

Planning Report September 2021

Application Reference - 21/03824/FUL

Address of Proposal - Building To North Of Laughing Snakes, Midford Lane, Freshford

Proposal - Conversion of redundant existing gatehouse building into a one bedroom holiday let

Type of Application - Full Application

Planning Constraints - Agric Land Class 3b,4,5, LLFA - Flood Risk Management, MOD Safeguarded Areas, Neighbourhood Plan, Policy CP8 Green Belt, Policy CP9 Affordable Housing Zones, Policy M1 Minerals Safeguarding Area, Policy M2 Minerals Allocations, Policy NE2 AONB, Policy NE5 Ecological Networks, SSSI - Impact Risk Zones

Related Properties

Building To North Of Laughing Snakes, Midford Lane, Freshford, Bath
Former High View Quarry, Midford Lane, Limpley Stoke
Peipards Farm, Warminster Road, Freshford, Bath, BA2 7UN

Key Points -

- The property is outside of the Northern settlement boundary.
- The development may result in pressure to infill.
- The additional volume calculation provided is questionable.
- The site is apparently next to a major bat roost, which was unfortunately missed by the bat survey.
- The building is derelict circa 1930's and brick built.

Comments –

- Craig believes the proposal is a valid use for the building.
- Both Nick and I believe unlike other recent applications for the conversion of small barns and cow byres, for which justification was argued on the bases of saving these buildings. This building is of very little merit, and stretches the concept of breathing new life into redundant agricultural buildings to far.
- The building is situated outside the development boundary, in open countryside. The proposal would therefore impact on the openness of the Greenbelt.
- The 21.5m³ volume of an 'outbuilding' is used to provide an additional volume calculation of 27%. However, the inclusion of the "outbuilding" in the volume calculation is questionable given that the Gatehouse itself is little more than an outbuilding, the "outbuilding" is over 15m away, its amenity value to the Gatehouse is not provided and is likely to be difficult to justify. It could therefore be argued the "outbuilding" should not be included in the additional volume calculation. Which would result in the additional volume equalling 44%.
- The additional volume also appears to be entirely used to form a first floor, which approximately doubles the height of the building. The impact of the addition is then disproportionate to its volume. The result being a disproportionate extension, which

will have an adverse impact on the openness of the Greenbelt and harm the rural character of the surrounding area.

- The size of the proposed parking area appears large and disproportionate for a 1 bed property.
- The light pollution in an otherwise dark field would it is believed, have a detrimental impact on a major nearby bat roost.
- If the proposal is approved a condition should be applied to ensure it is only ever used as a holiday let.
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Recommendation –

Object – On grounds of:

- Adverse impact on the openness of the greenbelt.
- Detrimental impact on the nearby major bat roost.

Comment – If the proposal is approved then a condition should be added to ensure the site can only be used as a single holiday let in perpetuity.

Any comments available before the meeting on the following applications will be circulated to councillors:

- 21/04021/FUL & 21/04022/LBA Sharpstone Cottage, Sharpstone Lane, BA2 7UA
- 21/02824/AR Homewood Park Hotel, Homewood, Hinton Charterhouse, BA2 7TB

BANES have confirmed that comments on the following application can be submitted after the next PC meeting on 11th October:

- 21/03824/FUL Building to North of Laughing Snakes, Midford Lane, Freshford:
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