

Planning Applications: 20/01627/FUL and 20/01628/LBA Peipards Farm, Access Road From Warminster Road To Peipards Farm, BA2 7UN

Proposal

Internal and external alterations for the conversion and refurbishment works to an existing barn, to create a farm office, farm shop and education centre.

Overview

Planning Applications 20/01627/FUL & 20/01628/LBA have been submitted as a proposal for internal and external alterations for the conversion and refurbishment works to an existing barn, to create a farm office, farm shop and education centre.

The planning constraints that apply to this Application are:

Agric Land Class 1,2,3a, Listed Building, Policy CP8 Green Belt, Policy CP9 Affordable Housing Zones, Policy M1 Minerals Safeguarding Area, Policy M2 Min Alloc's - Preferred Area, Policy NE1 Green Infrastructure Network, Policy NE2 AONB, Policy NE5 Ecological Networks, Policy NE5 Strategic Nature Areas.

Peipard's Farm lies within the Neighbourhood Plan area and is outside of the settlement boundaries.

Planning History

17/04322/FUL & 17/04323/LBA were Approved in March 2018.

Planning permission was sought for the modification, refurbishment and change of use of the buildings surrounding Peipards farmyard, to include conversion of the Barn into a single dwelling, refurbishment of the Farm House, conversion of the southern end of the byre and a connection to the original farm house, updated landscape proposals and access proposals to separate the agricultural and domestic traffic.

The Application covered the following buildings:

- The Farm House
- The Barn
- Cow Byre
- Shepherd's Cottage

There were a couple of further Applications which amended some of the detail but did not impact the fundamental nature of these Applications.

Freshford PC supported and welcomed these proposals as the buildings will be renovated, preserved in historic terms and brought into use on the farm.

The Current Applications

The current applications solely relate to the Shepherd's Barn (previously referred to as The Shepherd's Barn).

The Application is for change of use and some alterations. The intention is to utilise the buildings as back into service as an active facility forming part of the working farm, which would support the agricultural business through diversification and community engagement. Instead of converting the buildings into living accommodation, the proposed functions are to provide a farm office, a farm shop and a flexible use classroom / assembly space

The unsympathetic previous modifications will be replaced, such as the block breeze lean-to.

The farm office will enable in-site management activities replacing the current remote off-site activities. The single storey wing will provide farm office and store space.

The ground floor of the double storey building will provide a low-key farm shop selling produce from Peipards Farm and other local estates under the same ownership.

The first floor is planned to be used primarily as a classroom / education centre; a space from which to base the programme of school visits already run by the farm. The farm has hosted visits from local schools, including Freshford School.

The alterations that are to be made in support of this change of use include:

- Replacing the floor on the first floor with a new floor slightly lower to provide the headroom required. This is to enable the three king trusses to be retained as they are a significant element of the original fabric of the building.
- Replacing the concrete block lean-to with a sympathetic lean-to.
- Replacing a modified door with a sliding shutter door
- Reinstating the blocked doorway
- Removing the metal window frames with wooden frames
- Installation of conservation rooflights into the existing roof made of clay tiles

These changes are designed sympathetically to retain or restore the historic fabric of the building.

Parking is to be provided for up to 6 cars, which will be hidden from view when looking at the site from a distance. A potential issue is whether this is an adequate number of parking spaces, whether overflow parking is required and how that would be managed.

It is noted that the application is taking into account the findings of the Bat & Owl Survey and that the loss of a barn swallow nest is to be replaced by two

Schweglar swallow cups will be installed in a suitable, sheltered location in one of the buildings on the site. Also features for bats and birds will be installed or built into the building to increase the biodiversity on site.

Although no evidence of Barn owls was found, it's well established that the removal / conversion of old barns is having a detrimental impact on their numbers. A possible suggestion is for one or two Owl boxes to be installed on the land in appropriate locations to mitigate this loss of this potential habitat.

In summary, the application will:

- Sympathetically restore a previously badly amended building
- Enable diversification of farm activities
- Provide support for the local community

Suggested PC Response

Freshford PC supports this application which satisfies Policy RTE3 – Farm Diversification. It also meets the criteria defined in the Neighbourhood Plan Villages Design Statement:

“The historic fabric of buildings should be preserved and repaired wherever possible.”

There is a question over whether the number of parking places is adequate, and what the arrangement may be for parking overflow facilities.

The PC would also request the consideration of the provision of one or two Owl boxes to be installed on the land in appropriate locations to mitigate this loss of this potential habitat.