

23 Dec 2015

To HCC Planning Mr A Prior  
Copy Liz Harvey

Planning application 152290 and Listed Building application 152289 Pegs Farm, Staplow, Wellington Heath Parish

Dear Sir,

Whilst we very much welcome the principle of converting this former farmstead to residential use Wellington Heath Parish Councillors have reservations about some aspects of this proposal.

We are very concerned that part of the farmstead, specifically the round top barn is absent from these proposals. It is essential that the entire group of farmstead buildings and associated infrastructure such as concrete hard-standing are covered in any listed building and planning permission. All the farm buildings are obviously part of the farmstead and hence are within the curtilage, affecting the listed building and its setting and character. Hence we oppose this application although this might be addressed by a condition requiring the removal of all metal clad buildings including the round top barn.

We are not experts in listed buildings and must rely on specialists in Herefordshire Council in this respect but we wonder if the north elevation entrance porch is appropriate. We are concerned that the proposal to separate the main house into two residences is likely to divide its future ownership and control and consequently endanger a most important 2\* listed building.

We commend the attempt to respect the listed building and its former farmstead. However the proposed use of cement fibre corrugated sheet roofing for some areas including parts of the roof of Fuggles Barn may not be appropriate. We are told by a long-standing local resident that the original roof was slate, the corrugated sheets being a later and unsympathetic replacement. We would like to see definite evidence that the original roof was corrugated sheet. If there is doubt we consider that traditional slate or tile should be used throughout.

Post and rail fencing is proposed for a number of boundaries. This detracts from the rural character; natural species hedges are more appropriate especially in the curtilage of this listed building and particularly for the exterior boundaries.

The use of kerb stones (e.g. on the existing access road onto Southfield Lane) is unnecessary and introduces a suburban appearance to a rural setting.

The proposed additional block paving / tarmac access onto Southfield Lane seems unnecessary. Three existing access drives would seem sufficient. If the additional driveway is approved we would prefer the rural appearance and superior drainage that a gravel surface would offer. Measures to reduce water flowing from the new access onto the road in storm conditions would also be welcome, perhaps a slot drain across this new entrance discharging to a soak-away.

We welcome the provision of a generous number of parking spaces and garaging

and its generally sensitive incorporation into the overall design, the narrow lanes are unsuitable for visitor parking and unloading of delivery vehicles.

Hollow Lane, adjacent to, and below Pegs Farm is very narrow and notorious for both serious flooding and repeated vehicle damage to roadside verges and ditches which is costly for the parish council, Herefordshire council and landowners. The damage makes flooding worse and on occasions has caused cars to be written off by water ingress and ingestion.

1. We greatly welcome the reduction of the existing concrete hard standing and use of gravel surfaces.
2. We understand that an additional / improved passing place on Hollow Lane was briefly considered by Herefordshire Council some while ago. We would welcome an improved passing place although it needs to be sensitively implemented to retain the rural character. We would like to see this discussed with the Parish Council and implemented before the dwellings are occupied and if possible before development starts.
3. During the construction phase heavy and large vehicles are likely to damage verges, hence until the work is completed the applicant (who also owns some of the adjacent land) should be responsible for keeping the drainage and verges of Hollow lane in permanent good repair as far as the Ledbury - Bromyard Road.

We applaud the replacement of overhead cables by underground cables and would strongly recommend that this be extended to telephone trunking / cables (especially with a view to future fibre broadband provision) in addition to electricity supply cables. Trunking making ready for future broadband enhancement is a sensible minimum provision to reduce future commuting and enhance property values.

We note that development following previously granted planning permission has been very delayed. We therefore feel that conditions should ensure that work is commenced within 12 months and that clearance of buildings no longer required and removal of excess concrete hard standing should be completed before any of the barn conversions are occupied.

C F Rozelaar  
Chair of Wellington Heath parish council planning committee