

PLANNING STATEMENT

Permission in Principle to use former
conservative club for residential purposes
at Waverley House, South Park Road,
Kirkby L32 2AG.

MPD Built
Environment
Consultants Ltd

INTRODUCTION

This Planning Statement (this 'Statement') has been prepared by MPD Built Environment Consultants Limited on behalf of Mr Charles Wanless (the 'Applicant') to support the application for Permission in Principle for the residential use of Waverley House, South Park Road, Kirkby L32 2AG (the 'Site') submitted to Knowsley Borough Council (the 'Local Planning Authority'). It aims to assist the Council in its decision-making.

This Statement describes the Site and its context (including relevant planning history), the nature of the Proposed Development, the relevant planning policies, the issues raised and how the application proposals respond to these.



SITE AND SURROUNDS

The site consists of a Grade II listed building which has previously been extended and altered since it was originally constructed. The property sits in a substantial plot which in the South Park Road Conservation Area.

Waverley House is one of the earliest buildings remaining in the conservation developed in the mid-late 19th century. It is a large and imposing Italianate Victorian villa set within its own grounds of brick with stone dressings and a slate roof. The villa evokes a sense of the wealth of the Liverpool businessmen who developed speculative villa suburbs along the Liverpool, Bolton and Bury railway line. The grand villa has a three-storey square tower of which is a landmark that adds visual interest to views within and outside of the conservation area.

The property was formerly used as a conservative club but has been vacant for several years since its use as a club ceased. In the intervening period the fabric of the listed building has deteriorated substantially and without urgent intervention it is likely to continue to fall into further disrepair to the point where it is no longer salvageable.

Since it was last in use the building has suffered from regular bouts of vandalism as well as acts of trespass which has result in significant damage both internally and externally. Windows have been smashed, slate from the roof stripped, cast iron rainwater goods removed etc, leaving the inside open to the elements as well as birds.

The building itself is a standalone structure situated in substantial grounds with mature trees being situated around the edge of the site.



THE PROPOSALS

The proposals seek Permission in Principle to use the listed building for residential use.



SITE HISTORY

04/00639/LBC - INSTALLATION OF 6 NO. TELECOMMUNICATIONS ANTENNAE HOUSED WITHIN FALSE CHIMNEY SHROUD, REBUILDING OF CHIMNEY STACKS, INSTALLATION OF 2 NO. AIR CONDITIONING UNITS TO EXTERIOR OF BUILDING AND INSTALLATION OF EQUIPMENT CABINET AT GROUND LEVEL – REFUSED 21/07/2004.

04/00638/FUL - INSTALLATION OF 6NO. TELECOMMUNICATIONS ANTENNAE HOUSED WITHIN FALSE CHIMNEY SHROUD, REBUILDING OF CHIMNEY STACKS, INSTALLATION OF 2NO. AIR CONDITIONING UNITS TO EXTERIOR OF BUILDING AND INSTALLATION OF EQUIPMENT CABINET AT GROUND LEVEL – REFUSED 21/07/2004.

95/00161/APP - RETENTION AND ALTERATION OF EXISTING FENCING INCLUDING – GRANTED 22/06/1995.

74/13245/HIST - RETENTION OF STEEL PALISADE FENCING AND DISPLAY OF ILLUMINATED FASCIA SIGN – REFUSED 24/06/1991.

74/13145/HIST - RETENTION OF STEEL PALISADE SECURITY FENCE – REFUSED 24/06/1991.

74/13146/HIST - DISPLAY OF ILLUMINATED FASCIA SIGN - REFUSED 24/06/1991.

PLANNING POLICY

Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires applications for planning permission to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The core strategy along with saved policies from the UDP will be used to determine planning applications and form the adopted development plan for the borough of Knowsley. Also, of relevance to the consideration of this planning application is the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published December 2024 and National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), which are material considerations in the determination of a planning application.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

NPPF **Paragraph 2** states that Applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The NPPF is clear that Planning Permission should be granted for development where it accords with planning policy. To this end in **Paragraph 7** of the NPPF the point is made that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. At a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Paragraph 8 confirms that there are three overarching objectives must be achieved in order to deliver sustainable development. These are identified as economic contributing to sustained growth, social supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities catering for the needs of current and future generations; and environmental protecting and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment.

Paragraphs 10 and 11 states that there is a 'presumption in favour of sustainable development', and that development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan should be approved without delay. A recent

appeal decision found that the Council was able to demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply as required by the NPPF.

Paragraph 39 of the Framework encourages Local planning authorities to approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. Using the full range of planning tools available and working proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.

Paragraph 40 encourages early engagement between parties prior to a formal submission to iron out any issues thus contributing to an effective and efficient planning process.

Paragraph 48 states that planning decisions should be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. They should also be made in a timely fashion and within statutory time periods.

The NPPF, identifies local circumstances as a relevant factor to consider when making decisions. **Paragraph 56** states Local Planning Authorities should consider whether otherwise unacceptable development could be made acceptable using conditions or planning obligations. Planning obligations should only be used where it is not possible to address unacceptable impacts through a planning condition. **Paragraph 57** further states that planning conditions should be kept to a minimum and only imposed where they are necessary, relevant to planning and to the development to be permitted, enforceable, precise, and reasonable in all other respects.

Paragraph 61 identifies the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes. To achieve this objective, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay.

Paragraph 62 states that 'strategic policies should be informed by a local housing need assessment, conducted using the standard method in national planning practice guidance.'

Paragraph 63 highlights the need to provide homes for all sections of society.

Paragraph 73 acknowledges the importance of small windfall sites such as this proposal in providing much needed housing for people quickly. The government also places great weight on the benefits of using buildings within existing settlements for homes.

This site is within an existing settlement and is situated in an accessible location, with good access to public transport and local amenities which reduces the need to travel.

NPPF Paragraph 85 states that planning decisions should help to create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand, and adapt. It states that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, considering both local business needs and the wider opportunities for development. Significant weight, therefore, should be attached to the contribution of the proposed development towards supporting the growth and productivity of local businesses.

Paragraph 87 also identifies the importance of specific locational requires for different sectors which is of particular relevance in relation to the tourism industry.

Paragraph 96 aims to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places promoting social interaction, creating safe accessible places and supporting local health and well-being.

Paragraph 110 “The planning system should actively manage patterns of growth in support of these objectives. Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes.”

Paragraph 116 makes clear that development should only be prevented where there would be unacceptable impacts on highway safety.

Paragraph 124 requires planning policies and decisions to promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses.

Paragraph 127 highlights the need for planning policies and decisions ‘to reflect changes in the demand for land.’

Paragraph 131 seeks the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places, which is fundamental to what the planning and

development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.

Paragraph 135 states that *“Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:*

a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development.

b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping.

c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change ...”

Paragraph 136 Trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments and can also help mitigate and adapt to climate change.

187. Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment.

193. When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:

(a) if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;

(b) development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;

(c) development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons ⁷⁰ and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and

(d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.

Paragraph 202 highlights that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.

209. Where there is evidence of deliberate neglect of, or damage to, a heritage asset, the deteriorated state of the heritage asset should not be taken into account in any decision.

210. In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

(a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;

(b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and

(c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

212. When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation.

215. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed

against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

219. Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.

220. Not all elements of a Conservation Area or World Heritage Site will necessarily contribute to its significance.

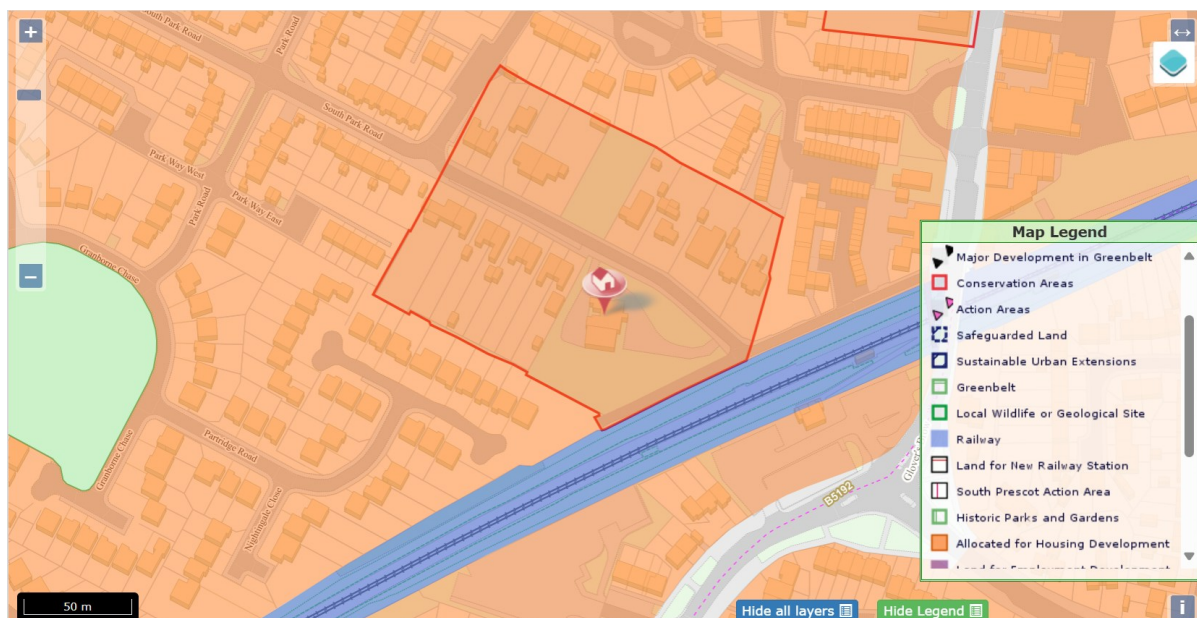
221. Local planning authorities should assess whether the benefits of a proposal for enabling development, which would otherwise conflict with planning policies, but which would secure the future conservation of a heritage asset, outweigh the disbenefits of departing from those policies.

Local Planning Policy

The Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy was adopted in January 2016. The Knowsley Replacement Unitary Development Plan was adopted in June 2006. In the transition to the Local Plan system, 78 out of the original 82 UDP policies were saved by the Secretary of State on June 12, 2009. Three additional UDP policies were replaced upon the adoption of the Merseyside and Halton Joint Waste Local Plan. Subsequently, 36 policies were deleted with the adoption of the Local Plan Core Strategy. As a result, 39 UDP Policies remain in effect.

The Merseyside and Halton Joint Waste Local Plan was adopted in July 2013 by the six constituent authorities of Halton, Knowsley, Liverpool, Sefton, St. Helens, and Wirral. The plan outlines a range of policies and site allocations to support a sustainable waste management framework for the Liverpool City Region up to 2027.

These three documents make up the statutory development plan for the borough of Knowsley. The development plan is also supported by several Supplementary Planning Documents which provide further guidance and support for the Development Plan policies.



Knowsley Core Strategy 2016

The key policies of the Core Strategy which apply to the application site are:

Policy SD1 – Sustainable Development
Policy CS1 - Spatial Strategy for Knowsley
Policy CS2 - Development Principles
Policy CS3 - Housing Supply, Delivery and Distribution
Policy CS7 - Transport Networks
Policy CS15 - Delivering Affordable Housing (15+ dwellings)
Policy CS16 - Specialist and Supported Accommodation
Policy CS17 - Housing Sizes and Design Standards
Policy CS19 - Design Quality and Accessibility in New Development
Policy CS20 - Managing the Borough's Historic Environment
Policy CS21 - Greenspaces and Trees
Policy CS22 - Sustainable and Low Carbon Development
Policy CS24 - Managing Flood Risk
Policy CS26 - Waste Management
Policy CS27 - Planning and Paying for New Infrastructure

Saved Policies of the Knowsley Unitary Development Plan

Whilst most policies of the Knowsley Unitary Development Plan ('UDP') were deleted upon adoption of the Core Strategy, a number of UDP policies have been saved until replaced by further development plan documents to accompany the Core Strategy.

The following 'saved' UDP policies are relevant to this planning application:

H5 - Development within Primarily Residential Areas
H7 - Provision of Flats, Nursing and Residential Homes, Hostels, and Housing in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)
H8 - Extensions and Alterations to Residential Properties
T7 - New Development and Walking & Cycling Routes
T8 - Transport Assessments
T9 - Travel Plans
T10 - Access for the Less Mobile

DQ2 - Security in the Built Environment
DQ4 - Trees and Development
DQ5 - Development in Conservation Areas

Other Material Considerations

Ensuring a Choice of Travel Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

Design Quality in New Development Supplementary Planning Document

Trees and Development SPD

Amended New Residential Development Supplementary Planning Document



ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSALS

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that when determining a planning application, local planning authorities must make their determination in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The Principle of Development

Section 5 of the NPPF (Delivering a sufficient supply of homes) emphasises the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes. Local planning authorities are required to ensure that a sufficient amount and variety of land comes forward where it is needed, and that opportunities to deliver additional housing are fully realised. The proposal would contribute directly to Knowsley's housing supply by providing an additional high-quality dwelling on a small site.

Section 11 of the NPPF (Making effective use of land) requires planning decisions to promote the effective use of land, including the optimisation of underutilised buildings and small sites, particularly in areas where housing supply is constrained.

Given the clear importance of the building as a designated heritage asset, and the supporting policies within the NPPF stating that land should be effectively used, it is considered that the principle of residential development is acceptable.

The NPPF at paragraph 8 sets out that achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, economic, social, and environmental. There are clear economic and social benefits, arising from the retention of a heritage asset and making most effective use of land, is an identified environmental objective.

Historic Environment

Waverley House is a Grade II listed building which was extended with a large flat roofed extension in the 1960's. The flat roof extension is an incongruous addition which detracts from the original building.

The site is also situated with the South Park Road Conservation Area.

Housing

The latest SHLAA published by the Council in December 2024 claims that the Council has a demonstrable 7.2 housing land supply. However, the SHLAA is based on figures from April 2024 and does not take account of the increased targets set by the Government in December 2024 using the standard methodology.

Residential Amenity

Currently, the listed building is in a dilapidated state of disrepair and has long been subject to regular acts of trespass and vandalism as well as anti-social behaviour. Clearly, this adversely impacts the amenities of residents living nearby. Future proposals will bring the listed building back into productive use whilst also providing much needed housing at same time.

Parking

There is sufficient on-site parking available to meet the minimum parking standards operated by the local planning authority.

Highways

There are two existing access points into the site from South Park Road. The main access point is included in the redline as part of this application for Permission in Principle.

Sustainability

The site is situated adjacent to Headbolt Lane Railway Station and the adjoining Bus interchange. It therefore has extremely good transport links. In addition, it is situated within walking distance the local centre at Glovers Brow which

contains a variety of retail outlets. The site is therefore considered a sustainable location given its access to nearby amenities and services.

CONCLUSIONS

This application seeks permission in principle for the residential use of Waverley House.

It is considered that the proposals are aligned with both the NPPF and the Development Plan policies. The impact on the designated heritage asset of the listed building is considered to be neutral and will not result in demonstrable harm to the designated heritage asset. It is therefore considered that impact will not detract from the significance of the heritage asset nor that of its setting or the conservation area in which it is located.

The site is located in a sustainable location and within an existing residential area as defined on the local plan proposals map so there should be no impediment in principle to the use of the site for residential purposes in principle.

Having regard to the above it is respectfully requested that Permission in Principle be granted without delay for the use of the property for residential purposes.