

Lewis And Mallon Architects Ltd.

Heritage Statement

Monks Lake

21/04/23



Introduction

This heritage statement is intended to accompany the proposed application for the replacement dwelling and garage at Monks Lake, Grange Road, Netley Abbey.

Given the location of designated heritage assets within the surrounding Netley Abbey Conservation Area, the purpose of this report is to assess the likely impacts of the site development on the significance of the setting of the area. It will also assess the architectural significance of the buildings to be demolished.

The local planning authority Eastleigh Borough Council have published an adopted Conservation Area Appraisal for the area which has been used to inform the context of this report.

Site Description

The site lies within the village of Netley, which is located on the east bank of Southampton Water. It sits on the north-west side of Grange Road and is approximately 150m to the north-east of Netley Abbey.

The site is set-back from Grange Road, accessed via a private track, shared with two other properties. The site is extremely secluded with mature vegetation and trees to all boundaries, giving a feeling of isolation. The existing house is located in a large clearing at the centre of the plot. The site also encompasses a significant part of the pond. More information on the site boundary and photos can be found in the Design and Access Statement.

History – Netley Abbey Conservation Area

The Netley Abbey Conservation Area Appraisal & Management Proposals 2010 provides a history of the village and the buildings of significant architectural interest, including the ruins of Netley Abbey.

The village grew up around the gates of the Royal Victorian Hospital which was established in 1856. The houses in the village are either Victorian or post-Victorian. The neighbouring area contains remains of the 13th Century Cistercian Abbey of St Mary's and the 16th century Netley Castle.

The conservation area was designated in 1981 and enlarged in 1992. The conservation area is mainly linear in form along the east bank of Southampton Water, though extends north-west to include the ponds and earthworks. The application site is within this north-west portion of the Conservation Area.

History - Application Site

The history of the application site is detailed in the Archeological desktop study which has been submitted as part of the planning application.

Legislative and Policy Framework

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that when determining applications special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area, including its setting as a designated heritage asset.

National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was revised in July 2018. Section 12 relates to the achievement of well-designed places making clear that the creation of high-quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve, and that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creating better places in which to live and work and helping make development acceptable to communities. Paragraph 127 makes clear that policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

- A) *will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
- B) *are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*
- C) *are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);*
- D) *establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;*
- E) *optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and*
- F) *create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users⁴⁶; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience."*

Historic England's The Setting of Heritage Assets

The proposals do not have a direct impact upon known archaeology or scheduled monuments. An archaeological desktop study has been commissioned and is included as part of the planning application. Neither does the proposal have a direct impact on any statutory listed buildings. It is key therefore to assess whether the proposal will impact the setting of adjacent non-designated heritage assets or the scheduled monument of Netley Abbey 2000m to the west.

In order to make an informed assessment, reference has been made to the setting guidance produced by Historic England 'The setting of Heritage Assets', published in December 2017. This document provides guidance on managing change within the settings of heritage assets, including archaeological remains and historic buildings, sites, areas, and landscapes. It states that the NPPF makes it clear that the setting of a heritage asset is the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced, its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve.

Vicinity to Heritage Assets

Map 3 in the Netley Abbey Conservation Area Appraisal & Management proposals identified that the nearest heritage assets to the application site are as follows:

- Netley Abbey ruins – (200m south-west)
- St Edwards Church, Listed Building (200m south-west)
- Netley Grange Listed Building (250m north-east)

The appraisal document identifies that both Netley Abbey and St Edwards Church are set within a different character area zone 3. This area centres on the ruins, sited in a dell with rising woodland. There are a number of detached dwellings in generous plots with extensive woodland between the Abbey and the applicant site. It can be concluded therefore that the application site will not have an impact on the adjoining character zone and the two heritage assets.

The other listed building Netley Grange is located in the same character area of the application site and therefore the impact on the setting of this heritage asset should be carefully considered. They are located in Character Area Zone 4, which is characterised by the ponds that historically supplied the monastery with fish. Today, the ponds are in a woodland setting. The houses in this area are noted in the appraisal document as being varied in style and age. They are unified by the setting of the mature trees and hedges. The heritage asset is set within a more built-up area of the zone and, unlike most of the other properties, is not set within generous grounds. Between Netley Grange and the applicant site is a large field, however planning permission for 89r homes has commenced and this will have a significant impact on the setting of the asset, significantly more so than any redevelopment of the applicant site.

The Existing House

The existing house is believed to date from 1954 and was constructed as a replacement for a house referred to as 'The Hermitage'. This property was damaged by a bomb in 1941 and subsequently demolished. The house which stands today was constructed to the east of the previous footprint. The existing house is of white render construction and appears to have been extended numerous times in an adhoc manor with no cohesive consideration for either the layout or aspect. The pre-application response received from the council did not raise any concerns as to the loss of the existing property on architectural or conservation grounds.

The Proposal

The application scheme proposes a replacement detached dwelling and separate garage of similar size to the existing buildings on site. The proposals will sit in a similar position to the existing house and garage, each rotated slightly to align with the site boundaries. The proposed material palette is predominantly render, which reflects the materiality of the existing buildings on site.

The proposals have benefited from pre-application advice which has inputted into the refinement of the design. The design is covered in more detail in the submitted Design & Access Statement.

With reference to the Conservation Area Appraisal & Management proposals, key points to note are:

- The site is very secluded and the woodland setting will be maintained
- The application seeks a replacement dwelling on broadly the same footprint with the plot ratio broadly being maintained, as per planning policy guidance
- The character area is identified as featuring houses of various styles and age. The proposals for a contemporary design are therefore not considered to be detrimental to the character area
- The scale and materiality of the proposals will not change the site's relationship to existing local heritage assets

Conclusion

This brief study has examined the likely potential of the re-building of the house and garage at the application site and its impact on the character and appearance of the Netley Abbey Conservation Area.

As identified by the Conservation Area Appraisal, the important heritage assets of Netley Abbey and St Edwards Church are located in a different character zone to the applicant site and as such it is deemed that no harm will occur to the setting of either of these assets.

The context between the applicant site and Netley Grange is due to be significantly altered by the creation of a new residential housing development, currently under construction. By virtue of its distance from Netley Grange and the seclusion provided by the mature vegetation, the application site will not impact the setting of the heritage asset.

This site evaluation concludes that the level of harm to the setting of designated and non-designated heritage assets is negligible. As such, in heritage terms, the site should be capable of being redeveloped in line with the current proposals.