



Moor Park
Conservation Area Appraisal
Adopted March 2008

This Conservation Area Appraisal was prepared by Donald Insall Associates
in October 2007, amended following public consultation November 2007
and adopted in March 2008

MOOR PARK CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

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MOOR PARK CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

PREFACE

Legislative Background

Since the 1967 Civic Amenities Act local authorities have been empowered to designate as Conservation Areas those areas within their districts which were considered 'special'. The subsequent Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act of 1990 consolidated those powers and defined Conservation Areas as:-

"areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance".

Such areas are diverse. They may be large or small; residential or commercial; civic or industrial; old or relatively modern. They may represent social ideals or civic pride. They may be specifically designed or speculatively produced; modest or grand. They may contain Listed Buildings of architectural or historic interest or may simply have local historic association. However, common to all will be an identifiable environmental quality which should be protected from unsympathetic redevelopment or alteration.

Sefton Council has declared 25 Conservation Areas throughout the Borough reflecting the variety of building styles and environments exhibited within its borders.

Policy Framework

The content of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 is clarified by national Planning Policy Guidance (PPG15): Planning and the Historic Environment and is supported by more recent Regional Planning Guidance for the North West (RPG13), which identifies as a key objective the need to ensure active management of the regions environmental and cultural assets.

The principles of these documents are further supported by Sefton Council's local Heritage Conservation policies contained within its Unitary Development Plan.

This legislation and policy framework enables the authority to exercise greater control over development within Conservation Areas and, where appropriate, this may be supplemented by the use of 'Article 4 Directions' to remove permitted development rights. In this way, minor changes, such as window replacement or loft conversions, which may be cumulatively detrimental, can be controlled.

National policy stipulates that local authorities have a duty to review, from time to time, their regions to ensure that places of special architectural or historic interest are being protected. The boundaries of existing Conservation Areas may be revised, new areas may be designated and those areas which have been eroded to the extent that their special character has been lost may be de-designated.

How status affects Planning decisions

Whilst the Council recognises that, for Conservation Areas to remain 'live' and responsive to a changing society, changes must and will occur, it nevertheless undertakes to ensure that all

changes make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of its Conservation Areas and do not result in any serious loss of character or features.

Planning legislation supports the authority in this by increasing its control over development. It does this in the following ways:

- Buildings and structures may not be demolished without formal consent from the Council (Conservation Area Consent).
- Trees are protected and all work to them requires consent from the Council.
- New development is expected to reflect the quality of design and construction of the surrounding area and should make a positive contribution to the area's character.
- Local planning authorities may, if necessary, exercise even greater control by removing the basic permitted development rights of householders.
- Under section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the Council has a legal obligation to ensure that "special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance" of the area when formulating decisions on planning applications.

Need for an appraisal

The first step to protecting the inherent qualities of a Conservation Area is having a thorough understanding of its character and Planning Policy Guidance PPG15 advises that "the definition of an area's special interest should derive from an assessment of the elements that contribute to (and detract from) it".

This should then underpin local policies for the areas protection. Such a definition requires a thorough appraisal of the area to assess the contribution of each element (e.g. buildings, boundaries, trees, surfaces, etc.) to the areas overall character. PPG15 notes that "the more clearly the special architectural or historic interest that justifies designation is defined and recorded, the sounder will be the basis for local plan policies and development control decisions".

Whilst an appraisal aims to identify the essential elements which give an area its character, it is not intended as a detailed evaluation of each building and feature. Therefore any buildings, features and details may still have importance even though not specifically referred to in the document and any omissions do not indicate lack of merit or interest.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

This report has been prepared by Donald Insall Associates Ltd on behalf of Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council. Its purpose is to clarify the designation of the Conservation Area, which will protect and enhance the character of Moor Park, Crosby. Designation as a Conservation Area provides the Local Planning Authority with additional powers to protect and enhance the area's special characteristics.

1.2 SCOPE AND STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY

The scope of this Conservation Area Appraisal is based on the guidelines published by English Heritage and represents a factual and objective analysis. In accordance with the guidelines, the following framework has been used as the basis for this analysis:-

- Location and population
- Origins and development of the settlement
- Prevailing former uses and their influence on plan form or building type
- Archaeological significance
- Setting of the conservation areas and their relationship with the surrounding landscape
- Character and relationship of spaces
- Contribution made by green spaces, trees, hedges, etc.
- Architectural and historic qualities of buildings
- Contribution made by key unlisted buildings
- Prevalent and traditional building materials
- Local details
- Extent of loss, intrusion or damage
- Existence of any neutral areas

The document has been structured to encompass these areas of study and concludes with recommendations for the area including amendments to the conservation area boundaries.

It is the aim of this appraisal to identify and examine those elements which individually and collectively define the essential character of the area.

1.3 EXTENT OF THE CONSERVATION AREA

The study covers the Conservation Area of Moor Park, Crosby, which is situated some 10 miles north of the City of Liverpool. The Conservation Area is located on the North Western side of the A565 as it skirts the Northern edge of Great Crosby before it leads north to Ince Blundell and Formby. The boundaries of the Conservation Area are currently quite tightly drawn and the study covers only four named streets in their entirety with a small part of two others.

1.4 DESIGNATION

A proposal for designation of Moor Park as a Conservation Area was drawn up and presented to Sefton Planning Committee in June 1987 following representations from the Moor Park Property Owners Association. The Association were concerned that the character of the area should be preserved and enhanced.

As a reason for designation the proposals stated that:

‘Over a period of time a number of the original conditions imposed by the developer have been breached. For example a number of the individual plots have now been subdivided and new infill development has taken place. This has resulted in a gradual erosion of the character of the area as a whole and it is intended that the designation as a Conservation Area will ensure that any new development respects this character in terms of detailed design, use of materials, appropriate landscaping and planting.’

The formal designation was made by Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council on 9th July 1987.

1.5 GENERAL IDENTITY

The area contains three structures which have elements predating 1850 – the tithe barn, now a nursing home, the windmill, and the associated cottage, both now private houses. The majority of the remaining buildings are houses from the end of the 19th century and early 20th century, a number having a strong ‘Arts and Crafts’ influence. The overall character is one of a ‘leafy suburb’ with strongly defined and enclosed house plots. There is little public realm space apart from the streets themselves; there is a predominance of tree cover and such gardens as may be seen are of a well maintained and mature character.

1.6 SURVEY

This has involved archival research in the locality and site visits on 6th November 2006 and 22nd February 2007 which comprised observation, note taking and photography.

2.0 LOCATION AND CONTEXT

2.1 LOCATION

Moor Park is located on the northern edge of the town of Crosby, which is itself a northern suburb of the City of Liverpool. It is on the fringe a conurbation stretching south from Crosby, through Bootle and Liverpool to the inner Mersey estuary. It is bounded on the north side by agricultural land and is separated from the walled park of Crosby Hall by the width of one field.



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Figure 01 – Showing Location of Moor Park Conservation Area

2.2 TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

The solid geology of the area consists of lower Keuper series New Red Triassic sandstones. These are overlain with estuarial silts and sand deposited by the river. It is at the northern end of a spur of slightly higher land which separates the coast from the inland peaty mooses. The River Alt drains this land to the east, rising to the east of Liverpool and flowing north inland of Crosby, nearly to Formby before turning west and then south to reach the sea in line with Little Crosby. The area is at about 10m above sea level and could be perceived as generally flat. Soils are good quality loamy sand which affords good tree growth where sheltered from the prevailing westerly wind. Below the Sub Soil is clay, which causes the water table to be high.

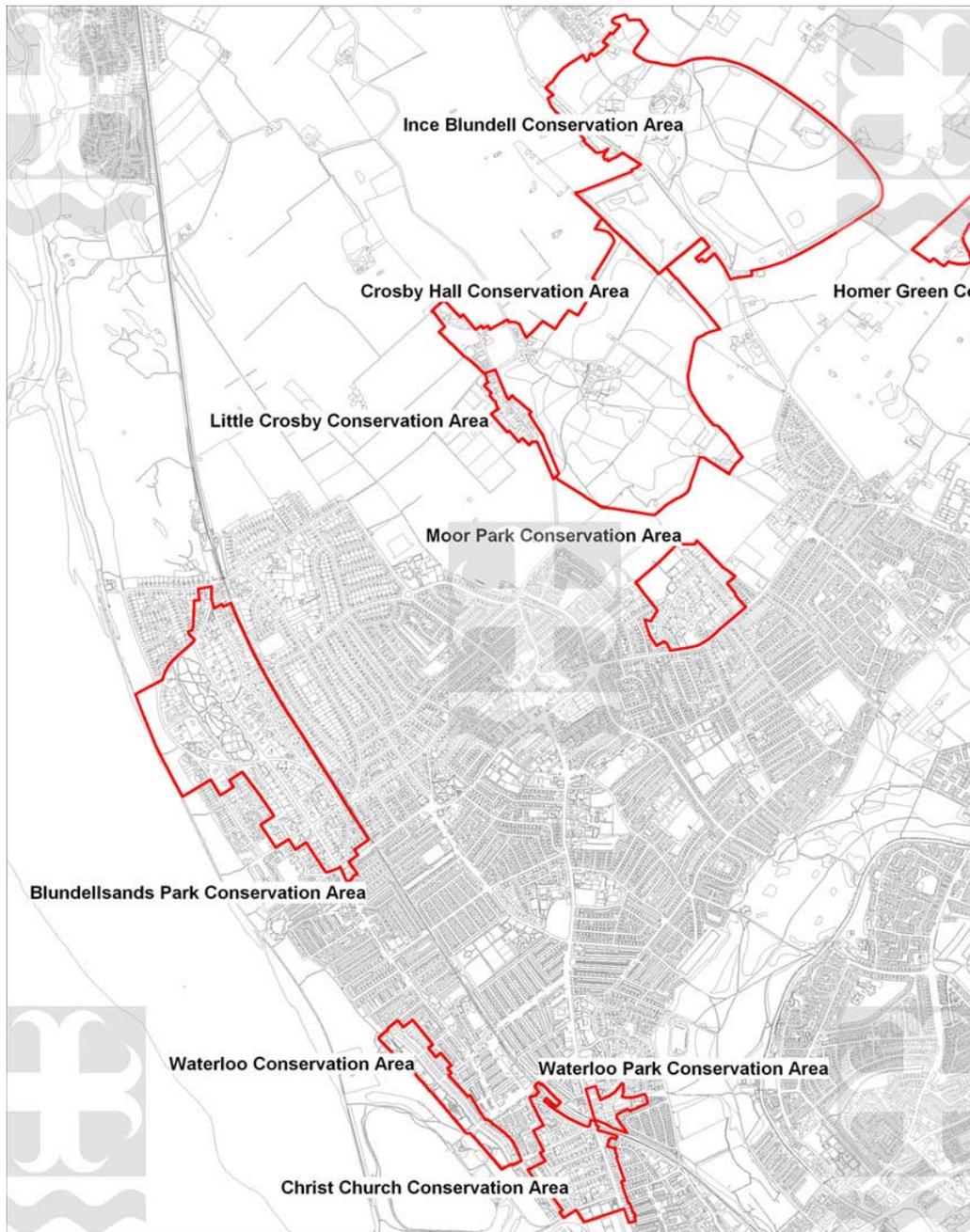
2.3 USES AND GENERAL CONDITION

The Conservation Area is almost entirely residential, with a small amount of recreational use at the north in the form of the Northern Cricket Club. The building known as the Tithebarn is now used as a nursing home. Outside the Conservation Area to the north the agricultural land use remains, but to the east and west is suburban housing with some educational buildings and areas set aside for sports use.

The general condition of most aspects of the Conservation Area is very high. Properties are generally very well maintained, trees and boundary hedges are well kept, grass verges are clear and well cut. There are a number of relatively modest issues concerning enclosure and approaches to development and repair which are considered in subsequent sections.

2.4 CONSERVATION CONTEXT

Moor Park Conservation Area is situated near 5 of Sefton’s conservation areas. It is at a distance of approximately 3/4 of a mile and 1 1/2 miles from Crosby Hall and Ince Blundell Conservation Areas respectively, lying to the north. Blundellsands Conservation Area is around 1 1/4 miles to the west and Waterloo and Christ Church Conservations Areas around 1 1/2 miles to the south.

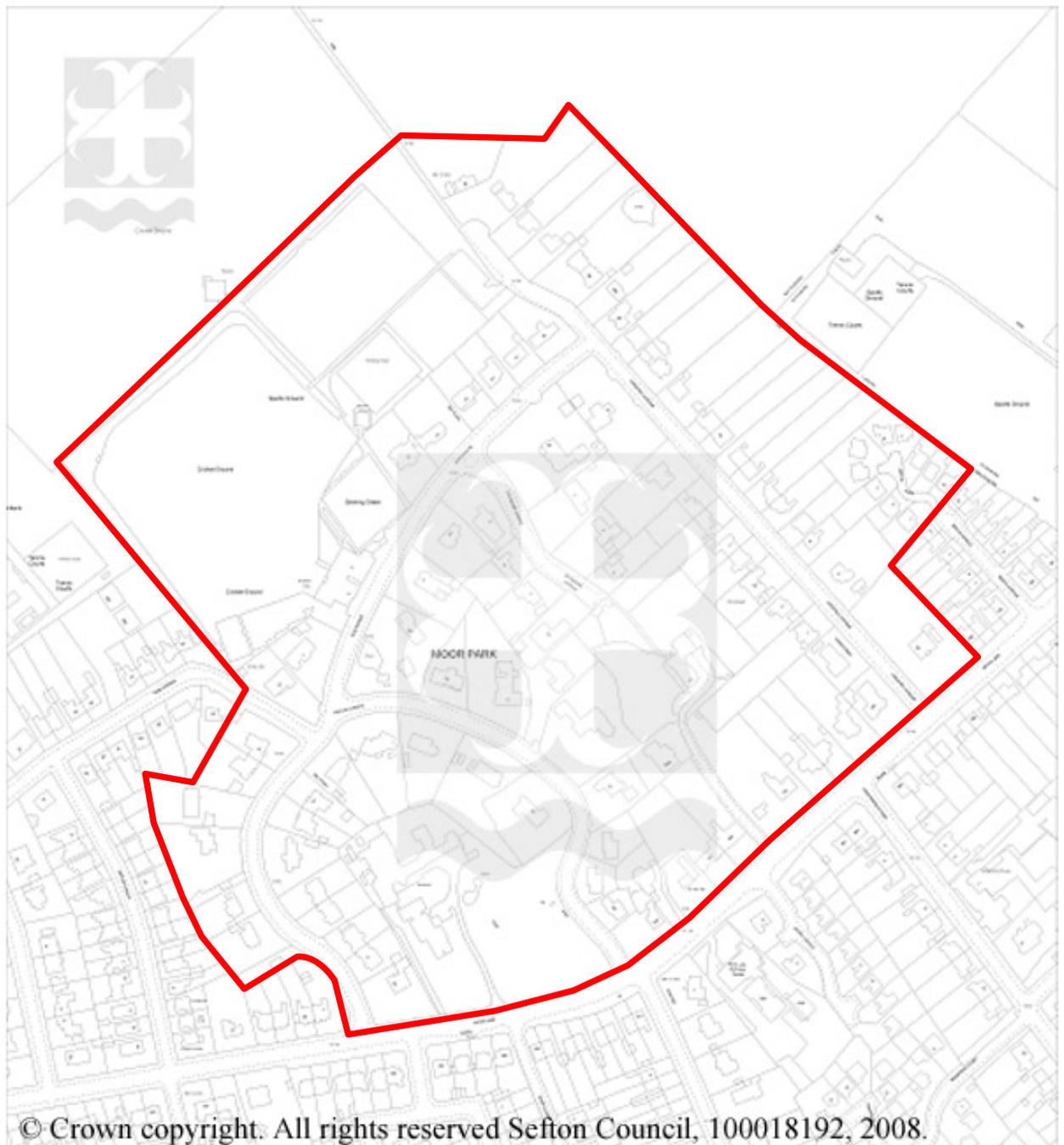


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PLAN 01 – CONSERVATION CONTEXT

2.5 STUDY AREA BOUNDARY (PLAN 02)

As the nature of the development within the Conservation Area is largely domestic, the boundary of the conservation area generally follows the edges of individual plots. To the north west of the Conservation Area is a sports club with facilities for lawn bowls, cricket, squash etc. The boundary of the Conservation Area cuts through the sports club grounds which is due to the historic line of a previous brook forming a boundary..



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PLAN 02 – CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARY

3.0 HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

(see Plan 03 at the end of the section for the relative ages of buildings and features)

3.1 EARLY HISTORY AND ORIGINS

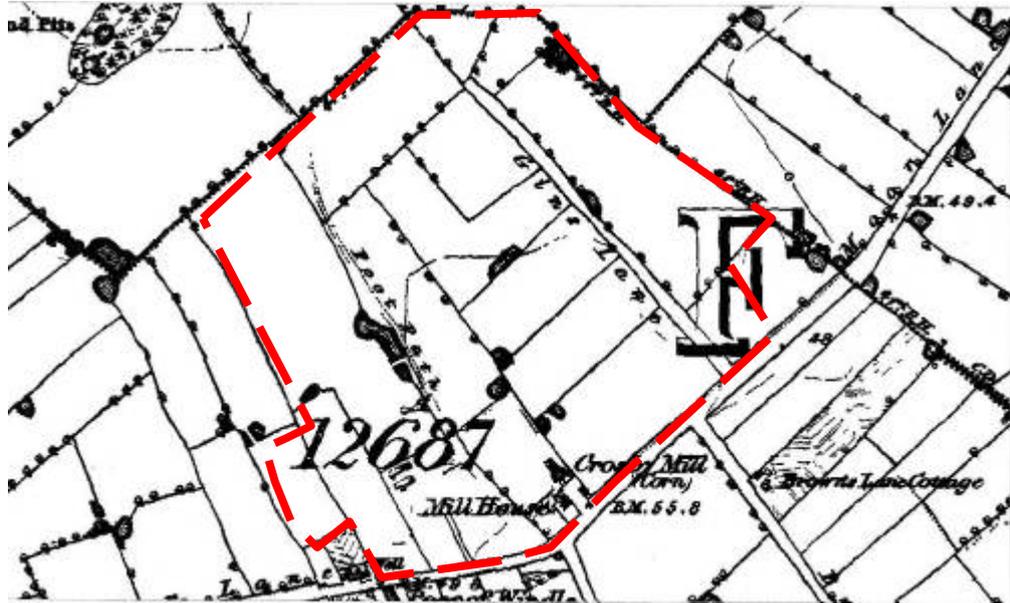


Figure 02 - Historical map dated from around 1849. The approximate site of the existing conservation areas is shown in red.

Indirect evidence suggests that the area of Crosby was occupied by Angles, crossing from what is now known as Yorkshire. However following the death of Alfred the Great in about 900 the area suffered Viking invasion and there were a number of Viking settlements established. Crosby (= Krossa byr, the settlement with crosses) was one of these and the name suggests that Christianity was a growing influence. A field named 'Harkirk' in Little Crosby parish is evidence of a Norse church.

At the time of Domesday, Little Crosby was in the hands of the Saxon thegn Uctred. Great Crosby is not included in Domesday as it was part of the royal manor of West Derby, and thus was not surveyed. The manor of Great Crosby remained in royal hands until it was sold by Charles I in 1625 to Lord Mandeville and others. In 1798 it was sold by their successors to a trustee of the Blundell family, thus linking it to Little Crosby, which had remained with the Blundells from the medieval period.

Positioned midway between the two townships, it is not entirely clear into which the area now occupied by Moor Park belonged. However, inspection of the maps shows that the north and east boundaries of the conservation area abut a historic boundary line between the two parishes and between Local Districts and Constituencies, suggesting that it is a historic boundary. On the evidence of this Moor Park falls within Great Crosby.

There is reference to a boundary dispute between Henry Blundell, Lord of the Manor of Little Crosby and the King, Lord of Great Crosby in the early 15th century. In resolution there was a new demarcation of the boundary with a ditch and mere stones. It is possible that this is the historical boundary next to Moor Park.

The North Western Boundary is at the line of the brook, which divided the townships of Little Crosby with Crosby and Thornton, the land over the boundary was later bought from the Blundell Family to enlarge the sports clubs grounds, the ditch was subsequently filled.

The Victoria County History volume covering this part of Lancashire, published in 1907 describes the area thus:

‘The country is flat and sandy, being in places still very marshy, so that deep ditches, especially in the north are required to drain the fields and meadows. The crops grown are principally oats, rye and potatoes.’

The use of the name ‘moor’ for the area is suggestive, but possibly confusing. It usually indicates an area of open common land, possibly poorly drained, but the location of the moor is not easy to pinpoint from evidence available and the name may simply not have any historical basis in that the moor may not have actually existed.

There was a very early enclosure of common or waste land in the manor in 1602, which was carried out by Queen Elizabeth as Lord of the Manor. Whether this was the area of Moor Park is not clear. Great Crosby Marsh was enclosed in 1816.

Reliable map evidence begins with the first epoch OS map from 1849 at a scale of 6” to the mile. This shows the area to be divided into relatively small linear plots, typical of enclosed common fields, so the area may have been part of the open field system of Great Crosby.

The presence of the windmill also indicates grain growing. The present windmill (shown as a corn mill on the 1849 plan) dates from 1803, and it is suggested that it replaced an earlier one at Little Crosby. The new location could be based on commercial reasons, being nearer to a main thoroughfare.

The mill is believed to be medieval in origin, and appears in the corner of an early 18th century view of Crosby from the west as a post mill standing up on the horizon. The current structure is a brick tower mill constructed in 1813 by William Blundell, the local estate owner, the millwright being William Murray.



Figure 03 ‘A West Prospect of Great Crosby 1716’ showing the earlier windmill on the left.
 Figure 04 The windmill in 1900

The mill continued to be used until 1971, however at this stage it was powered by electricity rather than wind, as the sails had been removed much earlier.

An image of about 1900 (Figure 04) shows the brick tower unpainted with its timber cap and the stumps of the sails. The windows are small paned and appear to be cast iron. There is a group of low outbuildings round about and the miller's cottage in front appears to have a low slate roof with gable.

The 1849 map shows the area of the conservation area to be occupied by about 20 agricultural plots of approximately even size. Quite a number of them have ponds at the sides, or in corners suggesting a greater degree of animal husbandry. The boundaries between the plots show quite a number of hedgerow trees. To the south of the area there are small orchards adjoining the road, and further to the south at Moorside Farm.

The map also shows a short lane, by the name of Gins Lane leading north from Moor Lane. The name gin has a number of meanings, the most plausible, in this instance being a wind powered 'engine' for pumping water, or machinery for lifting heavy weights e.g. baulks of timber.

3.2 DEVELOPMENT (SEE PLAN 03 AND THE HISTORIC MAPS)

The development of Liverpool and subsequently Bootle as a major port in Britain, and indeed in the Empire in the mid to late 19th century saw a rapid urbanisation of the immediate hinterland. This spread to Crosby by the later decades of the century and the character of the largely medieval village was changed very dramatically. In the Waterloo area of Crosby there is a strongly rectilinear street grid containing modest scale workers dwellings. The density opens up upon travelling further north, indicating a later period of development and conditions of greater prosperity with improved standards. Nevertheless the standard Victorian model for housing was of terraced or detached houses of similar character in a fairly rigid layout. House builders and developers generally continued with the model into the early periods of the 20th century, producing streets which are uniform and ordered in pattern, very much dominated by the built form. Maps show that in the 1890s the Moor Park area was still outside this area of dense urban and suburban development but that given a continuation of the rather relentless spread of urbanism it would soon be covered.

From around the mid-to-late 19th century the enlightened views and practices of philanthropists such as the Lever brothers at Port Sunlight together with the later pioneers of the Garden City Movement began to have a profound effect on housing developments. The health and well-being of the residents became increasingly important, for all classes and the need for good open space and well planned social facilities for men and women was recognised. The development of these model villages and garden cites / suburbs coincided with the flowering of the Arts and Crafts tradition in late Victorian England. The Arts and Crafts influence on the form and planning of the estate is evident and is expressed in the looser and more informal layouts, lower densities, much use of trees and shrubs, provision of open streets and verges and the provision of private gardens to encourage both recreation and the partaking of fresh air, but also the growing of fruit and vegetables which were, at that time known to be beneficial to health.

The layout and buildings of Moor Park appears to have taken much physical inspiration from these examples, although it was almost certainly constructed as an economic and profit-making venture. The land for the whole of the Moor Park estate was purchased in the mid 1890s by Mr. Joseph B Colton, a land agent and diamond merchant, for the sum of £4680. Mr Colton was Chairman of the Conservative

Association of the Southport Division, which included Crosby at that time. He was also a local councillor for Waterloo with Seaforth elected in 1895 and re-elected in 1897. He appears to have resided in Albert Road, Birkdale. The land when Mr Colton acquired it, was largely fields, but with the mill and cottage, the tithe barn and one property on Gins Lane. This is as it is shown on the 1893 OS map.



Figure 05 - Extract from 25" Ordnance Survey map published 1893

Joseph Colton appears to have planned and laid out the estate with some considerable thought to its character. The plots were demised with a series of restrictive covenants relating to layout and appearance all intended to control the future development of the estate. Many of these principles follow on from those established followed by the model village pioneers, and particularly from the Port Sunlight example.

In summary the covenants clauses were:

- The roads were never to be made up;
- There should be no kerb edges or pavements;
- Species of trees should be planted to follow each road name;
- There should be no boundary walls or fences, only hedges of privet, hawthorn or beech;
- All roofs should be grey slate or red tile;
- Once a plot of land has been sold to build an individual house, this must never be subdivided;
- No property should be divided into flats.

The outcome of these covenants is still very evident in the fabric of the Moor Park estate although there have been some changes.

Mr Colton himself started the process of building apparently with Chestnut Avenue. The minutes of the Crosby Borough Council for the period are illuminating:

Chestnut Avenue

15.2.1897 - The Surveyor reported that since the last meeting of the Council, Mr Joseph B Colton had submitted fresh plans for four houses to be built in the above and that plans for seven more houses were about to be lodged. Recommended that houses be disapproved.

6.3.1897 - *Plan of new street for Messrs. Calton on the site of Gin's Lane ... that the plans be not approved.*

6.4.1898... *further plans for a house in Chestnut Avenue for Mr. Calton ...*

It is not clear why the council did not like the proposals. Could it be that it was the influence of the council who encouraged Mr Colton to be more far sighted in his proposal for the estate and adopt the model village principles?

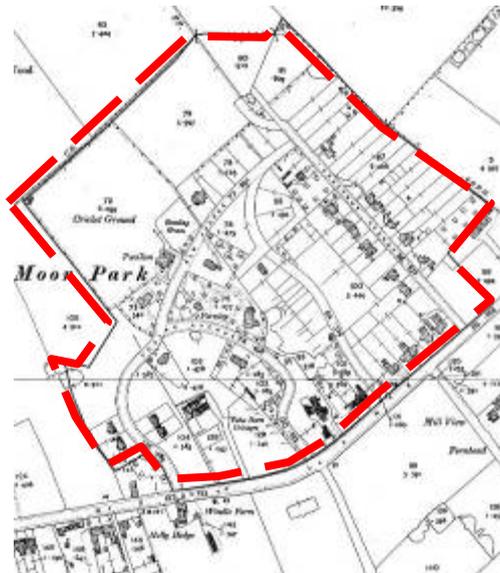


Figure 06 : Extract from 25" Ordnance Survey map published 1908

By the time of the publication of the 1908 OS map there seems to have been a concerted start on the development of the site. The plots either side Chestnut Avenue are laid out and about 16 houses have been constructed. Further west the other avenues are laid out, the cricket club established and a large property known as Appleby House (17 Poplar avenue) was built by Frank Appleby believed to be a Flour Merchant and Miller, it was built with its own landscape garden and lake (a modification of a pre-existing pond which appears on the 6" map).

The earliest dwellings have appeared either side Poplar Avenue on the west edge of the estate. Interestingly another avenue is laid out between Chestnut and Poplar Avenues and extending to Moor Lane, with putative plots laid out either side.

The dwellings facing Moor Lane have been built, and undoubtedly these would act as an advertisement for the development as a whole.

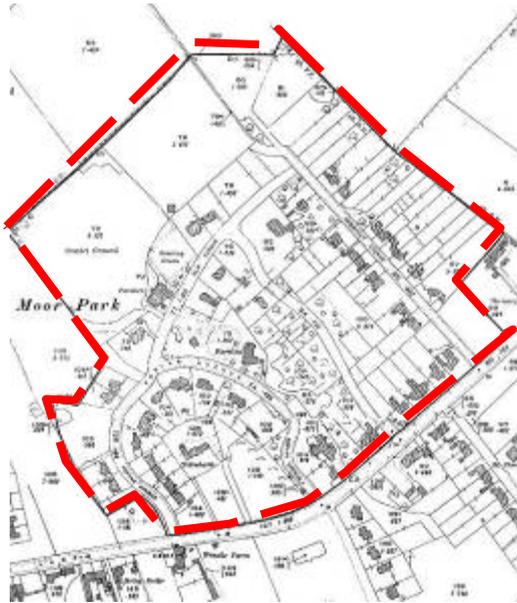


Figure 07 : Extract from 25" Ordnance Survey map published 1927

The next readily interpreted 'snapshot' of the development of the site is the 1927 25" OS map. Development was obviously not that rapid as the changes from the 1908 plan are not that great. At some time between the two surveys the north end of what was to become Sycamore Avenue achieved its present form. The three plots shown on the east side on the earlier map are merged into one and a large house built, with the street line moved slightly to the west to its current position. Further to the south Sycamore Avenue appears to remain marked out, along with a number of plots either side, but still not yet in fully developed form. There are also a few more houses on the inside curve of Poplar Avenue which is now fairly solidly developed.

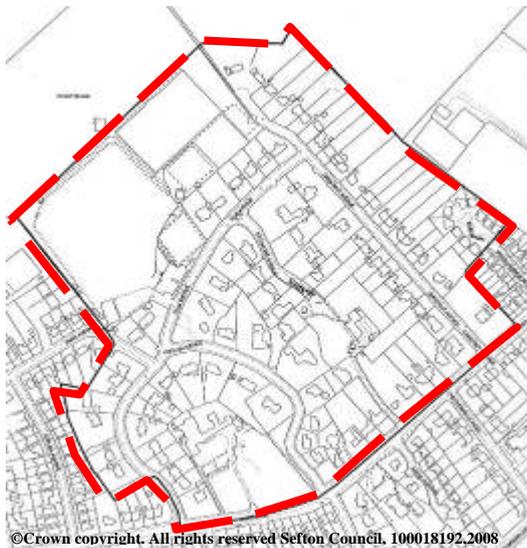


Figure 08 : Extract from 25" Ordnance Survey map published 1937

In the decade from the publication of the 1927 map until the 1937 map most of the remaining plots were developed and so the estate almost reaches its current form. It is worth noting that although these are given dates for publication of the maps the necessary survey could have happened up to five years before and so the process of development was more continuous, and indeed probably earlier than the map dates suggest.

All but four of the remaining plots on Chestnut Avenue are shown as having been developed. Sycamore Avenue now has its present form, being much shorter than originally proposed and with a new large house, Windle Hey built on its line, “in 1932 by Mr Barrel” with its own private drive access from Moor Lane. The development on the outer (north and west) sides of Poplar and Elm Avenues are now almost complete.

Immediately outside the Conservation Area boundaries new developments have sprung up to the east – Beech Avenue, and to the west – Esplen Avenue and Park Avenue. It is interesting to contrast the character and style of these developments with Moor Park. At a rough measure the density is about double that of the earlier layout, forms are much more rigid and building dominated and there is much less opportunity for tree and shrub growth.



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Figure 09 : Extract from 1:1250 Ordnance Survey map published 1997

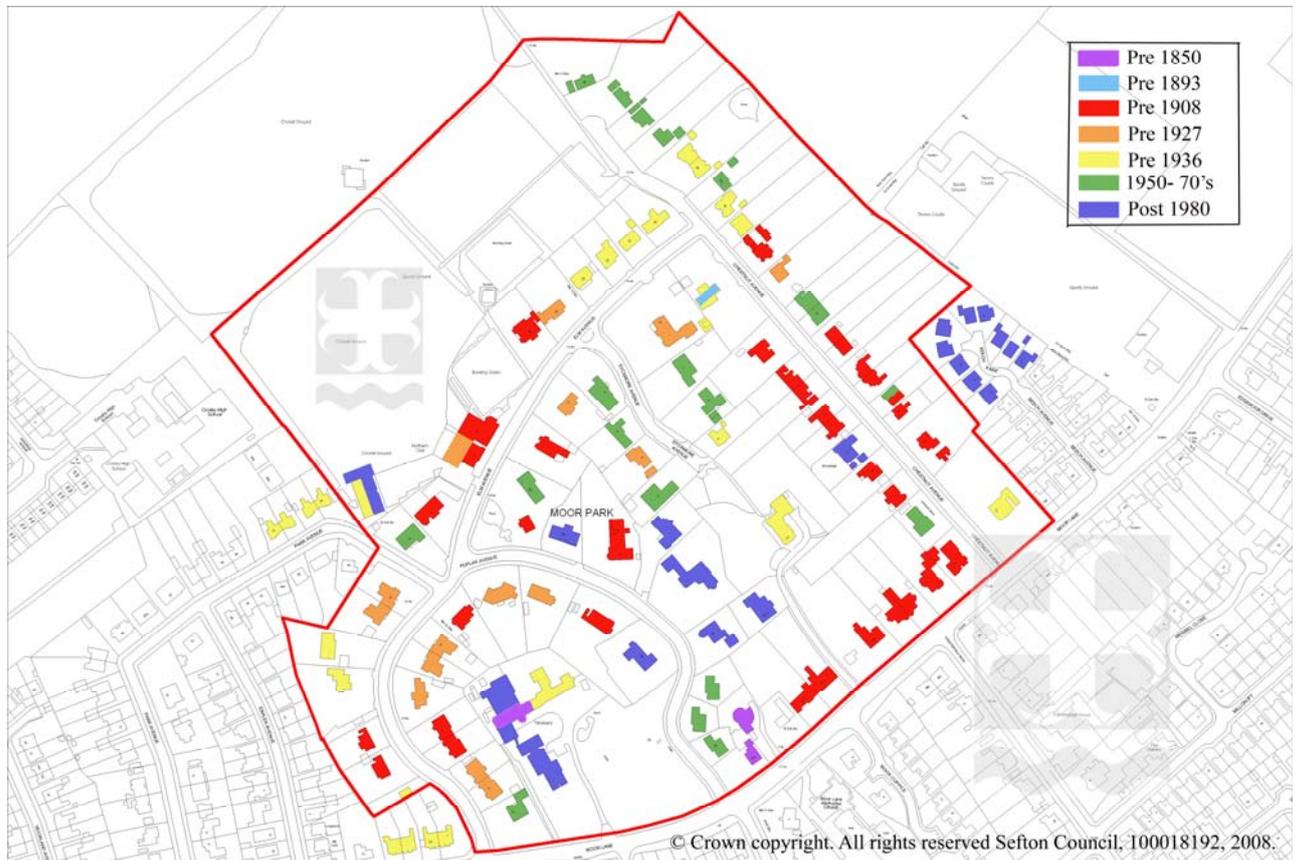
The final map in the series from 1997 shows that the remaining plots on Chestnut Avenue have now been taken up. The other main change is that a series of properties has been built alongside the eastern arm of Poplar Avenue, around and to the rear of the Windmill. The plot size for the three properties immediately to the west of the windmill is much smaller than the generality of the development and do rather impinge on the setting of the windmill itself.

Apart from the areas designated as recreational land the only significant undeveloped land (i.e. without buildings, particularly dwellings) is the plot of land between the eastern arm of Poplar Avenue and the drive to the Tithebarn.

The roads were unsurfaced for over 60 years until modern Tarmacadam was first laid down in the mid 1960's breaching the clause of the covenants imposed by Mr Colton, the original developer.

3.3 ARCHAEOLOGY

With the exceptions of the former tithe barn and nineteenth century tower windmill and associated cottage there is no record of archaeological interest in the area held by the Merseyside Archaeological Service Historic Environment Record. It should be noted, however, that lack of finds generally indicates a lack of investigation, as apposed to a lack of archaeological/historical interest.



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PLAN 03 - SHOWING RELATIVE AGES OF BUILDINGS

4.0 LANDSCAPE AND VISTAS

4.1 SETTING AND RELATIONSHIP WITH SURROUNDING AREA



Figure 10 : Aerial view of Conservation Area

4.2 CHARACTER AND RELATIONSHIP OF SPACES

The public realm spaces within the conservation area are limited to the streets themselves. Within these there are linear views up and down the streets, with generally rather limited views onto adjacent properties. The impression given is that there is much of value and interest which is hidden from public gaze, and therefore the estate has a rather exclusive and private character.

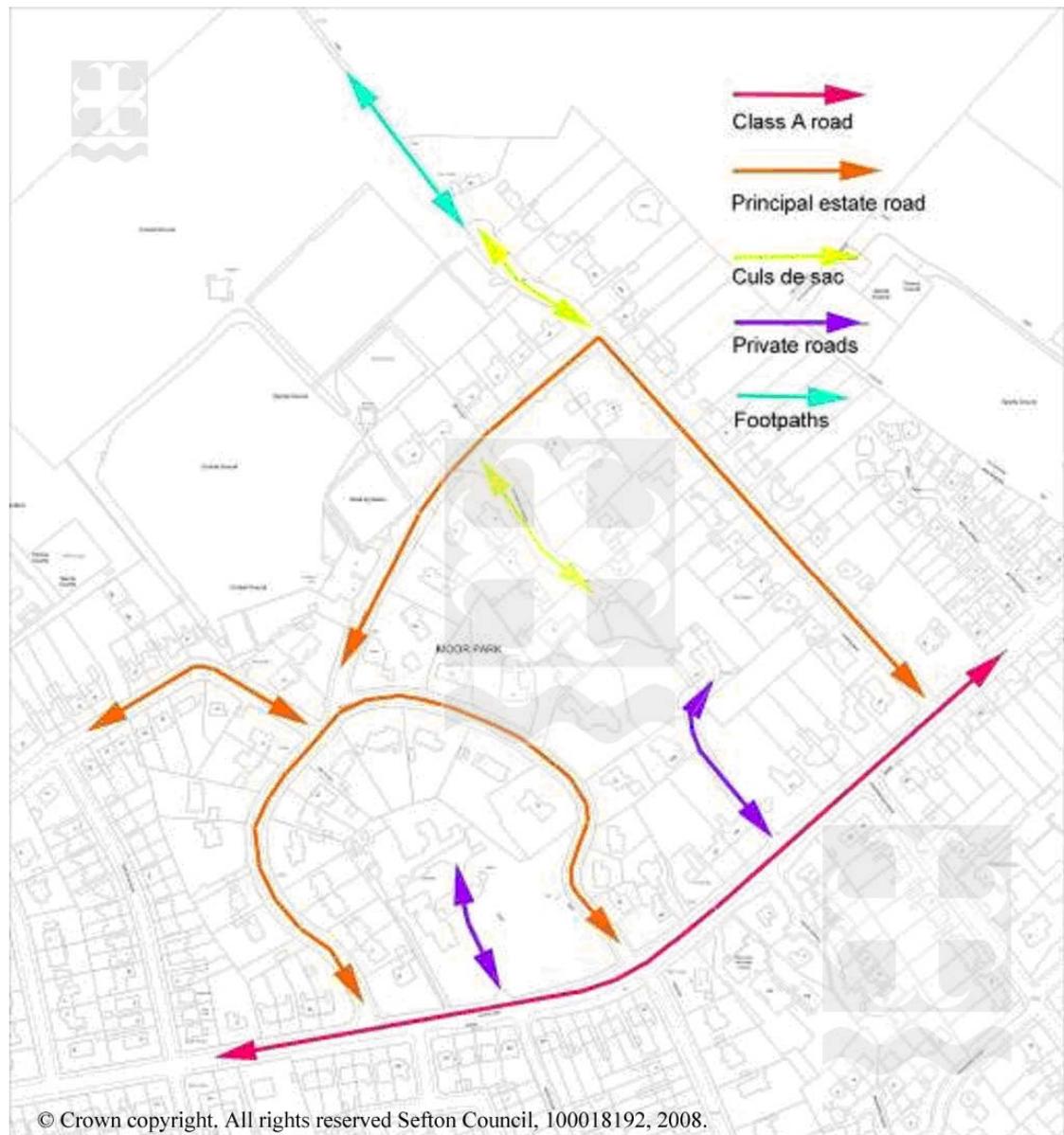
The streets, significantly named after trees (i.e. Poplar Avenue, Elm Avenue, Sycamore Avenue, Chestnut Avenue) are, as the names suggest heavily tree lined. In most cases the tree growth emanates from the adjoining plots or their boundaries. However Chestnut Avenue, the only avenue in the true sense of the word, is lined on both sides with pollarded Horse Chestnut trees. Except for the main road, Moor Lane, skirting the area to the south, there are no made-up pavements and the tarmac surfaced roads are bounded on either side with mown grass, or where the light is limited (or the wear excessive) by bare earth or gravel.

The nature of the house plots is not easily discerned from site visits. Mapping and aerial photography reveal them to be on the whole, fairly generous, some narrow and deep but more generally block-like. They are largely enclosed by high hedges or fences, which give a very cellular arrangement. As with the streets, trees predominate and it is clear from the aerial photograph that both the numbers and size of the trees within the conservation area are greater than outside.

To the north west of the conservation area is the Northern Club – a member’s sports club for lawn bowls, cricket and squash. The club has its own buildings, based around a traditional style wooden sports pavilion with changing areas and a front veranda, now much altered. This has been extended in several stages and a more modern range of squash courts added to the west. These buildings are close to Elm Avenue and they face outwards onto the playing areas, with distant views beyond. The entrance to the site is not enclosed and therefore this provides the only view out from the conservation area.

With the exception of the Northern Club grounds, there is a tension between the rather limited and enclosed public realm spaces and the hidden house plots.

4.3 HIERARCHY OF ROUTES



Plan 11 showing hierarchy of routes

The hierarchy of routes extends from a principal Class A road through to private access drives, and are considered in this order in the following paragraphs.

The principal communications route within the district is the A565 road leading from the centre of Crosby northwards. This skirts the south edge of the conservation area and is the only vehicular means of access to Moor Park, from whichever direction.

The area is entered by one of three unclassified side roads leading off the through route. They are generally of equal status, but there is a notable step down in the provision of standard highway elements such as pavements, signage and road demarcation from the main route onto the estate roads. Carriageways reduce in width, and kerbs disappear and are replaced with grass verges.

The least-used surfaced roads within the conservation area are the northern extension of Chestnut Avenue and Sycamore Avenue, both of which are culs-de-sac, leading to private dwellings.

There is one signposted footpath through the conservation area which is an extension of Chestnut Avenue and extends northwards to meet a footpath skirting the south edge of the walled Crosby Hall park. This seems to be a well used and well maintained path with directional signage.

There are two notable routes outside the public realm, and which are not public rights of way. These give access from Moor Lane to Tithebarn, the residential home, and to the house numbered 171 Moor Lane which is noted on some maps as Windle Hey.

Below these in hierarchy are the private drives and accesses to individual dwellings which lead off the public routes.

The simple nature of the roads and streetscape treatments of the conservation area, described above, is a key part of its character and helps to set it apart from modern estates, with layouts more overtly based on the needs of the vehicle.

4.4 VIEWS AND VISTAS WITHIN THE CONSERVATION AREA

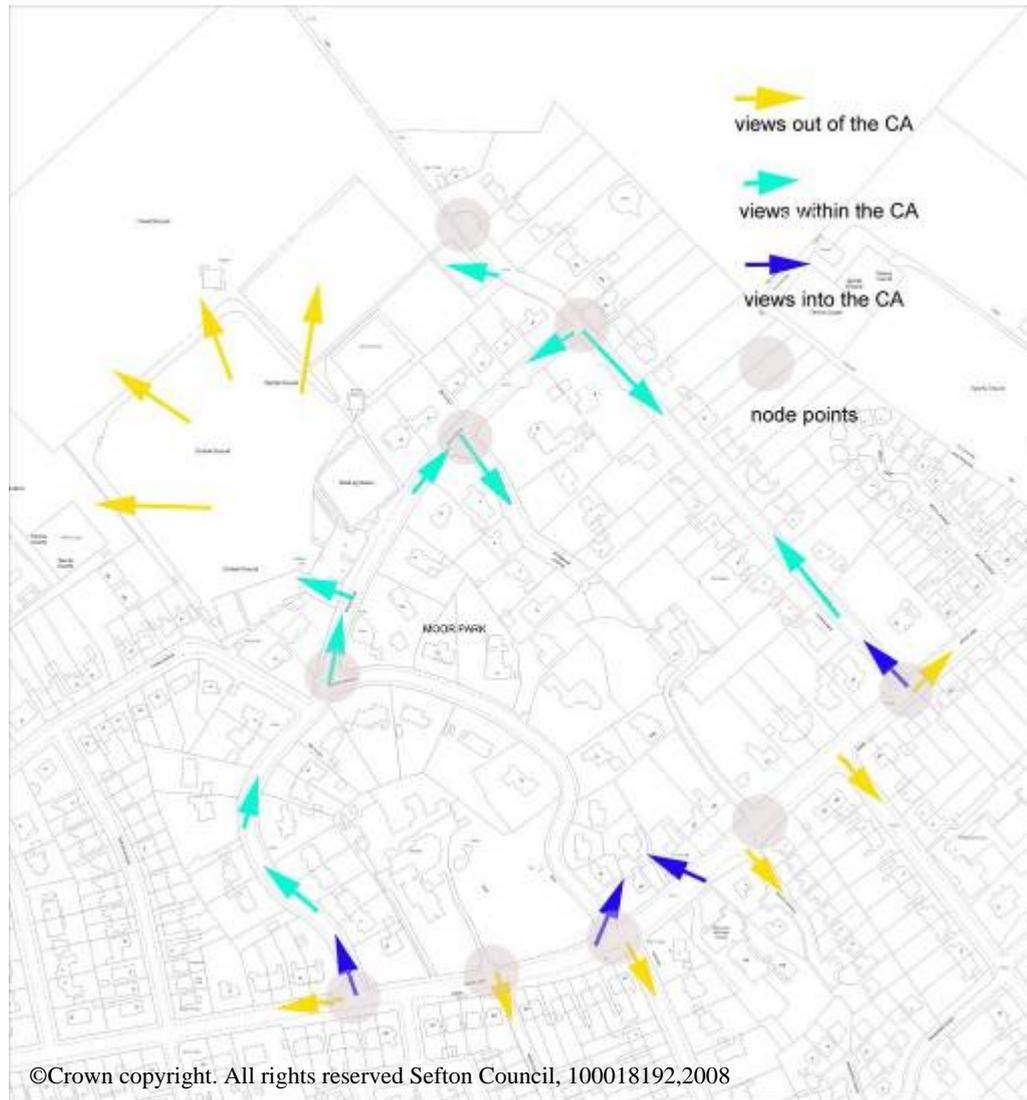


Figure 12 Main views within, into and out of the Conservation Area and Node points

As already intimated there are very limited views within the area; none meriting the description vista. The almost continuous screening either side of the streets mean that views are mainly *along* the streets, with limited side views onto the properties. Figure 12 indicates the main views

Views along Chestnut Avenue, and to a lesser extent Elm Avenue, are fairly long because of the straightness of these streets. These views are only obstructed by the presence of parked or moving vehicles. Poplar, Sycamore and the western parts of Elm Avenues all offer a different visual experience. Their curving nature means that there is a cycle of opening up and closing off of views as you move along. This adds greatly to the visual appeal of the streets and encourages a sense of exploration. The overall effect of this is to make the estate seem much larger than it is in reality. Comparison of the actual experience of moving around the conservation area with the route on the map makes this point particularly clearly.

This visual quality is part of the distinctiveness of the area and should not be allowed to become compromised.

The visual strength of Chestnut Avenue is in its straightness and consistency. It has the feeling of a true avenue, which was the tree-lined approach to a large house or mansion.

Lateral views from the main streets are largely along private drives, sometimes terminated by garages and sometimes giving views of the individual houses. In very few cases is there an uninterrupted view of the house frontage. All this adds to the feeling of exclusivity and privacy of the development and is a characteristic to be maintained.

Views out of the Conservation Area

Views looking out from the area are shown also on Figure 12 and are limited to those along Moor Lane and its immediate surrounding streets, and those out from the sports club. The views in the Moor Lane area are typical of a suburban area, and though not unattractive are not distinctive in character.

The views out to the north-west from the sports club and the public footpath are across fields to the nearby parkland. Again they are not highly significant in themselves but they are valuable by providing contrast to the very enclosed nature of the spaces within the rest of the conservation area. Access to the sports field is limited to members of the club, but it would be desirable if the open view could be more publicly available. As a prerequisite it should be said that the Green Belt policies preventing development of this land should be retained, thus keeping the buffer zone around Crosby Hall parkland intact.

4.5 GREEN SPACES AND PLANTING

The use of planting and landscaping is intrinsically linked to the layout and character of the village and therefore has been described to some extent already within this document.

As open, publicly accessible green spaces are limited, the small green area at the junction of Elm Avenue and Sycamore Avenue has particular significance. It has the feel of a small village green and has two pollarded maple trees and a carved stone commemorating the Golden Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II in 2002. Either side Sycamore Avenue at this point the tree planting is quite thick and there are broad grass verges, all of which contribute to a particularly rural feel at this point. The measures to keep vehicles off verges are large stones at intervals, and these seem to be quite effective.

Before the Avenues were surfaced there were footpaths (also unsurfaced) along both sides of each avenue separated from the road by a grass verge about 2 foot wide. It is only in the latter decades that residents grassed over these footpaths.

5.0 TOWNSCAPE AND FOCAL BUILDINGS

5.1 TOWNSCAPE

5.1.1 General Characteristics

Whilst it has some pre-Victorian features, the majority of the development seems to date from the end of the Victorian period, extending into the early part of the 20th century. It has the appearance of being developer led, but the individual dwellings are of quite varied character and although the plot sizes are all relatively large by today's standards they differ in shape and size quite markedly.

There is strong evidence of the influence of the Garden Suburb type of planning and layout. The informal nature of Poplar Avenue shows this quite strongly through its winding character, broad verges without kerbs and abundance of trees and hedges. The development of semi-detached villas belongs to this period as well as the 'cottage style' housing and there are examples of both. Fully developed Garden Suburbs have a strong emphasis on provision of recreational facilities and open space as well as the characteristic infrastructure. There is little if any formally designated open space – perhaps because of developer pressure but the presence of the Northern Club is evidence of the desire to provide recreational facilities.

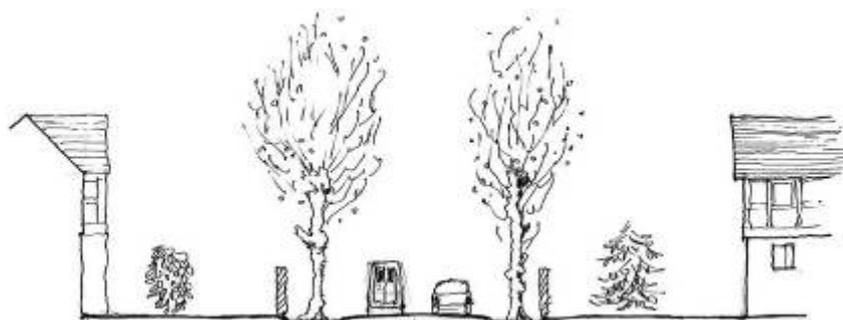
The east side of the conservation area is dominated by the formality of Chestnut Avenue, while the street layout on the western side is deliberately informal and it has more the characteristics of a Garden Suburb development.

Again it must be said that the street scene is largely dominated by the trees and hedges, rather than by the frontages of the buildings themselves. This is because the houses are well spaced out, well set back and are fronted with mature tree and shrub planting.

5.1.2 Grain

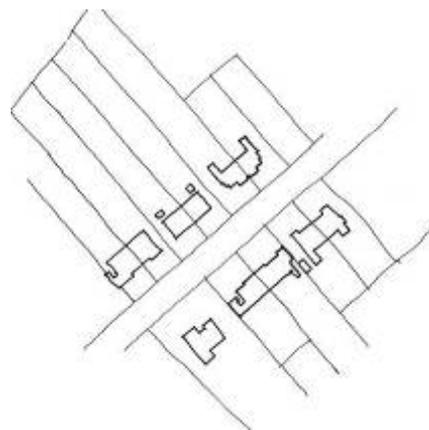
The grain and density of Moor Park Conservation Area is predominantly defined by relatively generous plots, (in comparison with modern housing developments) containing large semi-detached or detached houses. The spaces between properties contribute to a sense of openness, as do the widths of the streets. This sense of spaciousness is important to the character of the conservation area.

The following are comparative example sections indicating the street widths in relation to typical building heights:



Chestnut Avenue Grain

The grain of development in the Avenue is set by the plot dimensions which are narrow and deep. Frontages to the street are generally the width of the house plus a garage and a side path, though not all have garages. However the considerable depth has allowed some of the rear parts of the plots to be taken over for a form of backland development to create the extension to Beech Avenue. This process should be resisted



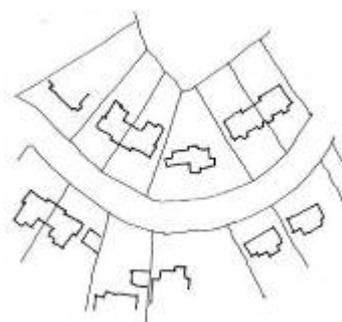
The majority of the houses are in semi-detached pairs with a truncated L shape. In some cases the forward projecting wings are next to the party wall, in some cases at the ends of the block.

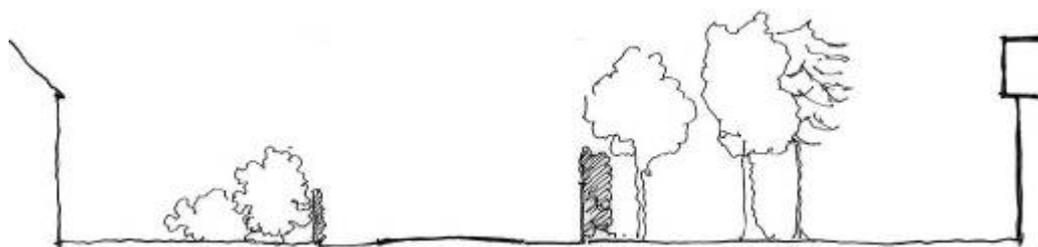
The houses are set at a more or less uniform 7m back from the boundary. The section through the avenue shows that the thoroughfare is well enclosed by the 2m hedges and also by the pollarded horse chestnut trees whose height to the pollarding level is about equal to the width of the street. There are modest front gardens with further tree and shrub growth.



Poplar Avenue Grain

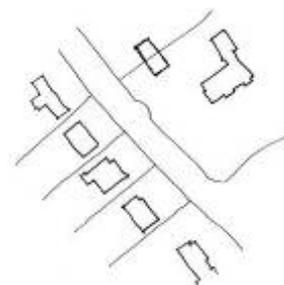
The overall street width is a constant 9m, with a 5m wide made up carriageway in the centre and grass verges either side. Plots are shorter and wider. Houses are set parallel to the road and about 7m back from it. The tree planting is less dominant than elsewhere. The section shows that the street is less strongly enclosed. Trees are set back within the plots rather than in avenue formation along the verges of the carriageway.





Elm Avenue Grain

On Elm Avenue the plots on the western side are regular and wider in relation to their depth. Houses are individual and detached. On the east side there are a number of large detached properties in very large plots. This section through Elm Avenue shows the different characters on the two sides. To the west the street is more open and properties are open to view, whereas on the east the houses are set back much further and completely screened by a fence, tall hedges and trees within the grounds of the property.



5.1.3 Rhythm, Repetition and Diversity

Within the original area of Moor Park buildings are predominately of an individual design or part of a small group. Where house designs are repeated, they are usually part of a semi-detached pair or small cluster of buildings. This only occurs in a limited number of instances. Where a similar floor layout was used in separate buildings by the same developer, different materials and detailing was often used to retain their individuality.

5.1.4 Nodes

The study identifies 9 ‘node’ points in the street scene where there are choices in direction and where there is a broadening out or choice of view. With one exception the nodes have few characteristics over and above these two, and so are not highly significant ‘events’ in the townscape.

The nodes, and their particular features are listed below and shown on Figure 12.

No.	Location	Character
1	Junction of Moor Lane and Chestnut Avenue	These first five nodes have similar characteristics: Whether on foot or in a vehicle there is a definite change in spatial and environmental character at these points. Moor Lane is a busy through route with a constant stream of vehicles. There is noise, air disturbance, vehicle smells and the perception of the dangers associated with busy traffic. Outside the Conservation Area most buildings are open to view, and built forms predominate. As soon as you turn into the Conservation Area the character is radically different. The streets are more enclosed, darker and more traffic free. The nodes therefore are not significant for their own townscape value but rather as points of transition from one character area to another.
2	Junction of Moor Lane and Moor Coppice	
3	Junction of Moor Lane and Poplar Avenue (1)	
4	Junction of Moor Lane and Tithebarn lane	
5	Junction of Moor Lane and Poplar Avenue (2)	

6	Junction of Poplar Avenue, Park Avenue and Elm Avenue	The lack of road markings and direction signs mean that there is little obvious sense of the hierarchy of routes described in the previous section. This uncertainty tends to slow vehicular progress and emphasises the more rural aspects of the neighbourhood.
7	Junction of Elm Avenue and Sycamore Avenue	This is the node which has its own strong character and sense of place. Within what is essentially a Tee junction is a small green island with trees and a commemoration stone. Apart from stones to keep off the traffic there is no clutter of signage, no bollards or low posts and chains. This simplicity, with the greenery around gives it a strong visual attraction and charm.
8	Junction of Elm Avenue and Chestnut Avenue	As a junction of two streets of rather similar characteristics this node doesn't register highly as an 'event' when exploring the conservation area.
9	Termination of Chestnut Avenue	Although this is the termination of the Avenue, it does not register a strong visual character. On the west is a tall hedge, while to the east are the open frontages of the dwellings. There is a small turning area and also a wicket gate leading to the northbound footpath. The open aspect of the two end houses contrasts greatly with the enclosure found elsewhere in the Conservation Area. A stronger visual barrier of shrubs or hedges as used elsewhere may be desirable and should be encouraged.

5.1.5 Character Studies of Individual Streets

Moor Lane is lined with deciduous trees, but at wide spacings and the main rhythm of the street is provided by the street lighting columns.

In the vicinity of the Conservation Area, Moor Lane has a fairly enclosed character. The boundaries on the north west (Moor Park) side are solid fences or hedges broken only by side streets and gateways, of which there are few. The property boundaries on the south east side are mainly hedges, sometimes combined with low brick walls, but they have a less 'solid' character and are more broken up by street entries and private drives.



Figures 13 and 14 - Moor Lane and Chestnut Avenue

Chestnut Avenue has a very strong visual character largely defined, as the name suggests, by its avenue of pollarded Horse Chestnut trees.

The street is of two vehicles width but has no white lining or formal kerbing giving it a soft character. The tarmac surface is now slightly raised above what appears to have been the level as originally planned. When first laid out, was believed to have been surfaced with Klinker and ashes from Bootle Gas Works, giving it the appearance of a private estate road. There are no formal surfaced footpaths and the broad margins of the roadway are grassed, with the hard surfaced driveway crossings.

The boundaries of the plots abutting the avenue consist largely of hedging, which is either of the clipped regular form, or loose lines of shrubs or trees. The hedges on the west side of the avenue are more continuous, as there are slightly fewer properties with consequently fewer drive entrances.

The avenue trees themselves are difficult to date as they have been heavily pollarded, but they could be about 100 years old and therefore could be original to the laying out of the estate. The tree shapes are of a stout trunk with pollarding at about 8m and with a crown of largely upward growing branches. At the time of the survey in November, the trees were almost leafless, and hence the street was fairly light, but when the trees are in full leaf the street would be almost tunnel-like.

Since the trees are such a strong feature of the avenue their proper management is essential.



Figure 15 Poplar Avenue

Poplar Avenue also leads off the main access road, Moor Lane, and is an almost complete loop. The movement around the street thus provides an interesting visual experience as there is a constant sense of exploration and revelation. The eye is led on to explore what is round the next bend.

The actual dimensions of the street are similar to Chestnut Avenue with a two car width carriageway, either side of which is a broad grass verge crossed by driveways. There is tree planting on the verge mostly of the smaller scale ornamental type – prunus, crab apples, maple etc., all deciduous. The street is enclosed by medium size hedges or fences, giving some views of the adjacent houses.

Park Avenue is a spur off Poplar Avenue leading to the west. Only the first stretch is within the conservation area and this is lined with hedges, and overhung by trees from the adjoining gardens, making it particularly attractive. The majority of Park Avenue is a later development of inter-war semi-detached houses which loops back to Moor Lane.

Elm Avenue links Poplar Avenue with the northern end of Chestnut Avenue. The general structure of the road is similar to both (in width and margins), however it has fewer trees within the boundary of the road. The street enclosure on the south side is a tall hedge overhung by mature trees and shrubs, producing a dark and almost continuous screen, and with almost no views of the properties inside. By contrast the enclosure on the north west side is less solid and allows views of the houses and the Sports Club. The views out alongside the Sports Club, as stated before give an interesting feeling of the setting of the Conservation Area which is otherwise quite closed and introverted.



Figure 16 and 17 - Elm Avenue and Sycamore Avenue

Sycamore Avenue leads off Elm Avenue and is a cul de sac, so it is the quietest of streets.

This lack of vehicle movements contributes to the feeling of a rural lane, which is enhanced by the narrowness of the carriageway the lack of kerbs and its curving nature. There are broad grass verges, in this case without tree planting. The majority of properties either side have tall hedges and retain mature or semi-mature trees, some of which overhang the street. Parking on the verges is discouraged by the use of large stones at intervals laid along the edge of the grass.

5.2 FOCAL BUILDINGS AND FEATURES

The windmill provides the area with a visual focal point and landmark, even though it is on the margin of the conservation area itself and is not particularly visible because of the density of tree cover. However it is an eyecatcher when travelling along Moor Lane, glimpsed through openings in and above the trees. Slight thinning of the tree cover to the east and west would open up views of this marker building.

The other particularly eye-catching non-domestic building is the pavilion of the bowling club in Elm Avenue. This is a modest timber boarded building dating in part from the early 1900s but it is painted externally in a strong Viridian green. It thus forms a good contribution to the variety and individuality of the area. There is a strong contrast in visual characteristic and degree of contribution to the environment between the bowling club pavilion and the newer squash court building opposite, which is much less attractive.

6.0 ARCHITECTURE MATERIALS AND DETAILS

6.1 PROMINENT STYLES

Plan 03 shows the sequence of development of the site. The dates given are based on information obtained from Ordnance Survey maps with later dating taken from site observation.

There was a peak of building activity in the very late 19th century and early 20th century. This corresponds with end of the late Victorian and Edwardian periods. Architecturally, housing was an eclectic mix, but with gothic and classical elements. The period saw the emergence of Arts and Crafts style housing and also the period of Garden Suburb development. All these influences are found at Moor Park.

In so much as there is a predominant style of housing on the site it belongs to the Arts and Crafts tradition, which also shows in later periods as a residual influence. The particular Arts and Crafts / Garden Suburb style elements which are evident at Moor Park are:

- Attractive arrangements of linked houses – in the case of Moor Park semi-detached houses
- Approximately 45 deg pitched roofs
- broad overhanging eaves
- jettied upper storeys
- use of timber frame and hand made brick
- plaster panels and features
- casement windows
- generous planting in the grounds.

Many of these elements also reflect the vernacular tradition which was indeed one of the influences of the Arts and Crafts movement. There are strands of the North West vernacular in the timber framing which generally has a robust character, as opposed to the rather flimsy superimposed boarding found in some locations, and in later examples.

The large majority of the buildings are of 2 storeys. The exceptions to this are a number of taller houses on Moor Lane, the windmill at 3-4 storeys, the single storey Northern Club buildings and a small number of bungalows.

6.2 MATERIALS AND DETAILING

6.2.1 Roofs:



Figures 18 and 19 - Illustrations of typical original roofs

The predominant roof covering material is red clay tiles which have some natural variation in colour caused during the firing process with slightly brown / blue tints often seen. At the north edge of the site there is a small group of houses with Westmorland slate roofs. This is consistent with the covenant requirement that roofs be grey slate or red tile. However there is now a significant number of houses roofed with concrete tiles, some plain, some single lap, bold roll and square profile. All of these replacement roof coverings are detrimental to the character of the buildings and area as a whole. A study of the roofs reveals most strongly the richness and variety of tone within the clay tile and natural slate finishes as opposed to the dead uniformity of the concrete plain or interlocking tiles, and therefore the benefit of the original covenant specification.



Figure 20 Villa on Chestnut Avenue

Figure 20 shows a small, detached 'lodge type' villa on Chestnut Avenue which has been re-roofed with red concrete interlocking tiles. The use of a different scale of roof tile makes the roof look smaller. With the replacement tiles there are only about 10 courses from eaves to ridge on the main slope, whereas in plain clay tiles there would be about 30. Eaves and valley details are all coarser. Valleys are constructed in lead rather than using purpose made valley tiles which tends to emphasise the constituent areas of the roof rather than unifying them. The uniformity of the colour is in contrast to the charm and character of the original roof and there is no growth of moss or lichen which would add to the visual richness of the roof cover.

The roof of the cottage adjacent to the windmill has been replaced with a brown highly profiled interlocking tile. The coarseness of the finish with its strong down-slope and cross-slope lines draw undue attention to the roof, especially as the building beneath is finished with a smooth white render. The shallowness of the pitch of this roof suggest that it may have been slated previously, in which case it would have had a much smoother appearance.



Figure 21 Cottage on Poplar Avenue

Figure 21 shows a house with a strong cottage-like character in Poplar Avenue, which has a roof of tiles similar to those on the mill cottage. The mechanical character of the tiles, along with their dead colour seriously detracts from the charm of this well designed house.

In many cases little more than the roofs of the houses is visible from the public domain and therefore the roofs have an undue influence on the character of the Conservation Area. For this reason it is vital that the original, usually natural, roofing materials are retained, and where roof coverings have been changed, original materials are reinstated.

6.2.2 Dormer windows:

Dormer windows are rare at Moor Park as most houses are of a full two storeys, without rooms in the roof space. Exceptions are shown in photographs Figures 22 and 23, the Mansard type houses at the end of Chestnut Avenue, where the first windows project as shallow flat-roofed dormers through the steeper pitch of the roof. These are entirely in keeping with, and indeed an integral part of the Mansard style.



Figures 22 and 23 - Dormer windows within Mansard roofs on Chestnut Avenue

The largely single storey Northern Club house has dormers illuminating rooms partly in the roof and, though perhaps slightly oversized, nevertheless complement the overall design.



Figure 24 Modern dormer on Chestnut Avenue

The recent house shown in Figure 24 shows modern and clumsily styled dormers. Presumably in an effort to reduce its bulk the house has been designed (at least in part) as single storey with rooms in the roof. The result, particularly the right hand dormer in the photograph is particularly unfortunate. The dormer roof structure is not triangulated and therefore has an unresolved appearance. The lancet type windows have an almost ecclesiastical character.

6.2.3 Gables:

In the majority of cases the main body of the house roof, and hence its main ridge, runs parallel to the street. This is in contrast with tighter urban developments where plots are narrower and roof ridges may run at right angles to the street. However in many cases at Moor Park, in an attempt to enrich the elevation, and also picking up on the late medieval ‘hall and cross-wing’ form, there are subsidiary roofs at right angles to the street giving rise to street-facing gable ends. The houses in Figure 25 show a good development of this, where, taken together the two houses have the residual form of one Elizabethan E-shaped house with the pretence of a central hall and two cross-wings.



Figure 25 Gable treatments

This photograph also shows two of the principal gable end treatments. There are a number of houses which have plain rendered gables, as on the right of the picture, but there are more examples with exposed timber framing with white render between, which forms a strong elevational feature. The use of gable end boarding set out on the diagonal, or with herringbone and other more elaborate patterns is strongly traditional of the north west of the country. Nearby original medieval houses which show this feature are Rufford Old Hall, near Ormskirk and Speke Hall, Liverpool.

A few gable ends are tile hung or brick, but the opportunity to provide elaboration to an otherwise plain elevation seems to be something rarely missed at Moor Park.

6.2.4 Elevational treatments:

The basic palette seems to be brick, white painted render which can be smooth or pebble-dashed, and render with timber framing expressed. Bricks are predominantly in the red / purple / brown range with a few instances of buff brick normally more associated with southern England. One or two examples of unpainted spar or pebble-dash render remain. The one building which stands out as being different is the Northern Club with its Viridian green painted horizontal boarding.



Figure 26, 27, 28 and 29 - elevational treatments

The red / purple / brown toned bricks seem entirely harmonious with the building type and the locality. The nearby village of Little Crosby has a number of buildings made from local brick which exhibits this colour range. The small number of paler red brick buildings which have been constructed are attractive and although perhaps alien to the wider locality, they are generally attractive buildings and add positively to the diversity of the palette of materials within Moor Park which is important to its character.

Renders with some texture are preferable to the completely smooth. Lime based renders with a wood float finish generally have a softer appearance but modern cement based renders can take almost a polish and produce an unsatisfactory appearance. There are some of these in Moor Park as well as pebble-dashed cement mortar. The unpainted pebble dashed render as in Figure 26 is a rare survivor and should be retained.

The majority of external white paints now used are chemical in origin and are rather dazzling and hard on the eye, particularly on a bright day. Most of the Moor Park painted renders are of this type, some also being rather shiny. However in some areas where render or timber framing is predominant a softer creamy white is used which produces a less strident result. Earlier limewashes were less dazzling. Figure 27 shows a bright white and a softer cream.

As referred to in the Gables section, the use of timber framing for parts of walls is frequently employed – see Figure 25. In contrast to the thin and unconvincing surface applied timber seen on modern housing, the ‘timber framing’ seen in Moor Park is considered and shows an understanding of the historical buildings which they were imitating. As with the rendered elements, most timbers are now painted with modern black paints, giving a harsher appearance than the traditional finishes. Although medieval examples were almost never black painted and were left as silvery natural oak or coloured with earth pigments, the buildings of Moor Park date from a period when the fashion for ‘black and white’ was generally prevalent.

6.2.5 Windows:

Windows are largely based on subdivisions or multiples of tall rectangles. Within this form, multiple casements predominate, but there are a number of sash windows evident, and occasionally a mixture of the two on the same building.

On all but the most recent of buildings timber is the construction medium for windows and this should be continued. It has the ability to be produced precisely to the requirements of the building, and is able to take fine detail, which is so often the icing on the cake. There have been some replacements in white uPVC but this never has the subtlety of its timber or timber and steel predecessor.



Figures 30, 31, 32 and 33 - (clockwise from top left) Window treatments

Casements are single, but more often in 2s or 4s, each having 6 or 8 small panes separated by timber glazing bars. Overwhelmingly they are white painted, sometimes with black subframes. There are one or two instances of replacement windows with dark frames either in timber or upvc. These are absolutely not traditional and detract both from the appearance and character of the individual houses and the area as a whole. Windows with a strong horizontal emphasis, which have very little historical precedent, although set within buildings of traditional form are further prejudicial to the individual building's and general character of the area.

6.2.6 Doors:

There is such a wide variety of doors at Moor Park that general comment is not really possible. Once again, in general guidance it is worth noting that simple traditional forms using painted softwood or untreated oak, with a simple vertical boarded or four-panelled design are usually the most satisfactory.

6.2.7 Surfaces:

All roads and most pavements within the conservation areas are simply tarmaced. Fortunately the visual nature of these surfaces is low key and the roads are not edged with hard kerbs so that the streets remain relatively informal and rural in character.

6.2.8 Streetscape features:

Street lighting columns are a standard galvanised tubular steel with a canted head. Some of the standards are painted green but some are a plain galvanised finish. Painting a uniform dark green colour is advisable. The lighting colour is not clear. A colour rendering which suits the green-ness of the area is the most desirable. Yellow, low-pressure sodium lights give a poor colour rendering. A white light is much preferable. Levels of lighting should be assessed carefully as high lux levels are not necessary for streets with such low pedestrian use.

The road system currently employs a minimum of *painted road markings*, which are used merely to demarcate road priorities at junctions. Any additional lines should be avoided.

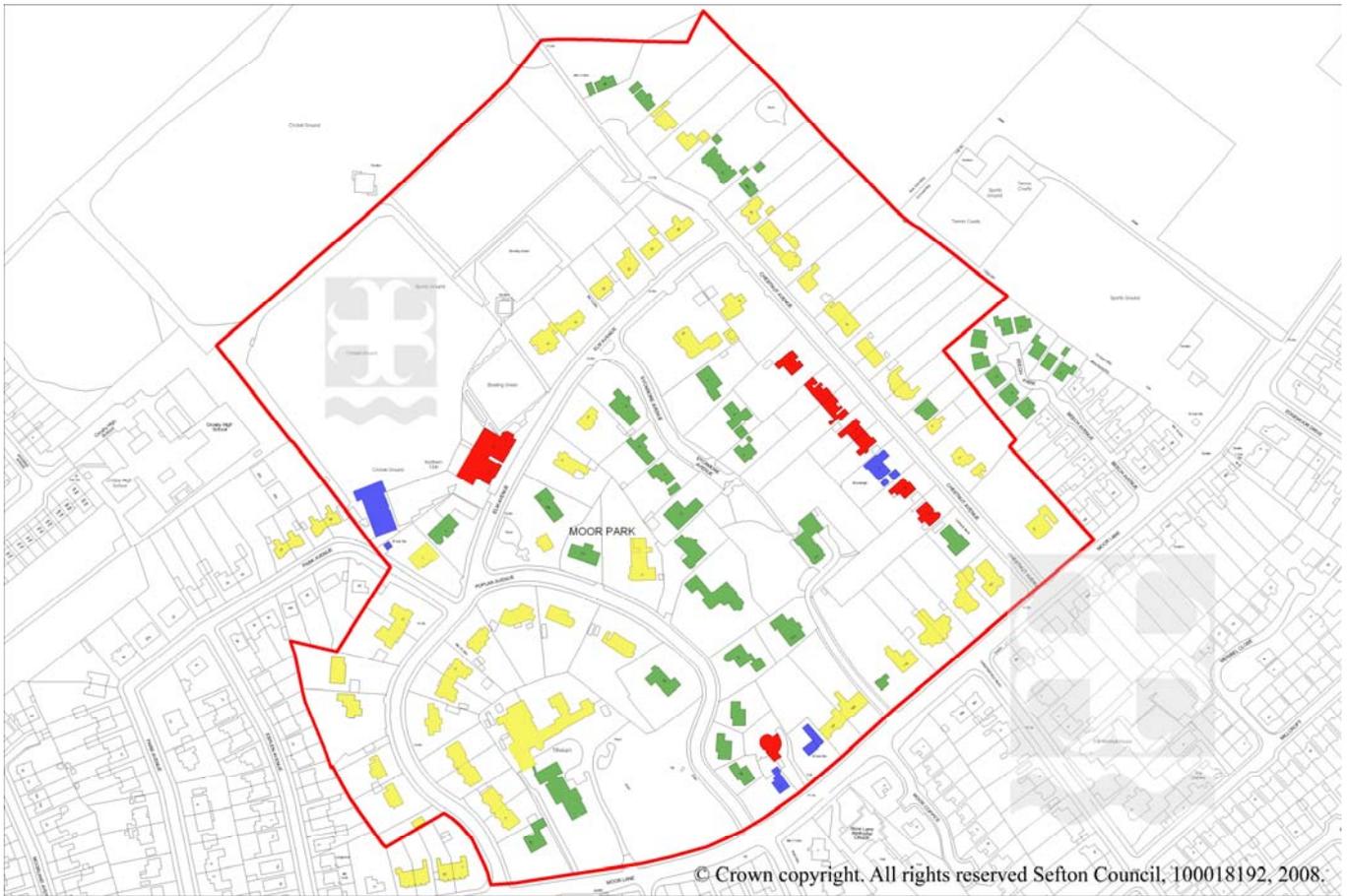
Currently there are no *kerbs*. This contributes to the informality of the streetscape and any proposal to introduce kerbs should be resisted.

The majority of *fences* are of a modern lapped vertically boarded configuration. Whilst these have an entirely modern character and contravene the original 'rules' for the area, these fences generally have a neutral impact provided that they are of a limited height and not situated on front boundaries. Picket or post and rail fences, particularly when associated with hedging are most appropriate. Decorative iron fences should be resisted. Solid front boundary treatments should be of a height that retains a view of the plot from the street.

Hedges are generous and full, and generally not too manicured. This tradition should be retained. Hedges comprising of indigenous species such as Hawthorne and those popular at the time that the estate was laid out (e.g. holly) are more appropriate than *leylandii*, which may quickly become too large and ungainly.

Trees are a valuable part of the streetscape and should be maintained and managed appropriately.

The Arts and Crafts tradition prevails in the area and so simple un-elaborate *gates* are most appropriate. Field type gates, vertical boarded gates or simple metal gates with vertical bars are all appropriate. Some decorative elements of hand made gates are appropriate but modern fancy iron gates are not appropriate to the area.



Key

-  Buildings critical to the character of the area
-  Buildings that contribute to the character of the area
-  Buildings of neutral interest
-  Buildings that are detrimental to the character of the area

MOOR PARK CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

PLAN 04 – SHOWING CONTRIBUTION OF BUILDINGS

7.0 CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

7.1 CHARACTER ZONES

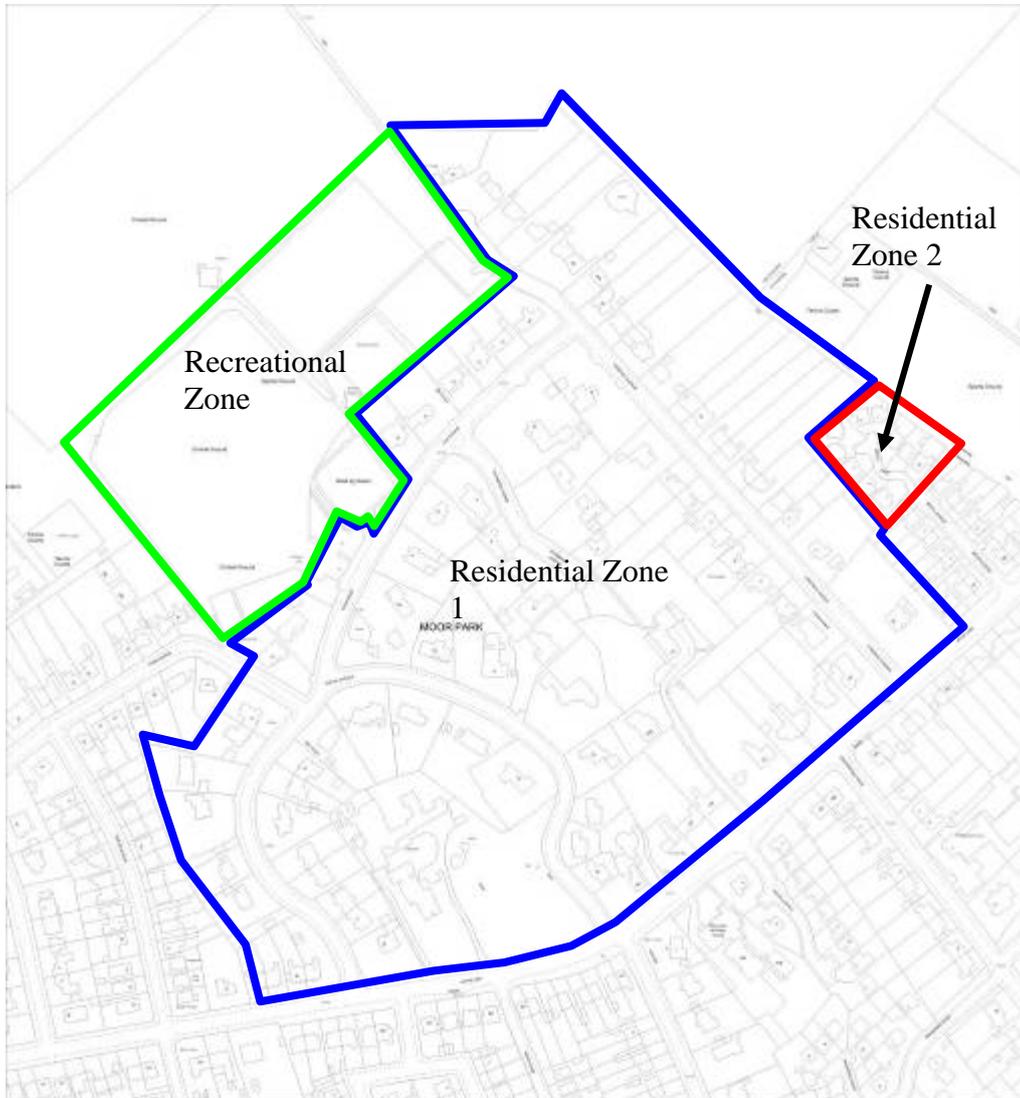


Figure 34 Character zones within Moor Park Conservation Area

The Conservation Area contains three character zone subdivisions, but more than 75% of the area falls within one such zone. This residential area (Residential Zone 1) contains all the elements which distinguish Moor Park and mark out its special character.

Residential Zone 1: This residential area contains all the properties which front onto Chestnut Avenue, Elm Avenue, Sycamore Avenue and Poplar Avenue. It also contains all properties within the conservation area which front onto Moor Lane. Within the residential area there are subtle differences in character, mainly from street to street and these have been brought out in the street analysis. The formality of Chestnut Avenue may be contrasted with the almost rural nature of Sycamore Avenue. The straightness of the one street and the curving nature of the others are now fixed and so, unless there is wholesale redevelopment these characteristics will remain.

Recreational Zone: This area contains all the non-residential properties and open spaces which constitute the site of the Northern Club, the sports club off Elm Avenue. By contrast with the closed and heavily wooded nature of the residential area the recreational area is wide open, with good outward views and comparatively few trees. One of the key values of this area is that it provides a link with the open space to the north of the conurbation, and is the first belt of agricultural land on the littoral travelling north from Liverpool. It is designated Green Belt and should remain protected from further sub-urban development.

Residential Zone 2: The third, and very minor zone is the small development of 10 recent properties on Beech Park, leading off Beech Avenue on the extreme east side of the conservation area. The small area known as Beech Avenue is a recent encroachment into the conservation area, extending from a cul-de-sac which was not part of the original development, and not part of the original conservation area. The character of the houses and the density of the development in this small area are such that it could be a candidate for removal of conservation area status.

7.2 THE CONTRIBUTION OF INDIVIDUAL BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES

There is a considerable degree of consistency of character throughout the conservation area, hence there are only two buildings which might be designated 'key' structures, and these for very different reasons – the Northern Club building on Elm Road, and the windmill tower on Moor Lane.

Windmill

When originally constructed the windmill would have dominated the area. When complete with its sails it would have been by far the largest structure around, and because of the need to catch the wind, the area immediately around would have been largely clear of trees. The open-ness of the area shows clearly on the 1850 OS map, where the mill is largely surrounded by open fields. However by about 50 years later surrounding development has begun in earnest and the mill is beginning to be enclosed.

Despite its listing, recent changes to have taken away much of its character. The loss of the sails and tail wheel were significant, but the recent change of windows and external painting have neutralised the structure even further. Viewed from a distance the timber cap seems to be in need of repair and in a sense it is now only the conical form which betrays its origins. The carrying out of a considered restoration programme would bring this building back to some sort of life, adding character to the immediate locality and providing an iconic feature for the area.

The structure remains as a potential identifier for the area, although it is largely invisible from the east side.

The Northern Club

The Bowling Green, Cricket Ground and Pavilion are all shown on the OS Map of 1908 (Figure 6) and appear to have been part of the earliest phase of development of the Moor Park area. Since that period the grounds have extended a little to the west

and more to the north west. The original pavilion has been extended and squash courts have been constructed more recently.

This complex is the only non-private part of the Moor Park conservation area, apart from the streets themselves, and has significance for this reason. The physical characteristics of the Pavilion building also render it visually distinctive. The viridian green weatherboarding, with white painted fascias and windows make it quite different from any other construction. On the side facing the cricket grounds and bowling green the pavilion has a covered viewing area with large windows, whilst on the street side the façade has a pleasing array of large and small gables. The richness of the plain tiles add significantly to the quality.



Figure 35 - Northern Club viewed from Cricket Ground
(note the glimpse of the windmill to the left of the picture)

Most of the buildings from the earlier phases of the development of the area still make a positive contribution to its character, in that they are part of what is distinctive about Moor Park, and their loss would weaken its integrity.

The plan identifies a significant number of buildings which may be considered as neutral. There are two reasons for this classification – firstly there are a number which, although distinctive, they are largely hidden from view by the growth of trees and shrubs and so they do not contribute so much to the overall feel of the area. Others, which tend to be the more recent are of a slightly more anonymous style, and although well mannered they do not make a distinctive contribution. It should be noted that although a building may currently be not contributing to the character of the area (i.e. it is hidden and categorised as neutral) it may have positive historical interest or may be allowed to contribute positively in the future by simple landscaping works.

The remaining category of buildings shown on the plan are those which are detrimental. There are two electricity substations which through lower maintenance standards and their rather blockish design are not prepossessing. The squash club is not a good quality building and is not complementary. The most concerning building is the small house next to the windmill, which has suffered such changes in its roofing, windows etc. that it is detrimental.

8.0 NEGATIVE FACTORS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENHANCEMENT

8.1 OVERVIEW

The overall impression of the Conservation Area is that it is well managed and respected. Maintenance levels are high and standards of recent developments are quite high, if a little incongruous in one or two respects (which are discussed below.) The density of development is rather low in some parts of the conservation area and there are limited options for further building, but generally intensification of development would compromise the character.

The generally good design standard of the properties is indicative of the standard required for any new development. Throughout the conservation area buildings are typical of the better quality houses of their period and this principle should be continued.

8.2 POOR QUALITY AND ILL-CONSIDERED LATER 20TH CENTURY ALTERATIONS TO BUILDINGS

The negative factors which affect the character of the conservation area are in many ways not unusual, and so far are not greatly detrimental to the area. However if allowed to continue unchecked they will significantly compromise the special character through a process of slow attrition.

Many of the problems arise from the mis-use of standardised, mostly factory produced building products, often marketed these days as 'solutions'. Some are promoted as remedies for the supposed disadvantages or failures of traditional materials, others have more of the aspect of fashion. Yet others are sold as relatively 'instant' solutions which avoid the need for traditional building trades. Almost without exception they are detrimental to the character of buildings constructed in traditional ways and maintained in the traditional manner.

Many now 'standardised' products – plastic windows, ornamental gates, artificial drive finishes, mock leaded lights (especially with replacement windows), fancy lantern light fittings, American postal boxes all have the capacity to mar rather than offer visual enhancement. They are beginning to creep in at Moor Park and should be resisted where possible.



Figure 36 - The electricity sub-station

An isolated and very limited negative factor is the poor condition of the electricity sub station. In an area where almost every property is maintained to a high standard the poor condition of this small building and its adjacent fences is particularly noticeable.

This negative aspect of the conservation area could be improved through improved maintenance and the use of appropriate fencing and possibly landscaping.

8.3 UNSYMPATHETIC NEW-BUILD AND EXTENSIONS

There are relatively few buildings within the conservation area which are entirely unsympathetic, but some are of lesser quality and do not enhance the general character of the area and may detract from the setting of more visually significant structures



Figure 37 The squash club building

The Squash club building is of a distinctly poor character. It neither has any of the quality of detailing and materials that characterises the area nor is of a high quality modern building with architectural interest in its own right. The use of flat roofs particularly jars visually with the neighbouring pitched roofs and the vast area of tarmac forming a car park in front of the building worsens its negative visual impact without planting to soften its size or form.



Figure 38 and 39 - Houses in Chestnut and Poplar Avenues

There are two examples of modern houses which represent wider issues with the modern housing in the conservation area. The buildings in different ways exhibit a confusion of identity, and show a lack of cohesion. A modern house on Chestnut Avenue (Figure 38) has very strong detailing, with white walls, red roof, bold dark windows and two rather unusual dormer windows. By its materials and colours the house seems to belong in many ways to a hotter clime, for example Spain, but the quirky dormers seem to come from northern sources.

One of the recent houses in Poplar Avenue (Figure 39) perhaps veers in the opposite direction in trying too hard to pick up local references, and is rather overloaded with detail. It has high quality tile roofs with a good richness of colour, decorative tile

hanging on the gables, red brick, windows of the appropriate form (but too many of them and in brown, rather than traditional colours) and most noticeably a central turret which seems to emulate the windmill.

As many of the houses are on generous plots there can be a temptation to over extend dwellings. There are not too many examples of this but it should be resisted. In most instances it should be noted that side extensions are more likely to be visually damaging to the conservation area than extensions onto rear elevations.

8.4 ALTERATIONS TO HISTORIC DETAILING AND MATERIALS

Unfortunately many of the historic properties have suffered from alterations to their detailing and materials that are important to their contribution to the character of the conservation areas:

Roofs: In a number of instances, original clay tile or slate roofs have been replaced by concrete tiles. This practice is detrimental to the visual character of the areas as a whole but also may cause structural problems to the fabric of the individual building as the mass of such tiles is generally greater than that of the covering being replaced. Roofs play a critical role in the character of the conservation areas, particularly in the longer 'streetscape' views, visually linking similar building types. In the case of semi-detached houses, the alteration of one roof seriously detracts from overall appearance of the block. In more recent years there has been a more minor, but still noteworthy threat from the use of imported slate. Slate from across the world, including countries like China, is being used on existing roofs as it is cheaper than the traditional Welsh slate. Imported slate often has a different visual character to Welsh slate, generally being a dissimilar colour, thickness and texture. The configuration of the existing roof coverings is an important part of the buildings' characters, with a subtle variation on slate coursing (e.g. diminishing courses), size and thickness. Few more modern materials work well on traditional simple house forms and their use should be resisted.



Figure 40 - Oversize roof tiles

There are a number of cases where the appearance of properties has been marred by the use of inappropriate, replacement roof tiles usually of concrete. Large, single lap tiles produce a 'coarseness' of detailing which can look strange on small roof areas. Equally the heavily profiled, concrete tiles used in a number of locations have no vernacular precedent in this area and produce a mechanical appearance and a high degree of uniformity that is inappropriate, particularly to the buildings of an 'Arts and Crafts' character.

Satellite dishes: The installation of satellite dishes is not unachievable within conservation areas, as long as they are positioned sympathetically and are kept as small as possible. Their visibility is often increased because they are seen against the sky. The least obtrusive dishes tend to be those positioned on the rear or sides of houses (clearly out of public view) and those constructed from a dark grey semitransparent material.

Windows and doors:

Many of the houses within the conservation area have had their windows replaced either with uPVC or inappropriate timber casement windows. This is particularly damaging to the character of not only the individual properties but also to the streetscene. Thus, the introduction of thicker framing members (almost always necessary with uPVC), removal of glazing bars, reconfiguration of the window, etc. all have a detrimental effect on the appearance of the property overall visual quality of the area. There are many examples throughout the area of poor quality replacement windows which not only differ from those of the neighbouring properties but also differ from others within the same façade.

There is no reason why the vast majority of original windows, if properly maintained should not continue to perform adequately. Maintenance entails regular painting with a good quality paint, and repair, rather than replacement of decayed elements. Draughts and insulation problems can be abated with discreet weather-stripping and high quality secondary glazing. It is equally becoming apparent that uPVC windows have a limited life and, with the lack of capability for repair or refinishing will not outlive some of the poorer quality softwood windows. Apart from the false economy, the perhaps more significant issue is that of their poor visual quality. Although often marketed as 'identical' to period windows this is never the case.

There is also a tendency for replacement windows to be in brown- whether brown plastic, or a heavy brown stain. Again this is represented as being 'traditional' which is certainly not the case.



Figures 41 and 42 Inappropriate windows



Figure 43 Inappropriate windows in the windmill

The windows of the windmill have been replaced with UPVC single pane lights. This is particularly inappropriate alteration to a building of this degree of visual dominance and historical interest.

Also important to the character of the area are the leaded lights. These are often examples of the craftsmanship of the turn of the 20th century which is critical to the character of the area. However, these leaded panes are gradually being replaced with plain glass and double glazed units which changes the character of the building away from the Arts and Crafts style. The use of 'leading' simply adhered on to a large piece of glass is a poor substitute and is always immediately apparent, therefore is inappropriate within the conservation area.

Though less common than replacement windows, replacement front doors are also detrimental to the character of the area. Where uPVC is used, replacement doors are particularly obtrusive and lack the quality of design and detail found in timber originals.

The addition of rooflights into the roofs of existing buildings can also adversely affect their character. When they are on street-facing slopes and when large numbers are used, particularly in a haphazard arrangement, they can detract from the streetscape. Rooflights are particularly obtrusive when they are not of the 'conservation' type and when they are not positioned flush with the roof covering.

Changes to colours / finishes:

Changing the external finish to the elevations of a building can have a dramatic and generally detrimental effect on its appearance but also on the character of the whole streetscene. In the case of historic buildings constructed from solid masonry, the effect of rendering in hard cement can be highly damaging to any adjacent unrendered features and can cause internal damp problems. Modern render, particularly to a previously unrendered building, can change its character and make it appear more modern than it is.

An important issue concerns the external finishes and treatment of the mirrored facades to semi-detached houses. In some alterations to houses, such as painting or rendering, if the buildings were detached the effect on the character of the building or area may be fairly inconsequential, but to a semi-detached house it has a much greater effect, resulting in the loss of the symmetry and balance of the group.

Repairs using modern materials: Repairs to historic building fabric using modern materials can have a detrimental effect not only on the appearance of a building but they can also speed up the process of deterioration. Most notable is the use of cementitious mortars and renders. When used on soft brick or stone, hard mortars or renders can adversely affect the natural paths of water movement. As pointing, they can force moisture out through the face of the masonry, eventually causing the failure of the surface of the material.

8.5 DEVELOPMENT PRESSURES AND LOSS

Development pressure on the conservation area is unlikely to be great as there are no gap sites within the conservation area, but there are a number of vulnerabilities, of which it is helpful to be aware at a general level, and so to be able to respond.

As mentioned Moor Park is right at the northern edge of the Liverpool/Bootle/Crosby conurbation with green land to the north. General planning policy is towards intensification of already developed areas, rather than further extension, and it is important that designated Green Belt should continue to be safeguarded both for the benefit of Moor Park, and its ambience, as well as to prevent urban sprawl.

There is some evidence that there has been subdivision of plots leading to intensification of the land use. Further subdivision should be resisted, as it is highly likely to have had an adverse effect on the historic grain of the area. Further intensification of use will lead to erosion of the 'green' and semi rural character of the area.

There is evidence also of the replacement of existing dwellings with new on the same site. This should only be accepted where there is significant demonstrable benefit to the character of the area, for instance in the replacement of a late 19th century building constructed of incongruous materials with a building of a more sympathetic appearance. The rationale should not be based on claimed heavy maintenance and repair costs of an existing building.

The Beech Park development would normally be considered to be 'backland' development, in that it has taken over the rear part of four plots facing Chestnut Avenue. If this was to be repeated elsewhere, the construction of independent road access would be required, which would certainly make the possibility of building less attractive to developers and therefore less likely. These sort of developments have a detrimental effect on the legibility and concept of the original layout and are not acceptable and must be resisted in future.

To preserve and enhance the existing character of the conservation area it is important that future development is adequately controlled and managed, by tightening up on guidance but also by promoting an understanding of the special characteristics of the area, which not only include materials and details, but also layout, landscape and streetscenes

8.6 OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENHANCEMENT

To counteract the negative factors which are detracting from the character of Moor Park Conservation Area, a number of measures might be considered and introduced:-

Guidelines for new dwellings and extensions

It would be desirable to provide guidance for future development within the Conservation Area. There are few sites available now for new dwellings, but where new construction takes place it should relate to the character of the area. There may also be pressure to extend existing properties. In both cases simple guidance on acceptable form, materials and finishes derived from this assessment of the character of the area would assist planners and applicants.

Paint lighting columns

The columns are currently painted green or remain with a galvanised finish. A paint scrape to reveal original colour schemes for lighting columns is desirable followed by painting, or repainting in a uniform colour is recommended. A dark gloss green or blue would give the appropriate character and dignity to the area.

Article 4 Directions

The appraisal has shown that there has been some replacement of elements of the buildings and changes to the setting which do not enhance the building and in some cases are detrimental to the overall environment. The problematic elements are:

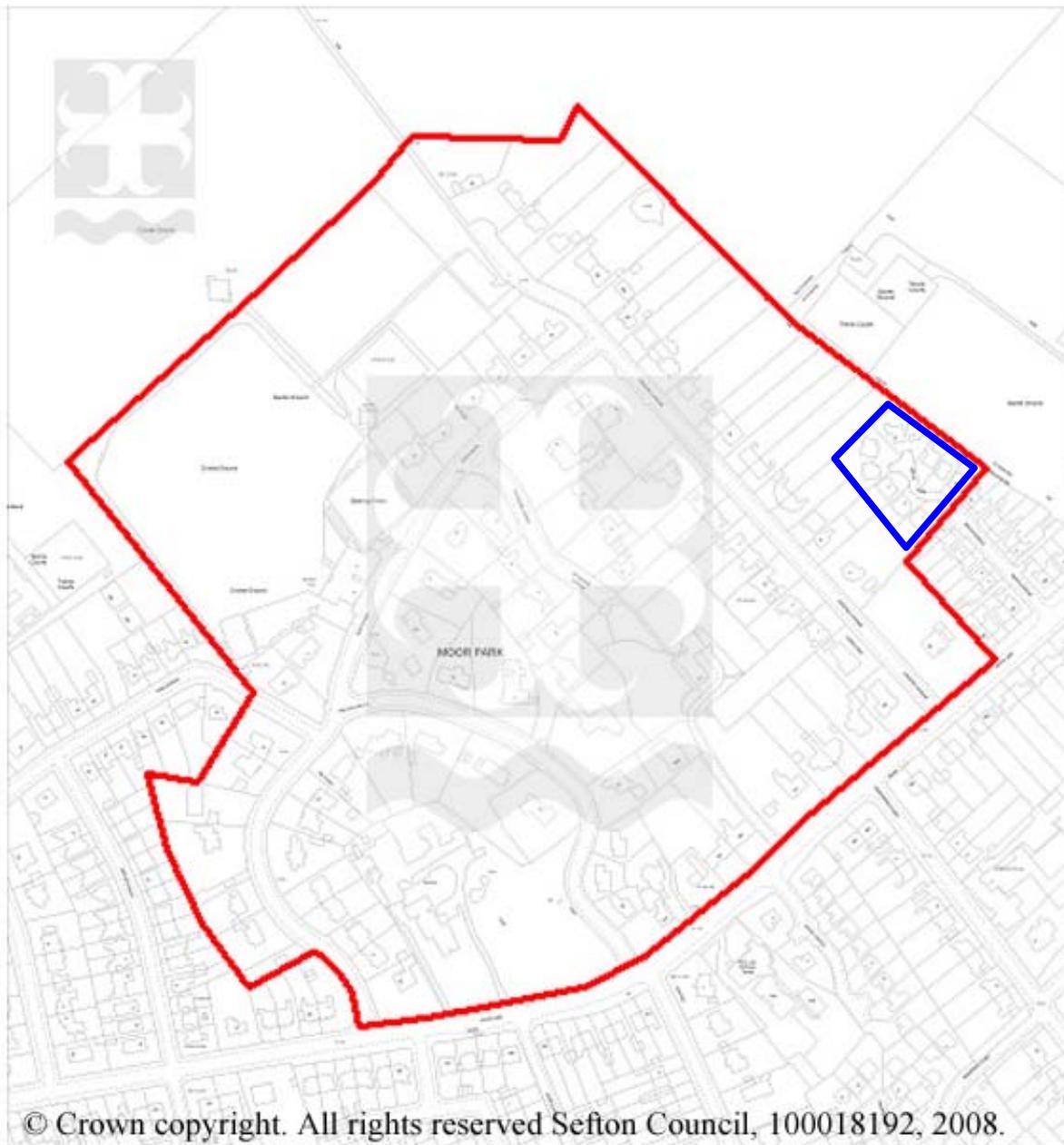
- Replacement of roof finishes
- Replacement of windows and doors
- Drives and gates

It is recommended that normal development rights for these elements are withdrawn through Article 4 Direction Orders, with the effect that Planning Permission will be required for changes affecting them.

Guidance Leaflet

As well as the development pressures that are clearly evident, the impact on the area of small alterations which individual householders have made to their houses and which, collectively, have compromised the areas character, is also of importance. It is likely that these alterations are due to a lack of awareness and appreciation of the value of the area and of those elements which contribute to its character.

An advisory leaflet already exists for the area, which includes the background to the area and guidance notes. It is advised that residents are made fully aware of the leaflet and if possible the opportunity should be taken to update it to include any more specific recent threats.



Key:

-  Existing Conservation Area boundary
-  Proposed area to be removed from Conservation area boundary

9.0 RECOMMENDED AMENDMENTS TO CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARIES

9.1 DESIGNATED BOUNDARIES

(See Plan 05 at the beginning of the section - designated boundary is shown in red)
The boundaries as drawn for designation have generally been drawn tightly and reflect the extent of the area within which the special character of Moor Park predominates.

9.2 AMENDMENTS

The character of the Conservation Area is strongly defined and relates to (a) the early 20th century planned development and (b) the Northern Club and its grounds to the north. Bearing in mind this clear definition there is one recommendation on amendments to be boundary.

Omission:

Land to the rear of the first plot on the east side of Chestnut Avenue at the south end has been made available for a small development as an extension of Beech Avenue. Although some care has been given to the design of these properties, the character is very different from that of the main part of the Conservation Area. The density is much higher and there is a lesser proportion of 'green' which is dominant elsewhere. For these reasons it is recommended that this small group of properties be excluded from Conservation Area status.

APPENDIX A

Illustration Sources

All OS base maps, historical map and aerial photographs have been provided by Sefton M.B.C under license. All marking up of plans is by Donald Insall Associates Ltd.

All other photographs, illustrations and plans supplied by Donald Insall Associates

Acknowledgements

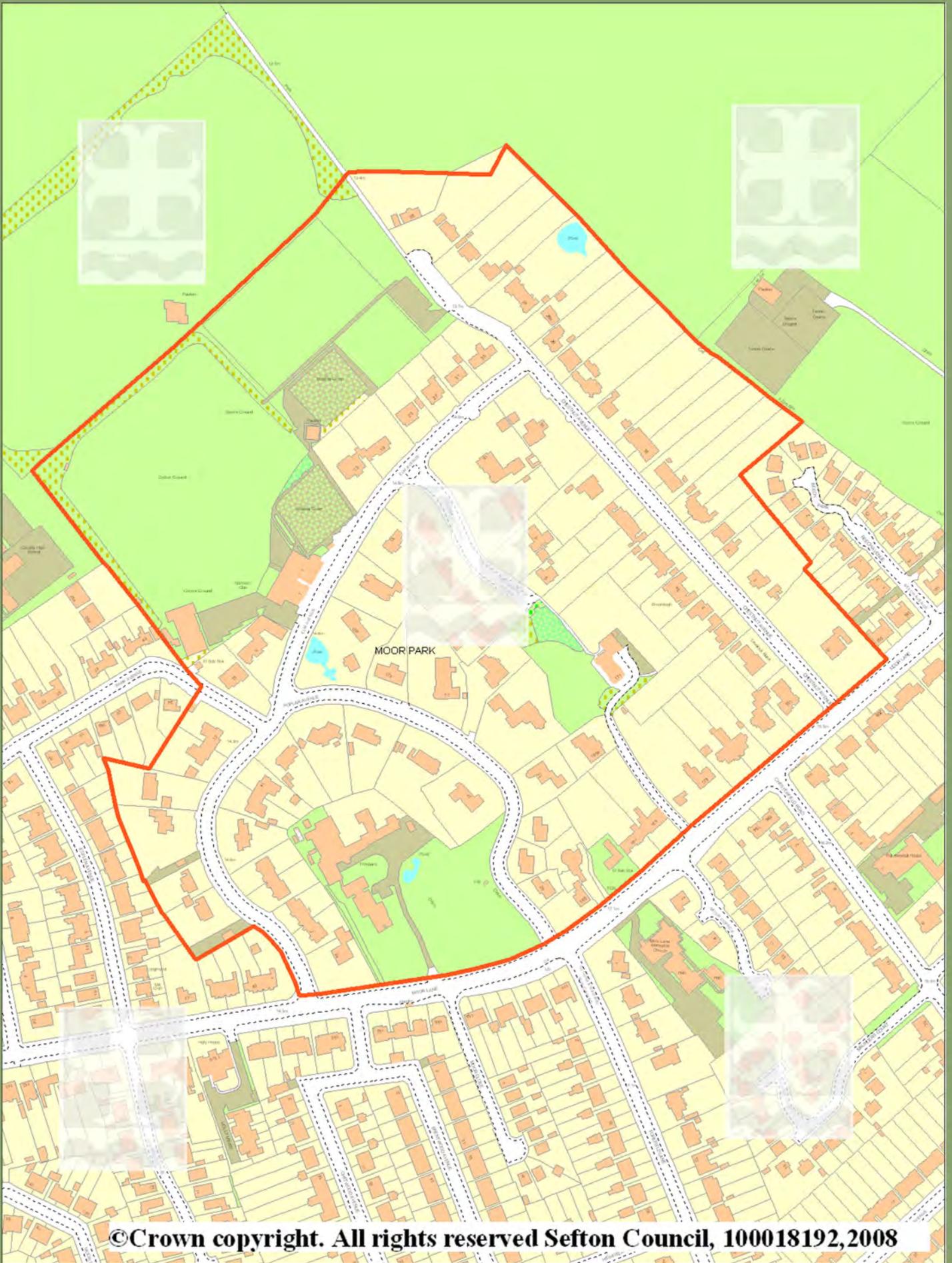
Dorothy Bradwell at Sefton Council

Sarah-Jane Farr of the Merseyside Sites and Monuments Record

Appendix B

Amendments following public consultation

Location	Amendment
1.3 second sentence	insert "Conservation" before "Area"
1.3 third sentence	insert "Conservation" before "Area"
1.5 first sentence	include the Millers Cottage as a structure pre-dating 1850
Plan 02	Insert OS license info on top of map
2.3 2 nd para, 1 st sentence	Delete "and" from end of sentence
3.1 13 th para. last sentence	Insert "millers" before "cottage"
2 nd and 3 rd para. after figure 06	Amend "Moor Park Lane" to "Moor Lane"
2 nd para after figure 08	Amend "Moor Park Road" to "Moor Lane"
3.3 1 st para. first sentence	Insert "and associated cottage" after windmill
Plan 03	Insert OS license info



Moor Park Conservation Area Boundary