

**PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE**  
**17 November 2016**

	<u>APPLICATION NO.</u>	<u>DATE VALID</u>
	16/P2148	23/05/2016
<b>Address/Site</b>	58 Mostyn Road, Merton Park, London, SW19 3LN	
<b>(Ward)</b>	<b>Merton Park</b>	
<b>Proposal:</b>	Demolition of the existing garage and green house and the erection of a part single part 2 storey (plus accommodation in the roof space) rear extension, the erection of a two storey side extension with rear dormer and the erection of side roof dormers.	
<b>Drawing Nos</b>	Site location plan and drawings 16387/P/101 P2, 102 P3, /103 P2, /104 P3, /105 P3, /106 P3, /107 P3 & 108/P2	
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Leigh Harrington (8545 3836)	

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**RECOMMENDATION**

**GRANT Planning Permission subject to conditions.**

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**CHECKLIST INFORMATION**

- Heads of agreement: No
- Is a screening opinion required: No
- Is an Environmental impact statement required: No
- Has an Environmental Impact Assessment been submitted: No
- Press notice- Yes
- Site notice-Yes
- Design Review Panel consulted-No
- Number neighbours consulted – 4
- External consultants: None
- Density: n/a
- Number of jobs created: n/a
- Archaeology Priority Zone: No
- Conservation Area – Yes. Merton Park, John Innes

1. **INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This application has been brought to the Planning Applications Committee due to objections which raise issues that cannot be overcome by attaching conditions to a planning permission.

## 2. **SITE AND SURROUNDINGS**

- 2.1 The application site is a detached single family dwelling located on the east side of Mostyn Road in the John Innes Merton Park Conservation Area. The property is one of pair of similar detached houses built in 1924 which have been identified as making a positive contribution to the Conservation Area. The site benefits from a large rear garden and the front garden provides space for off street parking. There is a large street tree in front of the site and four small Cypress trees in the front garden. The rear garden benefits from a number of trees along the boundaries and with the exception of four closest to the proposed ground floor extension the remainder will be retained.

## 3. **CURRENT PROPOSAL**

- 3.1 The current application involves the demolition of the existing garage and green house and the erection of a part single part 2 storey (plus accommodation in the roof space) rear extension, the erection of a two storey side extension with rear dormer and the erection of side roof dormers. Following objections from neighbours and the Council's Conservation and Design officer the proposals have been modified and reduced in scale and repositioned since the original submission and additionally 2<sup>nd</sup> floor front window to gable reverts to the original/existing form, the single storey rear extension brickwork to match the existing house at ground level and the proposed 2<sup>nd</sup> vehicle crossover omitted and replaced with a new pedestrian only gate.
- 3.2 For the ground floor of the two storey side extension the front wall would be set 0.9m back from the existing main wall and the 3.6m wide extension would feature a bay window to reflect that of the existing house and the space will be utilised as a study. Following officer suggestions the flank of the side extension now has three distinct rearward steps rather than following the orientation of the fence line and the side extension opens into the open plan media room and from there into the large single storey rear extension. This extension would now follow the orientation of the existing flank walls of the house rather than splay out towards the neighbouring houses as originally proposed. A small side extension is also proposed on the south elevation to provide a larger utility room.
- 3.3 At first floor level the extension on the north side above the study will provide two small bedrooms with a small extension to the centre of the rear elevation to increase the master bedroom.
- 3.4 At roof level a dormer on the south facing side roof slope will provide space in the loft for a new bathroom whilst two dormers in the main south facing roof slope and an extension of the ridge line on the eastern side of the house above the master bedroom extension will allow for the provision of two additional bedrooms. A small dormer set into the eaves level will on the southern roof slope will provide light for the staircase. The design of the existing gable on this eastern side will be replicated whilst for the front gable on the western side, and following officer recommendation, the design of the

existing fenestration is not being altered in that gable in order to retain a greater degree of commonality with the design of the neighbouring house.

- 3.5 The side extensions are designed to blend in with the design and materials of the existing house so that from the street there would appear to have been no extensions. The single storey rear extension with its angled canopy cover however has been designed to provide a modern counterpoint to the traditional design of the house with its large glazed rear section and flat roof. In order to reduce its impact from the street the brickwork for this element has been revised so as to use the same bricks as in the rest of the works.
- 3.6 The front garden will be landscaped and altered to provide better vehicle access with improvements to the street elevation through the provision of new 1.4m high semi mature holly hedge being planted.

#### 4. **PLANNING HISTORY**

- 4.1 11/P3493 Lawful development certificate issued for the retention of solar panels on the south facing roof slope.
- 4.2 15/P1933 Lawful development certificate issued in respect of the retention of 3 x existing front casement windows.

#### 5. **CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 The application has been advertised by conservation area site and press notice procedure and letters of notification to occupiers of neighbouring properties in relation to the original submission. In response 6 letters of objection have been received from local residents raising the following concerns:
- The houses were built as a pair and this creates a significant unbalanced look from the road
  - The houses make a positive contribution to the CA. The proposals would negate this. The proposals would have a harmful impact on the spacing between buildings, resulting in more of a strip than a gap.
  - Not in keeping with John Innes Conservation Area.
  - Proposed flat roofed dormers would cause overlooking and loss of privacy for neighbour, and be highly visible and visually intrusive from the street.
- 5.2 The John Innes Society objected to the initial version of the proposal:
- Numbers 58 and 60 Mostyn Road, built in the style of Brocklesby, are rated as making a positive contribution to the Conservation Area in the Character Assessment of the pair value was recognised by the Conservation Officer as recently as 2013 when considering application Number 13/P0776. The officer's report on that decision said; "These houses were designed to look similar and any change in appearance would have an impact on the pair and their collective impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area." We agree with that statement.
  - Well-designed extensions should be subordinate to the design style and size of the
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original building and when completed, should look as if they could always have been there. In this case, the original building will be completely overwhelmed by the proposed extensions and the pair value with Number 60 will be lost.

- In our opinion the cumulative effect of the proposed extensions would downgrade to negative the contribution this property makes to the Conservation Area and in the process the loss of pair value with Number 60 would downgrade that property too.
  - Taking the individual elements of the application, we see the problems as follows:
    - a) Very discreet dormers, towards the rear of the roof slopes and partially obscured by the chimneys, were added to No 60 in 1988. Less discreet dormers were turned down for Number 58 in March 2000 (Application No 99/P2022). In this proposal three very prominent dormers are proposed for the south facing roof slope, resulting in a cluttered appearance which will change its character completely and not match in any way the single small dormer on the south facing roof slope of Number 60.
    - b) The two storey side extension will unbalance the symmetry of the original building and destroy its pair value with number 60. It will also close the gap between Numbers 58 and 56, blocking a significant view to back land greenery and giving a built up appearance where at the moment there is a pleasing and characteristic open space.
    - c) The size, style, design, alignment, materials and modern design of the proposed extremely large rear extension are all completely out of character with the original building and obscure the distinctive design of the rear elevations of the property. The more traditional rear extension behind Number 60 does not have these failings.
    - d) The proposals for the front garden would result in the loss to car parking of yet another garden in this Garden Suburb. The suggestion a new holly hedge could be established quickly is not practical.
    - e) Good holly hedges take years to establish in the poor sandy soil of Merton Park and require a great deal of care and husbandry to make them thrive. Holly needs a wide border of soil around its roots to allow sufficient water and nourishment to reach them. This will not be achieved by the modern fashion for extensive block paving, often built without adequate on site drainage to irrigate planting and prevent run off into the street. We question the need for a circular drive and would ask for a Planning Condition to require a front garden landscaping scheme and to specify that any hard standing must be permeable. Having chosen to buy a property in a Garden Suburb, the new owners should be referred to the RHS guidance “Greening Grey Britain” and encouraged to think how planting and on site drainage could be incorporated into their front garden to lessen the impact of car parking and provide an attractive garden setting for their home.
  - We trust this application will be refused. In our opinion, it neither preserves nor enhances the Conservation Area, and will damage the important pair value with Number 60.
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5.3 Re-consultation took place on receipt of amended plans the subject of this report. Two further comments were received;

- The 30cm reduction to the flank wall is an insignificant amount and it will still be over development and not in keeping with the conservation area.

- Top floor windows will still cause overlooking of number 60 where the loft windows are gabled and not flat as suggested by the applicant's architect.
- There has been no material change and so objections remain as before.

5.4 The John Innes Society commented on the revisions;

- Amendments do not address concerns over the design of this development. Previous objections stand.
- The two storey side extension and the dormers on the South facing roof slope will damage the pair value of Numbers 58 and 60 Mostyn Road.
- Turning the front garden into principally a car park will damage the established character of this Garden Suburb.
- Much more space needs to be allocated for planting.

5.5 The Council's Conservation and Design officer was satisfied that with the revisions that have been submitted there would be a neutral impact on the Conservation Area. Whilst the proposals will widen this house, one of a pair with its neighbour at No 60, the materials palette for the front elevation, the retention of the matching front gable window and the provision of new holly hedging are considered to respect the connection with that house.

5.6 LBM Arboricultural officer raised no objections to the proposals subject to suitable conditions relating to the protection and supervision of the remaining trees.

5.7 LBM Greenspaces team confirmed that the proposals would not impact the street tree in front of the site.

6. **POLICY CONTEXT**

6.1 Adopted Merton Core Strategy (July 2011)  
CS14 (Design).

6.2 Sites and Policies Plan (July 2014)  
DM D2 (Design Considerations in all Developments). DM D3 (Alterations and Extensions to Existing Buildings), DM D4 (Managing Heritage Assets). Standards) and DM O2 (Nature conservation; Trees, Hedges and Landscape Features).

6.3 The London Plan (March 2015)  
The relevant policies within the London Plan are 7.4 (Local Character), 7.6 (Architecture) and 7.8 (Heritage Assets).

6.4 John Innes (Merton Park) Character Assessment (2006).

7. **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

- 7.1 The planning considerations in this case relate to the impact of the proposals on the character and appearance of the conservation area and on neighbour amenity including design, scale bulk and massing.
- 7.2 Design/Conservation Issues.  
London Plan policy 7.8 and SPP policy DM D4 seek to ensure that alterations and extensions to properties within conservation areas conserve and enhance such areas whilst Core Strategy policy CS14 and SPP Policy DMD3 require well designed proposals that will respect the appearance, materials, scale bulk, proportions and character of the original building and its surroundings. The revisions to the proposal have reduced the height and width of the two storey side extension to give it a more subservient appearance whilst the impact from the street is considered to have been reduced by the stepped nature of the new side flank walls. The proposed dormers have been set lower to reduce their impact. For those elements visible from the street the design and materials have been chosen to reflect the materials and styling of the original house. Whilst the design of the single storey rear extension is undoubtedly modern it is situated at the rear of the building, it will be flanked in brickwork that matches that on the ground floor of the existing house and by aligning it with the flank walls of the existing house rather than following the fence line its impact from both street and neighbouring viewpoints is significantly reduced. Officers consider in this regard that the proposals would have a neutral impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- 7.3 The proposals for the front garden have also been amended and whilst the conifers will be removed only one access and exit point will be in place, flower beds will be provided adjacent to the porous resin bound gravel driveway and a new semi mature 1.4m high holly hedges will be provided, with such hedges being a significant and positive feature of the John Innes Conservation Area.
- 7.4 Neighbour Amenity  
SPP policy DM D2 requires that proposals do not have a negative impact on neighbour amenity in terms of loss of light, outlook and visibility. Whilst the initial plans were the cause of concern for both neighbours and officers it is now considered that the revised positioning of the extension significantly reduces any impact it may have had on neighbour amenity. Where previously there was a constant 1m separation gap between the ground floor extension and the boundary fence it is now on 1m at its closest pinch point widening out to up to 2m in places. The two storey side extension is now 30cm further way at the front and the staggered arrangement increases the gap along the flank boundary with number 56 from 1m to between 1.7m and 1.9m and there are no windows in that flank elevation that would otherwise have increased overlooking of the neighbouring garden. On the boundary with No 60 the gap to the boundary was 1.7m but is now increased to 3.125m and is nearly 5m away from that house. The upper extension works are set within the shadow of the existing building and with the set back nature of the works on the flanks, the generous separation distances between these detached houses and the maximum distances beyond the rear of the neighbouring extensions (the proposal would extend 2.3m beyond No 60 and 1.8m beyond no 56) they are

not considered to have an adverse impact on sunlight and daylight to those neighbouring properties.

## 8. **SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS**

8.1 The proposal does not constitute Schedule 1 or Schedule 2 development. Accordingly there is no requirement for an EIA submission.

## 9. **CONCLUSION**

9.1 Notwithstanding the additional bulk to be added to the host building officers consider that the proposed design, retaining spaces between the building and site boundaries, along with the proposed facing materials would result in a scheme that would appear subservient to the main house when viewed from the street and would preserve the character of the streetscene. Officers welcome the landscaping measures and consider the reintroduction of holly hedging will assist in enhancing the character of the conservation area.

9.2 The setting of the modern single storey rear extension has been revised to reduce impact on that street scene and the amenity of neighbours whilst providing a modern but well-designed contrast to the house. In view of these factors the proposals are considered to have a neutral impact on the appearance of the conservation area, the host building or neighbour amenity whilst providing the occupiers more usable space.

9.3 Officers consider the proposal complies with the principles of policies DMD2, DMD3 and DM D4 of the Adopted SPP 2014 and CS 14 of the LBM Core Strategy 2011 and 7.8 of the London plan 2015 and it is therefore recommended to grant permission subject to conditions.

## **RECOMMENDATION: GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION**

Subject to the following conditions:-

1. A.1 Commencement of Development
2. A.7 Approved Drawings
3. B.1 (Approval of Facing Materials)
4. B.4 (Site Surface Treatment)
5. B.5 (Boundary Treatment)
6. C.2 (No Permitted Development Doors/Windows on North and South facing elevations)
7. D.11 (Construction Times)

8. F.1 (Landscaping) (to secure hedge planting)
  9. F.5D (Tree Protection)
  10. F.8 (Site supervision (Trees)) – refer to monthly reports
  11. H.9 (Construction Vehicles)
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