
Committee Date: 07/08/2014 Application Number: 2014/03352/PA
Accepted: 12/05/2014 Application Type: Full Planning
Target Date: 07/07/2014
Ward: Moseley and Kings Heath

8 Ashfield Road, Land Adjacent, Kings Heath, Birmingham, B14 7AS

Erection of 1 no. detached dwellinghouse and associated demolition of existing garage

Applicant: Damson Homes Ltd
 c/o Agent
Agent: Tanna Draisey Architects
 87 Westley Road, Acocks Green, Birmingham, B27 7UQ

Recommendation

Approve Subject To Conditions

1. Proposal

- 1.1. The proposal is for the demolition of an existing double garage serving No. 8 Ashfield Road, and its replacement with a detached, three storey, 4-bed, single family dwellinghouse.
- 1.2. The proposed dwellinghouse would measure a maximum of 13m in length, 5.9m in width, 11.2m in height to its roof ridge, and 8.2m in height to its eaves. It would be sited 5.4m in from the highway, and 1.3m from the flank walls of the adjoining dwellinghouses at Nos. 8 and 4 Ashfield Road respectively.
- 1.3. The proposed dwellinghouse would accommodate an entrance hall, cloak room, lounge, and kitchen/diner at ground floor. It would accommodate two bedrooms, a study, and a bathroom at first floor. It would accommodate two bedrooms (each with en-suite) at second floor (within the roof space).
- 1.4. The proposed dwellinghouse would be constructed of brickwork, with stone cills and brick arches over windows. The roof, which would be pitched and incorporate a front gable, would be faced in manmade slates. Windows would either be slimline UPVC or timber. The front elevation would incorporate a bay window at ground floor. The rear elevation would incorporate a single storey, lean-to element, and two dormer windows in the roof.
- 1.5. It is proposed that the existing footway crossing serving the double garage of No. 8 would be widened to create two new footway crossings – one to serve No. 8 and one to serve the proposed dwellinghouse. Each footway crossing would measure 3.2m in width, an upstand created between. One car parking space would be provided on each frontage (100% car parking provision) and a new brick boundary wall, with landscaped beds behind would enclose the remaining sections of the frontages from the highway.
- 1.6. The density of development on the site would be 10 dwellings per hectare.

[Proposed Plans and Elevations](#)

2. [Site & Surroundings](#)

- 2.1. The application site comprises of No. 8 Ashfield Road and its detached double garage to the side (south west). No. 8 is a three storey, Victorian/Edwardian, semi-detached dwellinghouse. No. 4 Ashfield Road, which also adjoins the site, is a two storey, Victorian, semi-detached dwellinghouse. Located on this site, between these two properties, previously existed No. 6 Ashfield Road - a detached, Victorian/Edwardian dwellinghouse, which was subsequently demolished in the Post-War period.
- 2.2. The site is located on a residential road of generally attractive Victorian and Edwardian houses, with long narrow rear gardens. Some properties have off-street parking, whilst others retain front gardens and low front boundary walls. Parking is unrestricted on the highway.

[Location Map](#)

[Streetview](#)

3. [Planning History](#)

- 3.1. No relevant planning history

4. [Consultation/PP Responses](#)

- 4.1. Transportation Development – No objection – Subject to conditions requiring submission of amended footway crossings and pedestrian visibility splays.
- 4.2. Regulatory Services – No objection - Recommend condition requiring submission of contamination remediation scheme as possibility of contamination as a result of oil spillage from cars stored in the garage over the years or contaminated hardcore that has been used under the hardstanding upon which the garage has been built.
- 4.3. West Midlands Fire Service – No objection
- 4.4. West Midlands Police – No objection
- 4.5. Severn Trent Water – No objection – Subject to drainage condition
- 4.6. Local residents, Ward Councillors, Residents Associations and M.P. notified. Six letters of general comment received from local residents. The following relevant comments were raised:
 - House on this site prior to WW2 so unreasonable to object in principle to new build
 - On-street parking is currently difficult and would be exacerbated by proposal. Potential to cause obstruction to police/ambulance vehicles
 - Needs to be built sensitively in order to fit in with Victorian villas
 - House looks squashed and shoehorned on to site

- Overlooking from first/second floor windows on rear elevation into neighbouring rear garden
- Openness of existing plot lost
- Loss of light to attic bedroom of No. 4
- Loss of light to ground floor living room of No. 4 from kitchen element
- Potential damage to house and boundary wall of No. 4 through construction works or subsidence

One letter of objection received from a local resident raising the following concerns:

- Three storeys would have adverse impact on street scene
- Overlooking to rear
- Very cramped development - far too close to the existing dwellings. It would be out of character with the existing built environment.

5. Policy Context

5.1. The following local policies are applicable:

- Birmingham UDP
- Draft Birmingham Development Plan
- Mature Suburbs SPD
- Places for Living SPG
- Car parking Guidelines SPD

5.2. The following national policies are applicable:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

6. Planning Considerations

6.1. The National Planning Policy Framework seeks a presumption in favour of sustainable development (Para. 14). Among the core planning principles set out in Paragraph 17 are ensuring the provision of sustainable development, of good quality, in appropriate locations and it sets out principles for developing sustainable communities. It promotes high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings. It encourages the effective use of land by utilising brownfield sites and focusing development in locations that are sustainable and can make the fullest use of public transport, walking and cycling. The NPPF also seeks to boost housing supply and supports the delivery of a wide choice of high quality homes, with a mix of housing (particularly in terms of type/tenure) to create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities.

6.2. The Birmingham UDP requires that new housing developments should provide an appropriate environment (Paragraphs 5.20-5.20A), a suitable housing density and mix (Paragraph 5.40) and encourages a full range of housing types and sizes including those for people with disabilities and other specific needs (5.35 and 5.37). Paragraph 5.38 recommends a housing density of 40 dwellings per hectare.

6.3. Within the Draft Birmingham Development Plan, Policies TP26 and TP27 state that the location of new housing should be on previously developed land, be accessible to jobs, shops and services by other modes of transport, be sympathetic to natural assets and not conflict with other policies in relation to employment land, green belt

and open space. It also states that new housing should offer a choice of type, size and tenure to create more balanced and sustainable communities.

- 6.4. No. 6 Ashfield Road, a detached Victorian or Edwardian dwellinghouse, previously occupied the application site until it was demolished in the Post-War period. Therefore I consider the principle of a detached dwellinghouse on this brownfield site would be acceptable and would fully comply with national and local policy. Whilst the density of development on the site, at 10 dwellings per hectare, would be below the 40 dwellings per hectare recommended in the UDP, the Council's Places for Living SPG recognises that higher density forms are not always appropriate everywhere and that is important in areas where lower density forms are a positive characteristic that harm is not caused by insensitive infill and redevelopment. The site is located within a residential frontage, and is sustainably located within walking distance of Kings Heath local centre, where there are services, facilities and very good public transport links.

Siting and Scale

- 6.5. Chapter 7 of the NPPF focuses on good design as a key element of sustainable development. Paragraph 56 states: "The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people."
- 6.6. Paragraphs 3.14D and 3.14E of the UDP identify that new housing development should be designed in accordance with good urban design principles. In addition, 'Places for Living' SPG encourages good quality accommodation in attractive environments. It contains a series of urban design principles and makes reference to minimum design and amenity guidance. Particular emphasis is given to assessing context and responding positively to local character.
- 6.7. I consider the proposed dwellinghouse would have a similar siting to that of the former No. 6 Ashfield Road, and would follow front and rear building lines along the street. Instead of incorporating a traditional two storey rear and single storey rear wing (as the former No. 6 would have had) a single storey element would extend across the width of the rear elevation, having a shallow depth. Although not particularly characteristic of the built form along the road, this element has been designed in order to minimise loss of light to adjoining occupiers, and not being visible from the public realm, I consider the design rationale to be sound. The 1.3m gaps between the proposed dwellinghouse and neighbouring properties would be consistent with that of the former No. 6 and characteristic of the close knit Victorian/Edwardian streetscene along Ashfield Road.
- 6.8. I consider the scale of the proposed dwellinghouse at three storeys (with second floor accommodated in the roofspace) is likely to have been consistent with that of the former No. 6. It would be wholly in keeping with adjoining properties and the streetscene, with roof ridge height and eaves level following the sloping topography of Ashfield Road from south west to north east.

Design and Appearance

- 6.9. I consider the design style and appearance of the proposed dwellinghouse would be acceptable. Amended plans have been submitted on request, which elongate windows to provide greater verticality, substitute render for brickwork below eaves, and replace lintels with brick arches among other things. A cross section plan of the

front elevation has been submitted on request which confirms that there will be appropriate window reveals and façade detailing. Therefore I am satisfied that the proposed dwellinghouse would achieve a Victorian/Edwardian aesthetic which would be in keeping with the high quality character and appearance of the locality. Notwithstanding I recommend attaching conditions to any consent requiring further details of windows on the front elevation and the front door in order to ensure these are of high quality and in keeping with the appearance of the streetscene.

Living Conditions

- 6.10. I am satisfied that living conditions within the proposed dwellinghouse would be acceptable, with bedroom sizes exceeding the minimum size requirements set out in the Council's Places for Living SPG. The rear garden would provide private amenity space that would far exceed the recommended amenity space size set out in Places for Living SPG.

Amenity of Adjoining Occupiers

- 6.11. No. 4 Ashfield Road has an original attic window on its side elevation facing on to the site. This is the only window which serves an attic bedroom, but there are also three rooflights serving this bedroom. The occupier of No. 4 has confirmed that although the attic bedroom is not in regular use, it is used as a base for family members when residing in the UK, and sleeps four people, whilst also acting as a family living/play room.
- 6.12. Whilst I acknowledge that light through this attic window would be reduced as a result of the proposed dwellinghouse, I consider a similar such scenario would previously have existed with the former No. 6 Ashfield Road; the attic bedroom is served by three other rooflights and not solely reliant on light being obtained through this window; and the attic bedroom is not the main bedroom within the property nor is it in constant use by the adjoining occupiers. Therefore, on balance, I am satisfied that the amenity of the adjoining occupier at No. 4 would not be materially harmed as a result of the proposal.
- 6.13. I note there is a small attic window in the side elevation of No. 8 facing on to the site. However, given that there are larger dormer windows on the front and rear elevations of this property, and No. 8 is incorporated within the blue line site boundary, I am satisfied that the reduction in natural light to this window would unlikely materially harm the amenity of these adjoining occupiers.
- 6.14. Whilst I note the concerns of the adjoining occupier at No. 4 in respect of loss of light to their rear living room window, the single storey kitchen element of the proposed dwellinghouse would comply with the Council's 45 Degree Code in relation to this window and therefore I am satisfied that there would be no resulting loss of light. Similarly the proposed single storey kitchen element would comply with the Council's 45 Degree Code in relation to adjoining habitable room windows on the rear elevation of the other adjoining property, No. 8.
- 6.15. I note the concerns of local residents in respect of overlooking from first/second floor windows of the proposed dwellinghouse into the rear gardens of neighbouring properties. However, I consider this relationship to be the norm for most people, and as such would not materially harm the amenity of adjoining occupiers.
- 6.16. I recommend conditions be attached to any consent to restrict permitted development rights for rear extensions and to prevent the insertion of any windows

in the side elevations of the proposed dwellinghouse in order to protect the amenity of adjoining occupiers.

- 6.17. I note the concerns of the adjoining occupier in respect of the potential for construction to result in subsidence or damage to their property/the adjoining boundary wall. However, this aspect would be controlled through Building Regulations.

Traffic and Parking

- 6.18. Transportation Development have raised no objection to the proposal. The Council's Car Parking Guidelines SPD recommends a maximum of two spaces per dwelling in this location. With one off-street space being provided for the proposed dwellinghouse and one-off street parking space for No. 8 the proposed development would comply with the Council's SPD.
- 6.19. On request amended plans have been submitted that reduce the number of off-street parking spaces proposed for the dwellinghouse from two to one. The reason for this is in order to retain some front boundary treatment and front garden, which I consider to be important for the streetscene and which is slowly being eroded along Ashfield Road to the detriment of local character. I consider the provision of one space for each dwelling would strike an appropriate balance between providing off-street parking yet retaining some front garden and boundary treatment. There would still be on-street parking opportunities along Ashfield Road should the need arise and I concur with Transportation Development that traffic and parking demand at this location, further to the addition of the proposed dwellinghouse, would not differ notably to that generated currently. In addition, it is noted there are good public transport links at this location.
- 6.20. Amended plans have been submitted which include an upstand to provide two individual footway crossings as advised by Transportation Development. Transportation Development recommend that a condition be attached to any consent requiring appropriate pedestrian visibility splays for the new footway crossings.

Other Issues

- 6.21. Regulatory Services have raised no objection to the proposed development. They recommend attaching a condition to any consent requiring submission of a contaminated land assessment as they advise there is a possibility of contamination as a result of oil spillage from cars stored in the garage over the years or contaminated hardcore that has been used under the hardstanding upon which the garage was built. However, given that the garage/site has historically been in domestic use and not been used for commercial or industrial purposes I consider it would be unreasonable to attach such a condition.
- 6.22. I note no objections have been received from Severn Trent Water, West Midlands Police or West Midlands Fire Service.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1. I consider the proposed development would help meet the City's housing demand by providing a dwellinghouse on a brownfield site, which positively responds to the local distinctiveness and character of its surroundings. There would be no material

impact of the proposed development on traffic and parking, or the amenity of adjoining occupiers. Therefore I am satisfied that the proposal would constitute sustainable development and I recommend that planning permission be granted.

8. Recommendation

8.1. Approve Subject to Conditions

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- 1 Requires the scheme to be in accordance with the listed approved plans
 - 2 Requires the prior submission of sample materials
 - 3 Requires pedestrian visibility splays to be provided
 - 4 Requires the prior submission of hard and/or soft landscape details
 - 5 Requires the prior submission of boundary treatment details
 - 6 Requires the prior submission of a drainage scheme
 - 7 Requires the prior submission of window/window frame details for the front elevation
 - 8 Requires the prior submission of front door details
 - 9 Removes PD rights for new windows
 - 10 Removes PD rights for extensions
 - 11 Limits the approval to 3 years (Full)
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Case Officer: Andrew Conroy

Photo(s)

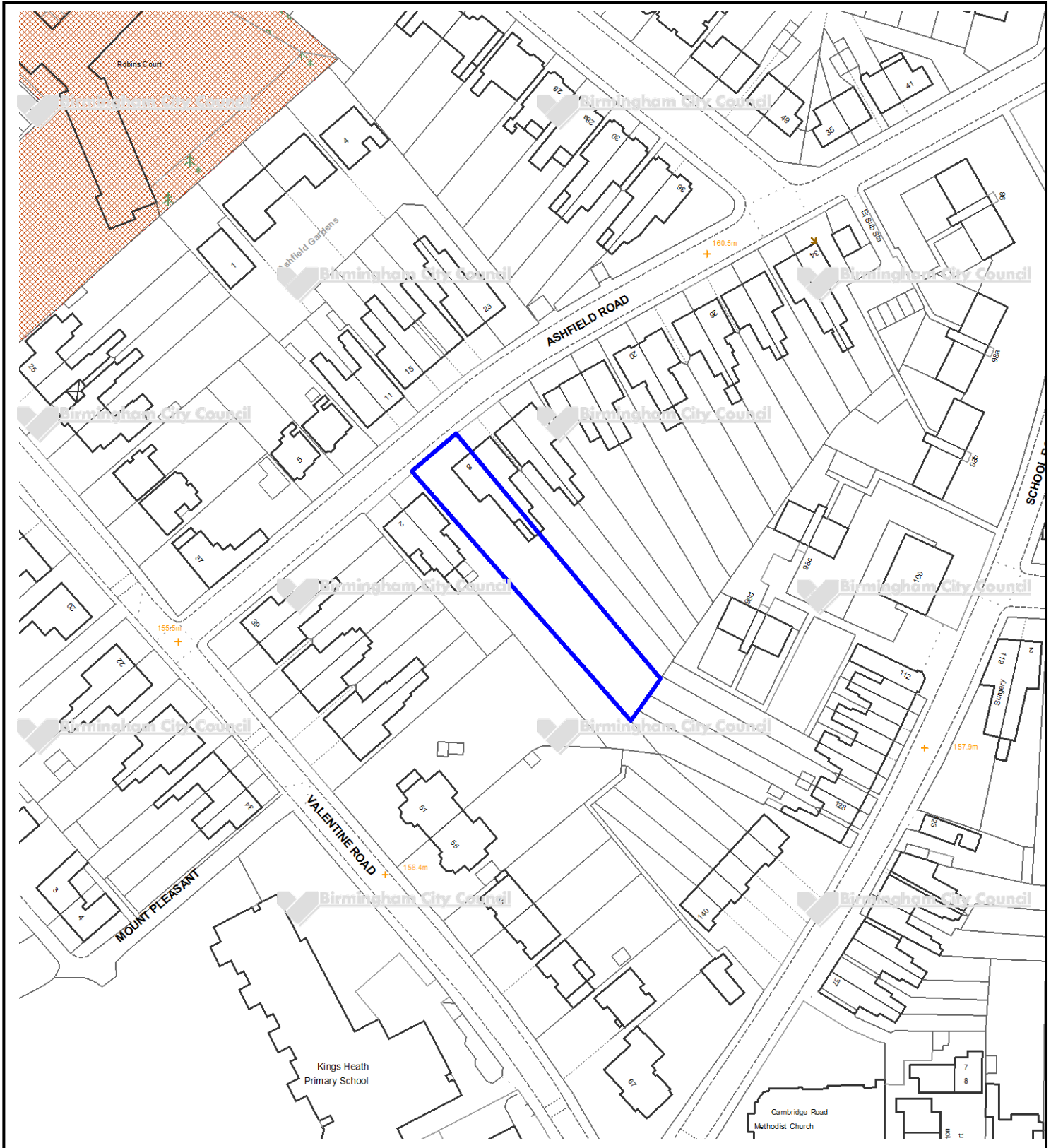


Figure 1 – Streetscene (No. 8 to left of site, No. 4 to right of site)



Figure 2 – Streetscene (No. 8 to left of site, No. 4 to right of site)

Location Plan



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