddocks, a riding school and a club house covering approximately 7,788 sq m (use class F2). There will also be approximately 320 sq m of live-work accommodation for the welfare of the animals; and
 - Hardnips Barn and glamping - this area would provide luxury and high-end custom built facilities in a serviced glamping site covering approximately 1,084 sq m (use classes sui

generis and E). Hardnips Barn will also provide a restaurant space for glamping guests to relax, and will also host workshops and events such as weddings.

4. The proposal is an example of genuinely sustainable development and will deliver a range of social, economic and environmental benefits. It has been informed by pre-application discussions with West Sussex County Council, two planning pre-application discussions with Chichester District Council (ref 19/02655/PRELM and 21/00543/PRELM), discussions with the Chichester District Council Inward Investment Officer, engagement with the Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership and Brinsbury College and engagement with Plaistow and Ifold Parish Council, local community groups and local residents. This has led to a proposal which is acceptable in principle and reflects the character and appearance of the area, and which:
- in social terms:
 - contributes to local health and recreation through maintaining and improving the on-site Public Rights of Way, notably the routes 3519, 564, 633 and 643, and opportunities provided through the Equestrian Centre; and
 - provides educational opportunities through the Rural Enterprise Centre and Equestrian Centre, in areas such as farming, woodland management and animal welfare;
 - in economic terms:
 - contributing to rural diversification by creating approximately 142 on-site FTE jobs in different sectors (plus off-site jobs and temporary jobs during construction);
 - creates opportunities for knowledge-sharing of new farming techniques and procedures via the farm hub and Rural Enterprise Centre;
 - provides accommodation in the Rural Enterprise Centre for businesses which require or value a rural location;
 - provides a mix of accommodation to encourage start-ups and small-scale enterprises;
 - introduces opportunities for the sale of local produce (including that from the farm hub or Rural Enterprise Centre) through the Rural Food and Retail Centre; and
 - provides visitor accommodation (capable of accommodating a longer tourist season), to contribute to Chichester's visitor economy; and
 - in environmental terms:
 - continues the remediation of Crouchlands Farm;
 - restores degraded parts of the Farm, including through the planting of 320 new trees and restoring previous tree belts (between Limekiln Wood and Hardnip's Copse) and field boundaries (to the west of the Equestrian Centre);
 - introduces and secures long-term woodland management; and

- improves existing habitats, and creates new ones.
5. The proposal complies with the Council's development plan when read as a whole. Material considerations also support the grant of planning permission, as the proposal is in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework as well as Chichester District Council's Economic Development Strategy, and the Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership's Local Industrial Strategy and Gatwick 360 Strategic Economic Plan. As such, we respectfully request that permission is granted without delay.

B. INTRODUCTION

6. This Planning and Statement accompanies the full planning application at Crouchlands Farm, Rickman's Lane, Plaistow RH14 0LE ('the site') for the Whole Farm Plan which comprises:

The regeneration of Crouchlands Farm, comprising demolition of selected buildings, extension, refurbishment and remodelling of selected buildings and the erection of new buildings to provide up to a total of 17,169 sq m (including retained / refurbished existing buildings) comprising the existing farm hub (sui generis), a rural enterprise centre (Use Classes E, C1 and F1), a rural food and retail centre (Use Class E and F1), an equestrian centre (Use Class F2 and C1) and a glamping site (Use Class E and sui generis); provision of new hardstanding, pedestrian, cycle and vehicular access, circulation and parking, landscaping including new tree planting, maintenance and improvements to the Public Rights of Way, site infrastructure and ground remodelling.

7. The planning application is also supported by the following documents, forms and plans:

- Air Quality Assessment;
- application form;
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment;
- Archaeological Report;
- Community Infrastructure Levy form;
- Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy;
- Design and Access Statement;
- Ecological Impact Assessment (Rural Food and Retail and Equestrian Centre);
- Ecological Impact Assessment (Hardnips Barn and Glamping);
- Ecological Impact Assessment (Farm Hub and Rural Enterprise and Education Centre);
- Economic Impact Assessment;
- Environmental Impact Assessment Report;
- Equestrian Report;
- Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water and Foul Sewerage Drainage Strategy;
- Glamping and Rural Diversification Report;
- Heritage Statement;
- Land Quality / Contamination Assessment;
- Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment;
- Lighting Assessment;
- Lighting Spill Model;
- Minerals Resource Assessment;
- Noise Assessment;

- Operational Statement;
- Rural Enterprise Centre Report;
- SI06 Draft Heads of Terms;
- Statement of Community Involvement;
- Structural Conversion Statement;
- Sustainable Design and Construction Statement;
- Transport Assessment;
- Travel Plan;
- Water Neutrality Report; and
- Woodland Management Plan.

C. THE SITE AND WIDER CONTEXT

Crouchlands Farm

8. Crouchlands Farm, within the ownership of Artemis, is approximately 194 ha in size and comprises agricultural buildings with associated hard standing, open fields in agricultural use as improved pasture fields (grazed and / or used for silage production), and areas of woodland. The Farm also comprises a residential dwelling towards the north of the site, Hardnips Barn, that is currently vacant and in need of significant improvement to raise it to a habitable standard. The 'Whole Farm Plan' application boundary is approximately 51 hectares.
9. Artemis purchased Crouchlands Farm in 2019 to remediate and regenerate the Farm, and to address the effects of previous use of the Farm caused by the previous owner. Since purchasing the site, Artemis has spent more than £7.5 million on restoration work - this has included:
 - the removal of the remaining biogas plant;
 - the clearance of waste material stored at the Farm;
 - the restoration of lagoons 1 and 2;
 - improvements to the farm infrastructure including trackways, buildings and fencing;
 - the improvement of the existing Public Rights of Way, and the creation of new permissive paths; and
 - a commitment to the Countryside Stewardship Scheme, including significant planting of 25,000 m of hedgerows, and restoration of fencing around the entire farm landholding.
10. Alongside this restoration work, Artemis has also reintroduced livestock to the Farm including rare breed cattle, sheep and pigs. In March 2022, the Farm achieved the prestigious 'Red Tractor' status which assures that the produce supplied by the farm is of the highest standards.

Application site

11. The application site comprises 51 hectares of the wider Farm. These 51 hectares incorporate the existing access point from Rickman's Lane, the existing farm buildings (comprising the large cattle shed and workshop, existing barns and the portakabins currently accommodating Artemis's office and welfare facilities), Hardnips Barn to the west and the existing fields to the south and west of the existing farm buildings. The southern field also includes an existing agricultural building.
12. The application site encompasses areas of woodland including Hardnips Copse (immediately west of the existing farm buildings) and Limekiln Wood (to the north west of the application

site). The area known as 'Lagoon 2', which is currently undergoing restoration, is also included to the far west of the application boundary.

Planning designations and history

13. The site is designated as countryside and some or all of the site is also subject to the following designations:
 - Rural Area under Section 157 of the Housing Act 1985;
 - Flood Zone 1; and
 - Ancient Woodland.
14. There is also an extensive network of Public Rights of Way across the application site that provide links to the wider area, including:
 - Bridleway 643;
 - Restricted Byway 633;
 - Footpath 564 (only passable at its eastern part);
 - Byway 3519; and
 - Restricted Byway 639.
15. Footpath 628 is immediately adjacent to the eastern boundary of the application site, and a new permissive path is being created by Artemis across its land south of Middleground Copse for walkers and riders.
16. The site is not within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), the Green Belt, a National Park, nor a Conservation Area. There are no listed buildings within the application boundary or the wider ownership of the applicant.
17. Recent permissions associated with Artemis's work to remediate and regenerate the Farm include:
 - 21/02590/FUL - Retention of 3 no. temporary portakabin buildings including 1 no. two storey office and 2 no. single storey portakabin buildings for a further period of 104 weeks.
 - 21/01110/FUL - Erection of 1 no. farm workshop building (retrospective).
 - 20/03336/FUL - Siting of 2 no. mobile homes with ancillary car parking to accommodate agricultural workers for a temporary period of three years.
 - 19/00682/FUL - Installation of 3 no. portakabin buildings consisting of 1 no. two storey office, 1 no. single storey toilet block and 1 no. single storey welfare unit for a temporary 2 year period.

Surrounding area

18. Immediately adjacent to the eastern boundary of the application site is Rickman's Lane, and a cluster of existing residential properties (primarily detached and semi-detached).
19. Moores Green Cottage is located adjacent to the existing farm buildings, but is excluded from the application boundary. Crouchland (more commonly known as Crouchlands House or Crouchlands), a Grade II listed property (which includes a Grade II listed outbuilding), and Lanelands (also Grade II listed) sit to the south west and south of the application boundary respectively.
20. To the immediate west of the application site is Lagoon 3, a digestate lagoon associated with the previous use of Crouchlands Farm by its previous owner for commercial biogas production. Lagoon 3 is still owned by the previous owner and is the subject of an enforcement notice (PS54 and PS55) that required its removal by 21 May 2021. Recent correspondence with the Council (in February 2022) indicated that the Council remained in the process of assessing the matters raised by the ongoing non-compliance with the enforcement notice, but expected this to be concluded shortly.
21. Crouchlands Farm is approximately 1km south-east of Plaistow, 1.5km south-west of Ifold and 3km north of Kirdford. Plaistow, Ifold and Kirdford are primarily residential, although local services include a school, pub and shop in Plaistow; a shop in Ifold; and a shop and pubs in Kirdford. The Farm itself is located in two Parishes: Kirdford to the south and Plaistow and Ifold to the north although the application site is solely within the Parish of Plaistow and Ifold.
22. The boundary of the South Downs National Park is approximately 2km to the west and 4km to the south of the application boundary.

D. THE PROPOSAL

23. The description of the development is as follows:

The regeneration of Crouchlands Farm, comprising demolition of selected buildings, extension, refurbishment and remodelling of selected buildings and the erection of new buildings to provide up to a total of 17,169 sq m (including retained / refurbished existing buildings) comprising the existing farm hub (sui generis), a rural enterprise centre (Use Classes E, C1 and F1), a rural food and retail centre (Use Class E and F1), an equestrian centre (Use Class F2 and C1) and a glamping site (Use Class E and sui generis); provision of new hardstanding, pedestrian, cycle and vehicular access, circulation and parking, landscaping including new tree planting, maintenance and improvements to the Public Rights of Way, site infrastructure and ground remodelling.

24. This floorspace is broken down in the table below:

Schedule of Accommodation				
Element	Use	Existing Floorspace to be Retained / Converted / Refurbished in sq m	New Floorspace in sq m	Total Floorspace Proposed (Gross External Area) in sq m
Farm Hub	Sui generis	2,000		2,000
Rural Enterprise Centre	E (Office and Light Industrial)	3,175		3,175
	C1 (Staff / Student Accommodation)	230		230
	F1 (Education and Training)	650		650
Rural Food and Retail Centre	E (Retail and Cafe)	176	1,431	1,607
	F1 (Education and Training)		315	315
Equestrian Centre	F2 (Assembly and Leisure)		7,788	7,788
	C1 (Staff / Student Accommodation)		320	320
Hardnips Barn and glamping	Sui generis (Glamping)		824	824
	E (Restaurant / Bar)	166	94	260
Total				17,169

25. The Whole Farm Plan seeks to remediate and regenerate Crouchlands Farm by proposing high welfare, low impact and low intensity farming activity, mixed use rural diversification development, rural food and retail opportunities, AgriTech facilities, and the development of a range of premium leisure uses. These are to be taken forward via the five elements of the Whole Farm Plan, which are all intrinsically linked to one another and are as follows:
- Farm hub - a small scale, high welfare, low impact, low intensity livestock operation at the north of the existing farm site, supported by approximately 2,000 sq m of refurbished agricultural buildings for over-wintering of livestock;
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 - Hardnips Barn and glamping - this area would provide luxury and high-end custom built facilities in a serviced glamping site covering approximately 1,084 sq m (use classes sui generis and E). Hardnips Barn will also provide a restaurant space for glamping guests to relax, and will also host workshops and events such as weddings.

Farm hub

26. The farm hub comprises the existing cattle barn and workshop at Crouchlands Farm, which has been refurbished to support (e.g. by providing accommodation for the over-wintering of livestock) and enhance the primary (and existing) farming use. While this is the lawful use of the farm, the proposal seeks to facilitate a move towards small scale, high welfare, low impact, low intensity livestock farming activities. This is to increase the diversity and enhance the resilience of the farming enterprise, and ensure that the farming activity has a responsible environmental footprint, but also to provide an example of best practice.

Rural Enterprise and Education Centre

27. The Rural Enterprise and Education Centre comprises the conversion and refurbishment of five existing farm buildings to provide a mixture of commercial and education uses. The existing 'courtyard' between the buildings will accommodate car parking with further car

parking provided adjacent to the farm hub and adjacent to the access road leading to the Farm hub.

28. The exact uses of the buildings are broken-down as:
- building B - this building will provide a range of office units and meeting spaces;
 - building C - this building will provide staff and student accommodation for those working or studying at the Farm that require overnight accommodation;
 - building D - this building will provide a mix of light industrial units;
 - building E - this building will provide further light industrial units with ancillary meeting spaces; and
 - building F - this building will accommodate the proposed AgriTech Centre, providing a mixture of education and training accommodation to support the wider 'education' objective of Artemis Land and Agriculture.
29. The office and light industrial units provide well-designed space for artisan craftspeople, such as food producers, bakers, chefs, decorative iron workers, and woodworkers local to the area or attracted to Crouchlands Farm by its diverse and innovative approach to agricultural practice.
30. The AgriTech Centre provides a purpose-built high-tech environment for seminars, classes, innovation labs, and conferences facilitating knowledge-sharing amongst the farming community. The building will include meeting rooms and space for conferences and lectures, as well as a demonstration hall into which farm machinery and livestock can be brought in to.

Rural Food and Retail Centre

31. The Rural Food and Retail Centre is provided across four buildings, comprising two new buildings and the conversion and refurbishment of an existing agricultural building arranged around a central courtyard, and a separate building housing the cookery school.
32. The main building, the Rural Food and Retail Food Hall, acts as an anchor by providing a farm shop and cafe. The farm shop will showcase the best of West Sussex food and drink (grown on-site and at other local farms). The produce sold, such as meat reared on the farm and organic food and beverages, will derive value from its on-site production, low mileage, and connection to the wider Crouchlands Farm. The offer will be very much complementary to the existing produce available in the shops in the surrounding villages.
33. Seating (including outdoor seating with a play area), toilet facilities and kitchen facilities are also provided alongside the cafe. Four small retail units are also included within the Rural Food and Retail Food Hall, with a further small retail unit provided in the refurbished existing agricultural building.
34. The Rural Food and Retail Centre also includes a Cookery School. The Cookery School contains meeting space for non-practical work, a 'show-and-tell' counter for demonstrations,

and ten counter units with appliances for practical learning classes such as cookery classes and butchery. The building also has storage space, toilet facilities, an office, and a lounge for administration and student amenity. Outside the building, the school has car parking, compost bins and refuse, an outdoor dining terrace, and a kitchen garden that facilitates vegetable and herb planting.

Equestrian Centre

35. The Equestrian Centre includes three competition standard arenas: two outdoor (80m x 50m and 60m x 30m) and one indoor. The indoor arena provides a 90m x 30m space to exercise and compete horses on site in all weathers safely, and provide sheltered riding to local residents who may wish to exercise their horse in warm, dry conditions in the event of adverse weather. The building will also provide storage for light equipment such as show jumps, arena harrows and rollers.
36. To the south of the arenas are stables and a hay barn for the horses as well as a therapy centre for equine rehabilitation. The therapy centre will include a therapy pool, water treadmill and cold spa available for horses in the local community, on site and those in need of short stays with veterinary referrals to offer a variety of intensive treatments not available locally, and very rarely available in one location.
37. There is parking for equestrian event visitors as well as parking for competitors and horse trailers at the southern end of the area. Equestrians would also be able to utilise the extensive Public Rights of Way network at the Farm, and maintenance and improvements to this network also form part of the Whole Farm Plan.

Hardnips Barn and glamping

38. High quality glamping accommodation, centred around Hardnips Barn, is proposed to the west of the application site. Visitors arriving via car will park in the new car parking to the south of Hardnips Copse, and access the reception located in Hardnips Barn via an improved existing path through Hardnips Copse. As well as accommodating the reception, the refurbished Hardnips Barn will include a restaurant and bar for those visitors staying with the glamping accommodation.
39. The glamping accommodation itself is located to the north east and south west of Hardnips Barn. The field to the north east accommodates five luxury lodges and five underground pods for guests to stay in during their time at Crouchlands Farm. The field to the south west accommodates five small treehouses and two wigwams, as well as five shepherd's huts. A special events area is also included within this field.

Other elements

40. The proposal also includes the provision of new hardstanding, pedestrian, cycle and vehicular access, circulation and parking. This includes a new junction and access road from Rickman's

Lane (preserving the existing access route which will continue to serve the Farm hub, with a secondary access proposed to serve the Farm hub).

41. New tree planting (320 in total) is also proposed, as part of Artemis's commitment to continuing the remediation and restoration of the Farm but also to deliver landscape and ecology enhancements. The new tree planting would also be secured in perpetuity by the woodland management proposals included within the application. This is particularly targeted at degraded areas of the site including:
 - reinstating a historic green corridor between Hardnips Copse and Limekiln Wood; and
 - improving the the condition of the field boundary to the west of the proposed equestrian centre, to restore the historic tree-lined character of this field boundary.
42. The proposal also includes the maintenance and improvement of the extensive Public Rights of Way network across the site as follows:
 - reinstatement of Footpath 564, once the existing Lagoon has been remediated, including the removal of fences along its length where possible. Where this is not possible due to operational considerations, appropriate stiles will be provided;
 - Footpath 633/2 will be improved, to provide re-profiled surface to facilitate drainage, culvert of the existing drainage ditch which traverses the Footpath, and provision of a firmer surface in accordance with West Sussex County Council's specification;
 - permissive paths will be provided through Limekiln Wood and Hardnips Copse, and in conjunction with the Woodland Trust, the provision of a permissive path will be explored at Limekiln Wood alongside information boards;
 - the existing permissive route which has been made temporarily available to the south of Middleground Copse will be established as a permissive route, subject to ground conditions and activities on the wider farm site; and
 - Bridleway 643 will be widened in part to enable the movement of farm machinery.

Potential future development

43. The plans accompanying the application also refer to future development opportunities that are not part of this planning application but nevertheless form part of the longer-term vision for the Farm. These include:
 - two treehouses set within the woodland where there are natural clearings - this would be an expansion of the glamping offer but requires careful consideration given its suggested location within Limekiln Wood;
 - an agricultural barn to store hay and machinery - none of the existing agricultural buildings are of a sufficient height to fulfil this function, and so a new building would be required; and

- glasshouse / demonstration kiln to the south east of the proposed glamping area - this is the site of the much-disturbed glassworks of late medieval/early post-medieval date. It retains the potential to be the site of a demonstration kiln to showcase an example of the the local industry that was prevalent in the medieval and post-medieval periods.
44. These proposals would, if brought forward, be the subject of future planning applications including further community engagement and consultation.

E. PLANNING POLICY COMPLIANCE

45. The development plan documents relevant to the application site comprise:
- Chichester Local Plan (2015);
 - West Sussex Waste Local Plan (2014); and
 - West Sussex and South Downs Joint Minerals Plan (2018).
46. The National Planning Policy Framework (2019) (“the Framework”) is a material consideration of significant weight. Other material planning considerations include:
- ‘Creating a Prosperous and Sustainable Economy - the Economic Development Strategy for Chichester District 2019 - 2024;
 - Surface Water and Foul Drainage Supplementary Planning Document; and
 - the Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership’s Local Industrial Strategy, Gatwick 360 Strategic Economic Plan and Build Back Stronger, Smarter and Greener Framework.
47. The Local Plan policies relevant to the proposal are considered to be:
- Policy 1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
 - Policy 2: Development Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy;
 - Policy 3: The Economy and Employment Provision;
 - Policy 25: Development in the North of the Plan Area;
 - Policy 30: Built Tourist and Leisure Development¹;
 - Policy 39: Transport, Accessibility and Parking;
 - Policy 40: Sustainable Design and Construction;
 - Policy 42: Flood Risk and Management;
 - Policy 45: Development in the Countryside;
 - Policy 46: Alterations, Change of Use and/or Re- use of Existing Buildings in the Countryside;
 - Policy 47: Heritage and Design;
 - Policy 48: Natural Environment;
 - Policy 49: Biodiversity;
 - Policy 52: Green Infrastructure; and
 - Policy 55: Equestrian Development.

¹ Policy 31 is not considered relevant as it relates to caravan and camping sites, which the Local Plan defines (paragraph 16.30) as those which primarily provide accommodation in temporary and mobile units. The proposed glamping units within the Whole Farm Plan are not designed to accommodate temporary, mobile or touring units, in order to provide a year-round offer.

48. Policy M9 of the West Sussex and South Downs Joint Minerals Plan is also relevant to the proposal.

Emerging policy

49. Chichester District Council is currently undertaking a Local Plan Review which will shape where new development will go in the Chichester District up to 2035. The Preferred Approach version of the plan was published in December 2018 and consulted on between 13 December 2018 and 7 February 2019. It is anticipated that the emerging plan will be adopted in Autumn 2022 - Spring 2023. Limited weight can be afforded to this currently.
50. Crouchlands Farm as a whole spans across Kirdford Parish and Plaistow and Ifold Parish, but the application boundary falls solely within the Parish of Plaistow and Ifold. At the time of writing, the Plaistow and Ifold Neighbourhood Plan had been withdrawn.

Policy I: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

51. Policy I seeks to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the district. The proposal accords with this overall objective, by:
- in social terms:
 - contributing to local health and recreation through maintaining and improving the on-site Public Rights of Way, notably the routes 3519, 564, 633 and 643, and opportunities provided through the Equestrian Centre; and
 - providing educational opportunities through the Rural Enterprise Centre and Equestrian Centre, in areas such as farming, woodland management and animal welfare;
 - in economic terms:
 - contributing to rural diversification by creating approximately 142 FTE jobs in different sectors;
 - creating opportunities for knowledge-sharing of new farming techniques and procedures via the farm hub and Rural Enterprise Centre;
 - providing accommodation in the Rural Enterprise Centre for businesses which require or value a rural location;
 - providing a mix of accommodation to encourage start-ups and small-scale enterprises;
 - introducing opportunities for the sale of local produce (including that from the farm hub or Rural Enterprise Centre) through the Rural Food and Retail Centre; and
 - providing visitor accommodation (capable of accommodating a longer tourist season), to contribute to Chichester's visitor economy; and
 - in environmental terms:

- continuing the remediation of Crouchlands Farm;
- restoring degraded parts of the Farm, including through the planting of 320 new trees and restoring previous tree belts (between Limekiln Wood and Harndnip's Copse) and field boundaries (to the west of the Equestrian Centre);
- introducing and securing long-term woodland management; and
- improving existing habitats, and creating new ones.

52. Policy I then reconfirms the duty imposed by section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) by setting out that planning applications that accord with the policies in the development plan will be approved, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The proposal complies with the development plan when read as a whole, and material considerations add weight to, rather than detract from, the case for granting planning permission.

Policy 2: Development Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy

53. The relevant extract here states that development in the Rest of the Plan Area is:

...restricted to that which requires a countryside location or meets an essential local rural need or supports rural diversification in accordance with Policies 45-46.

54. The wording in Policy 2, and specifically the use of the word "or", indicates that - for the purposes of this policy - only one of the criterion needs to be met. In addition, the terms "essential" and "local" are not defined in the Local Plan, but are considered to relate to:

- in the case of "essential", whether a particular need has been identified to contribute to a specified need as set out in, for example, national planning policy; a Council document, such as a Local Plan or Economic Development Strategy; a document produced by a recognised industry body; a document prepared by an applicant; or arising from a specific characteristic of a site e.g. the need to repair a degraded landscape; and
- in the case of "local", the same meaning as a Local Plan or Local Enterprise Partnership i.e. on a district basis or on the basis of a particular functional geography (e.g. economic).

55. The proposal meets the requirements of Policy 2 as follows:

- *a countryside location* - the proposal is intrinsically linked to the remediation and regeneration of Crouchlands Farm, which is itself located within the countryside. Specific elements of the Whole Farm Plan are also acknowledged as requiring a countryside location (e.g. the Equestrian Centre - paragraph 20.11, page 216 of the Local Plan) and the intrinsic link between the different elements reinforces the requirement for a countryside location. For example, this intrinsic link is vital to how the Whole Farm Plan seeks to support rural diversification (an identified objective of

the Local Plan; paragraph 3.16, page 25), which by definition can only occur in a rural area;

- *an essential local rural need* - while the focus of the proposal is a need to remediate the environment of Crouchlands Farm itself, there is also a demonstrable need for:
 - rural diversification, as set out in the vision (page 24) and objectives (paragraph 3.16, page 25) of the Council's Local Plan. This includes the need identified in the Council's Economic Development Strategy to provide "*the right business accommodation in the right locations*", which recognises that some business require rural locations e.g. the growing viticulture sector as identified in the Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership's Gatwick 360 Strategic Economic Plan;
 - equestrian development (paragraph 20.10, page 216 of the Local Plan; the Equestrian Report submitted with the application); and
 - visitor accommodation, with a lack of suitable accommodation identified in paragraph 16.25 (page 149) of the Council's Local Plan and by the Accommodation Diversification Research submitted with this application; and
- *supports rural diversification* - the Farm currently provides limited employment opportunities within agriculture. The proposal seeks to enhance these existing opportunities, but also seeks to broaden the range of opportunities by extending these to other sectors such as business and tourism, reflecting the support in paragraph 83 of the Framework for the the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses and sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments. In doing so, the proposal will increase the variety of employment opportunities in the local area. It is estimated that the proposal will create circa 142 full time equivalent jobs - a significant increase on the circa 5 full time equivalent jobs that Farm currently supports.

56. The proposal therefore complies with Policy 2.

Policy 3: The Economy and Employment Provision

57. Local Plan Policy 3 seeks to support the sustainable growth of the local economy, including:

[...]

- *planning to provide a wider range of local employment opportunities in the rural parts of the Plan area.*

[...]

- *supporting and facilitating proposals and initiatives which contribute to implementing the priorities identified in the Economic Development Strategy for Chichester District.*

[...]

- *small-scale employment development or live/work units, including extensions to existing sites in rural areas, may be identified in neighbourhood plans or permitted in appropriate circumstances where commercial demand exists.*

58. At the current time the existing Farm provides limited employment opportunities within agriculture (and circa only 5 FTE jobs). Much of this is seasonal, meaning employment opportunities that do exist do not necessarily provide income security for employees.
59. The Whole Farm Plan will generate a wide range of employment opportunities, and approximately 142 FTE jobs across the different elements. Existing opportunities are therefore improved by the proposed development and there will be a greater variety in terms of the quality and range of employment opportunities at the Farm.
60. At the forefront of this is the Rural Enterprise Centre, which provides high quality workspace for a mix of businesses requiring office and light industrial accommodation. The workspace is designed for those businesses that require a rural location, such as those involved in agricultural research and development, and a range of unit sizes are also provided to encourage start-ups and small-scale enterprises. This contributes to the implementation of Priority 3 of the Council's Economic Development Strategy, by providing alternative employment opportunities to attract and retain working age people over a longer-term in high quality business accommodation in the right locations for their businesses.
61. At the same time, the employment opportunities associated with the Rural Food and Retail Centre, as well as the glamping site, provide alternative employment opportunities. The glamping accommodation has specifically been selected to extend the tourist seasons, thus providing more secure employment opportunities. The mutual support the elements offer one another contributes to providing employment security, but also makes the best use of the natural assets of Crouchlands Farm in accordance with Priority 4 of the Council's Economic Development Strategy.
62. The policy supports live/work units in appropriate circumstances. The site comprises a total of 8 live/work units as part of the Equestrian Centre (4 units) and the Rural Enterprise Centre (4 units). As set out in the Equestrian Report, it is imperative that the Equestrian Centre is manned at all times when horses are on-site for health and safety reasons, as explained in the supporting Equestrian Report (and as supported by E.10 (page 278 of the Local Plan). The 4 live/work units at the rural enterprise centre will be used solely by students and employees which are required on site at all times. The live/work units will cause no harm to the character of the area or the amenities of adjoining properties, particularly in relation to increased noise and disturbance.
63. The Whole Farm Plan meets the aims and objectives of the Chichester Economic Development Strategy by positively contributing to the rural economy. The strategy acknowledges "*the need to attract and retain working age people; stresses the importance of education and training in raising aspirations and developing skills; encourages the District to make better economic use of its considerable natural and cultural assets*". The Whole Farm Plan creates a space that will be attractive to working age people, and offers education and training facilities and courses on-site, close to the natural environment.

64. The scheme is also informed by Coast to Capital's regional and local growth plans such as the Local Industrial Strategy, and Gatwick 360 Strategic Economic Plan. The applicant is in discussions with Coast to Capital, as well as other organisations such as Brinsbury College and Chichester College Group to ensure that valuable and credible working partnerships are established from an early stage. This aligns with the Chichester Economic Development Strategy which seeks to develop and maintain on-going dialogue between education providers and business groups.
65. The proposal therefore complies with Policy 3.

Policy 25: Development in the North of the Plan Area

66. This policy states that the Council will encourage and support development proposals and other initiatives that:
- *conserve and enhance the rural character of the area, the quality of its landscape and the natural and historic environment;*
 - *safeguard existing local facilities and expand the range of local facilities.*
67. At the heart of the Whole Farm Plan is the recognition of the opportunities that exist to restore the character and environment of the Farm, and conserve its landscape and natural environment. Parts of the Farm are currently in a degraded condition. Extensive areas of woodland have been neglected and left unmanaged (or even in one area, planted with conifers) and some areas (such as the lagoon known as 'lagoon 2') have undergone a process of decontamination and restoration. For many years this Farm was industrial in its character and it therefore does not display the remote, tranquil character that is typical of other parts of the Low Weald landscape. The proposal therefore includes direct enhancements (e.g. tree planting) and longer-term measures such as the woodland management proposed and the comprehensive biodiversity strategy has also been created to improve ecological gain across the Farm.
68. The elements of the Whole Farm Plan have been proposed to complement this, with low intensity uses being proposed in characteristically rural buildings that respect both the natural environment and landscape. The masterplanning process with a landscape focus, meaning that the built development will be accommodated such that any residual local landscape and visual impacts are mitigated. This careful design process will ensure the resulting masterplan has no significant adverse landscape and visual effects and in fact will enhance the landscape character through additional planting.
69. The existing local facilities in Plaistow and Kirdford will be protected and improved by an increase in visitors to the area. The elements of the proposal also seek to expand the range of local facilities, offering (via the rural food and retail centre) a different type of retail to the limited offer that exists within nearby Plaistow and Ifold. The proposals therefore comply with Policy 25 of the adopted local plan and are in accordance with the aspirations of the emerging Local Plan.

Policy 30: Built Tourist and Leisure Development

70. As set out at paragraph 16.25 of the Local Plan:

visitors support a range of facilities and services which are important to the local economy and enhance its attractiveness as a location for businesses and residents. However, due to a lack of suitable accommodation an insufficient number of tourists are able to stay overnight. To support the visitor economy, new tourist accommodation and attractions will be encouraged in areas that can accommodate additional visitor numbers without detriment to the environment. This will enable development and provide facilities that could extend the tourist season and also benefit the local community.

71. Policy 30 sets out six criteria against which proposals for tourist and leisure development will be assessed. These are set out below, along with commentary as to how the proposal complies with these criteria.

It is sensitively designed to maintain the tranquillity and character of the area

72. The proposal includes the re-use the existing Hardnips Barn to provide its reception and catering facilities. Glamping accommodation is proposed to the north east and south west of Hardnips Barn, with additional landscape planting (which provides privacy between the accommodation, but also contributes the character of the landscape) and wider enhancements (including restoring a green corridor between Hardnips Copse and Limekiln Wood). Chichester's Economic Strategy sets out a need for high quality visitor accommodation (page 4), and the glamping accommodation contributes to this meeting this priority.
73. The supporting Noise Assessment demonstrates that the proposed glamping use, including any events hosted within Hardnips Barn, will not cause significant impacts. Impacts would also be mitigated by other legislation and requirements e.g. licensing and management.
74. The low density of the accommodation, coupled with the landscape proposals, will ensure the tranquillity and the character of the area is maintained.

Is located so as to minimise impact on the natural and historic environment, including that of visitors or users of the facility, particularly avoiding increasing recreational pressures on Chichester Harbour AONB and Pagham Harbour and other designated sites

75. The glamping accommodation is located outside of the ancient woodland buffer zone, with access to the woodland itself currently restricted through existing fencing. Proposed access through Hardnips Copse will be restricted to existing and designated pathways, and is part of the wider programme of improvement and management that the proposal would secure (which include all areas of woodland, but particularly those identified as having been neglected and left unmanaged).

It provides a high quality attraction or accommodation

76. The proposed glamping accommodation will comprise a range of bespoke designed, premium units that have been specifically selected to provide high quality accommodation. This has also been informed by the Accommodation Diversification Research Report, which provides an audit of existing accommodation within the area. This identified that there was a lack of accommodation in the local area that was capable of occupation on a yearly basis, with most sites offering only seasonal accommodation.

Encourages an extended tourist season

77. Linked to the quality of the accommodation is its ability to provide accommodation for a longer tourist season. The selected accommodation is more durable while being less intrusive than other forms of accommodation. The mutual support provided by the glamping accommodation to the other elements of the Whole Farm Plan (and vice-versa), also supports an extended tourist season e.g. by providing accommodation for indoor equestrian events or events within the Rural Food and Retail Centre (e.g. the cookery school).

Be of a scale appropriate to the location and demonstrate they require a rural location and cannot be accommodated elsewhere, or the proposal is associated with the expansion of an existing facility

78. The proposed glamping site differs from conventional, commercial, glamping sites where accommodation is often provided at a high density, to maximise the number of guests that can be accommodated at any one time. The alternative approach at Crouchlands Farm has sought to understand the quantum of accommodation that could be integrated within an enhanced landscape while maintaining a high quality visitor experience (e.g. providing privacy between accommodation units) and to minimise any impact on the natural environment.
79. Glamping, by its nature, requires a rural location and the accommodation here seeks to maximise opportunities to experience the local area (e.g. the South Downs National Park) and to support the other elements of the Whole Farm Plan (as set out in the Operational Statement). This intrinsic link between the glamping accommodation and the other elements of the Whole Farm Plan mean that the accommodation is vital part of the overall approach to remediate and regenerate the Farm.

Support the objectives of rural regeneration / diversification

80. The Local Plan defines (on page 227) rural diversification as:

improving and sustaining the quality, range and occupational mix of employment in rural area in order to provide wide and varied work opportunities for rural people, including those formerly or currently employed in agriculture and related sectors.

81. The glamping site, and Whole Farm Plan as a whole, self-evidently accords with this definition by offering alternative employment opportunities beyond those limited agricultural opportunities that currently exist. The glamping site itself will provide opportunities in administration, catering and maintenance. The choice of accommodation, to provide an extended tourist season, also seeks to improve income security by minimising seasonal opportunities.
82. The proposal therefore complies with Policy 30.

Policy 39: Transport, Accessibility and Parking

83. Local Plan Policy 39 seeks to ensure that development provides for the access and transport demands they create, is located and designed to minimised additional traffic generation, has safe and adequate means of access and internal circulation, encourages sustainable modes of transport, and does not create residual cumulative impacts which are severe. This reflects paragraph of the Framework which states:

Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.

The proposed access arrangements are therefore considered to be an improvement to highway safety, despite the increase in vehicular traffic movement.

Accessibility

84. The main vehicular access to the site is from Rickman's Lane. The existing access road will be retained for farm machinery and access to the existing residential properties. A new access road is provided approximately 50m southeast of the existing access point, which would provide greater visibility for vehicles emerging from the site than is afforded by the current arrangement.
85. The application site is accessible by sustainable transport options which include:
- bus service 64, which is routed past the site on Rickman's Lane;
 - walking and cycling via the extensive network of Public Rights of Way, (which are also to be improved, reinstated (where they are currently closed) and improved, as set out in Appendix F, and Section 5.6 of the Transport Assessment);
 - low and ultra low emission vehicles (the proposal seeks to enhance this by installing charging points to cover 20% of car parking provision, with a further 20% served by cabling to allow for future installation of charging points); and
 - car sharing (the proposal seeks to secure measures to achieve this via the Travel Plan).

86. The proposal also includes other measures to support and enhance the above, including promoting local recruitment and sourcing local produce and the provision of secure cycling parking and associated showering facilities.

Trip generation and highways safety

87. Compared to the Farm's existing use, the proposal would result in a net increase in trips to and from the site. The majority of trips generated would be vehicular. During typical operation, the total daily increase in trips associated with all uses is approximately 729 two-way trips during the weekdays, most of which are likely to be cars and light vehicles associated with the Rural Enterprise Centre, Rural Food and Retail Centre and glamping site. On a Saturday, when there is an eventing show taking place at the equestrian centre (i.e. the worst-case scenario), it is anticipated that the proposal could generate 1,060 daily trips. These trips would however be spread over the whole day and would vary across the week reflecting the nature of the different elements of the Whole Farm Plan.
88. Taking this into account, Section 10 of the Transport Assessment confirms that:

...the development proposal results in a negligible impact on the local highway network.

89. This confirmation is supported by the modelling included within the Transport Assessment, which demonstrates that all junctions are forecast to continue operating well within their theoretical capacity. In light of all of this, the Transport Assessment sets out that the "vehicle and non-motorised user trips associated with the development are unlikely to further exacerbate any road safety problems at this location".

Car and cycle parking

90. Paragraph 18.1 of the Local Plan sets out that there needs to be flexibility to provide appropriate car and cycle parking. This also reflects paragraph 107 of the Framework which states that local planning authorities should take into account a range of factors if they choose to set local parking standards, including the accessibility of the development; the type, mix and use of development; the availability of an opportunities for public transport; local car ownership levels; and the need to ensure an adequate provision of spaces for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles.
91. The car parking provision for the proposal has taken into account the trip generation set out above, and has been discussed and agreed with West Sussex County Council during pre-application discussions. The provision also takes into account the shared use of the bays, recognising that each element of the Whole Farm Plan may be in use at different times of the day and week.

92. The proposal provides a total of 390 car parking spaces and 126 horsebox parking spaces. The breakdown of parking areas is set out in the below table.

Car parking schedule	
Element	Proposed Spaces
Rural Food and Retail (with some occasional 'VIP' parking for the Equestrian Centre, and also opportunities to share demand with cookery school and Rural Enterprise Centre)	93 (including 13 disabled spaces)
Cookery school	15 (including 3 disabled spaces)
Rural Enterprise Centre (with opportunities to share with the Rural Food and Retail Centre)	55 (including 4 disabled spaces)
Equestrian Centre	157 visitor car parking spaces; plus 126 small or 63 large trailer spaces
Hardnips Barn and glamping	25 (including 2 disabled spaces)
Special events car park	44 unmarked spaces

93. The figures in the table above include the overflow car parking area for the Equestrian Centre. It is considered unlikely that this will be used on a regular basis, but has been included in response to comments received during the public consultation process. No other overflow parking is proposed and the applicant has committed to providing an Events Traffic Management Plan (as per **Appendix I**) to provide further detail as to when and how this overflow area will be required.
94. 105 cycle parking spaces will be provided as part of the proposed development within safe and secure cycle storage facilities.
95. The Framework Travel Plan submitted alongside this application supports the level car and cycle parking provision by identifying how measures, such as a car share, would be encouraged.

Summary

96. As set out in the Transport Assessment (section 11):

It has been demonstrated that the transport impacts of delivering such a development are either negligible or can be appropriately managed and mitigated through the planning application stage, with appropriate conditions.

It is considered that the proposed development will not have an adverse impact on the local highway network and accords with Paragraph 109 of the NPPF [...] and therefore, it is

considered that there are no transport-related reasons why the development as proposed should not be recommended for approval by the local highway authority.

97. The proposal therefore complies with Policy 39.

Policy 40: Sustainable Design and Construction

98. The proposal is accompanied by a Sustainable Design and Construction Statement setting out how the proposal complies with the ten criteria of Policy 40. In summary, the proposal has been designed to:

- re-use existing buildings (the rural enterprise centre and Hardnips Barn);
- avoid new buildings within close proximity to ancient woodland (new buildings are at least 15m away);
- avoid, where possible, root protection areas and to utilise sensitive construction techniques where this is not possible;
- ensure the spaces within buildings (whether re-used or new) is flexible to adapt to the needs of occupiers;
- incorporate an integrated approach to renewable energy including opportunities for electric farm and visitor vehicles; and
- screen new development, and use this screening to enhance the landscape and ecological value of the Farm.

99. The proposal therefore complies with Policy 40.

Policy 42: Flood Risk and Water Management

100. Paragraph 159 of the Framework states that “*inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk (whether existing or future)*”. Local Plan Policy 42 echoes this, and allows development to be permitted where there is no increase to the risk of flooding elsewhere from any source and it must be safe. The policy also encourages SuDS to be used where possible. Furthermore, Policy C11 of the emerging Neighbourhood Plan requires all new development to make provision to control the risk of run-off resulting from hard surfacing, and to provide adequate surface water and foul drainage disposal, including the provision of SuDS.

101. The site is wholly within Flood Zone 1, where there is a low risk of tidal or fluvial flooding. While the proposal will increase the amount of hardstanding, mitigation measures are incorporated to reduce surface run-off and associated flooding risk. A range of SuDS devices will be employed across the site, including green roofs, rain gardens and swales, attenuation basins and permeable paving, to mimic the existing greenfield state of the site. These devices will also improve the quality of surface water discharged from the site.

102. It is proposed that a detailed Foul Sewerage Assessment would be a condition of the planning permission (as per **Appendix I**).
103. The proposal therefore complies with Policy 42.

Policy 45: Development in the Countryside

104. Policy 45 states that, within the countryside:

development will be granted where it requires a countryside location and meets the essential, small scale, and local need which cannot be met within or immediately adjacent to existing settlements

105. The criteria to be satisfied in this part of the policy are the same as those in Policy 2, although the use of “and” by Policy 45 (instead of “or”) in Policy 2 means that - for the purposes of this policy - all criteria must be met. The terms “essential” and “local” remain undefined, but as considered to relate to:
- in the case of “essential”, whether a particular need has been identified to contribute to a specified need as set out in, for example, national planning policy; a Council document, such as a Local Plan or Economic Development Strategy; a document produced by a recognised industry body; a document prepared by an applicant; or arising from a specific characteristic of a site e.g. the need to repair a degraded landscape; and
 - in the case of “local”, the same meaning as a Local Plan or Local Enterprise Partnership i.e. on a district basis or on the basis of a particular functional geography (e.g. economic).
106. The proposal meets this first part of the policy as follows:
- *a countryside location* - the proposal is intrinsically linked to the remediation and regeneration of Crouchlands Farm, which is itself located within the countryside. The proposal also seeks to support rural diversification (an identified objective of the Local Plan; paragraph 3.16, page 25), which by definition can only occur in a rural area;
 - *an essential local rural need* - while the focus of the proposal is a need to remediate the environment of Crouchlands Farm itself, there is also a demonstrable need for:
 - rural diversification, as set out in the vision (page 24) and objectives (paragraph 3.16, page 25) of the Council’s Local Plan. This includes the need identified in the Council’s Economic Development Strategy to provide “*the right business accommodation in the right locations*”, which recognises that some business require rural locations e.g. the growing viticulture sector as identified in the Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership’s Gatwick 360 Strategic Economic Plan;

- equestrian development (paragraph 20.10, page 216 of the Local Plan; the Equestrian Report submitted with the application), which itself requires a countryside location (paragraph 20.11, page 216 of the Local Plan); and
- visitor accommodation, with a lack of suitable accommodation identified in paragraph 16.25 (page 149) of the Council's Local Plan and by the Accommodation Diversification Research submitted with this application; and
- *supports rural diversification* - the Farm currently provides limited employment opportunities within agriculture. The proposal seeks to enhance these existing opportunities, but also seeks to broaden the range of opportunities by extending these to other sectors such as business and tourism, reflecting the support in paragraph 83 of the Framework for the the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses and sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments. In doing so, the proposal will increase the variety of employment opportunities in the local area. It is estimated that the proposal will create circa 142 full time equivalent jobs onsite (and a number of others off-site as set out in the Economic Impact Assessment) - a significant increase on the circa 5 full time equivalent jobs that Farm currently supports.

107. Policy 45 also lists three criteria that proposals should meet - these are considered further below.

The proposal is well related to an existing farmstead or group of buildings, or located close to an established settlement

108. Crouchlands Farm is an existing farm comprising several existing buildings, including those to be re-used as the Rural Enterprise Centre, and Hardnips Barn. These existing buildings form the hub of the Whole Farm Plan, with new development built alongside and around this to allow the agricultural activities to continue to the east, south and west.

109. While "close to" is not defined by the policy, the Farm is located immediately to the south of Plaistow; 1.5km south-west of Ifold and 3km north of Kirdford.

The proposal is complementary to and does not prejudice any viable agricultural operations on a farm and other existing viable uses

110. The farming activity is an integral part of the Whole Farm Plan and its retention and enhancement has been considered as an essential part of the proposal to ensure the new uses would not prejudice it. The proposal is complementary to the farming activity in that it supports increased farming activity while providing mutually supporting uses such as the opportunities for agricultural research and development (in the Rural Enterprise Centre) or the opportunity to sell farm produce within the Rural Food and Retail Centre. The intrinsic links between the elements of the Whole Farm Plan are set out in the Operational Statement.

Proposals requiring a countryside setting, for example agricultural buildings, ensure that their scale, siting, design and materials would have minimal impact on the landscape and rural character of the area

111. The proposal has first sought to make use of existing buildings (in compliance with paragraph 19.23 of the Local Plan, page 190), with the Rural Enterprise Centre utilising existing buildings at the Farm and the re-use of Hardnips Barn included within the proposal. New buildings have then been designed to minimise their impact on the landscape through sensitive siting (with regard to existing topography and landscape, and choice of materials). Screening is also proposed to mitigate visual impact, but to also contribute to enhancements such as repairing tree belts and generally restoring the lost landscape character of the Farm.
112. The proposal therefore complies with Policy 45.

Policy 46: Alterations, Change of Use and /or Re-use of Existing Buildings in the Countryside

113. Policy 46 specifically supports proposals for the conversion or reuse of buildings in the countryside. This reflects paragraph 83 of the Framework, which requires planning decisions to enable:
- a) *the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings*
114. The Whole Farm Plan aims to reuse and refurbish as many of the existing buildings as possible in order to retain the agricultural character of the Farm. The relevant criteria in Policy 46 are set out below to demonstrate how the proposal complies with this policy.

The building is structurally sound and is capable of conversion for employment uses without the need for significant extension, alteration or rebuilding

115. Structural Surveys have been undertaken to show how the buildings are capable for conversion. No extensions or re-building is proposed, with alterations limited to changes to elevations to facilitate the new uses. The Structural Conversion Survey report demonstrates that the buildings to be converted are structurally sound and capable of conversion for the proposed uses without the need for significant extension, alteration or rebuilding.

The proposal is complementary to and does not prejudice any viable agricultural operations on a farm and other existing viable uses

116. The proposal is complementary to the farming activity in that it supports increased farming activity while providing mutually supporting uses such as the opportunities for agricultural research and development (in the Rural Enterprise Centre) or the opportunity to sell farm produce within the Rural Food and Retail Centre. The proposal will not prejudice any viable agricultural operations.

The form, bulk and general design of the building is in keeping with its surroundings and the proposal and any associated development will not harm its landscape character and setting

117. The form and bulk of the existing buildings is already established, and will not be altered as part of the proposal. The alterations to the elevations of the building within the Rural Enterprise Centre will ensure they are fit for purpose (e.g. introducing windows and doors) and the alterations to Hardnips Barn will also ensure that the building is fit for purpose while retaining its overall appearance.

Proposals requiring a countryside setting, for example agricultural buildings, ensure that their scale, siting, design and materials would have minimal impact on the landscape and rural character of the area

118. The scale and siting of the existing buildings is already fixed, but (as above) the alterations to the elevations seek to ensure that these buildings continue to minimise their impact on the landscape and rural character of the area.

The proposal will not damage the fabric or character of any traditional building or the historic character and significance of the farmstead and in the case of a Heritage Asset, whether designated or not, the proposal will not damage the architectural, archaeological or historic interest of the asset or its setting

119. The proposal will not damage the fabric or character of any traditional building or the historic character and significance of the farmstead. As set out in the Landscape and Visual Appraisal, much of the fabric and character had been lost through the previous use of the Farm as a commercial biogas plant (by the previous owners of the site), and the proposal instead seeks to restore the fabric and character of the Farm with sensitively designed new development focused around the existing farm hub / areas of previous intervention.
120. Hardnips Barn, while traditional in appearance, has been the subject of significant alteration (including changes to the elevation) meaning that any historic character or significance has been reduced. In any event, the overall appearance of the Barn will be retained with minor alterations made in accommodating its new use.
121. The proposal therefore complies with Policy 46.

Policy 47: Heritage and Design

122. Policy 47 seeks to conserve and enhance the historic environment. It supports “*new development which recognises, respects and enhances the local distinctiveness and character of the area, landscape and heritage assets*”. This stems from paragraphs 194 and 195 of the Framework that 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. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary...

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.

123. Paragraph 199 of the Framework states that:

When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

124. Paragraph 202 of the Framework states that:

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.

125. The application site is not located within a Conservation Area and the existing buildings within the application boundary are not statutorily or locally listed.

126. There are three Grade II listed buildings in close proximity to the application boundary as follows:

- Crouchland, a Grade II listed house built by Henry Stradwick in 1652 (National Heritage List for England);
- outbuilding in the garden of Crouchland to the west of the house, Grade II listed and probably of 17th century date; and,
- Lanelands, a Grade II listed house.

127. A further three Grade II listed buildings are located in proximity to the application site. The Plaistow Conservation Area is approximately 1 km from the application site. Several non-designated heritage assets, including Hardnips Barn, are located within and around the application site.

128. There will be no direct impacts on the listed buildings as no works are proposed to the buildings themselves. Potential impacts are therefore limited to be to the setting of the three listed buildings set out above.
129. The Heritage Statement accompanying this application identifies that the significance of the Grade II listed buildings lies primarily in their architectural and historic interest - they are good examples of the timber-framed farmhouses and cottages of sixteenth and seventeenth century date that exist in the local area, that themselves reflected the pattern of land use (which itself has remained broadly consistent) in area at that time. Crouchland is elevated above the other examples by virtue of its scale and detailing, but its immediate setting demonstrates the most change with the farmstead (itself a non-designated heritage asset) that originally centred on the house now focused within the twentieth century farm buildings to the north east (within the application site as the farm hub and proposed Rural Enterprise Centre). Some understanding of the farmstead can be derived from the Grade II listed Outbuilding in the Garden of Crouchland, but the setting of this asset has become more domestic as a result of the house now being occupied as a private residence.
130. This Statement has identified what in policy terms is classified as 'less than substantial harm' to the setting of Crouchland as a heritage asset, arising through the introduction of new development specifically to the immediate east of the property, through the development of the Rural Food and Retail Centre and Equestrian Centre. Such change is however not inconsistent with the history of the house and its surrounding context (the house has been part of a wider estate and landholding that has changed over time as agricultural and estate needs have changed).
131. The level of harm is towards the lower end of 'less than substantial' scale and has been mitigated by both the design of the new development, and the new landscape and tree planting included within the development which includes the strengthening of existing, degraded, field boundaries. Once mature, the latter would have reinforced the historic landscape pattern and the different component parts of the proposed development would have been separated and integrated within their landscape context so that the perceived scale of the buildings and infrastructure is reduced. As discussed elsewhere in this Planning Statement, this will also mean that the residential amenity of those occupying the house will be preserved.
132. This 'less than substantial harm' is balanced against the public benefits of the scheme, as per paragraph 202 of the Framework. This includes:
- social:
 - contributes to local health and recreation through maintaining and improving the on-site Public Rights of Way, notably the routes 3519, 564, 633 and 643, and opportunities provided through the Equestrian Centre; and

- provides educational opportunities through the Rural Enterprise Centre and Equestrian Centre, in areas such as farming, woodland management and animal welfare;
- economic:
 - contributes to rural diversification by creating approximately 142 FTE jobs in different sectors;
 - creates opportunities for knowledge-sharing of new farming techniques and procedures via the farm hub and Rural Enterprise Centre;
 - provides accommodation in the Rural Enterprise Centre for businesses which require or value a rural location;
 - provides a mix of accommodation to encourage start-ups and small-scale enterprises;
 - introduces opportunities for the sale of local produce (including that from the farm hub or Rural Enterprise Centre) through the Rural Food and Retail Centre; and
 - provides visitor accommodation (capable of accommodating a longer tourist season), to contribute to Chichester's visitor economy; and
- environmental:
 - continues the remediation of Crouchlands Farm;
 - restores degraded parts of the Farm, including through the planting of 320 new trees and restoring previous tree belts (between Limekiln Wood and Hardnips Copse) and field boundaries (to the west of the Equestrian Centre);
 - introduces and secures long-term woodland management; and
 - improves existing habitats, and creates new ones.

133. The proposal therefore complies with Policy 47.

Policy 48: Natural Environment

134. Section 15 of the Framework sets out that development should protect and enhance valued landscapes. Policy 48 of the Local Plan seeks to ensure that there is no adverse impact on the openness of the views in and around the coast, designated environmental areas and the setting of the South Downs National Park, and the tranquil and rural character of the area. Development must recognise distinctive local landscape character and sensitively contribute to its setting and quality and proposals are to respect and enhance the landscape character of the surrounding area and site, and public amenity through detailed design.

135. The application site is not within the landscape setting of the South Downs National Park and is not within a protected landscape or an area designated for scenic landscape value. However, landscape elements and features which are sensitive to the proposal are:

- the extensive ancient semi-natural woodlands, which have high biodiversity and cultural value;
- the strong network of mature woodland, copses, shaws and hedgerows, with a diverse mix of woodland types and species, which define the historic landscape and drainage pattern in this part of the Low Weald landscape;
- the rural character of the narrow, enclosed tracks and lanes, including historic drove roads (public rights of way) and their associated linear fields, which connect settlements and farmsteads;
- the small scale, intimate and pastoral landscape character with livestock grazing the heavy clay soils; and
- the historic landscape setting of local listed buildings – Crouchland to the west and Laneland to the south.

136. However, parts of the site are in a degraded condition. Extensive areas of woodland have been neglected and left unmanaged (or even in one area, planted with conifers) and some areas (such as the lagoon known as ‘Lagoon 2’) have undergone a process of decontamination and restoration following the closure of the former commercial biogas plant. For many years this area has been an industrial site and it therefore does not display the remote, tranquil character that is typical of other parts of the Low Weald landscape.

137. The supporting Landscape and Visual Impact Appraisal assesses the potential landscape and visual effects arising from the proposed development once operational. In accordance with the relevant policies, the design of the proposal has been landscape-led, by:

- conserving and enhancing the nationally important biodiversity of the ancient woodlands within and surrounding the Site, incorporating a 15m buffer zone and low light corridors for bats;
- reinforcing the historic landscape pattern – replanting historic shaws and hedgerows alongside tracks and within larger fields to conserve and restore the characteristic irregular small scale mosaic of pasture, woodland and shaws;
- restoring despoiled landscapes, re-introducing a sustainable programme of woodland management, including traditional coppice management, restoring natural wetlands, and re-connecting fragmented woodland, wetland and meadow habitats;
- safeguarding the rural character and landscape setting of the Public Rights of Way on the site;
- providing safe vehicular access, with minimal damage to the characteristic enclosed character of local roads;
- encouraging an understanding of the Low Weald’s cultural and landscape heritage by promoting understanding and appreciation of traditional woodcraft and land management techniques and heritage sites, such as the glassworks; and

- creating a high quality environment, with an orderly, functional character, which enhances the existing degraded quality of the site and provides a safe, attractive environment for visitors and staff.

138. The topography and the natural screening (by the way of Ancient Woodlands and established tree belts) of the site ensure that the visual impact of the proposed development is minimal. Section 10 of the Landscape and Visual Impact Appraisal sets out how the potential predicted landscape and visual impacts will be mitigated against. These include (but are not limited to): landscape restoration; the integration of 15m woodland buffer zones; a Woodland Management Plan; extensive new planting of over 300 trees and new native hedgerows and mature tree belts; no/low light zones for wildlife corridors; new habitats for protected species; maintenance of Public Rights of Way; and sensitive materials palettes.

139. The Landscape and Visual Impact Appraisal confirms that:

...With the incorporation of the mitigation measures [...], there are not predicted to be any significant residual landscape and/or visual effects following completion.

140. The development will not give rise to any significant adverse effects on landscape character or on the countryside, and thus complies with Policy 48.

Policy 49: Biodiversity

141. Section 15 of the Framework sets out how proposals should protect and enhance biodiversity where possible, while also minimising the impacts on, and encouraging opportunities for net gains for biodiversity. Policy 49 seeks to ensure that the biodiversity value of the site is safeguarded and that demonstrable harm to habitats or species which are protected or which are of importance to biodiversity is avoided or mitigated. Biodiversity enhancements are to be integrated as part of good design and sustainable development. Any proposal must protect, manage, and enhance the district's network of ecology and biodiversity.

142. The site is not located with a designated Special Area of Conservation, Special Protection Area, RAMSAR area, Site of Special Scientific Interest, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, or National Park. The site is however located within the Impact Zone for Chiddingfold Forest Site of Special Scientific Interest (1.8 km north west), the Zone of Influence of The Mens Special Area of Conservation (3.7 km south east), and the Zone of Influence of the Ebernoe Common Special Area of Conservation (3 km south west).

143. The habitats of greatest ecological value at Crouchlands Farm consist of broadleaved ancient / priority woodland. To ensure that priority habitats (Ancient Woodland) are protected, a 15m buffer zone is established between all new development and woodland boundaries. As section 5.2.2 of the Ecological Impact Assessment (Hardnips Barn and Glamping) sets out:

...to prevent impacts from increased recreational pressure, measures shall be put in place to maintain the existing access routes and deter further public access into the woodland. These measures will include improvement of the existing path bisecting the woodland, together with strategic use of dead-hedging and fencing to restrict access to more sensitive areas. The soft landscape scheme shall include planting of dense thorny shrubs such as hawthorn and blackthorn around the woodland edges to discourage uncontrolled access.

144. Habitats of lesser ecological value within the landholding include improved grassland, species-poor semi-improved grassland, tall ruderal vegetation, buildings and hard-standing.
145. To enhance the habitats of greatest ecological value, and improve those of lesser ecological value, the proposal includes the following measures (as set out in the Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy):
- existing priority habitats (woodland and hedgerows) will be retained and protected within the developed sites (including the incorporation of 15m buffer zones between all new development and protected woodlands);
 - where removal of sections of hedge are required for access these will be compensated for through the creation of new hedgerows within the developed site; and
 - new areas of high-value habitats will be established across Crouchlands Farm through the creation of species-rich wildflower meadows, ponds, and native tree/shrub planting, including the strengthening of existing woodland edges through structural boundary planting.
146. A programme for the eradication of Himalayan balsam would be implemented as part of the proposal.

Protected species

147. Species-specific surveys have identified the following species at Crouchlands Farm:
- roosting bats in trees (including Bechsteins bats);
 - eight species of commuting / foraging bat including barbastelle bats;
 - great crested newt within four ponds within and immediately adjacent to the farm;
 - white admiral and at least seven priority moth species;
 - grass snake, slow worm and common lizard; and
 - nine species of red-list birds recorded as possibly, likely or confirmed breeding within the site.
148. In order to avoid impacts on bats, a sensitive lighting scheme that has been prepared in accordance with the guidelines set out by the Bat Conservation Trust. With the adoption of a sensitive lighting scheme, the Ecological Impact Assessment concludes that the:

...effects on Ebernoe Common and The Mens SACs (and their associated bat populations) are considered to be negligible.

149. The land to the south of the Cookery School includes provision for suitable great crested newt terrestrial habitat. Species-rich grassland would be created within the developed site to provide new habitat for reptiles. Other species-specific enhancement measures include:
- integrated and externally mounted bat boxes;
 - bird boxes (for swifts, house sparrow, barn owl and other common species);
 - log piles and insect houses; and
 - herptile hibernacula.
150. The proposal therefore complies with Policy 49.

Policy 52: Green Infrastructure

151. The 'State of the UK's Woods and Trees' report from the Woodland Trust (**Appendix 2**) sets out that existing woods and trees are under great pressure, with just 7 percent of native woodland in good ecological condition. The key findings of the report are that woods and trees are vital for a healthy, happy society, but not enough is being done to protect, restore and enhance woodland. The report outlines a series of priority actions, including the expansion of woodland and tree cover (particularly native tree and shrub species), the restoration of damaged Ancient Woodland, and making areas more accessible to people to promote a connection to nature.
152. The proposed development will make a considerable contribution to meeting the above actions through the management and protection of existing Ancient Woodland, an extensive programme of new tree woodland planting, and improved accessibility to the public.
153. There are a total of 425 individual trees, and 23 groups of trees, one hedge and thirteen areas of woodland growing within or immediately adjacent to the site. The supporting Arboricultural Impact Assessment assesses the impact of the development of the existing trees. It has assessed the quality, and has recommended that only 7 trees should be removed due to them being of a poor quality. None are mature, veteran or ancient trees, or any trees of high landscape or biodiversity value. Four are Category C and three are Category U trees.
154. The Arboricultural Impact Assessment states that (paragraph 8.1.2, and 5.2.10 respectively):
- The proposed removal of individuals and partial removal of groups of trees will represent no alteration to the main arboricultural features of the site, only a minor alteration to the overall arboricultural character of the site and will not have a significant adverse impact on the arboricultural character and appearance of the local landscape.*

The proposed new wooded areas and additional woodland planting in the ancient woodland buffers result in approximately 2.93ha of planting area, which is supplemented approximately 1.78ha of understorey planting. This is a significant increase in green network area across the site that will provide enhanced connectivity between the woodlands, greater canopy cover, new habitat and new visual features that will improve the landscape character.

155. To protect the Ancient Woodland, a minimum 15m buffer zone is incorporated between the woodland and new development. The introduction of a buffer zone will enhance the biodiversity potential of the woodland by increasing the woodland edge habitat. The buffer will also be structured and planted in such a way to provide a physical barrier between the site and ancient woodland that restricts public access and minimises the potential for light, noise and litter pollution from visitors. Hardnips Barn is an exception to the buffer zone as it is an existing building which is being repurposed to be ancillary to the glamping accommodation.
156. To mitigate the loss of 7 trees, a significant amount of trees are proposed to be planted. 320 additional individual trees are to be planted across the application site, and a new woodland belt is to be planted between Hardnips Copse and Limekiln Wood. Further to this, dense woodland species will be planted at the area of land which Lagoon 2 was previously located.
157. The proposal includes approximately 2.93 hectares of planting area across new wooded areas (including at the former site of Lagoon 1 and Lagoon 2) and ancient woodland buffers. This would make a significant contribution to the existing green network area, improving connectivity between woodlands and improving the landscape character.
158. The Arboricultural Impact Assessment recognises that (paragraph 4.2.43):

Because the proposals comprise a very low impact scheme designed to be sustainable within the existing environment and do not result in any residential development, any indirect impacts to the ancient woodlands are likely to be minor and can be readily mitigated through appropriate management.

159. The Arboricultural Impact Assessment ultimately concludes that (paragraph 8.1.1 onwards):

There are no incursions into the adjacent ancient woodlands, whilst the incursions into the associated 15m buffer zones are minor and do not represent any significant change to the current situation beyond that already posed by existing infrastructure historically permitted to encroach into these areas; consequently, the proposals will not result in any loss of ancient woodland, will avoid any potentially harmful effects on the woodland, and will comply with current UK Planning and development guidance.

The proposed removal of individuals and partial removal of groups of trees [...] will not have a significant adverse impact on the arboricultural character and appearance of the local landscape.

The incursions into the Root Protection Areas of trees to be retained are minor, and subject to implementation of the measures recommended on the Tree Protection Plan and [...] no significant or long-term damage to their root systems or rooting environments will occur.

The proposals will retain all the main arboricultural features of the site, its arboricultural attractiveness, history and landscape character and setting will be maintained.

160. The supporting Woodland Management Plan demonstrates that there will be beneficial and lasting management to the Ancient Woodland which complements the existing woodland management strategy, subject of a felling licence and protects the Ancient Woodland from any potential harm associated with implementation of the Whole Farm Plan. The Management Plan also ensures that future uses of the woodland maintain at least neutral or beneficial management.
161. The Woodland Management Plan considers potential existing and future threats to the woodlands, such as mammalian pests and livestock, disease transmission, invasive species, climate change, and increased anthropogenic uses. The Woodland Strategy then details all of the measures in place to protect the woodland from such threats. The strategy includes measures such as: introducing biosecurity and educational awareness courses, utilising only existing tracks through the woodlands and having no new hardstanding, regular monitoring for invasive species, replenishing the tree stock, reutilising deadwood elsewhere on the farm, amongst many other measures.
162. The low-impact scheme has been designed to be sustainable within the existing environment. A significant amount of care has been taken when putting together a Woodland Management Plan that will not only mitigate any potential harm, but will also restore and enhance the existing woodlands. With regards to the impact on trees, the scheme is wholly in accordance with the development plan.
163. The existing network of Public Rights of Way will be enhanced via a targeted set of improvements that seeks to make these routes more attractive. New permissive paths would be created to enhance connectivity.
164. These measures enhance the landscape and ecological value of the site, but also seek to improve the health and well-being of the local and wider community. It also seeks to make best use of the Farm's natural and cultural assets - as a resource for visitors to the glamping site but also for the benefit of local residents using the public right of way network. The proposal therefore complies with Policy 52.

Policy 55: Equestrian Development

165. Paragraph 20.11 of the Local Plan acknowledges that equestrian development requires adequate land for commercial enterprises and associated buildings which will generally be located in the countryside. Policy 55 then states that planning permission for equestrian

development will be granted where it can be demonstrated that certain criteria have been met. In compliance with these criteria in Policy 55:

- *there is sufficient land for the equestrian centre and for the horses to be kept* - the whole of Crouchlands Farm is 194 hectares, with only 51 hectares being in use for the development. This demonstrates that there is plentiful land for grazing of horses;
- *existing buildings are reused where possible but where new buildings are necessary, these are well-related to existing buildings, appropriate to the number of horses to be kept and the amount of land available* - there are no buildings on-site which have the capacity to be re-used for the indoor area, stables, or ancillary uses due to the buildings being re-used for the other elements of the Whole Farm Plan;
- *there is minimal visual impact on the landscape caused by the proposed development either individually or cumulatively* - the indoor arena is 10m at its highest point and due to the topography of the land is not visible from many of the Public Rights of Way, nor the surrounding area;
- *it does not result in the irreversible loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land* - land at Crouchlands Farm is grade 3 ('good to moderate' quality) agricultural land. As the Land Quality Report sets out, this part of the farm has previously been used for storage of materials including vehicles;
- *there is an agreed comprehensive scheme of management for any ancillary development including lighting, storage, waste disposal, manèges and sub division of fields* - the Lighting Impact Assessment confirms that appropriate lighting is proposed for health and safety purposes. The outdoor arenas will not be lit, hence the need for the indoor arena. The outdoor and indoor arenas are appropriate for a high quality facility such as this. As confirmed in the Equestrian Report, there is plentiful land at Crouchlands for the sub-division of field (which would allow for seasonal rotation to allow the grass to regrow). Private waste disposal arrangements would be made;
- *the proposal, either on its own or cumulatively, with other horse related uses in the area, is compatible with its surroundings, and adequately protects water courses, groundwater and the safety of all road users* - the equestrian centre is compatible with the rural nature of the farm, and will benefit from the extensive Public Rights of Way network. The Rural Food and Retail Centre will provide leisure opportunities for those visiting the farm (either livery users, competitors, or spectators). Water courses will not be impacted by the development. The Public Rights of Way allow for safe hacking, away from the roads;
- *the proposal does not lead to the need for additional housing on site* - no additional housing is proposed. There will be four live/work units above each stable block for health and safety reasons (in accordance with E.10, page 278 of the Local Plan), as set out in the Equestrian Report; and
- *the proposal is well related to or has improved links to the existing bridleway network, with no impact on the bridleway capacity to accommodate the growth* - as set out in the Transport Statement, there is an extensive network of Public Rights of Way in and around the site which horse riders already utilise, and can do going forward.

166. The proposal is well related to or has improved links to the existing bridleway network, with no impact on the bridleway capacity to accommodate the growth.
167. The proposal therefore complies with Policy 55.

Minerals

168. Crouchlands Farm lies within Weald Clay of the Brick Clay Resource Minerals Safeguarding Area. A Mineral Consultation Area covers the same area and also considers Minerals Infrastructure.
169. Policy M9 of the West Sussex and South Downs Joint Minerals Plan refers to 'Safeguarding Minerals' and seeks to avoid minerals sterilisation. Prior extraction can be required unless this is demonstrated to be not practicable or environmentally feasible. In respect of these two tests it is considered neither practicable nor environmentally feasible to require prior extraction, should a viable minerals resource exist. Further evidence will be submitted as part of the planning application to demonstrate this.
170. A Minerals Resource Assessment accompanies this application, concluding that there is an overwhelming need for the redevelopment at Crouchlands Farm which outweighs the safeguarding of the mineral in this instance. There are also significant constraints which indicate that significant prior extraction of clay and removal from site will not be economically viable and will be environmentally unsustainable.

Other matters

Water neutrality

171. Crouchlands Farm is located within the North Sussex Water Resource Supply Zone. Recent advice from Natural England is that new development within this area has the potential to have an adverse impact on integrity on the Arun Valley Special Protection Area, Special Area of Conservation and Ramsar by increasing demand for water abstraction at the Hardham abstraction point.
172. The Whole Farm Plan will therefore be water neutral, by firstly including water reduction measures on the new development comprising:
- rainwater harvesting - harvesting rainwater for toilet flushing and garden use;
 - smart metering - allowing users to automatically track the amount of water they use giving greater visibility and control over water usage;
 - leakage detection and reduction - identifying leaks and undertaking repairs to minimise water wastage;

- the use of water efficient fittings - selecting appropriate Toilets, Urinals, Taps, Showers, Baths, Dishwashers and Washing Machines to achieve significant water usage savings; and
- a water saving culture - educating users on water usage to enable them to make informed decisions on how they use water.

173. Secondly, the Whole Farm Plan will also use rainwater harvesting to serve the current and future livestock demand. This has been integrated into the proposed surface water drainage strategy to ensure that water neutrality can be achieved.

174. The Water Neutrality Report therefore demonstrates that, in terms of specific calculations:

- the existing water demand at the Farm, based on current livestock numbers, is 4,649.4 cub m/annum. Additional livestock could be accommodated at the Farm, which would provide for an existing demand of 8,219 cub m/annum;
- the Whole Farm Plan will result in a demand of 7,350.8 cub m/ annum;
- the water reduction measures detailed above will reduce this demand to 4,191.5 cub m/ annum;
- rainwater harvesting to serve the livestock demand would reduce this further and actually result in an overall decrease in water demand for the site of 457.9 cub m/ annum.

175. It is proposed that these measures be secured by condition (see **Appendix I**).

EIA

176. The Environmental Impact Assessment Report supporting this application demonstrates that at operational stage all residual impacts of the proposal are negligible with the exception of:

- in terms of land quality and hydrogeology, minor adverse residual impacts from possible contamination of soils and groundwater; impact on controlled water; sterilisation of future mineral resources, impact on built environment and property;
- in terms of ecology, minor beneficial impacts on great crested newts and invertebrates; and
- no significant adverse impact on the Plaistow Conservation Area.

Land Quality

177. With regards to the land quality at Crouchlands Farm, the supporting Land Quality Report concludes that (page 26):

...the potential risks associated with the use of the site as agricultural fields and woodland is considered to be low, as are the areas associated with the former glassworks and Lagoons 2 and 4 (due to ongoing decommissioning). The potential risks associated with the main farm

area and Rainbow Field are considered to be low to moderate, this is due to the potential for there to be localised areas of contamination present associated with the former land uses within these parts of the site. These are also the parts of the site where the majority of redevelopment will be undertaken.

Residential amenity

178. The closest element of the proposed development to Crouchland is the Cookery School. Great care and attention has been made to ensure that this element of the development is well screened, to limit the visual impact from Crouchland. The Equestrian Centre to the east of Crouchland will not be visible from Crouchland due to there being two strong tree lines, and a new habitat for Great Crested Newts, which act as a buffer.
179. As set out in the Transport Assessment, the access road to the property will benefit from upgrades such as widening and resurfacing, which will improve residential amenity for the occupier of Crouchland.
180. Moores Green Cottage sits adjacent to the existing farm, and may experience some improvement in odour and noise through the conversion of the adjacent Rural Enterprise Centre. Some impacts may arise from the increase in traffic movements along the access route (the secondary route to the rear of Moores Green Cottage is intended to provide access to the Farm hub and the limited car parking only).

Lighting

181. With regards to lighting, paragraph 185(d) of the Framework sets out that new development should limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation. However, there is an acceptance (e.g. at paragraphs 97 and 119) that development proposals must ensure safety and security of users.
182. New lighting is required at Crouchlands Farm for security reasons, and to ensure the health and safety of all staff and visitors. Areas of the site are only illuminated where absolutely necessary.
183. The supporting Lighting Spill Strategy demonstrates a range of mitigation features such as ensuring that all lighting is of a warm light (rather than a harsh bright light), as low to the ground as possible (there are no tall columns), downward pointing and discreet, with movement and light activated sensors. Suitable shielding is also incorporated to prevent impingement or nuisance upon neighbouring areas.

Noise and Air Quality

184. Section 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework seeks to conserve the natural and local environment by preventing new development from contributing to unacceptable levels of air and noise pollution. Specifically, paragraph 185 seeks to ensure that new development

takes account the likely effects of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the sensitivity of the site and the wider impacts that could arise from the development. Potential adverse noise impacts from new development should be mitigated and reduced, and tranquil areas which have remained relatively undisturbed by noise should be protected.

185. Criteria 10 of Local Plan Policy 40 sets out that a reduction of the impacts associated with pollution (including air, and noise pollution) should be achieved, including but not limited to the promotion of car clubs and facilities for charging electric vehicles.

186. In order to reduce air pollution from traffic generation, the supporting Travel Plan confirms that there will be a range of sustainable initiatives implemented on site. Such measures include, but are not limited to:

- the promotion of car sharing clubs;
- 20% electric vehicle charging capacity;
- secure and sheltered cycle parking;
- showering and clothing locker facilities on-site, for those who wish to walk, run, or cycle to Crouchlands Farm;
- the promotion of working from home initiatives, where possible; and
- an Artemis minibus to collect local schools and community groups for educational activities at the Farm.

187. The supporting Noise Assessment demonstrates that:

...The results of the cumulative assessment for the proposed noise sensitive receptors indicate an indicate a negligible increase over the existing noise levels.

...The findings of the BS 4142 assessment do indicate noise levels that could be considered above the SOAEL, however based upon comparison with internal and external noise level criteria (BS 8233) the predicted noise levels are below or within each of the relevant guidance levels.

...Overall, it is considered that with appropriate noise control and mitigation measures implemented the Proposed Development at Crouchlands Farm, Plaistow is not expected to have a 'significant adverse impact' on the health or quality of life.

Therefore, it is considered that based on the assessment above Proposed Development satisfies the relevant policy considerations set out in the NPPF and the PPG: noise.

188. Although it is not expected that the proposed development will cause an adverse impact, a Noise Management Plan is also expected to be a condition of any planning permission to ensure that noise arising from the proposed development (e.g. spectators of the equestrian events, and occupants of the glamping) is managed. A Construction and Environment Management Plan will also ensure that any temporary increases in noise levels from

construction is managed to protect the amenity of nearby residential properties. The applicant's expected conditions are found at **Appendix I**.

189. The supporting Air Quality Assessment concludes that (section 7):

...The number of trips generated by the development were below the relevant criteria in IAQM and EPUK guidance (IAQM and EPUK, 2017) on all affected roads. A simple assessment was therefore undertaken, and it was determined that significant air quality impacts were unlikely to occur given that air quality in the area is generally good and there is limited risk of the air quality objectives being exceeded. The number of traffic movements were also not expected to lead to significant impacts on designated ecological sites, and all impacts were considered to be not significant.

Operational phase odour emissions from Farm Hub were considered using the risk-based assessment methodology detailed in IAQM guidance (IAQM, 2018). Given the nature and scale of the odour source, the existing character of the area and location of receptors with regard to prevailing wind conditions, the effect of any potential odour was considered to be not significant.

190. With regards to construction dust and particulate, site-specific mitigation measures are recommended, and with the implementation of such, the residual impacts from construction activities are considered to be not significant in accordance with IAQM guidance.

191. Overall, there will be very minimal adverse impacts resulting from the development with regards to noise and air quality and so the scheme accords with the development plan on these matters.

F. PLANNING BALANCE AND POLICY CONCLUSION

192. In assessing the application as a whole, it is clear that the proposal would deliver the following benefits:

- **Social:**
 - contributing to local health and recreation through maintaining and improving the on-site Public Rights of Way, notably the routes 3519, 564, 633 and 643, and opportunities provided through the Equestrian Centre;
 - providing educational opportunities through the Rural Enterprise Centre and Equestrian Centre, in areas such as farming, woodland management and animal welfare;
- **Economic:**
 - contributing to rural diversification by creating approximately 142 on-site FTE jobs in different sectors (plus off-site jobs and temporary jobs during construction);
 - creating opportunities for knowledge-sharing of new farming techniques and procedures via the farm hub and Rural Enterprise Centre;
 - providing accommodation in the Rural Enterprise Centre for businesses which require or value a rural location;
 - providing a mix of accommodation to encourage start-ups and small-scale enterprises;
 - introducing opportunities for the sale of local produce (including that from the farm hub or Rural Enterprise Centre) through the Rural Food and Retail Centre; and
 - providing visitor accommodation (capable of accommodating a longer tourist season), to contribute to Chichester's visitor economy.
- **Environmental:**
 - continuing the remediation of Crouchlands Farm;
 - restoring degraded parts of the Farm, including through the planting of 320 new trees and restoring previous tree belts (between Limekiln Wood and Hardnip's Copse) and field boundaries (to the west of the Equestrian Centre);
 - introducing and securing long-term woodland management; and
 - improving existing habitats, and creating new ones.

193. This is balanced against potential harm in highways and landscape terms. However, as demonstrated above and in the supporting technical documents:

- in highways terms, there would be no adverse impact on the local highway network; and

- in landscape terms, and with the incorporation of the mitigation measures set out in the proposal, there are not predicted to be any significant residual landscape and/or visual effects following completion.

194. The analysis set out in this Planning Statement therefore demonstrates that the proposal accords with the Council's development plan, both in terms of the individual policies and when considered as a whole. As the planning application accords with the policies in the Local Plan, it follows that planning permission should be granted.

195. Material considerations also support the grant of planning permission, as the proposal is in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework as well as Chichester District Council's Economic Development Strategy, and the Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership's Local Industrial Strategy and Gatwick 360 Strategic Economic Plan.

G. APPENDICES

- **Appendix 1** - list of proposed conditions; and
- **Appendix 2** - State of the UK's Woods and Trees' report from the Woodland Trust (2021).