

Planning Committee: 02 August 2006

Item Number:

Application No: W 06 / 0799

Registration Date: 24/05/06

Town/Parish Council: Rowington

Expiry Date: 19/07/06

Case Officer: Martin Haslett

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Sintra, Lapworth Street, Bushwood, Lawsonford, B95 5HG

Extensions and alterations to convert existing bungalow into a house FOR Mr and Mrs P Ingram

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

Parish Council: raises objection on the following grounds:

"The Parish Council object to the proposed development in terms of size and height- this is an elevated site and a large multi gabled dwelling will dwarf neighbouring properties. Councillors also query the increased footprint of the proposed dwelling. The Parish Council is also very concerned that medium sized, single storey dwellings of this type are retained to provide housing for younger families, the elderly and the disabled, in order to maintain a vibrant rural community where housing choice is becoming increasingly limited".

Neighbours: 6 letters of objection on grounds of:

- site on rising land above the road, would therefore cause severe overlooking and loss of privacy;
- distance separation standards not met;
- loss of amenity to garden areas;
- proposed triple garage excessive in size;
- change in design detrimental to character of area;
- alteration to skyline
- additional traffic.

WCC (Ecology): no objection subject to bat note.

RELEVANT POLICIES

- (DW) ENV3 - Development Principles (Warwick District Local Plan 1995)
- (DW) H14 - Extensions to Dwellings in the Rural Area (Warwick District Local Plan 1995)
- The 45 Degree Guideline (Supplementary Planning Guidance)
- Distance Separation (Supplementary Planning Guidance)
- (DW) ENV1 - Definition of the Green Belt (Warwick District Local Plan 1995)
- RAP3 - Extensions to Dwellings (Warwick District 1996 - 2011 Revised Deposit Version)
- DAP1 - Protecting the Green Belt (Warwick District 1996 - 2011 Revised Deposit Version)
- DP1 - Layout and Design (Warwick District Local Plan 1996 - 2011 Revised Deposit Version)
- DP2 - Amenity (Warwick District Local Plan 1996 - 2011 Revised Deposit Version).

PLANNING HISTORY

The existing bungalow was built prior to 1974, but there have been no planning applications since the original permission.

KEY ISSUES

The Site and its Location

The bungalow is one of a group of 3 comparatively modern dwellings positioned on steeply rising land, behind the frontage to Lapworth Street. They are served by a private driveway. The application site therefore has two immediate neighbours on the private drive, but there are additional neighbours fronting Lapworth Street, separated from the site by their long gardens, but on lower land. These gardens have a length of at least 35m.

'Sintra', itself is a large bungalow of 1960s styling, situated in a large plot of landscaped gardens. Whilst well-separated from its neighbours on Lapworth Street itself, it is comparatively close to its immediate neighbour, 'Overidge House' and the third of the three dwellings, across the driveway, 'Willow Croft'. There are other neighbouring dwellings on Lapworth Street, to the north of the private drive.

Details of the Development

It is proposed to build a first floor over the existing bungalow, including the carrying out of small extensions to the ground floor, on the front of the existing garage and in the position of the rear conservatory. The work to the bungalow involves raising the roof from its existing maximum height of 5m to a new maximum of 8.5m. Brickwork would be to match the existing and the roof would be of plain clay roof tiles. The new accommodation would be largely within the newly-created roofspace, rather than forming a full additional storey and windows are, therefore, of the dormer type, except those in the gable ends to the roof. There are also several sets of rooflights.

Additionally, a three car garage is proposed on land a little lower than the site of the bungalow, down the driveway, towards Lapworth Street. The fall in the land means that the roof of the garage would be at the same level as the garden to the dwelling, and the flat roof would form a hard landscaped patio area.

Assessment

The issues to be considered are the impact on the street scene and on the adjoining residents. There is also the issue of the policy restriction on the size of extensions to dwellings in the green belt.

The view towards the existing dwellings from Lapworth Street is presently dominated by the gardens and vegetation and the changes proposed to 'Sintra' would mean that the dwelling on that site would be more dominant than it is at present. Nevertheless, given the size of the site and the importance of the surrounding landscaping, I do not consider that the impact on the street scene would be so serious as to merit a refusal of permission.

The impact on the neighbouring dwellings is more complex. The neighbouring dwelling at Overidge House is at the top of the drive, furthest from Lapworth Street, but is nevertheless situated on slightly lower land than the application site. Overidge House looks out straight down the drive, with Sintra partially within view from the bedroom windows. The distance, at the nearest point, between the two properties is about 8m, with a tall hedge on the boundary. At present Sintra is only glimpsed through this hedge, but would be more visible if a new gable wall were built as envisaged in the proposals. The new ridge level would be 3.3m higher than the existing, although potentially overlooking windows have now been removed from the amended plans. I conclude, therefore, that there would be some impact on the amenities of the residents at Overidge House.

Other dwellings in the group are further from the application site, and although the new development would be seen from them, I do not consider that the impact would be sufficient to merit a refusal. For example, the cottages in Lapworth Street, which adjoin the application site, are separated by very long gardens and substantial vegetation, and at a distance of nearly 50m at the nearest point, I do not consider that substantial loss of amenity would occur. Similarly, the adjoining (third) dwelling served from the private drive, Willow Croft, is separated from the application site by over 20m, which is a substantial distance for separation at the front of dwellings.

Overall, I conclude that the residents of Overidge House are the ones most affected by the proposals, but that this impact is insufficient to merit a refusal of permission. For these reasons I cannot agree with the comments of the neighbours or the Parish Council. Furthermore, the Parish Council's wish to preserve smaller dwellings in order to maintain a 'vibrant community' may be laudable, but cannot be controlled through planning application decisions. Although the current policy sets a 50% restriction to extensions to dwellings in the green belt, it is difficult to apply this policy to the creation of first floors for bungalows, as the additions tend to make the resulting dwelling more appropriate in its rural setting. As a result, the additional floorspace has generally been found acceptable under policy H14 of the Warwick District Local Plan 1995 and permission has been granted.

RECOMMENDATION

Grant, subject to the conditions listed below.

CONDITIONS

- 1 The development hereby permitted must be begun not later than the expiration of three years from the date of this permission. **REASON** : To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- 2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the details shown on the approved drawing 378-011-B and specification contained therein, submitted on 13 July 2006, unless first agreed otherwise in writing by the District Planning Authority. **REASON** : For the avoidance of doubt and to secure a satisfactory form of development in accordance with Local Plan Policy ENV3.

- 3 All external facing materials for the development hereby permitted shall be of the same type, texture and colour as those of the existing building.
REASON : To ensure that the visual amenities of the area are protected, and to satisfy the requirements of Policy ENV3 of the Warwick District Local Plan.

INFORMATIVES

For the purposes of Article 22 of the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) (England) (Amendment) Order 2003, the following reason(s) for the Council's decision are summarised below:

In the opinion of the District Planning Authority, the development respects surrounding buildings in terms of scale, height, form and massing and does not adversely affect the amenity of nearby residents. The proposal is therefore considered to comply with the policies listed.
