



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 3 November 2025

by T Bennett BA(Hons) MSc MRTPI

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 21 NOVEMBER 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/P1940/D/25/3373597

109 Wolsey Road, Moor Park, Hertfordshire HA6 2EB

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mr & Mrs N Mehta against the decision of Three Rivers District Council.
 - The application Ref is 25/0876/FUL.
 - The development proposed is new 2-storey rear and part-2 storey side extensions to existing dwelling with loft conversion and partial lower ground level to rear.
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Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Preliminary Matters

2. The description of development in the banner heading above differs to that on the decision notice. As I have no confirmation that the appellant agreed to change the description of development I must use that from the application form.
3. The appeal site is within the Moor Park Conservation Area (CA). I am therefore required to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area, in accordance with the statutory duty set out in Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act).

Main Issue

4. The main issue is the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the host property and the Moor Park Conservation Area (CA).

Reasons

5. Having regard to the Moor Park Conservation Area Appraisal (CAA), I find the CA derives its significance, in part, from its distinctive visual qualities. This being a planned, low-density development of large, two-storey detached dwellings primarily constructed between the 1920s and 1950s. These properties are varied in style and design, set back from tree-lined roads in spacious plots with open frontages, with properties retaining many characteristic original features, including chimneys.
6. The appeal property typifies this character and layout. It is a pre-1958, two-storey detached property situated in a spacious plot, set back from the highway and features distinctive chimneys. Due to the land levels, the property sits slightly higher than No 111 Wolsey Road, but lower than No 107.

7. Although some alterations have taken place at the property, including a garage and single-storey side extension, the main dwelling appears relatively unaltered. The limited additions do not harmfully detract from the property or the visual qualities of the CA.
8. The property has a simple form and a modest scale but exhibits an Arts and Crafts character with original architectural features. These include eaves detailing, a prominent hipped front gable, tiled front porch, leaded windows and tall prominent chimneys. These elements all add visual interest and contribute to the special historic interest and significance of the CA as a whole. Consequently, by retaining much of its original form and design, the property makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the CA. While this does not prevent the dwelling from undergoing any change, any alterations should be appropriately designed.
9. The proposal involves a two-storey side extension, a two-storey rear extension and roof alterations. The two-storey side extension would extend the main dwelling closer to the boundary with No 107. Concerns have been raised by interested parties that this would result in the property covering more than 80% of its plot width, something that the CAA seeks to avoid to maintain the spacious, open character of the estate. The Council, however, indicate the coverage would be 75%, in accordance with the guidance. However, irrespective of the numerical calculations, to accommodate the side extension, I am mindful that the existing double garage would be demolished, which is built up to the side boundary. Furthermore, given the hipped roof form of No 107 and that the side extension would be set away from the adjoining boundary with a catslide roof, I am satisfied that the sense of spaciousness would be maintained.
10. Although the side extension would incorporate a ground floor front projection, this element would remain noticeably setback from the front elevation of the hipped front gable. Consequently, given the modest width of the side extension, it would not in itself, unduly compete with the hipped front gable.
11. However, notwithstanding the above, the first-floor of the side extension would contain no setback from the front elevation, with the roof continuing the existing ridgeline. This, in combination with a proposed 1 metre increase in the ridge height of the host property, would add noticeable massing to the roof.
12. The enlarged roof as a whole would become an overly dominant feature of the front and side elevation when viewed from the street scene compared to the existing arrangement, particularly as the property is set forward of No 111. The enlarged roof, even with the proposed catslide, would harmfully erode the prominence of the chimney stacks, which contribute positively to the character and appearance of the property and, in turn, the significance of the CA. In particular, the southern chimney stack, a characteristic original feature, would be largely subsumed by the enlarged roof. This chimney stack is currently highly visible on the flank elevation from the street, above the vegetation along the shared boundary with No 111.
13. Furthermore, the increased ridge height would be noticeably taller than that at No 111 Wolsey Road, even after accounting for the extant permission which would increase the roof height at this property. It would also be taller than the roof at No 107 Wolsey Road. While this difference would not be substantial, it would

nevertheless harmfully interrupt the gradual stepped roofline of the houses along this part of the road.

14. Although the façade-to-roof ratio would be similar to the neighbouring properties, and the front elevation would retain the tiled front porch, leaded windows and eaves detailing, these factors do not sufficiently mitigate my concerns above.
15. Turning to the rear elevation, although this element is not perceptible from public vantage points, it would be visible from the rear gardens of neighbouring properties and still forms part of the overall character of the property and does not negate the need to ensure a high quality design which respects the character and appearance of the existing property.
16. The existing rear elevation is unassuming, but reflects the proportions and features of the host property, including eaves detailing and modest fenestration arrangement.
17. Given the large plot size, the increased footprint of the dwelling arising from the additions would retain acceptable plot coverage. However, the two-storey rear extension spanning the full width of the enlarged property, with a significant increase in depth, in combination with the enlarged roof with increased ridge height and basement, would result in substantial additions to the host dwelling. Collectively, these additions would overwhelm the original form of the dwelling, resulting in a disproportionate addition that harmfully detracts from its original character and appearance, with the increased roof form and depth visible from the street given the property's forward position relative to No 111.
18. The rear elevation would also incorporate significant amounts of glazing, including multiple Juliet balconies. Although the arrangement has attempted to reflect the horizontal emphasis of the existing rear elevation, the extent of glazing gives the appearance of an overly wide building and, along with the overall increased massing, fails to complement the original character of the host property, appearing as an unsympathetic addition.
19. I acknowledge that the roof would be dual-pitched, as required by the CAA, and that the rooflights and dormer on the rear would accord with the CAA principles. However, these factors do not mitigate my concerns regarding the overall scale of the proposals to the rear.
20. In support of the appeal, the appellant has drawn my attention to an extant permission at No 111 Wolsey Road. Although that scheme contains large amounts of glazing, extensive glazing is already a distinctive feature of No 111, which has undergone historic alterations. Furthermore, although the rear elevation would feature a terrace, the rear elevation of No 111 has various projecting elements at the ground and first floor which assists in breaking up the massing. Therefore, this example does not alter my findings, with the proposed scheme being assessed on its own merits.
21. Drawing the above together, I find that the proposal as a whole would fail to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the CA, resulting in less than substantial harm, but nevertheless of considerable importance and weight. Given that the impact arising from the proposal would be localised in terms of the CA as a whole, the harm would be at the lower end of this scale.

22. Regardless of the level of harm, the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) at paragraph 212 advises that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to their conservation. Paragraph 215 of the Framework requires the less than substantial harm to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
23. I have not been referred to any defined public benefits arising from the proposal. It would provide a larger residential dwelling, but this does not provide a public benefit that would outweigh the less than substantial harm identified.
24. A lack of identified harm from the Council on other matters including access, carparking, landscaping and the living conditions of adjoining properties in terms of outlook and privacy are neutral considerations that weigh neither for nor against the proposal.
25. I therefore conclude that the proposal would have an adverse effect on the character and appearance of the host property and would thus fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the CA. Accordingly, the proposal would fail to satisfy the requirements of the Act and conflict with Policies CP1 and CP12 of the Core Strategy 2011 (CS) which together seek to ensure high quality design that respects local distinctiveness and protects and enhances heritage assets and the character of an area from inappropriate development.
26. The proposal would also be contrary to Development Management Policies Local Development Document 2013 (LDD) Policy DM1 which requires applications to satisfy the design criteria set out in appendix 2 to ensure that development does not lead to gradual deterioration in the quality of the built environment. Appendix 2 specifically notes that oversized additions can detract from the character and appearance of the original property. The proposal would also be contrary to LDD Policy DM3 which states that within a CA, development will only be permitted if the proposal is of a design and scale that preserves or enhances the character or appearance of the area.
27. It would also conflict with Policy DE1 of the Batchworth Neighbourhood Plan (2025), which amongst other matters, seeks new development to respond to and where possible improve the local character.

Conclusion

28. The proposal conflicts with the development plan and the material considerations do not indicate that the appeal should be decided other than in accordance with it. The appeal is therefore dismissed.

T Bennett

INSPECTOR