

Committee Date: 07/07/2016 **Application Number:** 2016/03187/PA
Accepted: 18/04/2016 **Application Type:** Full Planning
Target Date: 18/07/2016
Ward: Harborne

356 High Street, Harborne, Birmingham, B17 9PU

Demolition of former public house and redevelopment of the site for 14 apartments with associated access, parking, cycle and bin storage

Applicant: Harborne Maine Ltd
c/o Agent
Agent: RPS Planning & Development
Highfield House, 5 Ridgeway, Quinton Business Park, Birmingham,
B32 1AF

Recommendation

Approve Subject To Conditions

1. Proposal
 - 1.1. This application seeks planning permission for the demolition of a former public house and redevelopment of the site for 14 apartments with associated access, parking, cycle and bin storage.
 - 1.2. The scheme would be four storeys, with the top floor being located within the roof space with flat roofed dormers and gable projections providing light to the upper floor. The scheme provides parking for 2 vehicles and a cycle shelter capable of accommodating 14 cycles. Access to the car park is via Harborne Park Road through an archway tunnel on the edge of the elevation facing Harborne Park Road. There would be gates, preventing public access to the rear, set back into the tunnel by 6m, to prevent cars entering from waiting on the road.
 - 1.3. The building would be set back from the two front boundaries (High Street and Harborne Park Road) by 1m on High Street and varying depths on Harborne Park Road of between 1m and 2m. The front boundaries would consist of 0.45m high brick wall with 0.6m high railings above. The architecture would be of a traditional design with 'Tudor' and 'Arts and Craft' influences. The building would consist of red brick with some white render panels and black wooden beams, Juliette balconies would also add interest to the projecting gables.
 - 1.4. The main pedestrian access into the building is from Harborne Park Road with a secondary access from the courtyard to the rear. Two ground floor flats, facing onto High Street, would have separate front doors onto the street.
 - 1.5. The proposal would consist of 12 one beds and 2 two beds. The one bed flats range in size from 50sqm to 55sqm, the two bed flats are 61sqm and 81sqm.

- 1.6. The footprint of the proposal is slightly smaller than the footprint of the 'existing' building. However, the site area is limited and as such limited amenity space is proposed.
- 1.7. The application has been made with the support of a Design and Access Statement, Transport Statement, Noise Assessment, Planning Statement and Drainage Assessment.
- 1.8. Site Area: 0.05ha Density: 280dph Car Parking: 14%
- 1.9. [Link to Documents](#)
2. Site & Surroundings
 - 2.1. The application site is the former Huntsman Public House, previously the Kings Arms. This was gutted by fire in 2013 and was made safe by the City Council soon after. The building mostly now remains as a single storey building, with the remaining material either removed or pushed into the site, there is a small 2 storey section remaining to the rear of the site.
 - 2.2. The site is on the junction of High Street and Harborne Park Road.
 - 2.3. The site is adjacent to a row of shops to its eastern boundary and an open grassed area to the southeast side of the site. There is a care home opposite the site (to the north) which is 3 storeys and a block of flats, to the Northwest which is partly three storey and partly four storey.
 - 2.4. Terraced properties are to the west of the site (over Harborne Park Road), which have shops at the ground floor and flats above.
 - 2.5. [Site Location Plan](#)
3. Planning History
 - 3.1. 17/02/2016 - 2016/00506/PA - Pre-application advice for demolition of former public house and redevelopment with a 4 storey residential building comprising 14 apartments – Advised proposal likely to be acceptable in principle, although absence of commercial use at ground floor would be unfortunate. Traditional architecture likely to sit more comfortably than a modern design.
4. Consultation/PP Responses
 - 4.1. Transportation Development: No objection subject to a condition requiring the footway crossing to be built to City Council specification.
 - 4.2. Regulatory Services: No objections subject to a condition requiring noise insulation.
 - 4.3. Education: No objection.
 - 4.4. West Midlands Police: No response received.
 - 4.5. West Midlands Fire Service: No objection.
 - 4.6. Severn Trent Water: No objection subject to a condition seeking drainage details.

- 4.7. Local Lead Flood Authority: No objection subject to a condition requiring a sustainable drainage assessment.
- 4.8. Site and Press Notices posted, local MP, Councillors, Residents' Associations and the occupiers of nearby properties notified of the application; the following responses received:
- 11 letters of objection from local addresses relating to;
 - Density of the development
 - Concern regarding highway safety as vehicles slow down to enter the site and impact on busy road junction.
 - Concern regarding inadequate car and motorcycle parking and limited on-street parking availability on local roads. Overspill parking would be detrimental to residents and local businesses.
 - Proximity of the apartments to the pavement is not conducive to residential accommodation.
 - Proposed building is one storey taller than the adjacent building and would cause a loss of view and sunlight.
 - The lack of any commercial use on the site will advance the decay of this end of High Street.
 - Concern regarding impact on traffic flow and the nearby pedestrian crossing during refuse collections as the refuse vehicle would not be able to access the site.
 - Already adequate supply of apartments in this congested area of Harborne.
 - Proposal does not consider disabled access to the site or provide disabled parking.
 - The Harborne Society: Supports in principle the proposed residential use and design however objects to the inadequate parking provision and refuse collection arrangements.
 - 10 letters of support from local addresses relating to the following matters:
 - Redevelopment of a brownfield site and removal of a current eyesore.
 - In keeping with streetscene and would be an attractive gateway into High Street.
 - Proposal would add vitality and viability to the area.
 - Proposal would add to the mix and range of residential properties in Harborne in close proximity to the University of Birmingham and Queen Elizabeth and Women's Hospitals.
 - No loss of amenity due to the demolition of the pub as there are other pubs nearby.
 - Proposal would overcome the crime problems associated with the current vacant site.
 - Excellent provision for cycles proposed.
 - Housing is the best use for the site as it is a difficult location for commercial uses.

5. Policy Context

- 5.1. UDP 2005, Pre-Submission Birmingham Development Plan 2031; Car Parking Guidelines SPD; Places for Living SPD; Loss of Public Houses SPG.

5.2. NPPF; NPPG.

6. Planning Considerations

Principle

- 6.1. The NPPF defines the three dimensions of sustainable development as being economic, environmental and social. Recently the NPPF and appeal decisions have established that there must be very good reasons to resist development if it otherwise constitutes sustainable development. There is also a strong emphasis on providing new housing, especially at sustainable locations within urban areas. The NPPF seeks to ensure the provision of sustainable development, of good quality, in appropriate locations and sets out principles for developing sustainable communities. The NPPF 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 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. Policy TP27, of the draft BDP, requires new housing to be; outside flood zones 2 and 3; served by new or existing infrastructure; accessible to jobs, shops and modes of transport other than the car; capable of remediation; sympathetic to historic, cultural or natural assets; and not in conflict with other specific policies of the plan. In summary this site is considered to be in a good location to deliver sustainable development.
- 6.3. The Loss of Public Houses SPG seeks to retain community facilities where possible recognising them as an asset unless alternatives are generally available. The current site contains a derelict public house which currently makes no contribution to the community, there are ample local public houses on the High Street, as indicated in the supporting Planning Statement, and as such I consider that the policy is satisfied due to the frequency of alternatives available.

Design/Places for Living

- 6.4. In terms of design, paragraph 3.14 of the UDP identifies that a high standard of design is essential to the continued improvement of Birmingham as a desirable place to live, work and visit. It also requires developers to consider the site in context and states that to avoid problems of piecemeal and incremental development, comprehensive master plans should be prepared. Paragraph 56 of the NPPF states that “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.”
- 6.5. A significant amount of pre-application discussion took place to improve the design of the proposed building and both contemporary and traditional approaches were considered. Traditional architecture was found to be most appropriate to the site and its context and I now consider it would make a positive contribution to the streetscene. At pre-application stage the applicant explored with local agents whether commercial units on the ground floor would be attractive to the market but was advised against their provision due to lack of demand. Despite enquiries it was also not possible to purchase the adjoining grassed site on Harborne Park Road, which would have

facilitated a more comprehensive scheme. Nevertheless, the development as proposed would significantly improve the appearance of this prominent site.

- 6.6. The layout of the site reinforces the strong building line along High Street whilst providing some defensible space for ground floor residents to the front with a 1m-2m setback behind a wall and railings. An active frontage is provided with front doors and windows to the ground floor flats facing onto both High Street and Harborne Park Road. To the rear, space is very limited due to the size and shape of the site however two parking spaces, a bin store and cycle store would be provided in a hard landscaped setting with some planters.
- 6.7. The scale of the development would be appropriate for a prominent corner site which attracts views from several roads and the nearby roundabout junction of High Street and Lordswood Road. The pub was a two-storey building with large pitched roof but surrounding development includes buildings of three and four storeys which the proposed four storey building would accord with. The third floor accommodation would be located within the roof which keeps the height to a minimum.
- 6.8. In terms of the detailed design, the elevations are well articulated and broken up with appropriate features including bay windows, dormer windows, Juliette balconies and a mix of render and brickwork. There is a strong base to the building and appropriate hierarchy in terms of the relationship between window size and height up the building.
- 6.9. Your City Designer has advised that much progress has been made since initial pre-application discussions and she is now able to support the scheme, stating that it would make a beneficial contribution to this part of Harborne and the streetscene.
- 6.10. Internally, all apartments meet the Government's *Technical Housing Standards* in terms of overall space provided and the bedroom sizes. Although these standards are not adopted locally they provide a useful guideline in the assessment of internal space. Furniture layouts also indicate that the normal furniture could be accommodated in all rooms.
- 6.11. There are two first floor windows serving the upper floor flats on the rear of No. 354 High Street. The proposal appears to conflict with the 45 Degree Code in respect of the nearest of these two windows however, I am mindful that the remaining two-storey section of the existing pub building also conflicts and, on balance, I do not consider the occupants of the flat likely to suffer any greater loss of light than the existing situation. I note that the owners of No. 354 High Street (not the occupants of the flat) have written in support of the application.
- 6.12. It is acknowledged there is no useable amenity space for residents due to the size of the site however I consider this to be offset by the proximity to shops and services within the centre, including Harborne swimming baths. I note that Grove Park is located further south along Harborne Park Road approximately 0.5km from the site.

Transportation

- 6.13. Policy 6.49B, of the UDP, requires new development to make adequate parking provision to meet all transport needs. The NPPF states that "when setting parking levels LPA's should take into account the accessibility of the site, the type, mix and use, access to public transport, local car ownership and the overall need to reduce high emission vehicles". Policy TP37 of the draft BDP requires that development proposals support and promote sustainable travel and TP43 requires new development to support the delivery of a sustainable transport network.

- 6.14. The site is within area 3, as defined by the *Car Parking Guidelines* SPD, where residential development requires a maximum of 2 parking spaces per unit. The scheme proposes 2 parking spaces and 14 cycle parking spaces to serve the 14 proposed flats. Parking on-street at this location is limited, with zig-zags along both sides of the site associated with 2 separate signal controlled pedestrian crossings. Beyond this there are double yellow parking restrictions. However, an assessment of local car parking opportunities, within the submitted Transport Statement, has detailed unrestricted parking opportunities within a short walking distance, including Ravenhurst Road and parts of Serpentine Road. Additionally, there are public car parks serving this local centre and a number of regular buses serve this location throughout the day. The Transport Statement indicates that the one-bedroom flats would be marketed as car-free and the two parking spaces proposed would be allocated to the two 2-bedroom apartments with permits issued. A car park management plan condition is attached to ensure appropriate procedures are put in place.
- 6.15. On this basis, I am satisfied that the proposal would be sustainably located, within very close proximity of local services and excellent bus routes into the City and should be supported with limited on-site parking.
- 6.16. Concerns were raised by Transportation in regard to the layout of the parking area, with initial comments provided stating the layout was not workable, requiring vehicles to reverse out of the site and with poor visibility at the access. Amended plans have been submitted increasing the turning area and slightly altering the proposed boundary treatment at the access and Transportation Development is now satisfied that there would be adequate visibility and turning area within the site.
- 6.17. The objections relating to lack of parking and refuse collections are noted. Transportation Development has advised that the traffic and parking impact at this location resulting from the development is unlikely to be any greater than that of the former public house, which had no off-street parking. In terms of servicing, the pub would have had refuse collections and deliveries, most likely more frequently than the proposed use so the situation is likely to improve with only domestic rubbish from 14 apartments to collect once a week.
- 6.18. I am mindful that some of the objectors and Members are familiar with the Harborne Village Apartments site, a modern four storey block of apartments opposite the site at 349-353 High Street. This development of 24 apartments was approved in 2006 (2006/05132/PA) but was subject to a condition limiting occupancy to the over-55s due to concerns from Transportation Development about low parking provision (16 spaces/70% provision). In October 2011 application 2011/07631/PA was made which included removal of the age restriction condition, since this was thought to be responsible for the low number of sales, and the provision of 2 additional parking spaces. This application would have resulted in there being 22 flats for general occupation, 2 retail units and 18 parking spaces (81% provision). Transportation Development recommended approval subject to a condition requiring one of the parking spaces to be allocated for a car club scheme. Members refused this application but it was allowed at appeal in 2012 subject to the recommended conditions of a car club scheme and car park management plan.
- 6.19. Notwithstanding the Council's concerns regarding likely on-street parking in an already heavily parked area, the Appeal Inspector stated that,
- "The site is close to the commercial centre of Harborne which offers a wide range of shopping opportunities ... other local services and amenities in close proximity ... wide*

variety of bus services and associated bus stops that are very close to the development. The highly sustainable location of the site, the excellent provision of public transport and the control of on-street parking on some of the surrounding streets would all tend to reduce reliability on car ownership at this site. I would expect the occupiers of several apartments to make the decision that owning a car would not be a priority for them”

- 6.20. The Inspector allowed the appeal and imposed a new condition requiring submission of a car park management scheme including details of the car club. Unfortunately, despite the applicant's efforts, it has not been possible to provide the car club due to the lack of an interested provider for viability reasons. Car clubs are likely to be more attractive on larger sites where there would be greater uptake among residents.
- 6.21. Taking account of the Inspector's comments regarding the sustainable location of the site, the likelihood of residents deciding not to own a car if parking is not available and the failure of the car club scheme, I remain of the view that the current proposal should be approved despite the low off-street parking provision. It would bring back into use a derelict site in a prominent location and offers an attractive, well-designed building. While more parking would be ideal, it cannot be accommodated on this constrained site, for example, in place of the ground floor apartments, without adversely affecting the streetscene and, on balance, I consider the scheme would have an acceptable impact on parking and highway safety.

Noise Impact

- 6.22. The scheme would place a residential use into a relatively noisy location. The noise assessment submitted with the application identifies noise from Harborne Park Road as the primary source and recommends glazing and trickle vents which achieve suitable sound reduction. A suitable condition is attached, along with a condition which also requires noise insulation between the proposed apartments and the adjacent commercial building at No. 354 High Street as per Regulatory Services' recommendation.

Drainage

- 6.23. Some drainage information has been submitted however the Local Lead Flood Authority advises that further details are required before the drainage scheme can be approved. A suitable condition is attached.

Community Infrastructure Levy

- 6.24. This development attracts a CIL payment of £60,996.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1. This application is recommended for approval; the proposal constitutes sustainable development as defined in the NPPF providing good quality residential accommodation on a derelict site in a highly sustainable location. It would make a positive contribution to the streetscene and the impact on parking and highway safety would be acceptable.

8. Recommendation

- 8.1. Approve subject to the following 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 the prior submission of hard and/or soft landscape details
 - 4 Requires the prior submission of a lighting scheme
 - 5 Requires the prior submission of a parking management strategy
 - 6 Requires the prior submission of details of a delivery vehicle management scheme
 - 7 Requires the provision of cycle parking prior to occupation
 - 8 Requires the prior submission of a residential travel plan
 - 9 Requires the prior submission of a Sustainable Drainage Assessment and Sustainable Drainage Operation and Maintenance Plan
 - 10 Requires the prior submission of noise insulation (variable)
 - 11 Requires the prior submission a noise study to establish residential acoustic protection
 - 12 Limits the approval to 3 years (Full)
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Case Officer: Amy Stevenson

Photo(s)

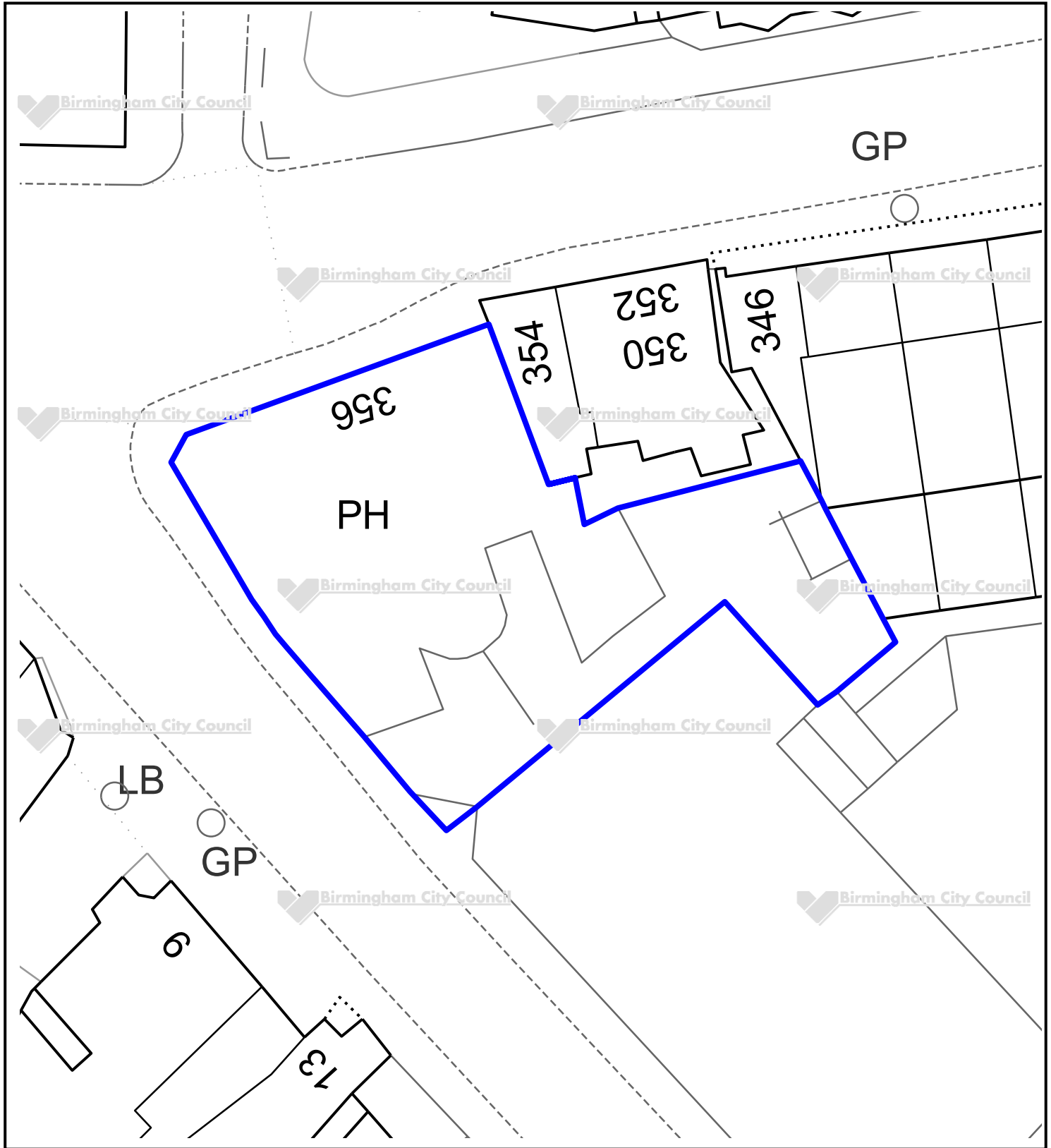


Photo 1: View from further west on High Street, close to roundabout



Photo 2: View from south on Harborne Park Road

Location Plan



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