

## REPORT TO THE NORTHERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting	30 <sup>TH</sup> March 2011		
Application Number	N/11/00001/FUL		
Site Address	Innisfrey, Washmeres, Colerne, Chippenham, Wiltshire, SN14 8DQ		
Proposal	First Floor Extension to Bungalow to Form House		
Applicant	Mr and Mrs Strange		
Town/Parish Council	Colerne		
Electoral Division	Box & Colerne	Unitary Member	Sheila Parker
Grid Ref	381686 170949		
Type of application	FULL		
Case Officer	Kate Bates	01249 706 679	kate.bates@wiltshire.gov.uk

### Reason for the application being considered by Committee

The application has been called to committee at the request of Councillor Sheila Parker to assess the visual impact upon the surrounding area and the relationship to adjoining properties.

### 1. Purpose of report

To consider the above application and to recommend that planning permission be GRANTED subject to conditions.

### 2. Report summary

The application is to extend the existing bungalow at first floor level to form a house. The site lies within the framework boundary of Colerne, within the Colerne Conservation Area, within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and adjacent to a Grade II Listed Building. The key points to consider are as follows:

- The impact on the character and appearance on the area (Colerne Conservation Area, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) – policies HE1 and NE4 of the North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011.
- The impact on the adjacent Grade II listed building (Washmere House) – policy HE4.
- The impact on the privacy and amenities of the adjacent properties – C3 and H8.

Colerne Parish Council supports the application subject to due regard being taken of the height relative to neighbouring two storey properties.

3 letters of support have been received.

5 letters of objection have been received from 2 households.

### 3. Site Description

The application site is located towards the southern end of the village of Colerne and is accessed off a narrow lane, known as Washmeres which leads off of Bath Road down towards Washmeres Farm. It is sited within Colerne Conservation Area, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the adjacent property, Washmere House, to the east of Innisfrey is Grade II listed.

Washmere House has its principle elevation fronting Washmeres and dates from the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. It is a three storey house (the second storey appears to be partially within the roof) with a historic outshut addition to the west side of the main dwelling which has a monopitch roof leading from the main roof of the house down to single storey level. There are no windows in this west elevation facing Innisfrey, however planning permission and listed building consent (references 09/00360/LBC and 09/00604/FUL) have been granted to replace a lean to modern glazed single storey addition to the west of the property with a more solid room constructed of clay tiles and rubble stonework walls with two Conservation type rooflights within the roofslope. The planning permission also refers to a small log store adjacent to the boundary with Innisfrey. Originally the replacement lean-to was going to be a bathroom however, a subsequent listed building consent application (10/03425/LBC) was approved to install bathroom facilities into the first and second floors of the house and so this room may now become a study. This replacement lean-to has not yet been constructed. Washmere House is set down slightly from Innisfrey. Along the boundary there is a low block wall with approximately 1.8m timber/ willow fencing.

Innisfrey itself is a bungalow with single detached flat roof garage, originally granted planning permission on 24<sup>th</sup> May 1961. The land was formerly part of the curtilage of Washmere House. The neighbouring property to the west of Innisfrey, known as Summerhayes, is also a bungalow with detached single garage also granted planning permission on 24<sup>th</sup> May 1961. Access to both bungalows is from a shared access onto Washmeres with the driveways leading between the two bungalows to the garages to the rear of the properties.

Innisfrey itself has small curtilage which does restrict the site in terms of development. The original site plan submitted on 04.01.11 outlined more land than was owned by Innisfrey and so a revised site plan was received 24.01.11. The property has most of its garden to the front with steps down from the bungalow to the lawn area which is enclosed by a low stone wall and pillars with railings. There is a smaller paved area to the rear of the property with the property's flat roof garage also to the rear. The sides of the bungalow are coursed limestone rubble with reconstructed stone lintels, cills and quoins with the front and rear being painted cream render. There are three rooflights to the front roofslope and three rooflights to the rear roof slope as the roofspace was converted into a bedroom with WC. The roof materials on the main bungalow are grey concrete interlocking tiles with a small flat roof element to the rear (which enlarges the kitchen). The windows are white double glazed upvc.

Catley House is a two storey dwelling and is sited to north of the application site with its principle elevation fronting Washmeres. A two storey gable extends the rear of the property with windows to the south aspect facing towards the rear of Innisfrey (one at first floor level) along with windows to the rear elevation (one at first floor). A single storey gable projection also extends the property to the rear. Catley House and garden is at a higher level to Innisfrey.

The levels within the site are not uniform. Broadly speaking, the site slopes down from north to south and west to east. Site sections have been requested to further assess the impact of the development, however the survey is due to be carried out on the 14<sup>th</sup> March 2011 therefore the results are not available at the time of drafting this report but will be documented as additional information prior to the committee meeting.

Washmeres Lane curves around the site and is bordered by a stone wall. The lane itself slopes further downwards as the land levels drop. Bath Road is therefore at a higher level to the application site and there are open rural views from Bath Road between the rooflines of buildings to the south aspect down across the Box valley.

<b>4. Relevant Planning History</b>		
<b>Application Number</b>	<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Decision</b>
<b>N.90.02582.FUL</b>	<b>Extension to Garage</b>	<b>Permission</b>

An application for a new bungalow and garage was refused under reference 80/01030/FUL on land south of Innisfrey however this appears to be owned by the adjacent property, Summerhayes (or Pleasant View as it was formerly known).

#### **5. Proposal**

The original proposal was to put another storey on the bungalow (including over the rear flat roof element) to form a two storey house. The form of this development consisted of raising the roof (the ridge height on the existing bungalow is nearly 5.2m above ground level and the proposed ridge height was to be some 7.7 metres). This existing bungalow consists of bedroom with shower, living room, kitchen, bathroom and cupboard at ground floor with stairs going up to the rooms in the roof which consists of two bedrooms and w/c. The original scheme was to remove the downstairs shower, relocate the ground floor bedroom to first floor so the accommodation at ground floor would be kitchen, bathroom, cupboard, large living room and a stairs with a lift up to first floor where there would be three bedrooms, w/c and ensuite. The form of this proposals was not considered acceptable due to loss of privacy and amenity to Catley House regarding overlooking windows, unsympathetic design given its proximity to Washmere House – a Grade II listed building and impact on the area (AONB and Conservation Area) particularly from Bath Road. Subsequently a revised scheme has been received which takes the form of widening the proposed rear gable slightly to achieve better proportions, reducing the ridge height down by 400mm and reducing the first floor extension by approximately one third. The number of windows facing into Catley House is now reduced to 1 from 3 as originally proposed and this remaining window will be obscure glazed and restricted opening serving an ensuite. The new windows to the development will be painted timber. The new layout will be similar to the previous proposal on the ground floor, albeit the lift has been relocated and the first floor will provide a study, two bedrooms, and ensuite. The proposal is required to re-configure the house to make it more useable for a wheelchair user.

#### **6. Planning Policy**

North Wiltshire Local Plan policies HE4, C3 and H8

#### **7. Consultations**

Colerne Parish Council has been consulted and supports the application subject to due regard being taken of the height relative to neighbouring two storey properties.

The County Archaeologist has been consulted (the site is in an archaeological site) and comments are awaited.

#### **8. Publicity**

The application was advertised by site notice, press advert and neighbour consultation.

3 letters of support from residents have been received – 2 regarding the original larger scheme and 1 taking into account the revisions.

Summary of key relevant points raised:

- The specific circumstances of the applicant requiring the development
- Overlooking windows have been removed (revised scheme)

- Precedent set with adjacent development (Windy Ridge)
- The existing bungalow is rendered which is out of character with local buildings, the proposed stone clad dwelling will be more consistent with other properties in the near vicinity.
- Improves the character of the area.

A letter from the applicant's GP has been received supporting the development (as it contained personal information this letter has not been scanned into the website), however, the personal circumstances of the applicant is not really a material planning consideration.

One letter querying the accuracy of the initial site location plan was received and the site location plan has been duly amended.

5 letters of objection have been received from two households (both households have submitted objections also to the revised scheme).

Summary of key relevant points raised:

- Dominating effect to neighbouring properties and proximity to neighbouring buildings.
- Loss of privacy and amenity
- Overlooking windows
- Disproportionate to the area
- Loss of light (to rooms and gardens)
- Impact on replacement extension (with rooflights) that has not yet been constructed but which has planning permission and listed building consent.
- Overshadowing of immediate patio area which causes the space to the rear of the garden to be utilised which will then be overlooked.
- Precedent issue with other nearby bungalows
- Materials within the Conservation Area.
- Visual importance of Washmere House (Grade II listed building) viewed from the Box Valley which should be preserved

Some 3d photograph 'mock ups' have been received from an objector which are very helpful to illustrate the neighbour's concerns (although the agent has indicated that the photographs themselves may be misleading). In addition, another resident has provided some very technical data regarding sun light and will submit an impact statement once site level information has been received. At the time of drafting this report this statement and the site level information was not yet available but will be recorded as additional information.

## **9. Planning Considerations**

### Principle of Development

The site is within the defined framework boundary of Colerne and in principle residential extensions are appropriate within the context of local plan policies C3 and H8.

### Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Area (Colerne Conservation Area, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) – policies HE1 and NE4

Bath Road has important views down towards the Box Valley and offers a rural open outlook between the rooftops of the existing buildings. Policy HE1 does state that it is the gaps between buildings as well as the attractive views and vistas helps to make up the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Development which fails to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of a Conservation Area should therefore be refused. The key issue here is whether the revised scheme can be considered to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.

The advice of the Senior Conservation Officer has been sought in this regard and still has some reservations about the resulting appearance of the development within this sensitive location, however it is acknowledged that the revised scheme is an improvement.

It is acknowledged that the proposal will have an impact on the area. It is considered that the revised scheme will have less of an impact than the original scheme proposed, given its reduction in height and size. In terms of materials, the walls will be faced in coursed rubbles stone to match the existing side elevations of the bungalow (at present the front and rear walls are painted cream render), and the roof will plain grey tiles to match existing which is considered acceptable as it is in keeping with the host buildings. The windows in the existing bungalow are white upvc however revised plans have been received to show the new windows (at first floor level) will be painted timber at this more prominent level which is considered more acceptable within the Conservation Area. The application site is not immediately adjacent to the main Bath Road and is at a lower level. It is a difficult judgement to make, however on balance it is considered that the proposal will preserve the character and appearance of the Colerne Conservation Area.

Policy NE4 (Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty) also requires development to conserve or enhance the natural beauty of the landscape including its open rural character. The proposal should be sited close to and in association with an existing building and use appropriate building materials and landscaping.

As the proposal is an extension to an existing dwelling and is all contained within the property's residential curtilage, and the revised proposal has taken into account the impact on the open rural character, it is considered that the requirements of this policy will be met.

#### Impact on the adjacent Listed Building – policy HE4

Policy HE4 requires that where a planning application is made for development within the vicinity of a listed building, the planning authority will take into account the effect of the proposal on the setting of the listed building.

The advice of the Senior Conservation Officer indicates some concern with the constraints of the site and feels that the proposal could potentially be overdominant in its relationship with Washmere House. The existing bungalow was originally constructed within the historic land associated with Washmere House however given its height it is clearly a subservient building. This has been carefully considered. The proposal will increase the height of the Innisfrey from 5.2m to 7.3m which will have some impact on the setting of the adjacent listed building. However, it is acknowledged that the two storey element originally proposed has been reduced back by some 3.6 metres so that the bungalow remains single storey immediately adjacent to Washmeres House. The height of the two storey element has also been reduced by some 400mm and overall this amendments help to reduce the impact on the setting of Washmere House.

It is considered that when the site sections are forthcoming the information will assist Members to further assess the impact of the scheme on the adjacent properties.

#### Impact on the privacy and amenities of the adjacent properties – policies C3 and H8

Concerns have been raised over the revised proposal regarding the dominating effect the proposal would have on the rear of Catley House and garden and the resulting loss of amenity. It is claimed that it would result in a loss of daylight to three rooms to the rear of Catley House (one first floor, two ground floor) and effect the light levels in the garden and overshadow the patio area. Policies C3 and H8 indicate that loss of light, overshadowing, loss of privacy, oppression and harm to amenities are materials planning consideration and these concerns therefore been carefully considered.

Catley House is a two storey building with its garden area immediately north of the site. There is therefore the potential for the increase in height of Innisfrey to have an overshadowing effect on the garden of Catley House. Catley House itself is sited north east of Innisfrey and is approximately 11.5m away from the nearest edge of Innisfrey. Catley House is sited at a higher

level to Innisfrey and currently Innisfrey is enclosed on this boundary by a stone wall (approximately 1.6m high from Innisfrey site ground level) with hedging above. It is therefore considered that the loss of the light to rooms would not be as significant as to warrant refusal on this basis. Similarly, with the difference in site levels, the overshadowing to the garden area would be minimal and insufficient reason to warrant refusal of the application.

It is worthwhile to note that overlooking windows towards Catley House garden area have been removed save for the window to the proposed ensuite which is to be obscure glazed with restricted opening (this will also be conditioned to ensure it remains so).

Concerns have been raised by objectors regarding loss of light to garden and patio area of Washmere House. In addition, once the side extension to Washmere House has been constructed, the light to the two rooflights on the roofslope will be limited by the proposal. These concerns have been duly considered and it is fair to say that the proposal will have an impact on the occupiers of Washmere House. Given that the proposal is to maintain the bungalow at single storey level nearest to Washmere House and the loss of light will not be pronounced at all times of the day at all times of the year (the application site is southeast of Washmere House), it is considered that the overall impact would not be sufficient to warrant refusal. Information on the site sections has been requested from the applicant and will be recorded as additional information prior to the committee meeting.

Summerhayes is a bungalow to the south west of the application site. The nearest part of Summerhayes is approximately 5.5 metres from Innisfrey and the properties are at a similar level. There is already a degree of overlooking between the two properties and the new first floor does not propose any windows in the facing (west) elevation therefore the impact on Summerhayes is considered acceptable.

Regarding the issue of the application setting a precedent for neighbouring bungalows, each application has to be considered on its own merits according to the constraints of each site. Windy Ridge was a bungalow facing Bath Road to the west of the application site which had planning permission granted under reference 05/01004/FUL for its demolition and replacement with two cottage style dwellings. This site is different and less constricted as the application site and there was not the issue of an adjacent listed building. All applications must be considered on their own merits and it is therefore considered that few parallels can be drawn with the current application being determined.

## **10. Conclusion**

There are issues with this proposal which has required careful consideration, however on balance it is considered that the addition of a first floor over part of the existing bungalow would not result in a significant loss of amenity or privacy to adjacent properties sufficient to warrant refusal. Overall, the proposed revised scheme is considered to respect the character and appearance of the Colerne Conservation and Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in which it is sited. On balance, the proposal is not considered to detract of the setting of the adjacent listed building. As such the proposal accords with policies C3, H8, HE1, HE4 and NE4 of the North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011.

## **11. Recommendation**

Planning Permission be GRANTED for the following reason:

The proposal is considered to have an acceptable impact on the immediate locality and wider natural beauty of the landscape and will preserve the character and appearance of the Colerne Conservation Area in accordance with policies HE1 and NE4 of the North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011. The development will not have an overriding detrimental impact on the privacy and amenities of the neighbouring properties in accordance with policies C3 and H8 of the Local Plan and will not materially detract from the setting of the adjacent Listed Building therefore complying with policy HE4 of the Local Plan.

Subject to the following conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

REASON: To comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The stonework to be used externally on the proposed development shall match that of the existing building in terms of type, colour, size and bedding of stone, coursing, type of pointing and mortar mix, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to works commencing.

REASON: In the interest of visual amenity and the character and appearance of the area.

3. The roof tiles to be used in the development hereby permitted shall match those of the existing building in terms of their material, colour, texture, profile and pattern of laying.

REASON: In the interest of visual amenity and the character and appearance of the area.

4. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended by the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Amendment) (No.2) (England) Order 2008 (or any Order revoking or re-enacting or amending that Order with or without modification), there shall be no extensions or external alterations to the building forming part of the development hereby permitted.

REASON: In the interest of amenity of the area and to enable the Local Planning Authority to consider individually whether planning permission should be granted for extensions or external alterations.

5. Before the development hereby permitted is first occupied the first floor window to rear (north) elevation serving the ensuite shall be obscure glazed and with the opening pane restricted to open to 30 degrees, and will be maintained as obscure glazed with restricted opening of 30 degrees at all times thereafter.

REASON: In the interest of residential amenity and privacy.

6. The development hereby permitted shall be implemented in accordance with the submitted plans and documents listed below. No variation from the approved plans should be made without the prior approval of the local planning authority. Amendments may require the submission of a further application.

Plans

Revised proposed elevations received 09/03/2011, existing elevations, existing ground floor plan, existing first floor plan received 04/01/2011, revised site location plan received 24/01/2011, revised block plan received 18/02/2011, revised proposed ground floor and revised proposed first floor received 15/02/2011.

REASON: To ensure that the development is implemented as approved.

