# Historic farmhouse near Bristol faces uncertain future amid housing development



A historic farmhouse near Bristol has recently been thrust into the limelight due to a unique housing development that encircles it. White House Farm, a 17th-century Grade II listed building situated on the periphery of the town, has been surrounded by a new estate featuring 88 homes, constructed by developers Persimmon Homes in 2019. The farmhouse, which has been unoccupied for approximately a decade, is now on the market for £500,000.

Originally acquired by Persimmon Homes, White House Farm stands out as a remnant of historical architecture in the newly built area of Lyde Green, which includes developments by Taylor Wimpey and Persimmon Homes. Currently, the property is owned by Merlin Housing Society Limited and is being offered for auction. The sales listing describes the farmhouse as a "substantial Grade II listed farmhouse" that holds significant potential for renovation or development, either as a single-family home or possibly subdivided into multiple dwellings, pending planning consents.

Despite its initial charm, the property has fallen into disrepair, evidenced by smashed and boarded-up windows that are visible to the new residents. Its listed status, designated by Historic England for its "exceptional limestone rubble construction" and distinctive architectural characteristics, has protected it from demolition. Local perspectives on the farmhouse are mixed; while some residents appreciate its historical value, others feel it appears incongruous amidst the modern housing that surrounds it. One local resident remarked, "It looks so out of place with all the new homes built around it. I hope it can be restored to its former glory."

In a separate instance of planning and renovation challenges, property expert Sarah Beeny is facing a legal obligation to dismantle an unauthorised extension to her £3 million Somerset home, which has attracted attention for its extravagant design, likened to a "mini Downton Abbey." This issue has come to the forefront following a series of disputes with local authorities and neighbouring residents regarding her ambitious development plans since she purchased the farmhouse in 2018.

Although the local council granted some initial approval for a new residence, it stipulated that the existing farmhouse from the 1970s must be demolished. Instead, Beeny opted for an extension of the original structure, which included the addition of French windows and an upstairs balcony without securing the necessary permissions. After her retrospective application for these modifications was declined in May, she attempted to appeal the decision through the Planning Inspectorate, which was subsequently rejected.

The council has indicated that they are currently reviewing the case for further enforcement actions due to violations of planning conditions tied to the original farmhouse's demolition requirement. The emergence of protected bat roosts within the old farmhouse adds another layer of complexity, as highlighted by the planning inspector, raising potential difficulties in acquiring the necessary licences from Natural England for any disturbance.

Community sentiment on Beeny's development has been largely negative, with many local residents expressing concerns over her disregard for planning regulations. One resident, Kevin Flint, voiced his frustrations, stating, "It's created a lot of bad feeling in the village. She was given permission to build the new house on condition she knocked down the old one, which she extended and refurbished - it's just not on." This ongoing saga of planning disputes and community backlash highlights the challenges faced by individuals attempting to navigate property development.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.persimmonhomes.com> - This URL supports the claim that Persimmon Homes is a major developer involved in constructing new homes, including those in the area around White House Farm.
* <https://www.persimmonhomes.com/locations/south-west/county-of-bristol/city-of-bristol> - This URL corroborates Persimmon Homes' presence in Bristol, specifically mentioning developments in areas like Lyde Green.
* <https://historicengland.org.uk/> - Historic England's website would provide information on Grade II listed buildings, supporting the claim that White House Farm is protected due to its historical significance.
* <https://www.merlinhs.co.uk/> - This URL could provide information on Merlin Housing Society Limited, which currently owns White House Farm, although specific details about the property might not be available.
* <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/> - The Somerset County Council website might offer insights into local planning regulations and disputes, relevant to Sarah Beeny's property issues.
* <https://www.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/> - This URL supports the claim about the Planning Inspectorate's role in handling appeals related to planning decisions, such as those involving Sarah Beeny's Somerset home.