

DESIGN AND HERITAGE STATEMENT FOR
Entrance gates at Moor Court Hall, Farley Road,
Oakamoor, Stoke-on-Trent, ST10 3BD



Moor Court Hall

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Moor Court Hall is a Grade II listed property built by Alfred Sohier Bolton (of Thomas Bolton & Sons copper manufacturers) in 1861 on land originally owned by the Earl of Shrewsbury. The architect William Sugden of Leek designed the original house and Alfred Bolton's son Francis lived there until his death in 1951. Moor Court was designed in the Jacobean Revival style which was popular during the Victorian period.

The Boltons family were prominent Victorian and Edwardian Industrialists who were copper manufacturers benefitting from the rapid growth in telegraph, telephone and electrical industries. They were significant employers within the area bringing social and economic stability to Oakamoor.

The property was significantly enlarged in 1878 with the architect of this phase being the son of William Sugden, Larnier Sugden. An additional wing was added to the West Elevation with gabled dormers, and a new veranda was wrapped around the west and south elevation which was subsequently removed. The early 20th century brought about further extensive additions to the property to the north including a conservatory overlooking the garden.

Following these 1913/14 additions the property appears to have remained relatively unchanged in terms of footprint. It was sold to the Prison Service in around 1955 and extensive additions were made to the site with accommodation built into the hill side. The majority of these buildings were demolished and by the 1990s when Peter Thornley (famous wrestler Kendo Nagasaki) bought the property any evidence of the site as a prison had been removed or covered over by landscaping.

HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

The building is Grade II listed.

List Entry Summary

This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.

Name: MOOR COURT

List entry Number: 1374730

Location
MOOR COURT, FARLEY ROAD

County: Staffordshire

District: Staffordshire Moorlands

District Type: District Authority

Parish: Oakamoor

National Park: Not applicable to this List entry.

Grade: II

Date first listed: 26-Jul-1983

OAKAMoor C.P. FARLEY LANE (North side) SK 0444-0544 11/147 Moor Court 26/7/83

GV II Country house. Dated 1861, with additions of 1913. Ashlar; fish-scale tile roofs with plain tile bands; ashlar stacks with cylindrical shafts. Neo-Jacobean style; principal alignment east-west. South front: 3 storeys and attic with slightly lower single-bay wing of 2 storeys and attic to the left; roughly 4 bays, the 2 central ones under a shaped gable, central break to left hand wing beneath a similar shaped gable, casements. West front: 2 storeys and attic; 6 bays, north and south bays have shaped gables, the former projects. East front: 2 storey porch inscribed 1861 on the parapet with a pointed niche containing a statue of St. George. Moor Court was built by the Bolton family, manufacturers of Oakamoor.

Listing NGR: SK0593044532

National Grid Reference: SK 05930 44532

LOCATION & SETTING



Aerial View Moor Court Hall

Moor Court Hall sits in extensive well landscaped grounds overlooking the Churnet Valley in Staffordshire. It is a peaceful setting within a rural landscape. A number of buildings within the site are privately owned as residential dwellings.

The main entrance to the site is from the Farley Road via the South Lodge. There are stone pillars with a pedestrian wrought iron gated access to the side. The original gates have been removed.



South Lodge – entrance off Farley Road

The stone pillars are replicated at the end of the driveway as you enter the immediate boundary of Moor Court Hall onto the entrance forecourt.



South Lodge approach to Moor Court Hall

The entrance from the East is another gated approach marked by the former Coach House which was constructed in 1913 to house Francis Bolton's cars. It is now under private ownership as a residential dwelling house.



East Entrance – view of Coach House, piers and gates

There is an Annex to the north-east of Moor Court which is thought to have been constructed originally in 1878 and later added to in the work carried out in 1913/14 to enable the building to be connected to the main house. There is a steep access driveway with gate to the East of this building which is the approach to a courtyard on the north side within which there are two buildings constructed during the property's time as a care home (circa 1997) and latterly used as a gym/swimming pool facility.



Access to the courtyard with the Annex on the left

To the north of the site there is an access lane to the woodland at the rear and the privately owned property known as Oakland along with an agricultural storage building and stables.



North-west access drive with Oakland on the left and Moor Court to the right

PROPOSAL

The proposal is to improve the appearance and functionality of the entrance points into the grounds of Moor Court Hall.

Entry Point 1 – North-East of Moor Court Hall entry to the north courtyard

The existing entry gates are a pair of mismatched utilitarian modern metal gates. The proposal is to remove the existing gates and posts and reposition the gates as indicated on the drawings clear of the steep accessway.

The proposed pair of new gates would be in wrought iron in keeping with the age of the property, the detailed design of which would be agreed between the client and manufacturer and require the approval of the Local Authority. Two stone piers are proposed to match the small pier at the lower level of the access drive with metal estate fencing and pedestrian gates to access the Annex and the gardens at the north of the property.



Entry Point 1

Entry Point 2 – North of the site closing off the entry point from the north-west access road

Moor Court is open at the point to the access road and woodlands and the privately owned Oaklands property.

It is proposed to introduce a gated access at this point along with a stone wall perimeter to provide a secure site boundary in keeping with the historic property.

The entry point would comprise two stone piers and double wrought iron gates with the detailed design being agreed as above. A stone wall to match the existing stone wall which runs north along the side of the orchard would be constructed to follow the edge of the access road as shown on the drawings.



Entry Point 2

Entry Point 3 – the main access from the South Lodge

The proposal is to introduce a new set of wrought iron gates and stone piers forward of the existing single gate and low level piers which sit adjacent to the octagonal summer house.

This would mark the end of a tree-lined avenue from South Lodge and form a grand entrance fitting for a property the size and scale of Moor Court Hall. The piers would be topped with spherical stone caps to match the existing piers.



Entry Point 3

Entry Point 4 – East entry point adjacent to the Coach House

The proposal is to improve the appearance of this entry point by increasing the height of the existing stone piers and replacing the modern gates with new double wrought iron gates.

The existing stone wall abutting the Coach House would be retained with the piers being increased in height to line through with the stone parapet of the Coach House. The new wrought iron gates as with the other new gates would be designed by the client and manufacturer and approved by the Local Authority prior to installation.



Entry Point 4

ASSESSMENT

The level of alteration and works proposed have to be assessed against the Significance of the Listed Building. The NPPF states: Para 131: In determining planning applications local planning authorities should take account of:

- the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness

The application is part of the wholesale renovation works to Moor Court Hall to bring it back into viable sustainable use as a family home. Historically South Lodge would have been the main gated entry point into the estate. South Lodge is now in private ownership along with the Coach House to the East and Oaklands to the North. The proposal is therefore to introduce a new gated access on the South Lodge approach driveway at the entry to the main forecourt.

The works seek to distinguish the points of entry within the site in order to improve the first impressions of arrival into the historic estate. The proposed new gates will be hand crafted in wrought iron in an appropriate style fitting with the Jacobean revival design of the property. The recognition of these entry points will serve to bring the site together and allow Moor Court Hall to sit proudly within the wider surroundings of the estate and its setting within Oakamoor as a whole.

The stone piers and walls will be retained and preserved and where applicable new stonework will match the existing utilising local crafts people and local stone.

INVOLVEMENT AND CONSULTATION

Pre-application advice has taken place with the Conservation Officer.

Advice given by the Conservation Officer has been taken on board to ensure the preservation of the historic fabric of the property and sensitive restoration.

DESIGN ISSUES

The existing stone piers/walls will be retained and repaired as necessary. Where applicable new stonework will be locally sourced and will replicate the existing stonework.

New gates will be in wrought iron hand crafted and designed in a style in keeping with Moor Court Hall.

The design of the entry points is intended to improve the first appearance of Moor Court Hall and ensure the security of the site within the disparate ownership of the estate and the wider rural setting.

DEVELOPMENT WITHIN A CONSERVATION AREA

The proposals should not have a detrimental effect on the listed Moor Court Hall or the wider Oakamoor village and setting. They should serve to improve the appearance of the property through the sympathetic refurbishment and renovation of the existing historic elements, the removal of incongruous modern additions and the sensitive introduction of new elements.

CONCLUSION

The continued occupation of Moor Court Hall as a residential property ensures its continued maintenance. The proposals do not harm the historic integrity of the Grade II listed property but rather serve to improve the appearance and conserve the historic fabric.