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Design, Access and Heritage Statement

Site: Stondon Massey House, Ongar Road, Stondon Massey, Brentwood, Essex, CM15 0LD

Proposal: Demolition of existing outbuilding and construction of detached ancillary building
(revision of previous approval 17/00975/FUL)

Date: October 2022



1.0 Location and Description

- 1.1 Stondon Massey House is located to the west of the Ongar Road in Stondon Massey. The house is set back from the road and accessed via a long shingle driveway. The boundary treatment along the road consists of mature native hedgerow and trees, partially obscuring the house from view when travelling along Ongar Road in the summer months.
- 1.2 Stondon Massey House was built as a Rectory and Gentleman's residence in the early 19th century. It is an educated restrained geometric composition, which is designed to be a composite part and highlight of the managed landscape.
- 1.3 The House is located prominently on the rising slope within its grounds, visible from the road and reached by a 19th century indirect curved access drive. The house is designed as a square plan, with a symmetrical roof leading to a central pediment gable overhanging roof soffits and a wide multi flue stack above a central pivot oculus window on each of the four sides. The main east, south and north facades are also designed with large single arch head recesses for the large tripartite ground floor windows. This house is built with the finest of contemporary materials red brick walls, well detailed hard wood portals, fenestration and details.
- 1.4 The location of the proposed ancillary building is located to the North-East of the walled garden beyond the lean-to garage range. The location of the proposed building is quite some distance from the listed building, however, it is within the curtilage and setting of the listed building.
- 1.5 An existing ancillary building to be demolished is basic timber framed building, previously used for storage and other ancillary uses connected to the day to day running of Stondon Massey House and the upkeep of the grounds. The building is now redundant. It is of no significance, has a metal corrugated roof and weatherboarding to the walls.

2.0 Significance

- 2.1 Stondon Massey House is a grade II listed building. The two-storey box shaped red brick house and roof are a fine composition. All the facades, including the north façade, are part of that primary importance. Underpinned by its service cellar, the attached single storey kitchen is part of the composition. The kitchen west façade wall is integral and part of the garden separation wall which becomes the east and north wall of the private garden dividing it from the service garden area. REFER TO APPENIX B LIST DESCRIPTION.
- 2.2 On the same side of the walled garden separation wall and extending north-west from the single storey kitchen are a row of service outbuilding lean-tos. These form the south-west side of the grassed service area. There is a detached single storey modern garage structure to the north of this.

3.0 Application History

- 3.1 There have been previous applications on the site for a similar building. Application 17/00975/FUL was approved for demolition of an existing building and construction of a detached ancillary building. The proposed building subject to this application, is the same footprint and position as this approved consent 17/00975/FUL
- 3.2 A subsequent amendment application was submitted (21/01702/FUL) to alter the height of the building. This application was refused. The application sought to increase both the eaves height, ridge height and change the pitch of the roof. The subsequent overall increase in the ridge height was 2.0m and increased eaves height of 1.0m
- 3.3 The application was refused for the following reasons:

1. The proposed amendments would result in the development constituting inappropriate development in the Green Belt that would have a greater and more harmful impact on the openness of the Green Belt, in conflict with policy GB1 and GB2 of the local development plan and chapter 13 of the NPPF. Other matters that may weigh in favour of the proposal have been considered but do not clearly outweigh the harm to the Green Belt or other harm identified. Therefore, very special circumstances to justify inappropriate development in the Green Belt do not exist.

2. The proposed amendments would result in a development that is not appropriate within the setting of the Grade II listed building of Stondon Massey House and would change the character of the building to a form that would be more than ancillary and subservient in its appearance. The development would result in 'less than substantial' but material harm to the heritage asset and the historic character of the area. No public benefits have been identified that would outweigh the harm. The development fails to comply with local policy CP1 (i), (iii) and C16 of the local development plan and chapters 12 and 16 of the NPPF.

4.0 Proposed Ancillary Building

- 4.1 The proposed Ancillary Building would be located to the North East of the walled garden beyond the lean-to garage range. It would be downhill and more modest in height and design than the historic buildings. These buildings would be designed in a traditional character, materials and details as agreed with the Local Authority. Thus the form, materials and character should be considered to be harmonious with the more modest service buildings in this modest north east service building court, tucked behind and partially screened by the mature trees at the side of the drive.
- 4.2 It has been emphasised that the service area is partially screened by the copse of mature trees and shrubs to the north of the main access drive. It is proposed to reinforce the features of the close landscape by additional planting which would strengthen the screen to the service area from the main drive approach to the house.
- 4.3 The existing house was designed to have a grander scale than the cluster of outbuildings to the north west. The proposed additional modest structures which would be no higher than the main 4 metre garden wall, should not be considered to have a significant impact on the setting of the other outbuildings or the main

house itself. Similarly the service area group around the green is harmonious with the copse and pond and should integrate with the mature landscape setting.

- 4.4 The proposed building is the same footprint as the previously approved application 17/00975/FUL . However, the building is now slightly sunken into the sight, as the previous application had no consideration to the ground levels, which are sloping down from the South to the North.
- 4.5 By reducing the height of the ground floor level, the proposal will allow for an additional mezzanine study area to provide a quiet area for the occupants of Stondon Massey House to work from home.
- 4.6 The appearance of the proposed building will be an improvement on the previous approved application 17/00975/FUL . The approved design for this application had a shallow pitched roof and Edwardian sash windows, which mixed with the weatherboarding finish appeared similar to a long shed with odd windows inserted.
- 4.7 The proposal is to alter the pitch of the roof to form a slightly steeper and more traditional roof pitch. The new roof pitch will result in the opportunity to use clay plain tiles, which will appear traditional and sympathetic to the surrounding buildings.
- 4.8 Rather than increase the eaves height, the eaves height will be reduced to ensure the increased roof pitch does not overly increase the ridge height. When compared to the approved ridge height, the proposed new ridge height will only be 550mm taller. Whilst the eaves height will be some 400mm lower. This is indicated on the cross section drawing submitted. REFER TO APPENDIX A – ELEVATION COMPARISON.
- 4.9 The proposed building will feature exposed rafter feet. This will improve the appearance of the building and better reflect the historic nature of the surrounding setting.
- 4.10 The windows proposed will be timber flush casement windows. These windows will better reflect a subservient ancillary building than the previously approved sash windows.
- 4.11 Another improvement is the proposal of a red brick plinth. This will further improve the appearance of the building to better reflect a more traditional building.

5.0 Impact assessment and justification

- 5.1 The proposed additional building should be considered to be part of the 'lesser scaled' group to the north west which would blend into the overall service area design. As it would not compete in size or height with the grand house or its lesser outbuildings, the additional buildings should be able to be considered as not competitive with the character or significance of the grand scale main Palladian Stondon Massey House.
- 5.2 The character and setting of the main house, garden and entrance drive entry should not be considered to be detrimental to the character and significance of this remarkable historic building group.
- 5.3 A previous approval has set a precedent for an ancillary building in this location. The proposed building is the same footprint as the previously approved application 17/00975/FUL.
- 5.4 The appearance of the proposed building is an improvement over the approved scheme 17/00975/FUL. The building will better reflect the character of the surrounding buildings and the hierarchy of buildings on the site.
- 5.5 The ridge height will be increased slightly over the approved consent 17/00975/FUL, however, the increase is only very slight and can be offset by the reduction of the eaves height and the improved appearance of the building.
- 5.6 The slight increase in ridge height will have not impact on the openness of the greenbelt.
- 5.7 The proposal overcomes the reasons for refusal of the amendment application 21/01702/FUL, which was for a building much greater in height, and retained the poor roof pitch.
- 5.8 A good example of another similar approved building is the ancillary building approved at Wells Farmhouse in Blackmore 20/00168/FUL. A similar building with small casement windows, clay plain tile roof, timber weatherboarding and red brick plinth.

Appendix A – Indicative elevation comparisons



Front Elevation

APPROVED FRONT ELEVATION
(17/00975/FUL)



Proposed Front Elevation

0 1 2 3 4 5 1:100

PROPOSED FRONT ELEVATION



REFUSED FRONT ELEVATION
(21/01702/FUL)

Historic England list description

STONDON MASSEY HOUSE, ONGAR ROAD

Grade: II Date first listed: 20-Feb-1967

Date of most recent amendment: 09-Dec-1994

List entry Number: 1292999 UID: 373815 Listing NGR: TL5741601102

Rectory, now house. c1800, C20. For John Oldham, Rector 1791-1841. Red brick, Flemish bond, slate roof. Square plan with low pitch gables to each face with deep eaves and exposed purlins. Palladian symmetry retained both outside and within the building to an unusual degree.

EXTERIOR: 2 storeys and attics. E front, 3 bays. Bull's eye attic window in the gable and plain string course across gable base to give the impression of a large pediment. Central stack with 3 flues.

Ground floor, 2 tripartite segment headed sash windows with glazing bars, centre lights 3x4 panes, side lights 1x4 panes. Each window has a wooden tympanum with roundel and gauged brick voussoirs. Central door also tripartite, doorway with side panels decorated with garlands apparently inserted, probable replacing side lights. Tympanum and voussoirs similar to windows. Reeded door frame. Door with 4 panels and 3 paned rectangular fan-light.

First floor - 3 sash windows with glazing bars, flat heads with gauged brick voussoirs 4x4 panes. S, garden front, exactly similar to E front except doorway has glazed side lights. Rear, W elevation is similar, gable with bulls-eye attic window but ground floor has 3 windows, flat heads and gauged brick voussoirs, sashes with glazing bars, 3x4 panes. First floor, 2 similar windows set between the lower ones, wide stack with 9 flues. N elevation irregular as single storey servants' block attached. Ground floor, to W end, tripartite doorway as on E and S sides, glazed side lights. Door has glazing in upper panels with lower ones flush. First floor, 3 windows, flat heads, gauged brick voussoirs, sashes with glazing bars, two, 3x2 panes, and one 4x4 panes. Servants' building single storey, hipped slate roof. W front central door with window each side, all segment headed, S window tripartite sash with glazing bars, 3x4 panes, side lights 1x4 panes. N window divided in C20 into 2 casements. N elevation, one segment headed tripartite window, sashes with glazing bars, 1x4, 3x4, 1x4 panes, also a C20 casement in a narrow, original window. Stack and garden wall to rear.

INTERIOR of main house: entry corridor with 2 groin vaulted sections and inner door C20 glazed and semicircular fan-light. Corridor to S front door now blocked by alteration of SE room to provide an apsed end. Stair C19 type but apparently C20 renewal, in stair well with glazed domed top light, light borrowed through large roof sky-light. Attic rooms and top corridor lit by bulls-eye windows seen on all faces. Entry door to stair top flight and skylight from back stairs in NE angle.