

**Proposal** P05  
**Modification ref:** D/PMAP/05

**Grey Court School**

### Issues

- (i) MOL status should not be removed from part of the site and the replacement land should not be so designated.
- (ii) An area of playing field would be lost.
- (iii) The visual amenity of the surrounding area, and in particular Ham Avenues, would be adversely affected.
- (iv) Alternative options should be explored.

### Inspector's appraisal and conclusion

MOL status should not be removed from part of the site and the replacement land should not be so designated.

11.18 That the school needs to expand to cater for rising numbers of pupils from the Richmond part of the Borough is not disputed. It would be achieved by the replacement and significant expansion of a single storey building on the south of the site. The question is whether the resultant de-designation of MOL to the south of the existing buildings, comprising about 5.6% of the MOL within the school curtilage, would be appropriate. I noted that this tract of MOL is not open to public view and is densely screened from the rear of residential properties in Ham Street. I consider its contribution to the openness of the locality as a whole is very limited and I discern no compelling reason to retain the designation.

11.19. The LPA states that the designation of land on the western frontage of the existing buildings fronting Ham Street is not intended to be a replacement as is claimed by objectors. To my mind Grey Court School is unusual in that its site has a classical parkland ambience, which is reflected in the Grade 2 status of Newman House and the location in a Conservation Area. I consider this would be enhanced by the protection afforded by the proposed designation.

An area of playing field would be lost.

11.20. I accept that so far as playing space is concerned the DfES requirements could be met. In terms of a wider context the Council's *Open Space Strategy* shows that Ham has a substantial amount of open space compared with which the loss of the de-designated area would not be significant. As to objections regarding any reduction in the school's sports facilities it appears to me that only a running track, which could be replaced elsewhere on the school site, would be affected. Allowing, in accordance with DfES practice, the double counting of hard surfaced play areas, the area available for sport would be left comfortably in excess of the national standard. In that connection I note that no objection to the Proposal was raised by Sport England and I consequently conclude that there is no substance in the claim that the school's Sportsmark award status for the standard of its sport and physical education would be threatened. I am satisfied that the LEA has suitable arrangements for consultation about school development.

The visual and residential amenity of the surrounding area, especially Ham Avenues, would be adversely affected.

11.21. The school is set in a landscape of notably high visual quality and historic importance. Nevertheless, it appears to me that development on the land released from MOL would not impinge to any significant degree on any public view, nor would it devalue the quality of the Conservation Area. While there would be an incremental increase in traffic generated by the school I note that proposals for its expansion would be required to be the subject of a School Travel Plan. So far as concerns

---

community use of the site I find nothing in the Proposal to inhibit that, bearing particularly in mind the positive approach of UDP policy CCE 9.

11.22. As I observed, the vegetation bordering the west side of the Great South Avenue largely screens the school from view so that only occasional glimpses of the buildings are possible. Any building on the ex-MOL land would be no nearer than those already existing and would observe their building line. I conclude that the impact on any view from the direction of the Great South Avenue would be inconsiderable. Nor in my view would there be any materially adverse effect on any wildlife corridor following that route.

Alternative options should be explored.

11.23. With regard to the claim that redevelopment should take place on the existing footprint I accept that there would be insufficient scope for the likely expansion in pupil numbers. At the same time I do not consider expansion between the existing buildings and Sandy Lane acceptable as that would be highly intrusive in a currently very pleasantly open scene which provides a link to Ham Avenues and neighbouring open land. In my view it would be clearly detrimental to that area's MOL status. I note also that a further suggested alternative of developing the area fronting Ham Street would have an adverse effect on the character of the Conservation Area and the view of Newman House.

11.24. Given the special circumstances motivating the Proposal I support it.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

**11.25. I recommend that the UDP be modified by D/PMAP/05.**

---

**Proposal P06**  
**Modification ref: D/P06/1**

**King George's Pavilion**

#### **Issue**

MOL status should not be removed.

#### **Inspector's appraisal and conclusion**

11.26. The removal of MOL status is not proposed and the modification should be made.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

**11.27. I recommend that the UDP be modified by D/P06/1.**