

PLANNING DESIGN ACCESS & HERITAGE STATEMENT

PROPOSAL

Partial demolition of the existing house and erection of part single, part two-storey storey side and rear extensions with roof extension and alterations to access drive.

LOCATION

13 Heathside Road
Moor Park, HA6 2EE

REPORT

APRIL 2021



Application site marked in red line above

Site and Surroundings

The site comprises of a detached two-storey dwelling with a flat roof double garage. The house is set within a substantial plot with significant boundary screening along its sides and rear border with a mix of hedges and mature trees. The plot itself is in rectangular form and sited on the corner of Heathside Road and Heathside Close.

The land rises modestly from the front road and then flattens out across the plot with the adjoining detached property No.11 located on a higher land level.

The building itself is of general architectural presentation sited within a mix of houses with varying forms and scale, including houses with a mix of extensions. The adjoining two houses along the plot have wide building frontages covering the full span at two-storey level with rear extensions and sited on similar sized plots. These two houses retain limited gaps between them and appear prominent in the wider street scene.

The property is sited back from the frontage with a mix of landscaping features in front and retains a gap to the side to Heathside Close. On the other side the garage provides some visual break but in itself the existing house is unusual in that it is very modest in scale compared to materially larger houses visibly nearby on similar plots; opposite larger houses on narrower plots; and sited in a tighter urban pattern.

The building is not listed or locally listed however the property is within Moor Park Conservation Area. The property has good accessibility and is not within a flood risk zone.

Policy Context

National Planning Policy Framework 2019
The Three Rivers Core Strategy 2011
The Development Management Policies LDD 2013
The Moor Park Conservation Area Appraisal

Relevant Planning History

20/1507/FUL for various extensions to the existing house was refused on 23rd September 2020. A subsequent appeal was lodged and whilst dismissed, the Inspector found the development footprint to be acceptable as well as the frontage driveway and determined that whilst the overall massing of the development would consume the original house, the potential to extend the existing house with more subservient extensions merited consideration.

The Appeal Inspector state in decision 3262206:

The CA Appraisal sets out plot coverage that will be permitted at 15% and the appellant has provided examples where it appears plot coverage in excess of 15% has been allowed. I do not find that, in this case, exceeding the limit by 1% (or 3% based on figures within the submitted objections) sufficient to warrant refusal on its own.

With respect to the potential to extend the Appeal Inspector states:

This is not to say that the dwelling should remain unaltered at all but only serves to emphasise the importance of any proposed alterations being sensitively designed with both the host dwelling and setting within the CA in mind.

With respect to the frontage character of the forecourt, the Appeal Inspector states:

The proposed hardstanding to the front of the property is a notable increase compared to the existing site. Despite this the site plan (042/PR/204), as well as the indicative lawn areas in the appellant's statement, appear to demonstrate that the proposed hard standing would essentially be set back from the road. This would allow for soft landscaping and maintenance of the boundary hedges and trees, as well as the external grass verge, which would assist in maintaining the green appearance of the site. Appropriate landscaping could be secured by condition to secure a layout similar to the clover leaf layout noted in the CA appraisal. I do not find that increase in hardstanding would erode the open character of the site, impact upon the CA or warrant refusal as a result of this element of the proposal even when taking into account the prominent corner plot location.

This revised application seeks to positively address the outstanding concerns of the Appeal Inspector and Council with a more modest set of extensions that seek to retain the primary design and form of the current building with additional extensions to provide good quality family accommodation on a spacious plot whilst respecting the setting and presentation of the original building onsite.

Proposal

The application seeks to extend the modest dwelling to provide a more spacious family dwelling, within the setting of a spacious plot.

- Replacement of the side garage to form a new garage and utility room with a partial wrap around extension to provide an open plan living, dining room to maximise daylight.
- First-floor extensions
- Roof accommodation via raising of the roof
- Re-siting of access drive and new forecourt with associated landscaping

Principle of Development

The site is located within the built-up settlement area and as such the principle of residential extensions are considered acceptable. The site is also within walking distance to local schools, amenities, buses and local services. The location of the site within the context of a designated Conservation Area does not in itself preclude the site or property from being redeveloped or extended.

It is therefore put forward that the site is within an accessible and sustainable location and the development would be in accordance with the aims and objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework 2019, which supports the extension of existing houses to meet generational and extended family housing needs in sustainable locations.

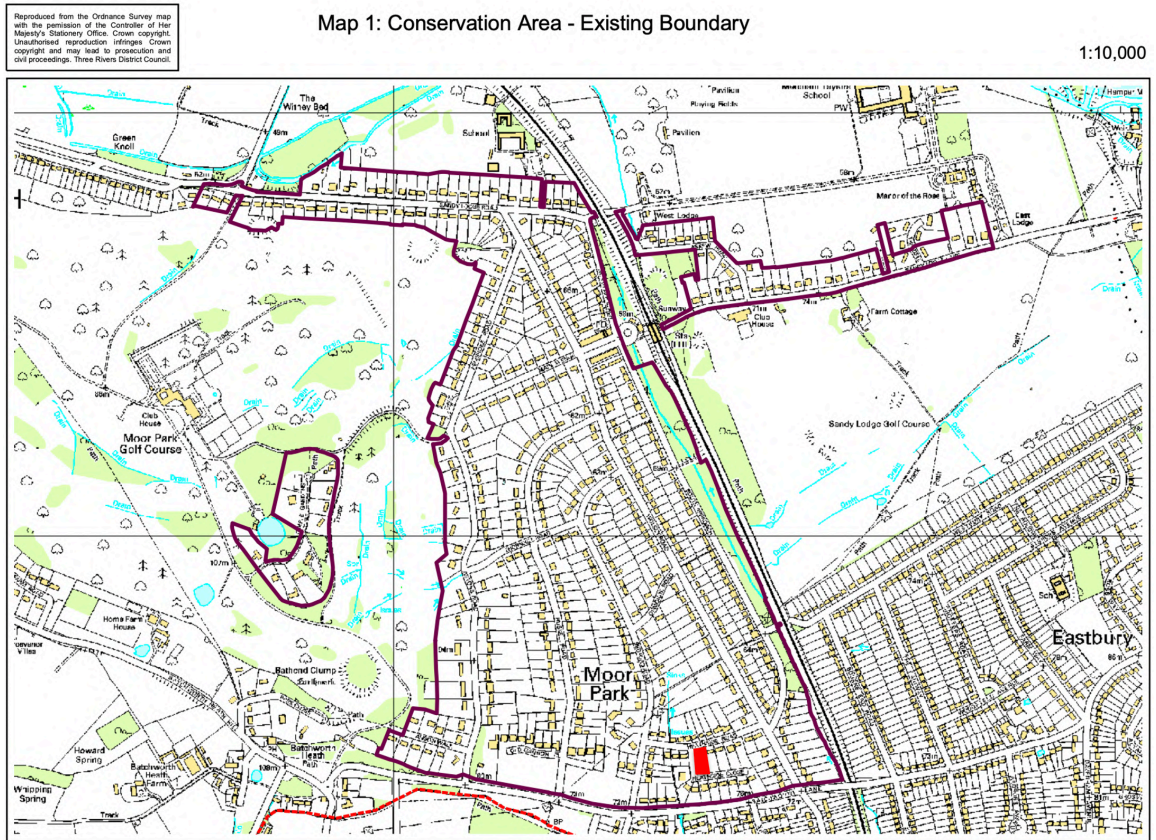
Character & Appearance Conservation Area



The existing modest dwelling is located within the Moor Park Conservation Area. The Conservation Area was designated in May 1996. This adopted Moor Park Conservation

Appraisal was adopted in 2006 and is read in association with Policy DM3 of the Development Management Policies LLD, adopted in July 2013.

The map below identifies the application site in red block.



The Appraisal includes maps that identify important views as well as identifying specific properties in the Article 4 Directive that have been listed as having little to no scope for increases to frontage hard surfacing.

The application site is not identified in the list of properties having little to no scope for frontage hard surfacing and does not form part of any identified important view line as set out in the maps.

The property dates to the mid-1950s and retains many of its original architectural details including metal framed windows with leaded lights, tiled door surround, first floor oriel window and decorative brickwork arch above the front ground floor window. Its red brick elevations and hipped roofs are typical of 1950s development in the area. The property is considered to make a positive contribution to the area.

The property is not identified as a locally listed property, a building of Townscape Merit and is not a Listed Building. The property is not within proximity to any visible locally listed, listed or building of Townscape merit.

The Appeal Inspector stated:

I find that the current dwelling does make a positive contribution to the appearance of the CA in that it has remained modest in built form and design which has enabled it to comfortably nestle in to the large, green, corner space

amongst some notably larger dwellings. Its relatively unaltered form is indicative of the original character of the CA which the CA appraisal is clear in its intention to protect. This is not to say that the dwelling should remain unaltered at all but only serves to emphasise the importance of any proposed alterations being sensitively designed with both the host dwelling and setting within the CA in mind.

With respect to the above it is clear the existing house is set in a prominent corner location and it does in its largely unaltered form positively contribute to the character of the Conservation Area.

It should equally be recognised that the immediate context of detached housing includes various forms of extended dwellings and the Appeal Inspector has made clear the existing dwelling can be extended through sensitive design.

As a starting point, the proposed extension footprint has been reduced when compared to the previously refused scheme 20/1507/FUL. In addition, the Council is requested to note the Appeal Inspector found the footprint proposed to acceptable, however notwithstanding this the footprint has been reduced. This is a positive enhancement to the previous scheme.

In addition, the previous application 20/1507/FUL included a basement. The applicant notes the Inspector made reference to the inclusion of the basement as adding overall scale to the proposal in terms of floor space. The Council is requested to note the present scheme no longer includes any basement. This is a positive enhancement to the previous scheme.

The proposed partial wrap around extension, incorporating the double garage and rear kitchen and dining room is set back from the existing frontage to present a subservient extension that retains the main frontage of the existing property.

The setback incorporates a catslide element to the side, which is reflective of the Arts and Craft style of the current property. The first-floor setback together with the side roof form will continue to retain the spacious gap between the extended property and adjoining property as shown below.



Towards the corner the property is largely unaltered at ground and first-floor. The catslide rear element is retained.

However, the modest increase in the roof height to allow for usable roof accommodation adds to the side roof. The additional roof element is pitched back from the corner and retains the subservient setting of the building when seen from the junction of Heathside Road and Heathside Close.



The remaining element of the extensions relate to the roof height increase. The present house has a shallower roof form, which results in a lack of ability to incorporate roof level accommodation.

NPPF19 along with the Council's own policies seek to support the efficient use of existing buildings by way of granting appropriate extensions, which include roof level accommodation. Indeed, recent changes to Permitted Development allows many dwellings to build additional floor(s) subject to meeting household extension criteria.

It is therefore reasonable to assert that the use of roof accommodation to provide more family friendly development and extended family accommodation is supportive by Government reform measures set out under Permitted Development legislation for household developments.

The present scheme has sought to balance the need to provide additional roof level accommodation to support a growing family whilst at the same time having a roof extension that largely retains the presentation and style of the host property.

In this instance, whilst the roof height is modestly increased, it does not add prominent roof level features such as dormers, which would readily draw attention to the roof. Rather the roof accommodation is supported by modest roof lights, which can be conditioned to be conservation roof lights.

The roof massing will naturally increase but when seen against the subservient extensions and retained corner gaps, the extended roof together with the overall extended building will not present an over dominant building form on this corner location but rather an extended family home, which will continue to enjoy a spacious setting.

The roof extension has been sensitively designed and whilst an element of crown roof, will be part of the design, this has been added to permit usable floor to ceiling height

within the roof accommodation, but sited in a manner so as not to appear from public view points of the building.

The proposed extensions will be finished in matching brick and tile to the existing thereby maintaining the fabric of the building and integrate the extensions to the main building without drawing attention to changes to the building scale.

The applicant has also taken the opportunity to enhance the building setting with the use of metal framed windows with leaded lights which would positively enhance the finishing materials of the building in the Conservation Area.

All finishing materials can be controlled by a pre-commencement condition.

Overall, the present application has sought a reduction in the proposed massing and scale of development proposed under 20/1507/FUL. The proposed modest side and rear extensions together with the raising of the roof to provide usable accommodation will continue to respect the host property.

The extended property will continue maintain and enhance the character of the Conservation Area within this prominent location whilst providing family friendly accommodation in line with other extended houses within the immediate setting.

Hard surfacing in the context of the Conservation Area

The Conservation character is informed by a range of features beyond the built development. These can include boundary walls, metal railings, landscaping features, trees and frontage set-backs with views in-between houses.

The immediate setting includes a mix of frontages with driveways and lawn, with houses opposite largely having in and out driveways with central landscaping with limited to no frontage walls or hedges, with exposed forecourts.

These examples all inform the evolved character of the Conservation Area and any new frontage surfacing should be seen in the context of this evolved setting, which is the defining character of the application site setting.

With respect to proposed replacement hard surfacing, the area provided for onsite will be of functional size to permit suitable driveway parking with turning space to allow for forward gear drive movements both into and out of the property.

This enhances safety and replaces the current driveway that requires vehicles to reverse out to exit the site with limited visibility at the access point.

The proposal has sufficient retained frontage areas for landscaping of lawn, planting of shrubs and new small trees, that will all contribute to the frontage character of the property and its corner setting in the public realm. It should be noted the existing shrubs at the front are overgrown and no trees of any material value at the front area being removed.

The Council is requested to note the Appeal Inspector's comments below:

'I do not find that increase in hardstanding would erode the open character of the site, impact upon the CA or warrant refusal as a result of this element of the proposal even when taking into account the prominent corner plot location.'

As such it would be reasonable to assert that within the immediate setting the proposed frontage character and mix of landscaping will be reflective of other large houses on large plots within the context of the Conservation Area.

The allowance of the proposed hard standing would not present an alien feature and together with extensive side hedges and additional planting, the forecourt would have a neutral impact on the Conservation Area whilst enhancing the safe movement of vehicles in and out of the proposed driveway in contrast to reversing out in the current situation.

Garden Provisions

The property will continue to retain a significant sized, quality, family size garden to meet the needs of the extended property. The garden will continue to enjoy landscaping screening from existing trees and hedges. Where any trees are shown to be felled, they will be replaced, and landscaping and tree works can be controlled by way of condition.

Parking

The increase in residential accommodation will not put pressure on local parking provision and the proposed replacement onsite parking provision is considered sufficient to meet the needs of the extended property.

Neighbouring Amenity

The extended property in terms of siting, mass and layout will not result in any detrimental impact to the daylight, amenities or privacy of any adjoining property.

The development respects the 45-degree line when taken from the corner of nearest neighbour's side window and the first-floor element itself is set further away from the shared boundary than the ground floor extension.

It is noted from the much larger previous application was not refused on neighbour amenity grounds and with this more modest scheme, the proposal would equally be acceptable on amenity grounds.

Conclusion

The site is located within an established built-up settlement area where the principle of residential extensions is considered appropriate.

Whilst the site is within a Conservation Area various houses have been extended. The applicant has taken on board previous comments from the Council and most recent appeal decision on the merits of the existing dwelling and the need to ensure proposed extensions integrate with the existing building and are of a subservient form.

The present application has positively responded with more modest extensions that retain the main body of the existing property and its key features whilst new additions have been sensitively sited and have a subservient form so as not to compete with the host property, which will continue to retain its presence on this spacious corner plot.

The overall siting, scale and frontage forecourt and access will retain and enhance the character of the Conservation Area with a modernised building suited to meet modern family needs in line with many other extended houses within the immediate setting.

The proposed development will continue to retain a spacious setting for the extended dwelling with retained large rear and side gaps and landscaping features to the sides and rear.

The extended accommodation would be in accordance with national and local space standards and the property would maintain a significant sized family size garden and sufficient parking to meet its extended needs.

The frontage character will include a replacement driveway and forecourt to provide a more functional and safe parking area and access with sufficient landscaping buffers with scope for planting and new trees. The frontage character would be reflective of the vast majority of houses found opposite and to the side of the site.

The changes will not materially harm the amenities of any adjoining properties in terms of daylight, privacy or outlook.

The site is within a sustainable area where future occupants will have access to a range of services and public transport options and will not be wholly reliant on using private vehicles for day-to-day trips.

In addition, the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 has a presumption in favour of sustainable development and the development is considered to fall within a sustainable location.

Overall, the proposed development will continue to preserve and enhance the character of Moor Park Conservation Area with a form of redevelopment that respects the key elements that inform the setting and identity of the Conservation Area whilst reflecting the evolved residential character of spacious houses set on spacious plots with generous gardens and landscaping.

The Council is requested to grant planning permission subject to conditions.