

Staploe Parish Council

Date: 04/01/2022

Application number: 22/00325/FUL

Proposal: Change of Use of Agricultural Land to form residential garden land associated with the three dwellings approved under 19/02526/CPNQ, and associated landscaping, hardstanding and fencing/gates.

Location: Barn At Lower Goodwick Farm Begwary Bedford Bedfordshire MK44 2NX

Response: Object

Staploe Parish Council discussed this application at their meeting on 31st March 2022. The Clerk has received one objection to this application from a member of the public.

It was resolved to object to this application on the grounds that the conversion to residential properties was granted on the basis of a Class Q conversion which permits a garden the size of the footprint of the building and no ancillary buildings. This conversion appears to create a garden very much larger than the size of the footprint of the properties and the extended garden would reduce the privacy of the neighbours garden.

This development is outside any settlement policy areas. Therefore, it is development in open countryside. Saved policy H26 of Bedford Borough Local Plan 2002 states that planning permission will not be granted for housing in open countryside except as provided for under policies H27 (agricultural workers), H28 (replacement dwellings). or H30 (affordable housing to meet local needs) which has been replaced by Policy CP17 of the Core Strategy and Rural Issues Plan 2008. None of these policies are relevant in this case so we believe it should be regarded as development in open countryside.

We accept that the applicant already has permitted development rights under Class Q regulations to replace the barn with a dwelling, which they have done but this assumes that the dimensions will remain the same and the garden / curtilage is limited to an area equivalent to the footprint of the existing building and there are no ancillary buildings. The garden requires change of use of part of an agricultural field to garden. Class Q permits a garden the size of the footprint of the original building(s) i.e. approximately 343m² in this case. The proposed garden is approximately 2647m² (or 2990m² including the footprint of the house). This is 7 times the size of the garden permitted. We believe it is important to maintain the character and appearance of the countryside and safeguard it from unsuitable development. By enlarging the residential curtilage and introducing domestic uses to land which was previously agricultural, the garden extension could have a significant visual impact and gradually lead to urban characteristics (for example, sheds, fences and hardstandings, etc.) being introduced to an area whose open and attractive landscape qualities are highly valued. We are also concerned that such a large curtilage will encourage further extensions – particularly to the Peabarn (the northernmost property) which we don't believe are appropriate.

Best wishes,

Lucy Crawford

Clerk to Staploe Parish Council