
Committee Date:	23/07/2015	Application Number:	2015/03920/PA
Accepted:	02/06/2015	Application Type:	Full Planning
Target Date:	28/07/2015		
Ward:	Sutton Four Oaks		

25 Mountford Drive, Land adjacent, Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham, B75 6TA

Erection of detached dwelling house with new footway crossing, car parking and associated landscaping and boundary treatment, following demolition of existing garage and installation of new footway crossing for 25 Mountford Drive.

Applicant: Linda Hudson
25 Mountford Drive, Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham, B75 6TA
Agent: Jab Architectural Design
76 Brooks Road, Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham, B72 1HR

Recommendation

Approve Subject To Conditions

1. Proposal

- 1.1. Planning permission is sought to erect a detached dwellinghouse with new footway crossing, car parking and associated landscaping following the demolition of the existing garage and installation of new footway crossing to existing dwelling.
- 1.2. It is proposed to subdivide 25 Mountford Drive and create a new residential plot within the existing side garden. The proposed dwelling would be sited 2 metres northeast of the existing dwelling and would follow the established building line of 23 and 25 Mountford Drive. It would have a contemporary design with full height glazing, aluminium windows and a mix of brick, rendered and timber cladding elevations. The dwelling would be two-storeys in height with rooms within the roof space and would include a three-storey forward projecting gable. Amendments have been made during the application, which have reduced the scale of the building by lowering the mid-point of the roof and the height of the northeast gable has been reduced by 0.27 metres to ensure the majority of the building is two-storeys high.
- 1.3. Internally, the ground floor would comprise a lounge, hallway, W.C and an open plan kitchen/dining room. At first floor there would be a laundry room and two bedrooms (both with en-suites) and at second floor and within the roof space there would be a third bedroom with an en-suite and a storage room. The bedrooms would measure between 10.5sqm and 19.5sqm and the proposed rear garden would measure 117sqm. The remaining rear garden for 25 Mountford Drive would measure 78sqm.
- 1.4. It is proposed to install two separate footway crossings for the existing and proposed dwelling houses and each house would have two car parking spaces (200% parking provision). The existing footway crossing serving the garage would be reinstated.

- 1.5. The Silver Birch tree to the front of 25 Mountford Drive would be retained and new soft landscaping would be provided to the front of the existing and proposed dwelling houses.
- 1.6. Site Area: 0.0254 hectares. Density: 50 dwellings per hectare.
- 1.7. [Link to Documents](#)
2. Site & Surroundings
 - 2.1. The application site relates to the side garden belonging to a two-storey semi-detached dwelling, located at the turning head of a residential cul-de-sac. The site contains a single storey garage and is adjoined by Coppice Primary School to the rear of the site and a public footpath to the northeast. The site has vehicular access from Mountford Drive which provides access to a car parking area and garage located to the side of the dwelling house. There is an ancient woodland (subject to a Tree Preservation Order 117) located around the perimeter of Coppice Primary School that adjoins the site to the rear.
 - 2.2. The surrounding area is predominantly residential in character and comprises two-storey semi-detached 1960s houses, with some having been extended to the side and rear. The houses in the cul-de-sac have open and deep front gardens and off-street car parking.
 - 2.3. [Site Location](#)
 - 2.4. [Street View](#)
3. Planning History
 - 3.1. 15 February 1956 - 41651000 - Planning permission approved for residential development.
 - 3.2. 21 November 1974 - 40262000 - Planning permission approved for kitchen, dining room, bedroom, cloakroom/WC extension.
4. Consultation/PP Responses
 - 4.1. Ward Councillors, M.P, Residents Associations and nearby occupiers were notified.
 - 4.2. 7 letters of objection received from nearby occupiers stating the following:
 - Out of character as the house is detached with a larger width and narrow depth footprint; is three storeys in height (in part); sited much closer to the road; and would have a smaller rear garden compared to neighbouring properties.
 - Over-development.
 - Set a precedent and contribute to erosion of the locality, contrary to Mature Suburbs SPD.
 - Inconsistent with surrounding housing density and design/layout of houses at the end of cul-de-sacs.
 - Loss of light and privacy.
 - Loss of mature trees and landscaping.

- Increase on-street parking problems, traffic congestion and cause more access problems for emergency and delivery vehicles.
 - Builder's vehicles would cause extreme disruption, obstruct access and may cause a bad accident as local children play on the road.
 - Detrimental to wildlife, in particular bats, foxes and birds.
 - Increase surface water drainage and result in additional pressure on the capacity of the existing drainage system.
 - Spoil the environment, which has already been spoiled by the building of a much bigger school adjoining the site.
 - The occupiers of the new dwelling may start using the adjoining pathway for parking and 'land grabbing' purposes.
 - The applicant has not consulted existing residents and shown no consideration.
 - The plans do not have correct measurements and the application form is incomplete.
 - Planning Officers have advised previously that the conversion/extension of a neighbour's garage is unlikely to be granted planning permission as it would amount to over-development of the site.
- 4.3. 1 letter of comment received from a nearby occupier stating the following:
- Would like the local planning authority to consider the design of the property being out of keeping with existing properties style; loss of mature trees and bushes to the front of the property; over-intensification of land; and loss of kerbside parking space, which will displace on-street parking into turning head and thus impacting use, convenience and highway safety.
- 4.4. Transportation Development - No objection subject to conditions requiring appropriate pedestrian visibility splays new access point; new footway crossing to be built to BCC specifications/standards and at applicant's expense; and any redundant footway crossing to be reinstated to full height kerb at applicant's expense.
- 4.5. Regulatory Services - No objection subject to a condition requiring a vehicle charging point.
- 4.6. Severn Trent Water Limited - No objection subject to a suitable drainage condition.
- 4.7. West Midlands Police - No objection and recommends that the proposal is developed to enhanced security standards produced by Police Crime Reduction initiative 'Secured by Design'.
- 4.8. West Midlands Fire Service - No objection.
5. Policy Context
- 5.1. Birmingham Unitary Development Plan (UDP) 2005, Draft Birmingham Development Plan (BDP), Places for Living SPG, 45 Degree Code SPD, Mature Suburbs SPD, Car Parking Guidelines SPD, National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Planning Practice Guidance and TPO 117.
6. Planning Considerations
- 6.1. The main considerations are whether the proposed development would be acceptable in principle and whether it would have a detrimental impact on the

character and appearance of the area, on the amenities of existing occupiers, trees, ecology, and highway safety.

6.2. Principle of Development

6.3. Policies 3.8 and 3.10 of the adopted UDP seek to protect what is good in the City's environment and states that proposals, which would have an adverse effect on the quality of the built environment, would not normally be allowed. Policy 5.20 advises that the City Council will take measures to maintain and protect the existing good quality residential environments which are one of the City's greatest assets.

6.4. The adopted UDP recognises the role of previously developed windfall sites in meeting the City's housing requirements. However, in assessing proposals for residential development, policy 5.25C requires account to be taken of factors such as the suitability of the location, whether there are any physical constraints and whether the site is accessible to jobs, shops and services by modes other than the car.

6.5. The NPPF seeks to ensure the provision of sustainable development, of good quality, in appropriate locations and sets out principles for developing sustainable communities. It encourages the effective use of land by utilising brown-field sites and focusing development in locations that are sustainable and can make the fullest use of public transport, walking and cycling. The NPPF promotes high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings.

6.6. The application site relates to the side garden of a semi-detached dwelling at 25 Mountford Drive, located within a predominantly residential area. The site raises no constraint issues that would prevent its development or create an unacceptable environment for future occupiers and is located within an accessible location close to jobs, shops and services. Regulatory Services raise no objection and no objections have been raised by Severn Trent Water Limited subject to a condition requiring suitable drainage of the site. I further note that the proposed redevelopment of the site would provide additional surveillance of the public footpath that adjoins the site. I therefore consider that the proposed development is acceptable in principle subject to the following site specific considerations.

6.7. Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Area

6.8. Policy 3.14 of the adopted UDP promotes good urban design that responds to local context. The NPPF advises that planning policies and decisions should aim to ensure that developments respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation. Paragraph 63 states that great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which help to raise the standard of design more generally in the area. Planning Practice Guidance advises that local building forms and details that contribute to the distinctive qualities of a place can be successfully interpreted in new developments and that innovative design should not be discouraged.

6.9. Mature Suburbs SPD states that new housing can have a significant impact on local distinctiveness on the character of an area and that new development must be of 'good design' resulting from a good understanding of the local character and circumstances. Innovative and contemporary designs that respect their context are encouraged. The Mature Suburbs SPD identifies 7 factors which enable a character

to be assessed and defined. These factors are; built form, spatial composition, architectural style, enclosure, density, degree of landscaping and the character of the public realm.

- 6.10. The application site is located within a residential cul-de-sac that is made up of well-proportioned semi-detached houses set behind open and deep front gardens with similar spacing between the buildings, which gives the street scene interest and a strong sense of rhythm. The site is adjoined by Coppice Primary School to the rear and a public footpath to the northeast.
- 6.11. The new residential plot would be of an appropriate size for the proposed dwelling house and would reflect the frontage width of plots in the area and provide an acceptable open front garden and adequate rear garden. The proposed dwelling would follow the front building line of 25 Mountford Drive and would respect the scale of houses in the cul-de-sac. The three-storey forward projecting gable would have a similar ridge height as 25 Mountford Drive and would not appear incongruous within the street scene.
- 6.12. The City Design Advisor raises no objection to the contemporary design approach and considers that the building footprint responds well to the tight configuration of the plot. I am satisfied that the proposed dwelling has been carefully designed to respond to the constraints of the site in terms of the irregular plot shape and would complement the buildings within the cul-de-sac in terms of scale, architectural forms (i.e. hipped roof with gables) and building materials. I do not consider that contemporary design would dominate or detract from the mature character of the area. I have recommended a condition regarding the proposed building materials and in particular the colour of the rendering to the front elevation and conditions to secure details about the proposed windows, doors and boundary treatment to ensure a high quality development.
- 6.13. The proposed development would create a new front parking area for 25 Mountford Drive and a front parking area for the proposed dwelling house. The new parking areas are similar to those at neighbouring properties within the cul-de-sac and amendments have been made during the application which shows the Silver Birch tree to the frontage to be retained and replacement soft landscaping to be provided which would help to soften the street scene. I have recommended a condition to secure details of the soft landscaping and hard surfacing for the new parking areas.
- 6.14. Impact on Trees and Ecology
- 6.15. The proposed dwelling and patio area would be located within the root protection area (RPA) of the Ash trees, which are covered by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO 117) and form part of a woodland that is sited within Coppice Primary School to the rear of the site. The Council's Tree Officer has advised that the construction of the proposed dwelling would need to employ special foundation designs to ensure the excavations are kept to a minimum within the RPA and that the hard surfacing for the patio would need to employ special construction methods to ensure no adverse implications for the existing tree roots. I consider that it is necessary to attach a condition to secure the final design of the construction methods within the RPA areas of the existing trees.
- 6.16. The Tree Officer has further stated that the existing trees to the rear of the site could be a problem for the future occupiers of the dwelling house due to their close proximity and risk of overshadowing. I am of the view that the proposed dwellinghouse and the rear garden would gain adequate sunlight throughout the day

given the orientation of the house and the rear garden would only be overshadowed in the late afternoon/early evenings and future occupiers would be aware of the trees when buying the proposed dwelling house.

- 6.17. I note nearby residents have expressed concern about the impact of the proposed development on existing wildlife. I consider that the proposed development would have negligible impact on ecology.
- 6.18. Residential Amenity
- 6.19. Regulatory Services raises no objection subject to a condition requiring a vehicle charging point. I do not consider that this condition is reasonable and necessary to make the proposed development acceptable.
- 6.20. All bedrooms would comply with the minimum guidelines set out in Places for Living SPG for bedroom sizes. The rear garden for 25 Mountford Drive would be reduced to 78sqm and the rear garden for the proposed dwelling would measure 117sqm. Both gardens would be useable, private and would exceed the guidelines set out in Places for Living, which recommends 70m² for family dwelling houses.
- 6.21. The proposed dwelling would comply with the 45 Degree Code SPD in relation to the rear facing habitable room windows at 25 Mountford Drive and would not result in any overshadowing of this property. I note that 25 Mountford Drive has side facing windows that provide secondary light to a living room and a bedroom. The new boundary fence that would be erected to separate the two plots would prevent overlooking and the first floor side facing Master bedroom window would be installed with obscure glazing to prevent overlooking into the side facing windows at 25 Mountford Drive. I am therefore satisfied that there would be no loss of privacy to the existing occupiers at 25 Mountford Drive.
- 6.22. I note that nearby residents are concerned that the full height glazing to the front elevation of the proposed dwelling would result in overlooking of the existing dwellings located on the opposite side of the road. The separation distance between the proposed dwelling and the front elevations of the existing dwellings at 31, 33 and 35 Mountford Drive exceeds 21 metres and although the three storey part of the proposed dwelling falls below the minimum guidelines as set out in Places for Living SPG, which recommends 27.5 metres between building faces for three storey dwellings I am of the view that the proposed development would not result in significant overlooking. Furthermore, the front elevation of existing dwellings already experience some degree of overlooking from the public realm.
- 6.23. Impact on Highway Safety
- 6.24. The proposed dwelling and the existing dwelling would both have parking for at least two vehicles, which complies with the maximum parking standards set out in the Car Parking Guidelines SPD. The proposed development would provide adequate parking provision for the proposed and existing dwelling and I note that there is unrestricted on-street parking available. I therefore do not consider that the proposed development would result in on-street parking pressure to the detriment of highway safety.
- 6.25. The proposed development would involve the installation of a new footway crossing to the existing dwelling house and to the proposed dwelling. Transportation Development raises no objection subject to conditions to ensure appropriate pedestrian visibility splays are provided at the new access points; for the new

footway crossings to be built to BCC specifications and at the applicant's expense; and to ensure the redundant footway crossing is reinstated. I consider that these conditions are reasonable and necessary and have attached them accordingly.

- 6.26. Transportation Development have noted that the proposed dwelling is likely to generate approximately five 2-way trips per day, and that this increase in traffic generation would not have a negative impact upon the safe operation of the surrounding highways. I concur with this view.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1. The proposed development would redevelop previously developed land and provide a dwelling house that is of high quality design. I consider that the contemporary design approach would complement the scale, architectural form and materials of neighbouring properties and would not harm the distinctive character or identity of the area. Subject to safeguarding conditions, I am satisfied that the proposed development would contribute to the improvement of the built environment, and would not have an adverse impact on the amenities of adjoining residents, trees or upon highway safety.

8. Recommendation

- 8.1. I recommend approval subject to the following conditions:

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| 1 | Requires the prior submission of a drainage scheme |
| 2 | Requires the prior submission of level details |
| 3 | Requires the prior submission of sample materials |
| 4 | Requires the prior submission of hard and/or soft landscape details |
| 5 | Requires the prior submission of hard surfacing materials |
| 6 | Requires the prior submission of boundary treatment details |
| 7 | Requires the prior submission details obscure glazing for specific areas of the approved building |
| 8 | Requires the prior submission of dormer window/window frame details |
| 9 | Requires the prior installation of means of access |
| 10 | Requires the redundant footway crossing to be reinstated. |
| 11 | Requires pedestrian visibility splays to be provided |
| 12 | Requires the prior submission of an arboricultural method statement |
| 13 | Requires the implementation of tree protection |
| 14 | Requires the scheme to be in accordance with the listed approved plans |
| 15 | Limits the approval to 3 years (Full) |
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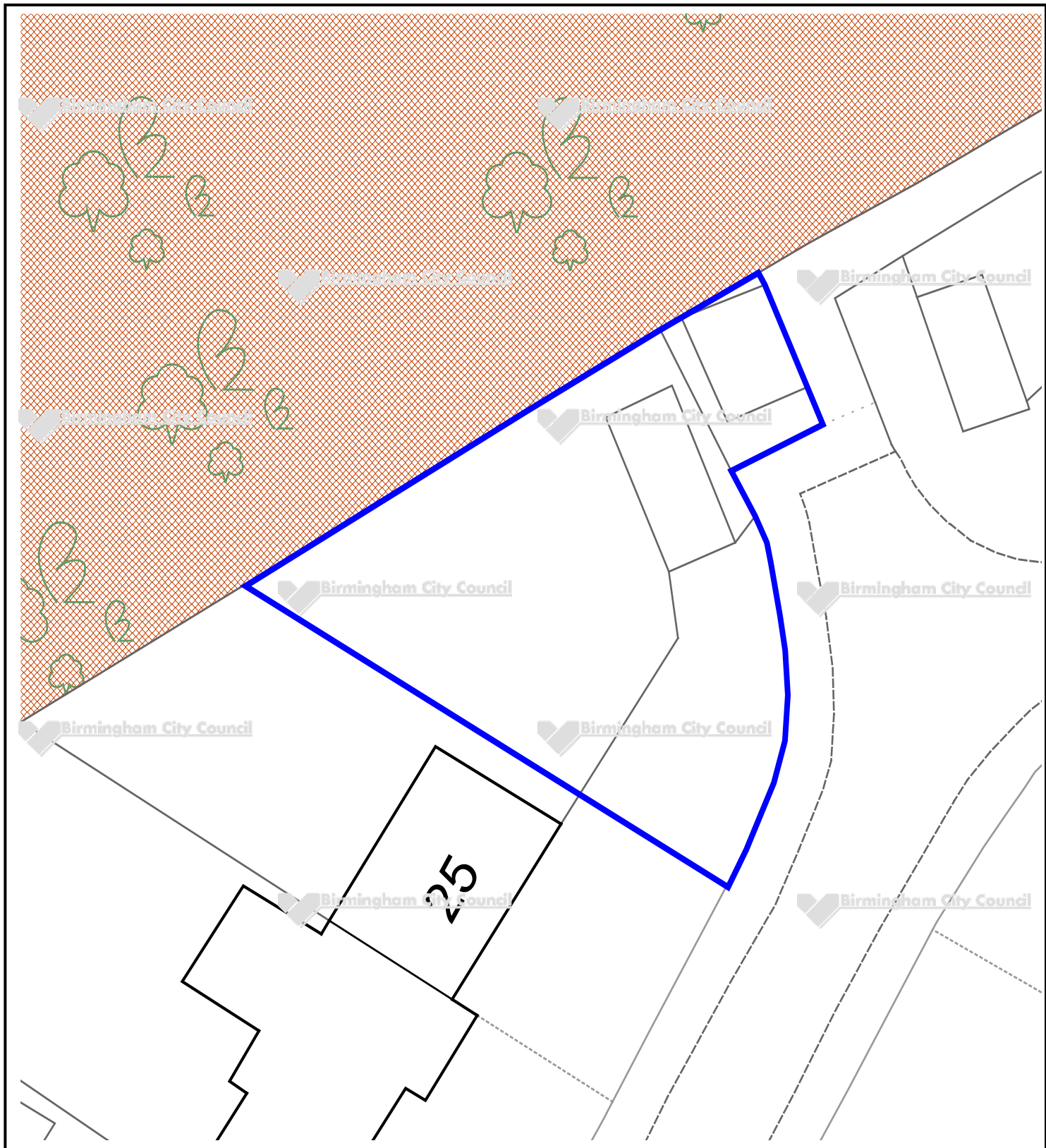
Case Officer: Helen Hawkes

Photo(s)



Application Site

Location Plan



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