

19/04128/LBA - Peipards Farm Access Road From Warminster Road To Peipards Farm, Freshford, Bath, BA2 7UN

Following is a section from the Design and Access Statement that describes the application.

Peipards Farm is located to the south of Bath, in the civil parish of Freshford, and to the west of the A36, the main road between Warminster and Bath. Peipards is outside of the village settlements and local green spaces area.

Peipards is a self-contained farm but lies in relative proximity to the residential extents of Freshford village. The farm is sited within the designated Green Belt around the city of Bath, and the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). A footpath skirts the southern edge of the farmyard, running along the field boundary to the SW.

The farm is located on a plateau above the surrounding valleys; the local topography slopes down from NE to SW. As a consequence, the site is relatively secluded, and is of low prominence from most of the nearby settlements, which are typically set down into the valley. Large trees planted in the Farmhouse garden and along the A36 shield the site from distant views to the SW where the landscape falls away. The farm buildings are surrounded on all sides by associated land, which primarily consists of grassed fields used for pasture.

The historic nucleus of the farm consists of 4 masonry buildings around a rectangular yard, surfaced in concrete. This collection of buildings includes; the C19th farmhouse and associated domestic gardens to the SW, a single storey byre along the NE side, a cruciform C18th barn framing the SE side, and a smaller barn / byre to the NW. This arrangement of four building around a yard is visible on the 1838 tithe map.

The farm has expanded over time; a series of large steel portal framed barns have been erected to the North of the historic yard. These still have an active role in the farming activities. Installed to the south is an occupied permanent static caravan.

The site has a dedicated access lane from the A36, which runs directly past the east side of the yard to the modern agricultural barns. The metalled lane is in good condition and is appropriate for the large agricultural vehicles and smaller traffic that service the farm. At the SE corner of the compound this track branches to the SW along the outside perimeter of the farmhouse garden towards the static caravan and farmland beyond.

Proposal

A driveway entrance into the farmhouse garden would be reinstated in the Eastern corner of the site, adjacent to the two existing garages. To create this entrance an opening would be broken through a short section of existing estate railing, (there is already a pedestrian break at this point) This railing appears to be mid C20th, judging by its condition, welded elements, and the fact it interfaces cleanly with buildings constructed at this time.

Between the existing garages is a wide tarmacked yard, the harshness of this space would be reduced and softened by extending a grassed verge into the elbow of this junction. This would frame the reinstated entrance and protect the manoeuvring space in and out of the brick garage associated with the farmhouse.

From the entrance a short gravel drive would skirt the pond and would be enclosed with estate railing along its left edge. This would terminate in a gravelled parking area, bounded by the pond to

the SE, the existing boundary wall to the NE, the end of the Byre / pet cemetery to the NW and a new Yew hedge to the SW.

Beyond the drive and parking area the proposals include some further modifications to the consented landscape scheme including: Changes to the terrace outside the kitchen to reduce its formality and make better use of existing levels. A new path from the proposed parking to lead directly to the front door. Adjusted widths on the gravelled pathways to better reflect the hierarchy of use.

Materials used will be soft and appropriate to the landscape; natural stone flags, buff gravelled surfaces, stone retaining walls, yew hedges and estate railings.

These changes would provide a more practical access to the dwelling, which serves several purposes:

The proposals would reinstate the use of the farmhouse's original front door, for day to day use by the resident occupants and visiting guests. The proposed parking area has also been placed to also provide easy access to the kitchen and dining room when unloading shopping etc, and the existing pedestrian access gate in the NE boundary.

The new drive would establish a walkable route from the garages to the farmhouse, through the garden to the front door, rather than having to skirt around the site perimeter after parking.

The need for farmhouse residents to park in the shared-space historic farmyard would be eliminated.

Providing a separate drive would help to disaggregate domestic traffic from the agricultural traffic operating in the northern part of the site.

The provision of this new drive would remove the need for the consented access road that cut through the existing farmhouse garden to the southern corner of the farmyard.

Comments

If I were a listed building officer I might consider a car park in this position, the key eastern approach, would harm the setting of the listed building and be an erosion of the current consent particularly with a lot of 'Front yard' to the rear of the house.

The recommendation is that the Freshford Parish Council support this application.