

Wellington Heath Parish Council

31 March 2016

To HCC Planning Mr Fernando Barber-Martinez
Copy AONB Paul Esrich
Copy Liz Harvey

Planning application 160339 Farmers Arms, Wellington Heath

Dear Sir,

Wellington Heath Parish Councillors have some concerns about this planning application. Whilst we are supportive of the village pub and would welcome further renovation and removal of external clutter, the increased scale and potential loss of amenity for neighbours are not necessary.

Loss of amenity for local residents

The extension of the building towards Pub Lane, creation of a new entrance and a smoking area will cause loss of amenity for nearby residents. The new entrance should not be further north or east than the existing former main entrance by the toilets (proposed to be blocked off).

The new garage / store will also be much closer to near neighbours.

Exterior lighting should be carefully designed to reduce the area and duration of illumination so as not to annoy neighbours and detract from the rural setting.

No trees should be removed and locally appropriate bushes / trees should be planted on the boundary at the northeast corner between the existing shrubs / trees and the old cider press stone to reduce the loss of amenity for the nearest neighbours.

Noise and smells from extractor fans are detrimental for neighbours, more so in the past than currently, the relocation of the kitchen closer to neighbours may cause loss of amenity depending on orientation and design.

The foul water sewer lower down in the village sometimes overflows in storm conditions. Therefore rainwater discharge to the sewer should be avoided and upgrade of the sewer would be welcome.

Disturbance to neighbours during construction is a concern especially outside normal working times.

Local distinctiveness and scale

The proposal is in the Malvern Hills AONB and the new Herefordshire Core Strategy gives much increased emphasis to local distinctiveness. The village of Wellington Heath has been characterised in Herefordshire Council's Landscape Character Assessment as a rare landscape type 'Forest Smallholdings and Dwellings'.

The Farmers Arms is a historic building of the early settlement and is in a very prominent location in a confined steep valley. The original building is modest, consistent

with the AONB Guidance on Building Design, the existing single story extensions do not obscure its form. This planning application could be an opportunity to improve local distinctiveness and enhance the landscape but the current proposal dominates the original building and the valley setting.

The new pitched roof is much larger and higher than the pitched roof on the southern single story extension. The pitch of the proposed new roof is inappropriately steeper than the original building. The overall size of the pitched roof is further increased by its span over the eastwards extension. The new roof has a gable end which is not characteristic of the hip roof of the original building and again increases its dominant form.

The roof lights are not characteristic of the original building, only serve the escape route and permanent lighting of the escape would make them particularly prominent at night.

The detailing and particularly colour should be in accordance with the AONB Guidance on Building Design and should be subject to submission and approval of materials.

Relation to other planning applications and decisions

The planning application approved for an adjacent house P152217 para 30 stated "There is no requirement for this storage space and there is sufficient alternative storage space within the main pub building and cellar". This planning application for the pub now proposes a garage with a door layout that appears more suited to storage with consequential frequent access for the pub business. If the garage is approved a condition should restrict usage to vehicle parking.

The planning appeal relating to P142904/F gave weight to "providing acceptable levels of amenity".

Our response to the planning application for the adjacent house P152217 opposed the urban appearance of the boundary wall, perpetuated in this planning application. The notice of planning permission imposed a condition that boundary treatments are subject to approval.

C F Rozelaar
Chair of Wellington Heath parish council planning committee