

Combe Parish Council Meeting – Wednesday 2nd February 2011- Unapproved

Planning Application 11/0040/P/FP

Proposed: The construction of a front porch and conversion of the existing garage to create additional living space, including erection of rear and first floor extensions.

At: Charnwood, Church Walk, Combe

Present: Michael Green – Chairman
Elena Softley – Deputy Chairman
John Hunt
Celia Adamson
Paul Williams
Julia Sharpe – Clerk
Mrs Gooder and Mr Lagerburg – No 1 The Green
Mr and Mrs Hunt – Church House, Church Walk
Mr Gibson
Mr Slatter

Michael Green opened the meeting by explaining that the Parish Council had little power over the planning process but that the meeting had been called to draw together opinion and assist in any way possible. He explained that the planning application had been considered at the Parish Council Meeting on 12th January and that it had been agreed that the application was outside the parameters on which the Parish Council could make objections and that due to lack of public comments a response of No Comment had been submitted.

As a result of concerns raised by both the residents of 1 The Green and Church House the Parish Council agreed to review this decision.

Mr Lagerburgh spoke on behalf of Mrs Gooder and explained that their main objection was due to the consequence of the tree felling that had taken place and the terrible effect that it had caused to No 1 The Green. He said that he understood that his argument was with the WODC, who he considered had failed to consider the consequences of their decision to allow the tree felling and the resulting loss of privacy to No 1. He provided two photographs, one taken with the trees in position and one as the site now looks. With the trees in position the house was screened and it is now completely open making Charnwood overbearing. He pointed out that the trees are still shown on the planning application drawing number 10-10-03. He concluded by saying that the planning application made the situation worse and that Mrs Gooder would be strongly objecting to the application on the following grounds:

- The overbearing nature of the extension over the garage
- The whole character of Church Walk, (a conservation area) would be changed
- A change to the skyline resulting in loss of light
- Inadequate space on the existing plot for the parking of 4 vehicles

Mr Hunt of Church House made the following points:

Extension effectively doubles the depth of the existing property

- The impact of the proposed application not broken down by the garage at Church House
- The proposed extension is over dominant and visually intrusive
- The extension will cause significant loss of light from the South West
- The extension will have an adverse impact on the setting of a listed building and conservation area

Mr Green pointed out that the block plan – number 899/8 did not show Mr Hunts conservatory which had been added approx. 3 years ago.

Mr Slatter read the following statement from Mrs Arber.

The roofing over of the existing garage and the small (2m) extension at the rear has been designed following extensive discussions with the WODC Planning Officers and the Conservation Officer. They were concerned that the changes ensured that the new works were always sub-servient to the current property, did not adversely affect the view west along Church Walk or have a negative impact on Church House. For this reason the ridge level of the roof over the garage was made lower than the ridge of the existing house and the ridge over the small extension was lowered even more. In addition the rear extension mentioned above has been set away from the boundary so that a more interesting roof design together with other features can be incorporated into this side of the proposals. The aim is to provide a more pleasing and interesting aspect for the residents of Church House.

The front garden has been cleared of tired, overgrown trees and shrubs to make way for additional parking within the boundary of the property. The gardens are being re-landscaped and replanted with new trees and shrubs once construction work is finished. The Eucalyptus tree was cut down with the approval of WODC.

In almost all two storey houses in built up areas it is possible to see into neighbour's gardens from the first floor windows. The same is true at Charnwood. It was always possible to see into neighbouring gardens even before the shrubs were cut down. This can be verified by a number of residents. However the new window on the north side is in a shower room and will be fitted with frosted glass. Four windows, including two behind the garage of Church House, are being built up on the Church House side of Charnwood and the new velux window is at such a height off the floor that anyone would need to be on a step ladder to see down into neighbouring gardens.

The rear aspect of Charnwood faces south, south east. This means that proposed changes to the roof heights and the small extension will have minimal effect on the sunlight in the garden of Church House because either the sun will be too high in the sky or it will be disappearing behind the existing bulk of Charnwood.

Mr Green informed the meeting that the application was to be considered by the Uplands Committee meeting on 7th March and that members of the public were able to attend and put their opinions forward at that meeting.

The members of the public then left the meeting and the Parish Councillors considered their comments and now wish to make the following comments:

The Parish Council consider that the proposed alterations would be a visual improvement to the present flat-roofed garage; however the size of the extension will cause loss of light and overshadow and have a negative impact on Combe House .

The plans do now show that the gateway is to be widened but at this time the wall at the front has been partly demolished and concern was raised that this would lead to a widening of the gateway and ask that this be rebuilt to its original length

Concern that the amount of space in-front of the property is inadequate for the parking of 4 vehicles and request a guarantee that the wall is not altered
Concern that the felling of the trees has changed the appearance of Church Walk and that steps are taken to restore the landscape by replanting

Church Walk is a pedestrian walk way, not designed for heavy vehicles. Strong concern that steps must be taken to protect the walk-way at all times from heavy vehicles and that pedestrian access is kept open at all times.

It was agreed that the Clerk would send a letter to Dan Metcalf at WODC outlining the above concerns.

Planning Application 11/0081/P/FP

Proposed: erection of replacement garage and carport

At: Park View, Park Road, Combe

No Comment.