

Committee Date: 23rd April 2009
Accepted: 14th February 2008
Target Date: 10th April 2008
Ward : Harborne

Application Number: S/00873/08/FUL

Wentworth Gate, Land adjacent no. 7, Moor Pool (Site Ei), Harborne, Birmingham

Erection of a two-storey house

Applicant: Grainger Plc c/o agent

Agent: Hephher Dixon Ltd 23 Furzton Lake Shirwell Crescent Furzton Milton Keynes MK4 1GA

Recommendation

Approve-Conditions

Proposal

The applicant proposes the erection of a detached, two-storey dwelling on a site currently occupied by three garages. The site is located in the Moor Pool Conservation Area, Harborne. There are two concurrent development applications for other sites in Moor Pool, considered elsewhere on this agenda: Site A and Site C, ref. S/00872/08/FUL and S/00874/08/FUL. The applications are accompanied by Conservation Area Consent submissions for demolition of the garages, also elsewhere on this agenda.

The three development applications follow extensive and detailed discussions between the applicant and your officers, concerning matters including conservation area character, residential amenity, trees and landscaping, and transportation.

The house would be set back 5m from the pavement, in line with the adjacent property at number 7. The property would be served by a driveway and integral garage, with a dining room overlooking the front, and an open-plan kitchen and living room to the rear. Three bedrooms would be provided upstairs, with sizes meeting your Committee's Guidance, as would the back garden at 126 sqm. Elevational design and scale would generally reflect that of neighbouring properties, with a brick-clad ground floor elevation, and roughcast above including a large forward gable. The roof would be pitched and tiled and with a chimney. The new building would be constructed on slightly higher land than the neighbouring number 7 due to the slope of Wentworth Gate. The development would require the removal of the four fruit trees in the back garden.

The application is supported by a number of documents:

Planning Statement, Design and Access Statement, Conservation Character Appraisal and Justifying Statement, Transport Assessment, Ecological Assessment, Tree Survey, Sustainability Report, Statement of Community Involvement.

Site Area: 256 sqm

Development density: 39 dwellings per hectare.

Site & Surroundings

Wentworth Gate lies on a hill sloping up from the north to the south. Other houses in the Conservation Area lie opposite and adjacent to the north, while adjacent to the south are two private garages associated with a property fronting Wentworth Road. The site itself slopes up gently from the highway towards the rear, with an open tarmaced forecourt and

the three garages. Apart from the pine tree and fruit trees already described, the back garden has two large deciduous trees lying just outside its boundaries, a horse chestnut to the north and a sycamore to the south.

The site lies within the Moor Pool Conservation Area, which was laid out as a Garden Suburb a century ago. The estate was designated as a Conservation Area in 1970, in recognition its special architectural and historical interest. The area remains an attractive place, including its community facilities at the original Moor Pool opposite Site A, the bowling green, the village hall, tennis courts, allotments, etc.. Site E(i) lies 770m west of Harborne centre, where there is a wide range of shops, services, leisure uses and public transport.

Consultation/PP Responses

Conservation and Heritage Panel - Principle of development acceptable, garages of no architectural merit. However, concern at loss of garages on local parking. House feels cramped in streetscene, should be narrowed, and possibly deepened to rear to compensate.

English Heritage - No comments.

Transportation Development - No objection subject to conditions.

Changes to the kerb line and radius, and the driveway provisions, are noted in order to provide continued access for a minibus in association with number 7 next door.

No replacement parking is proposed on site for the garage units to be lost, but it is noticed that other garage sites have significant spare capacity that would be made available to residents. Priority would be given to residents who live on heavily parked streets.

Severn Trent - No objection subject to sustainable drainage condition.

Regulatory Services - No objection.

Housing - No objection.

Fire Services - No objection.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Surrounding residential occupiers, residents associations, local councillors and MP notified, site notice and press notice displayed. Approximately 140 households have objected, including letters of objection from Gisela Stuart MP, Councillors Deirdre Alden, John Alden and Peter Hollingworth, Harborne Ward Committee, Moor Pool Regeneration Group, Moor Pool Residents' Association, Moor Pool Allotments Association, the Billesley Lane Allotments Association, the Birmingham and Districts Allotments Council, and Birmingham Friends of the Earth

One letter of 'no objection' from the Harborne Society.

Objection letters largely make comments about various matters without specifying the sites they refer to - most residents have submitted one objection letter but with the reference number for all six applications. The majority of these letters raise matters which appear to be directed at Site A in particular, and the level of objection to Site E(i) is certainly much lower than the figure of 140 letters suggests. I report below the specific comments directed at Site E(i), and other general comments for example on transportation matters that might

also apply to Site E(i).

Gisela Stuart MP raises the following points of objection:

Overwhelming opposition from local residents, need to put views of local community first. Scale and design of new houses wholly out of keeping with estate, would detract from overall appearance. Had a long campaign to establish additional Conservation Area status.

Already considerable pressure on parking and road safety, removal of garage spaces would further exacerbate already unsustainable situation.

Councillor Deirdre Alden raises the following points of objection;

Greater need for parking provision on the estate, with roads clogged with parked cars and damage to verges.

Concern that although some other sites dropped, applicant may return to them in future, seeking piecemeal development across the estate.

Overlooking, loss of much-needed garages. Infill development, would set precedent for squeezing other single houses in various parts of the estate

Councillor John Alden - Support the numerous objections to the application. Unless officers are mindful to reject the applications, request the applications are heard by the full planning committee so that the objectors can nominate a spokesman to raise their objections in public.

Councillor Peter Hollingworth - add my support to the numerous letters of objection.

Harborne Ward Committee - Support the numerous objections by residents. Unless the Planning Committee is mindful to reject the applications, should make a site visit before determining the application.

The comments received from local residents and residents' associations are broadly summarised as following;

Character

The estate is a Conservation Area and has recently received upgraded protection with the Article 4 Direction - area should be protected, not developed. Design is poor. Would be ironic to resist small changes to existing houses (The Article 4) yet allow the development of new housing.

Would be one odd house in a group of matching houses - design does not reflect style of existing properties. Trees are an issue.

Transportation matters

Road is narrow and already heavily congested with parked vehicles, loss of garages would make situation worse. Access problems, general disruption, loss of garages, parking would get worse, all for one house. Very specific and difficult parking and access difficulties for the occupiers next door at 7 Wentworth Gate, involving daily collection and manoeuvring by NHS mini-bus..

The Harborne Society: no objection. Noted that the proposals are significantly reduced from those shown in 2007. Regret loss of rest of substantial package of estate enhancements. Concern that not enough replacement parking spaces provided, as on-street parking problems are severe, especially at Margaret Grove.

Planning History

20/11/75, 41903/000, three garages, refused - detract from architectural appearance of frontage, adversely affect visual amenity.

10/6/76, 41903/001, three garages, approved.

To be determined - S/00871/08/CAC, Demolition of garages, elsewhere on this agenda.

Policy Context

UDP, Places for Living, Mature Suburbs, Moor Pool Conservation Area (and Article 4(2) Direction), PPS1, PPS3, PPG13, PPG15, The Birmingham (Moor Pool, Harborne Conservation Area No.7) Tree Preservation Order 1971.

Planning Considerations

The principal matters for consideration raised by this application include the effects on conservation area character, the effects on residents' amenity, transportation matters, and tree matters.

CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER

The existing three, flat roofed garages have at best a neutral effect on conservation area character. In principle, therefore, I have no objection to the demolition and replacement with an appropriately scaled and designed new dwelling. The issue of the loss of parking is dealt with separately in this report.

The proposed dwelling's broad scale, design, and materials generally reflects that of the surrounding dwelling. Some more contemporary elements and other changes have been incorporated however, for example slightly different fenestration on the main gable, the front door canopy, and the open metal grille for the garage. Apart from the garage door, I do not consider these more modern elements are inappropriate for a new dwelling which is also detached from its neighbours. As the overall scale, design and mix of materials reflects the prevailing local pattern, I am satisfied that the proposal would constitute an acceptable addition in the streetscene and in the Conservation Area. My Conservation Officer concurs.

The proposed dwelling sits at a higher ground level than its neighbour at number 7, but this is to be expected due to the slope of Wentworth Gate. A good distance separation of 4.9m between side walls would be provided, and the neighbour's single storey side and rear extensions provide screening between the two gardens. Also, the applicant has taken care to reduce the massing of the side and rear of the house adjacent to number 7 to reduce its impact on the neighbours - the roof is brought down to eaves at ground floor level and the associated bedroom has a dormer window, thereby significantly reducing massing at first floor level.

Neither I nor my Tree Officer have any objections to the removal of four small fruit trees at the rear of the house. The application proposes a new front garden on the southern half of the site's frontage, with a new hedgerow presented to the street. The rear garden would be affected, especially in the summer due to shading, by the two large trees, but neither I nor my Tree Officer considers this warrants withholding planning permission.

TRANSPORTATION MATTERS

On-street parking congestion is a significant problem in various parts of the Moor Pool Estate. The northern approximate two-thirds of Wentworth Gate is no exception, but the southern third is largely free of parked cars as along this section there are no houses fronting the highway. Notwithstanding the narrow road carriageway, there is some on-street capacity for extra parking. The applicant's survey shows only one of the three garages is in use by an estate resident, one is used for storage, and one is vacant. Therefore, only one car would need to park on the street due to the demolition of the garages. Transportation Development do not object to the application.

The occupiers of the adjacent property at 7 Wentworth Gate have daily disabled access requirements. Specifically, a minibus comes and goes twice a day and currently uses the forecourt of the application site to park and manoeuvre. Manoeuvring into the site is made difficult by the narrow width of the road, other parked cars, and birch trees on the grass verge. Development of the site and the new house's own vehicular access requirement, would significantly reduce flexibility for next door's disabled access. However, the applicant has worked closely with the neighbour to find an acceptable solution, demonstrated with manoeuvring paths on a plan. Specifically, a 1.3m wide strip of parking forecourt immediately adjacent to the drive of number 7 has been excluded from the application site and would remain in the ownership and use of no. 7. This would be retained for the minibus' manoeuvring and parking. The plan has been amended to take account of no.7's drive and front hedge, to also ease movement. Although the new arrangement would not be as large an area as the existing, it does nevertheless appear to be the best solution that can be achieved, and would appear to provide still reasonable access for the occupiers of no. 7.

Sustainability

Positive - re-use of previously developed land in a sustainable location.

Conclusion

That planning permission be granted.

Recommendation

That planning permission be granted

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|---|-----------|--------------------|
| 1 | PLA102R1 | Exlevels/Satisite |
| 2 | PLA401R20 | Planting/Safelook |
| 3 | PLA404R83 | Protfence/Keeptree |
| 4 | PLA999 | Non-Standard |

Prior to the construction of the houses hereby granted planning consent, sample panels of brickwork shall be constructed on site, illustrating brick, brick bond, pointing mix and pointing technique.

REASON:

In order to safeguard the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

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|---|--------|--------------|
| 5 | PLA999 | Non-Standard |
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Samples of the principal external materials for the houses hereby permitted, for the written approval of the Local Planning Authority. The development must be built in accordance with the approved materials.

REASON:

In order to safeguard the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

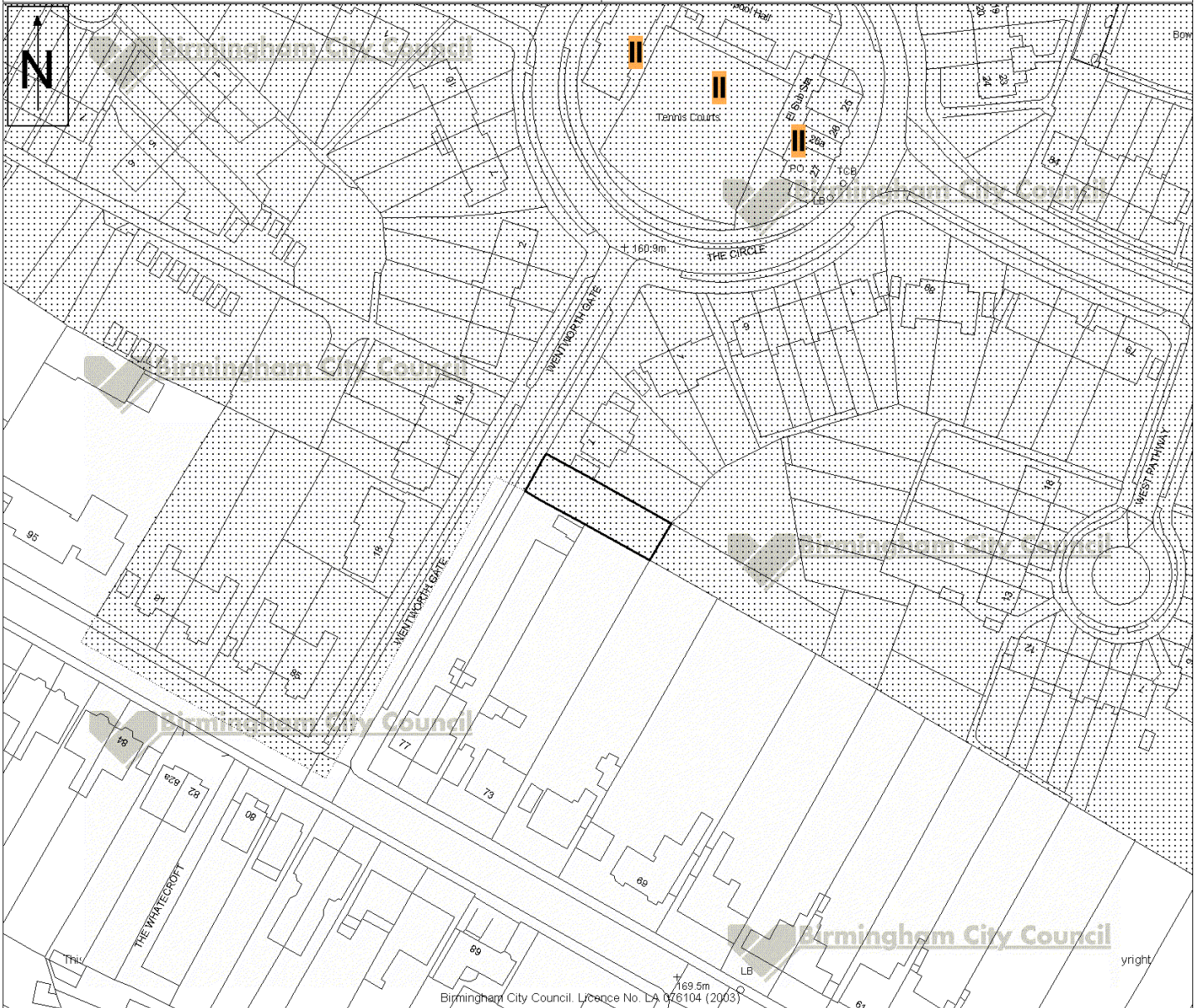
- 6 PLA999 Non-Standard
 Details of external joinery, at a scale of no less than 1:10, including plan, section and elevation, for the written approval of the Local Planning Authority. The development must be built in accordance with the approved details.
 REASON:
 In order to safeguard the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- 7 PLA999 Non-Standard
 Pedestrian visibility splay of 2m x 2m x 600mm high to be incorporated into the driveway.
 REASON:
 In order to ensure the safe movement of vehicular traffic on to the public highway.
- 8 PLA999 Non-Standard
 The site access shall be amended to the City's specification and at the applicant's expense.
 REASON:
 In the interests of highway safety.
- 9 PLA999 Non-Standard
 Details of the driveway hardstanding, in particular the visual and/or physical demarcation of its edge to the driveway of 7 Wentworth Gate.
 REASON:
 In the interests of highway safety.
- 10 PLB309R83 Treeprot/Keptree
 11 PLB403R3 Plans Schedule
 12 PLB999 Non-Standard
 No consent is granted for the metal grille shown for the garage doors.
 REASON:
 In order to safeguard the character and appearance of the Conservation Area
- 13 PLD12R54 Tlimit-3/Durat

Reason(s) for Approval

Birmingham City Council grants Planning Permission subject to the condition(s) listed below (if appropriate). The reason for granting permission is because the development is in accordance with:

Policies 3.10, 3.27, 5.7 - 5.40, 6.51A, of the Birmingham Unitary Development Plan 2005; and Places for Living (2001), which has been adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance.

Case Officer: Simon Turner



Birmingham City Council, Licence No. LA 026104 (2003)



<p>S/00873/08/FUL WENTWORTH GATE, LAND ADJACENT NO. 7, MOOR POOL (SITE EI), HARBORNE, BIRMINGHAM</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Statutory Listed Building ■ Locally Listed Building Conservation Area PA Viewing Offices Site Boundary ★ Site Location 	<p>PLANNING P. O. BOX 28 ALPHA TOWER SUFFOLK STREET Q'WAY BIRMINGHAM B1 1TU</p>
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