

# PLANNING STATEMENT

**601 Princess Drive  
Page Moss  
Huyton  
Liverpool  
L14 9ND**

**Planning Application  
for Change of Use**

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Brief

1.1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Trinovant Surveyors Limited on behalf of JTL (the applicant) in support of a planning application for the change of use of 601 Princess Drive, Page Moss, Huyton, Liverpool L14 9ND, from its existing Sui Generis (Public House) use to Use Class F1(a) for vocational education and training purposes. The proposal supports Knowsley Council's Local Plan Core Strategy and the national planning policies objectives for growth, regeneration, and the enhancement of local skills and employment readiness.

## 1.2 Considerations

1.2.1 This statement considers the merits of the proposed development through the relevant planning policies, and site-specific characteristics. It should be read in conjunction with the wider technical submissions. This statement adopts the following structure:

- The Site and its Surroundings.
- Background.
- The Proposed Development.
- Planning Policy Context.
- Planning Considerations.
- Conclusion.

## 1.3 Supporting Information

1.3.1 The proposal is supported by the following information:

- Existing and Proposed Drawings.
- Application Forms.
- This Planning Statement.
- Appendix A – Applicant's Supplementary Background Statement & Case Studies

## 2. Site Description and Surroundings

- 2.1.1 The application site is located to the centre of Page Moss with excellent regional connectivity, being located just off Liverpool Road on Princess Drive, 2.5 miles away from the M57 and it also has its own gated car park and a bus stop located to the front of the property. It comprises of detached Pub (The Old Bank Pub) with an approximate total floor area of 543.54 sq. m (5,850.62 sq. ft) with a shared access road, on-site parking and accessible access to front entrance.
- 2.1.2 The property is currently operating as a public house on the ground floor with an events space at first floor level. It is situated next to IAMTech Knowsley Community College and Livv Housing Group, with a Lidl, McDonalds and Costa Coffee located directly opposite. The surrounding area comprises a mix of educational, residential, commercial and office uses. As noted previously, the site benefits from excellent transport links, making it a highly suitable location for educational purposes.
- 2.1.3 Page Moss falls within Knowsley Council which is one of six local authorities that make up the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority. Page Moss located 6.7 miles east of Liverpool City Centre and 6.3 miles south west of St Helens.
- 2.1.4 This application relates to the change of use of the building from Sui Generis (Public House).
- 2.1.5 Key site details:
- **Gross internal area:** 543.54 sq. m (5,850.62 sq. ft)
  - **Existing use class:** Sui Generis (Public House)
  - **Parking:** Circa 9 onsite parking spaces (no designated accessible spaces)
  - **Amenities:** Local shops, transports connections, gated onsite parking

## 3. JTL Background

### 3.1 About JTL

- 3.1.1 JTL, established since 1990, is the leading work-based learning provider in the building services engineering sector across England and Wales. They are a not-for-profit registered charity (No. 1080254), offering advanced apprenticeships in electrical installation, engineering maintenance, mechanical engineering services comprising plumbing, gas alongside heating and ventilating. They serve approximately 8,000 apprentices and 3,800 employers in 6 regions across England and Wales, providing opportunities via its own estate of 18 training centres and 80 partner organisations.
- 3.1.2 JTL holds contracts with the Education & Skills Funding Agency in England and all funding is reinvested in apprenticeship training. JTL has evolved to also provide a growing choice of professional development training for those already working within the industries. JTL, through its association with both Unite the Union and the Electrical Contractors Association has been securing employment for apprentices in the industry for over 30 years. JTL operates its own training centres in some areas of the country whilst in others it secures a partnership arrangement in that a local centres delivers the knowledge element of the qualification and JTL delivers the performance element (NVQ) thus enabling the full apprenticeship framework delivery.
- 3.1.3 JTL has a repeated ‘good’ grade from HM Ofsted Inspectorate, and its services have proven very popular with employer’s keen to take advantage of the Governments new approach to apprenticeships under the apprenticeship new levy scheme.
- 3.1.4 JTL are keen to further develop its own centres for the additional apprentices and employers in the UK whilst supporting the Education & Skills Funding Agency and its aims of driving up both quality and volumes apprenticeship numbers.

### 3.2 Planning Background

- 3.2.1 Planning history in relation to the application site as follows.

#### **Princess Drive, Page Moss, Huyton, Liverpool L14 9ND**

Case Ref	Description	Decision Date
16/00120/FUL	601 Princess Drive - Change of use of vacant upper floor from lawful use C3 (Residential dwelling) to D2 use class (Assembly and leisure)	14 <sup>th</sup> April 2016
09/00481/COU	601 Princess Drive - Change of use of ground floor from retail (use class A1) to form bar/cafe (use class A3 & A4)	20 <sup>th</sup> January 2010

## 4. The Proposed Development

### 4.1 About the Proposal

- 4.1.1 The property comprises of a detached square shaped structure on plan, constructed using traditional methods with a hipped roof. The property appears to have been extended numerous times to the rear of the property. Access can be gained to the main pub a function area via two pedestrian entrance doors, both with an accessible ramp. An external stair case is located toward to rear top provide adequate fire escape routes for the first floor.
- 4.1.2 The property is still currently operating as a public house and function space, however, it has been on the market for some time.
- 4.1.3 JTL seek to purchase the freehold of the property for the use as a vocational apprenticeship training facility and improve the quality of the property. The application proposal seeks to change the use of the 601 Princess Drive, Page Moss, Huyton, Liverpool L14 9ND from use class Sui Generis (Public House) to F1(a) for education training purposes.
- 4.1.4 The transition to F1(a) use aims to serve projected apprentice learner numbers, which will support the Council's strategic priorities to support education and enhance Knowsley Council educational landscape aligning the Education Strategy 2023 – 2026 and the SEND Sufficiency Plan 2023 – 2028.
- 4.1.5 The external elevations and site layout will remain mostly unchanged, besides the removal of the lean-to to the rear and canopy to the front.
- 4.1.6 The internal layout is to be re-configured and adapted to provide workshops and teaching classrooms, however we consider the internal reconfigurations – partitioning, etc to be de minimus.
- 4.1.7 There are very limited sites within the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority and the surrounding areas currently available on the market which meets the applicant's profile and provides the requisite space to feasibly convert into a training centre premises, and that also provides adequate levels of parking to accommodate both staff and student numbers and that is economically viable.
- 4.1.8 The facility will be subject to HM Ofsted and City & Guilds Inspections to ensure quality provision in the local area.
- 4.1.9 Employer meetings will also be hosted at the venue in addition to local employer and training provider network group meetings.

## **4.2**     **The Facility**

4.2.1     The application proposes to repurpose the building to provide a new vocational education centre. JTL intends to create a multi-purpose facility offering:

- Electrical and renewable energy training workshops.
- Classrooms and digital learning suites.
- Electrical testing and AM2 preparation area.
- Ancillary areas including a canteen and WC facilities and store.

4.2.2     The internal layout is illustrated in the accompanying proposed plans. No changes are proposed to the external structure of the building.

4.2.3     The centre will cater for up to 54 students per day, with up to 12 staff.

4.2.4     Operating hours will typically be Monday–Friday, 8:00 am–6:00 pm.

## 5. Planning Policy

### 5.1 Planning Policy Context

5.1.1 This section sets out the relevant planning policy framework which will be applied upon the proposal. The relevant planning policy framework for Knowsley Council comprises of the following documents:

- National Planning Policy Framework.
- Local Plan – Knowsley Council Local Plan Core Strategy (adopted January 2016)
- The Ensuring a Choice of Travel SPD (adopted September 2010)

### 5.2 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

5.2.1 National Planning Policy is provided by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This document sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

5.2.2 The NPPF reaffirms Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 by stating that ‘applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise’. In terms of the role of the NPPF within the wider planning system, it ‘must be taken into account in preparing the development plan, and is a material consideration in planning decisions.

5.2.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF3) was published in February 2019 to underpin the Governments approach to planning. Section 2 sets out in paragraph 7 that:

5.2.4 ***“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”.***

5.2.5 In terms of implementation of the NPPF, the advice of the material weight to be attached to its policies is clearly set out in Annex 1: ‘Implementation’. Paragraph 219 states that ‘existing policies should not be considered out-of-date simply because they were adopted or made prior to the publication of the Framework (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight they may be given).

5.2.6 As outlined above, at the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development which has three overarching objectives which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives). Paragraph 8 of the NPPF sets out the different objectives;

- 5.2.7 “An economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure; A social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being; and An environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.”
- 5.2.8 Paragraph 9 sets out that these objectives should be delivered through the “Preparation and implementation of plans and the application of policies in this Framework; they are not criteria against which every decision can or should be judged. Planning policies and decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area”.
- 5.2.9 Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that applications for planning permission should be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.2.10 The NPPF reaffirms Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 by stating in paragraph 11c that for decision-taking this means;
- 5.2.11 “Approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay”; and
- 5.2.12 In the NPPF paragraph 11 (d) it is set out:
- 5.2.13 “Where there are no relevant development plan policies or the policies which are most important for determining the applications are out of date, granting permission unless:
- i. The application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
  - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.”
- 5.2.14 The proposed development does engage the specific policies set out in footnote 6 to paragraph 11di (e.g., Green Belt, AONB, National Park or Designated Heritage Assets).
- 5.2.15 Section 6 of the Framework relates to Building a strong, competitive economy. Paragraph 81 states that “planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The approach taken should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future.”
- 5.2.16 Paragraph 119 encourages the effective use of land in way that makes as much use as possible of previously developed or ‘brownfield’ land.

- 5.2.17 Section 12: Achieving well-designed places’ states the creation of high-quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Paragraph 126 of the NPPF sets out that “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.”
- 5.2.18 The revised NPPF at section/chapter 14 sets out government views on how the planning system should take into account the risks caused by flooding. The planning practice guidance under the chapter titled ‘flood risk and climate change’ gives detailed advice on how planning can take account of the risks associated with flooding in the application process.
- 5.2.19 Paragraph 96 of the NPPF states, “To ensure faster delivery of other public service infrastructure such as further education colleges, hospitals and criminal justice accommodation, local planning authorities should also work proactively and positively with promoters, delivery partners and statutory bodies to plan for required facilities and resolve key planning issues before applications are submitted.”
- 5.2.20 Paragraph 130 states planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments will function well, add to the overall quality of the area, visually attractive, sympathetic to the local character and history, establish a strong sense of space and optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development.

### **5.3 Knowsley Councils Local Plan Core Strategy**

- 5.3.1 The Core Strategy sets Knowsley’s spatial vision and strategic policies to guide development to 2028, aiming to deliver housing, jobs, regeneration and infrastructure while protecting important environmental assets. It is the high-level document that directs site allocations and development management policies in subsequent Local Plan documents.
- 5.3.2 Knowsley is located within the Liverpool City Region, in the northwest of England, positioned to the east of Liverpool and bordered by Sefton, St Helens, and Halton. The borough benefits from excellent regional and national transport connections. It is strategically situated close to the M57, M62, and M6 motorways, providing direct access to Liverpool, Manchester, and wider national routes. The A580 East Lancashire Road runs through the borough, linking Liverpool to Greater Manchester and forming a key east–west corridor for logistics and commuting. Knowsley is also well served by public transport, with rail links from Huyton, Prescot, and Kirkby providing access to Liverpool city centre and Manchester, alongside a comprehensive local bus network. These strong transport connections make Knowsley an attractive and accessible location for business, education, and residential development.
- 5.3.3 The Local Plan sets out the Council’s policies and proposals to guide planning decisions and establishes the framework for the sustainable growth and development of Knowsley Council.
- 5.3.4 Knowsley Councils vision for the future will be achieved by meeting strategic objects, for example:
- **Strategic growth and regeneration focus:** Plan direct growth to existing urban and regeneration areas and allocates Sustainable Urban Expansions where needed.
  - **Employment land target:** Minimum 164ha employment land (2010-2028) with priority locations such as Huyton etc.
  - **CS4 links jobs to skills:** Policy CS4 explicitly requires actions to address skills/education barriers, promote local recruitment and training initiatives.
  - **Delivering through regeneration and infrastructure:** Regeneration frameworks, transport

improvements and legal agreements (developer contributions/local labour clauses) are core delivery tools.

- **Education/attainment priority:** The Plan recognises low attainment and NEET rates and supports coordinated education investments to improve workforce readiness.

5.3.5 The relevant planning policies of the Knowsley Councils Local Plan are set out below:

#### **5.4 Policy CS2**

5.4.1 **Development principles (Policy CS2):** New development must promote sustainable economic development, reduce inequalities, improve access, reduce carbon and the need to travel, and achieve high design and accessibility standards. These principles are cross-cutting and applied through development management.

#### **5.5 Policy CS4**

5.5.1 **Economy and Employment (Policy CS4):** The policy promotes the use of planning, land assembly, and targeted interventions to support key growth sectors, ensure an adequate supply of employment land to 2028, and enhance the quality and efficiency of existing employment areas. It also seeks to tackle skills shortages, prioritise local recruitment, and encourage start-ups, social enterprises, homeworking, and digital connectivity. Policy CS4 specifically requires measures to address educational and skills barriers to employment, with the Plan committing to the use of land-use planning tools and legal agreements—such as local labour clauses and training contributions—to directly link new development with job creation and training opportunities.

#### **5.6 Policy CS9**

5.6.1 **Principle Regeneration Area – North Huyton and Stockbridge Village (Policy CS9):** establishes a formal commitment to the comprehensive, integrated regeneration of North Huyton and Stockbridge Village. The policy is intended to tackle entrenched deprivation, rebalance the local housing market and stimulate local employment and community provision through a programme of coordinated physical, social and economic interventions. CS9 lists “education and training facilities” as a desired outcome for this regeneration scheme.

#### **5.7 Ensuring a Choice of Travel SPD**

5.7.1 The Ensuring a Choice of Travel SPD (adopted in September 2010) provides detailed guidance on Knowsley Council’s transport policies. Its main aim is to ensure new developments offer a range of travel options, promote sustainable transport, and minimise congestion and pollution. The SPD is used to assess planning applications for transport compliance, while design dimensions for parking and manoeuvring are referenced in the Department for Transport’s Manual for Streets.

## 6. Planning Considerations

### 6.1 Considerations

6.1.1 This section of the statement identifies the main planning considerations and provides an assessment of the planning merits of the site in support of the proposed development.

### 6.2 Principle of Development

6.2.1 The proposal seeks to re-purpose the existing Sui Generis (Public House) for training and education use - use class F1(a).

6.2.2 The re-use of this property for a vocational training centre aligns with both national and local policy promoting sustainable development, upskilling of the workforce, and efficient land use.

6.2.3 Given the proposals seek to re-utilise the building and will result in employment generation from this we consider the proposals contribute positively to the local area. No loss of employment-generating activity occurs, as the centre itself provides direct employment and will result in employment generation helping to meet regional skills shortages in the building services engineering sector across England and Wales.

6.2.4 Furthermore, as JTL are the leading work-based learning provider in the building services engineering sector, the proposals will generate an ongoing resource for business in these sectors to recruit staff from and provide a specialist training facility in locale. As such it is considered that the proposals positively contribute to the range and quality of employment opportunities in Knowsley Council and thereby meet criteria set out in Policy CS2, Policy CS4, Policy CS9 and as such be considered acceptable in principle.

6.2.5 JTL's expansion into the area aligns with the Education & Skills Funding Agency's objective of increasing both the quality and volume of apprenticeships. This support helps meet national skills priorities while directly benefiting the local economy and workforce.

6.2.6 The increased demand for apprenticeships, the presence of local skills gaps, and JTL's proven track record provide clear evidence of the need for additional training facilities in Knowsley Council and the wider Liverpool City region.

6.2.7 The proposed training centre aligns with regional planning and economic development strategies by fostering a skilled workforce and supporting regional growth. It integrates with broader goals of enhancing skills and employment opportunities as set out in Knowsley Councils Local Plan.

6.2.8 JTL will further establish their partnerships with companies in Page Moss, Huyton and the surrounding Knowsley area to create a feedback loop, ensuring that training programs remain aligned with industry requirements.

6.2.9 JTL already partners with industry associations such as the Electrical Contractors Association (ECA) which will further strengthen the training centre's connections with local businesses. These associations can help promote the centre's programs and facilitate introductions to potential employer partners.

### **6.3 Employment and Skills**

- 6.3.1 The proposed change of use to F1(a) – Education will provide full reoccupation of the premises with both direct and indirect employment. The proposed further education use is for trade apprenticeship training in the building services engineering sector. It is considered that the proposed use would be an appropriate use at this site and within the wider area.
- 6.3.2 The provision of apprenticeship training offers significant social and economic benefits and bring future employment benefits to the local and wider community. These benefits would relate to local employers and to local residents, in training local school leavers and apprentices in skilled trades to meet the wider government employment objective.
- 6.3.3 Traineeships provide training opportunities for local young people aged 16-25 years old, with many coming from under-represented groups within the immediate local area. The site is well placed being nearby existing educational facilities with opportunities for students to continue their education vocationally within the building services engineering sector.
- 6.3.4 The proposal would retain and enhance much needed training opportunities and links to employment, which bring significant benefits to residents in the local and wider community, including young people and mature students looking to ‘up-skill’, and involving people from under-represented groups and deprived areas. The proposal complements and links with local businesses, including those located in Page Moss and Huyton, Knowsley Council and the wider Liverpool area, with the training opportunities in the building services engineering sector having direct links to employment use operations and helping businesses to fill the employment gap by producing a skilled workforce. This complies with Policy CS2, Policy CS4, Policy CS9 of Knowsley Council Local Plan.
- 6.3.5 The training centre will generate employment opportunities. This includes direct jobs at the training facility (e.g., trainers, administrative staff) and indirect jobs through increased demand for local services and suppliers, supporting local economic growth.
- 6.3.6 The training centre will also provide valuable support to local businesses by offering a skilled workforce trained specifically in trades relevant to Knowsley Council.
- 6.3.7 The centre will address any existing skills shortages in the region by providing targeted training programs that support the needs of local employers. This will help to bridge skills gaps and enhance the employability of apprentices. This supports Knowsley Councils skills gap strategy, especially for young people aged 16–24 not in education or employment (NEETs).
- 6.3.8 The proximity to other educational and professional institutions also offers opportunities for collaboration, which can enrich the training programs and provide additional resources for apprentices.
- 6.3.9 The training centre will provide educational and employment opportunities for local residents, contributing to community development and economic resilience. It will also support regional economic growth by enhancing the skills base and supporting local industries.
- 6.3.10 By improving the skills of the local workforce and supporting regional businesses, the training centre will contribute to the economic resilience and growth of Page Moss and Huyton, Knowsley and the surrounding areas. There will also be a direct economic benefit through increased footfall, local service use, and job creation for teaching and support staff.

## **6.4 Parking and Transportation**

- 6.4.1 The proposed seeks to retain the current access and parking arrangements which has approximately enough space for 9no parking spaces (including 1no. accessible bay). Currently located on the site are some temporary storage structures/containers that as part of the proposal will be removed, creating further space for parking.
- 6.4.2 The parking requirement for further and higher education is one parking space per 15 full time students plus 1 space per full time teaching staff. Based on the predicted number of students (32no. total) and staff (2no. total) the minimum required number of parking spaces is 5no. The existing capacity therefore exceeds to the minimum number of parking spaces.
- 6.4.3 The parking standards also require parking for people with a disability. The parking standard for education use is 5-10% of the total number of spaces. This has been included within the proposal.
- 6.4.4 The parking standard states the minimum cycle parking standards for further education use is 1 cycle space per 7 students. Based on the predicted number of students the minimum number of cycle spaces is 5no. The proposals include for a secure cycle rack to the side of the building which shall accommodate 10no. bicycles proposed to encourage more sustainable journeys. There are no dedicated cycle parking facilities currently at the premises.
- 6.4.5 The proposals also include for the installation of 2no. EV charging points. There is also provision for future expansion such is JTL's commitment to sustainable modes of transport and environmental betterment.
- 6.4.6 The proposals are considered a less transport intensive use than the existing use and our client considers that it is highly likely that a number of pupils will not be car owners and will use alternative means to get to and from the site such as bicycle, bus and rail.
- 6.4.7 Two bus stops are located either side of Princess Drive right in front of the main entrance to the property, the following buses stop at these two stops C46, 698, 611, 102, 898, 12 and 899. Besides the bus Roby Train station is located under 2 miles away from the property.
- 6.4.8 The proposals are considered to comply with National Planning Policy Framework (2023) parking and sustainable transport guidance.

## **6.5 Servicing and Refuse**

- 6.5.1 The change of use from Sui Generis (Public House) to an education facility, F1(a), is unlikely to increase the refuse generation and servicing arrangements to the premises.
- 6.5.2 JTL currently shall adopt general refuse collection on a weekly basis. The separate covered bins shall be provided on site for recycling and general waste, located within the store. The bin collections shall alternate bi-weekly.
- 6.5.3 All waste is collected by Biffa Waste, a nationally recognised waste transfer company who JTL currently have a contract with across all of their training centre sites in the UK.
- 6.5.4 Deliveries of materials/consumables for the workshops are small and infrequent, delivered as and when required, generally on a monthly basis.

6.5.5 Although a canteen is shown on the proposed floor plans, there is no intention to provide cooking facilities or the provision of purchasing food on the premises. The canteen will only provide the ability to make hot drinks and heat food brought onto the premises. It is not therefore envisaged that there will be significant deliveries/ regular additional servicing resulting from the canteen facilities beyond the existing use.

## **6.6 Sustainability**

6.6.1 The training centre will result in job creation as well as training pupils for future employment and as such brings substantial economic benefit. We also consider that the local employment of young people and the educational benefit the training centre would bring in bridging skill gaps gives a substantial social benefit. In terms of Environmental benefit, the sites accessibility, permanence for JTL as a training hub rather than utilising temporary solutions present stability and also the rail & bus connections offer alternative environmentally friendly transport solution.

6.6.2 Two bus stops are located either side of Princess Drive right in front of the main entrance to the property, the following buses stop at these two stops C46, 698, 611, 102, 898, 12 and 899. Besides the bus Roby Train station is located under 2 miles away from the property.

6.6.3 Internally, energy efficient improvements will include LED lighting.

6.6.4 The proposal includes to install a bicycle rack on site for 10no. cycles to encourage more sustainable journeys.

6.6.5 The proposals also include for the installation of 2no. EV charging points. There is also provision for future expansion such is JTL's commitment to sustainable modes of transport and environmental betterment.

6.6.6 The proposals are as such considered to promote the 3 pillars of sustainability which are enshrined in the NPPF at Paragraph 8 in particular.

## 7. Planning Application Conclusion

### 7.1 Conclusion

- 7.1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Trinovant Surveyors Limited on behalf of JTL (the applicant) to accompany this Planning Application for the change of use of the building for education/training use.
- 7.1.2 The proposals will revitalise the building, having a positive effect on the local community. The conversion of the building will be used to provide vocational training for 16- to 25-year-olds seeking to expand their education and skillset, and thereby providing a wider offering of trained and employable staff in the area for local business. We consider the location of Page Moss and Huyton enhances the education and employment offering in this area of Knowsley and the wider Liverpool City area and is thereby of substantial benefit to the area as a whole.
- 7.1.3 This Statement has provided an analysis of the site context including its location and physical characteristics, as well as the relevant national and local planning policies, and assesses the compliance of the proposal within this context. The key driver behind these proposals is to provide JTL with a more established presence in the Knowsley area on a permanent basis.
- 7.1.4 We consider the proposals meet the criteria set out in the Knowsley Council Local Plan, specifically Policy CS2, Policy CS4 and Policy CS9.
- 7.1.5 In addition, we consider the proposals meet the Council's strategic priorities, particularly to support education and training opportunities to enhance the skills of the existing and future workforce, whilst retaining and attracting highly skilled people. The proposals will generate an ongoing resource for education, employment and business in these sectors to recruit staff from and provide a specialist training facility in the area. As such it is considered that the proposals positively contribute to the range and quality of employment opportunities in the area.
- 7.1.6 This proposal delivers significant public and economic benefit, makes efficient use of an existing structure, and responds directly to Knowsley Council's strategic vision. It maintains a low environmental impact, aligns with local employment goals, and creates a vocational education hub in one of the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority key urban centres.
- 7.1.7 Accordingly, the proposal is fully compliant with the NPPF and the Knowsley Local Plan, and there are no material considerations which would indicate otherwise.
- 7.1.8 We respectfully request that planning permission be granted for this important local skills initiative.

## **Appendix A**

### **Applicant's Supplementary Background Statement & Case Studies**



**BUILDING  
FUTURES**

**Powering Electrical and  
Plumbing Apprenticeships**

Registered Charity no. 1080254

**Integrity | Professionalism | Respect | Responsiveness**

## **Applicant's Supplementary Background Statement & Case Studies**

### **Introduction**

This Planning Statement supports a change of use application for 601 Princess Drive, Huyton, Liverpool (L14 9ND). The proposal seeks to convert a public house and function suite (sui generis use) into a vocational training facility (Use Class F1(a)) operated by JTL, a national apprenticeship provider in building services engineering. The change of use involves internal reconfiguration only with minimal external alterations to the building's fabric or appearance. The facility will be staffed by up to 12 employees (4 site based, 8 visiting) and accommodate approximately 54 learners daily. This training provision will improve quality and consistency of apprenticeship delivery, responding to strong employer demand in the region for skilled trades training for electrical, and emerging renewable energy technologies.

This Statement demonstrates that the proposed development is in full compliance with Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council's adopted planning policies and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). It highlights how the scheme will contribute to local and national objectives around skills development, employment, and regeneration. The educational and economic benefits of the proposal are emphasised, aligned with the Borough's priorities for improving workforce skills and supporting growth sectors. To reinforce the case, three comparable case studies of education-led change-of-use schemes successfully approved in the Liverpool City Region are presented, illustrating precedent for such proposals in Knowsley's context.

### **Site Description**

**Site and Surroundings:** The application site comprises a substantial two-storey detached building of approximately 5,500 sq ft Gross Internal Area. It occupies a prominent roadside position fronting Princess Drive (A5058) in Huyton, within the Knowsley Borough. The property known as "The Old Bank" pub at ground floor with the "Princess Suite" function room at first floor. It sits on its own plot with an enclosed forecourt and parking area offering on-site parking and a ramped entrance for accessibility. No external changes are proposed to this existing access or parking provision.

The surrounding area is mixed-use in character. Princess Drive is a primary route (the A5058 ring road) with a prominent frontage and high visibility to passing traffic. Adjacent uses include residential neighbourhoods and pockets of commercial and light industrial premises, ensuring a mixed local catchment. This location benefits from excellent transport links – the site is close to the M62 and M57 motorways for regional access, and it is served by regular bus routes providing direct connections to Liverpool City Centre. The property's sustainable location and connectivity make it well-suited for an education/training use, being easily reachable by learners from across the Liverpool City Region. The proximity of Knowsley Community College also provides opportunities for collaboration and partnership. JTL's specialist apprenticeship provision can complement the College's wider curriculum by offering progression routes for learners who wish to advance into full trade apprenticeships. The co-location of the two providers creates potential for joint careers events, employer engagement

activities and referral pathways, ensuring that local residents have access to a seamless and comprehensive skills offer across both organisations.

**Building Layout:** The building's configuration is well-suited to its new use. The ground floor, previously the pub lounge, is a large open-plan space, suitable for conversion to training workshops. Ancillary areas (former bar, kitchen, WCs, storage) provide space for offices or tool storage as needed. The first floor function suite is a spacious open hall ideal for sub-division into classrooms. Generous floor-to-ceiling heights and robust construction (concrete frame and pitched roof) will accommodate any required training equipment installations. The site's forecourt parking and level access will facilitate easy loading of training materials and accessible entry for all students. Overall, the property's size, layout, and setting are conducive to a vocational training centre and require only internal adaptation to suit the proposed use.

### **Proposed Development**

**Description of Proposal:** The application proposes a change of use of the entire building from a public house with function suite (*sui generis*) to a vocational training centre (Use Class F1(a)). JTL, a leading not-for-profit apprenticeship provider in the building services engineering sector, will operate the facility. Crucially, minimal external building work is involved – the existing façade, structure, and site layout will remain largely unaltered. Internal changes, comprising fit-out and reconfiguration to create teaching classrooms, practical workshop areas (e.g. for electrical training bays), and staff offices. The limited external alterations means the proposal has no significant impact on the streetscene or visual amenity of the area; the building's appearance will remain as almost existing with only the removal of historic ad-hoc additions being necessary.

**Operation and Capacity:** The centre will be staffed by up to 12 employees (4 site based, 8 visiting) and accommodate approximately 54 learners daily, on apprenticeship training programs. This scale is modest and in line with JTL's other regional training centres. Training activity will typically occur on weekdays during normal working hours, with learners attending scheduled sessions as part of their apprenticeship off-the-job training. The proposed use is therefore predominantly daytime, weekdays, and will not generate late-night activity or noise – a notable positive contrast to pub use which has potential for evening/night-time noise and disturbance. The training centre use is compatible with the mixed residential context and will likely be a quieter and more orderly neighbour than the historic pub use.

**Rationale and Need:** JTL has identified this site in Huyton to address a gap in local provision for building services apprenticeships. Until recently, many apprentices in the Liverpool City Region had to attend further-away colleges or subcontracted training providers for the off-site learning element of their apprenticeships. By establishing its own dedicated training facility, JTL can improve quality and consistency of training delivery and respond directly to employer needs. There is strong demand from employers across Merseyside for apprentices in trades such as plumbing, electrical installation, and emerging renewable energy technologies (e.g. heat pump and solar PV installers). The Liverpool City Region Long-Term Skills Plan (2024) highlights that construction and infrastructure projects are driving a high demand for skilled tradespeople and that expanded training capacity is needed so that employers and apprentices can access high-quality provision locally. Major infrastructure investments – from the Everton FC stadium and Liverpool Waters regeneration to upcoming projects like Baltic Station, the Metro Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) scheme, a potential Carbon Capture pipeline, and new Investment Zones – are poised to create sustained demand for construction and engineering skills. This facility will directly support the Liverpool City Region's skills and employment agenda by equipping

local young people with the qualifications needed to fill those roles, thereby aligning workforce development with the region's long-term economic growth plans.

**Use of Existing Building / No Physical Impact:** The proposal represents a sustainable re-use of an existing building, aligning with the NPPF's objective to make effective use of land and buildings. The internal works will be designed to meet all building regulations and will modernise the interior for its new function (for example, installing training rigs, updated ICT infrastructure, and any specialist ventilation or electrical supply needed for workshops). Externally, the building's appearance remains largely unchanged (importantly, the existing mural on the gable elevation will be retained) and features such as the forecourt parking (to be used by staff and learners) and ramped entrance (providing disabled access) will be retained. There are no heritage constraints on the site and no changes to footprint or height, so there are no design or visual amenity concerns. Likewise, no material change in impermeable area or external lighting is proposed, so there are no new impacts on drainage or light pollution. In traffic terms, the level of activity is modest; many learners are expected to car-share or use public transport (given the good bus links) and the on-site parking is sufficient for the small staff and any visiting employers. The peak traffic generation will be far less than the historic pub use (which could draw many evening customers by car). A travel plan will be implemented if required, to encourage public transport and car-sharing among learners.

In summary, the development entails a low-impact, beneficial re-use of the site, with operations that are compatible with the area and a scale that is readily accommodated by the existing property and infrastructure.

### **Planning Policy Context**

**Development Plan:** The statutory development plan for this area is the Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy (2016), supported by saved policies of the earlier Knowsley Unitary Development Plan where relevant. This proposal has been assessed against the up-to-date Core Strategy policies and is found to be in full compliance. The key policy considerations include: the presumption in favour of sustainable development; support for economic growth and employment opportunities; provision of community facilities (including education); town centre and sequential test considerations; and transport/highways impact. Each is addressed in turn below. Material considerations include national policy in the NPPF (most recent July 2021 framework) and the Council's supplementary planning guidance, particularly the "Adding Social Value to Development: Employment and Skills SPD" which underscores the importance of delivering training and job opportunities through development. The proposal strongly aligns with these objectives, effectively embedding social value as its primary purpose.

- **Sustainable Development:** Core Strategy Policy SD1 echoes the NPPF's presumption in favour of sustainable development, stating that development proposals in accordance with the plan should be approved without delay. The re-use of this previously developed site within the urban area of Huyton is inherently sustainable – it makes efficient use of land and existing infrastructure, and it revitalises a building. By locating a training centre in an accessible location close to the community it serves, the proposal meets the social objective of sustainable development (providing education and skills locally) as well as the economic objective (supporting a stronger local economy through skills uplift). There are no adverse environmental impacts identified. In line with NPPF ¶11 and ¶38, the Council is asked to approve this sustainable, policy-compliant change of use without delay.

- **Economic Growth and Employment (Core Strategy Policy CS4):** The Knowsley Local Plan places strong emphasis on economic regeneration, job creation, and improving skills. Policy CS4 (Economy and Employment) seeks to create conditions for business growth and to link local residents to employment opportunities, including through skills initiatives. The Council's Employment and Skills SPD implemented under CS4 typically requires significant developments to commit to local training or apprenticeships as part of their social value contribution. This proposal directly delivers on that policy aim: rather than a development generating a need for training, it is a development providing training. By establishing a dedicated apprenticeship training centre, the scheme will train local young people in high-demand trades, improving their job prospects and supplying skilled labour for local employers – outcomes that CS4 and the Council's economic strategy explicitly encourage. In effect, the proposal is a catalyst for social value in itself, and thus fully accords with Policy CS4 and the spirit of Knowsley's regeneration objectives. It will help raise local skills levels and contribute to tackling worklessness, which are long-standing challenges identified in the Core Strategy and the Council's Learning and Skills Strategy 2023–2027. The Council has affirmed its ambition to offer young people the best opportunities to gain skills and employment, and this project aligns squarely with that ambition.
- **Community Facilities and Education:** Although the Knowsley Core Strategy does not have a single policy solely for new education or community facilities, the plan's Spatial Vision and Strategic Objectives support enhancing community infrastructure and services. The provision of a vocational training centre constitutes a community facility delivering education and training services to residents and employers. The NPPF (Chapter 8: Promoting healthy and safe communities) provides clear guidance that planning decisions should plan positively for the provision and use of community facilities (including educational facilities) and guard against unnecessary loss of valued facilities. In this case, the area is well serviced with regards public houses. Instead, the proposal will introduce a new community-focused use, thereby maintaining and enhancing local services. NPPF paragraph 95 directs that it is important to ensure a sufficient choice of school places (and by extension, training opportunities) is available to meet community needs. By providing an additional training venue in Knowsley, the development increases the choice and availability of apprenticeship training locally. This supports young people who might otherwise have to travel outside the borough for such education. Knowsley Council's Education and Skills policies (reflected in its recent Education Strategy 2023–2026) identify improving post-16 skills provision as a priority; this scheme delivers directly on that priority by expanding local capacity for apprenticeships. The Liverpool City Region Combined Authority has likewise stressed the need to build local training capacity to address skills shortages, noting that expanding providers' capacity is critical so that "employers and apprentices can access high quality provision locally". The proposal is therefore consistent with national and local aims for supporting education and training infrastructure.
- **Loss of Public House Use:** The site's current use as a pub/function suite is classified as sui generis (not within a specific use class). Pubs are sometimes regarded as community facilities in planning policy. The NPPF (para 93) indeed urges planning decisions to guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities like pubs particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs. There are other pubs and social venues in the wider area serving local residents, so its change of use will not leave a gap in provision of leisure facilities. Moreover, the community benefits of the new training use are substantial: rather than a vacant building or potentially a problematic empty pub, the community gains a

positive educational resource. This aligns with NPPF guidance to plan positively for community services. The change from a drinking establishment to a daytime educational use also likely reduces any anti-social behaviour or noise that can be associated with pub uses, thus benefitting the residential neighbours. On balance, the loss of the sui generis pub use is justified by the clear community and economic gains of the proposed F1(a) use. The proposal is consistent with Local Plan objectives to bring vacant premises back into use and with NPPF para 93, which supports developments that provide social, recreational, and cultural facilities the community needs.

- **Town Centre Considerations:** Use Class F1(a) (education/training) is not defined as a main “town centre use” in the NPPF (which focuses on retail, leisure, offices, etc. for sequential test purposes). Nonetheless, it is worth noting that this site, while not in a town or district centre, is in a readily accessible location on a primary route. Locating the training centre here will not undermine any town centre – in fact, it brings an active use to a site on the edge of the Dovecot and Stockbridge Village communities, potentially driving footfall to nearby shops by students and staff. Core Strategy Policy CS6 (Town Centres and Shopping) directs main town centre uses to existing centres, but an education use such as this is generally considered appropriate in a variety of locations provided it is accessible. There is no reasonable sequentially preferable site (e.g. within Huyton Town Centre) that would meet JTL’s specific needs for workshop space, parking, and location close to its apprentices’ employers. The chosen site is a, previously developed building that is eminently suitable and available now – aligning with the NPPF’s encouragement to use brownfield land and existing premises. Therefore, the proposal does not conflict with town centre first principles and does not require a retail impact assessment or similar, as it will not generate retail-like impacts. Indeed, by re-using an empty building, it supports the vitality of the area without drawing trade from any centre.
- **Highways and Accessibility (CS7):** Core Strategy Policy CS7 (Transport Networks) and the NPPF (Section 9) require that developments provide safe and suitable access for all users and promote sustainable transport choices. The site already has an established access and parking forecourt from Princess Drive, designed for the former pub use. The traffic generated by the training centre will be modest and largely off-peak (with arrivals/departures typically during the morning and late afternoon, rather than night-time or weekend peaks associated with a pub). The A5058 Princess Drive is a distributor road with capacity, and the site benefits from public transport links – several bus routes run along Princess Drive (linking to Huyton, Liverpool city centre and other areas). Ample on-site parking exists for staff and those learners who may drive, and cycle parking will be introduced on-site to encourage bike use. Given the small scale of operations, the impact on the highway network will be negligible; certainly below the NPPF threshold of “severe” impact which might warrant refusal (per NPPF ¶111). The scheme will incorporate a basic Travel Plan to encourage public transport and car sharing among apprentices. **Accessibility:** The building’s ground floor is accessible via a ramp and wide entrance, and internal layouts will be configured to be inclusive (with ground-floor teaching space available for any learner with mobility impairments). Overall, the proposal complies with CS7 by providing appropriate parking, not harming road safety or efficiency, and making use of sustainable travel modes.
- **Design and Amenity (CS19, CS20):** Although no new build works are proposed, Core Strategy Policies CS19 and CS20 relating to design quality and amenity are still relevant. The proposal maintains the building’s external design with no changes, thus preserving the character of the area. Any signage for the new use will be modest and subject to a separate advertisement

consent if required. In terms of residential amenity, the training use is benign – activities will be indoors, during normal day hours, and will not create noise, odours, or anti-social behaviour. This is a clear improvement in amenity terms over a pub use which could entail late-night noise or disturbance. The nearest dwellings will experience a quieter environment and less comings-and-goings at night. There will be no overlooking or overshadowing issues as the building footprint and form remain the same. Lighting will remain as existing with possible improvements for security, done sensitively. Thus, the scheme satisfies CS19/20 by achieving a use that is compatible with its surroundings and protects amenity.

- National Planning Policy Framework: The proposal strongly aligns with pertinent NPPF policies. Building a strong, competitive economy (NPPF §81) – The NPPF urges significant weight be placed on supporting economic growth, taking into account local business needs. This development directly addresses local business needs for skilled workers by providing an avenue to train apprentices needed by the construction and engineering sectors. It will help improve productivity and growth by tackling skills shortages – an economic benefit of significant weight. Promoting healthy and safe communities (NPPF §92–95) – as noted, the NPPF supports provision of social infrastructure like schools and training facilities and protecting valued community uses. This scheme provides a new community service (education) in a location accessible to the community, thereby meeting these objectives. Making effective use of land (NPPF §119–120) – the proposal reuses a brownfield site and existing building, exemplifying effective land use. Supporting skills and education – though not explicitly a separate chapter, national policy (and Ministerial statements) recognise the importance of expanding education facilities, with particular support often given to proposals that create new schools or training centres. The Government’s “Levelling Up” agenda also highlights skills development as a priority for areas like Knowsley. Therefore, granting this change of use would be consistent with national efforts to improve skills and would make a meaningful contribution to “levelling up” opportunities for local youth in a disadvantaged community.

Local Regeneration Priorities: Finally, it should be noted that Knowsley MBC and the Liverpool City Region have clear regeneration strategies that prioritise improving educational attainment and pathways to employment. Knowsley has historically faced challenges such as high economic inactivity and low skill levels in parts of the borough. The Council’s Corporate Plan and inclusive growth strategy emphasise investing in people to ensure residents can partake in new economic opportunities. The Liverpool City Region Long Term Skills Plan (2024) under Mayor Steve Rotheram similarly identifies that closing the skills gap – especially in construction, green energy, and infrastructure sectors – is crucial for the region’s prosperity. Major developments (like those cited earlier: Everton Stadium, Liverpool Waters, transport initiatives, etc.) will create jobs that must be filled by a suitably trained local workforce. Approving this training centre directly supports those strategic aims by providing a pipeline of skilled local labour. It will also contribute to social inclusion, giving local young people a chance to gain trades and secure good jobs on local projects, thereby spreading the benefits of regeneration. In summary, the proposal is not just acceptable in planning terms – it is highly desirable in policy terms, helping to deliver on multiple economic and social objectives of the Council and City Region.

## **Case Studies**

To underscore the suitability of the proposed change of use, this section highlights three comparable schemes in the Liverpool City Region where buildings have been successfully repurposed for education or training uses. These examples, drawn from Sefton, Liverpool, and St Helens, demonstrate local precedent and support for vocational training facilities and similar education-led projects:

Sefton Case Study – A former public house in Seaforth (The Royal) was converted into a vocational training centre, illustrating how redundant pub premises can be sustainably repurposed for education use. In that case, a prominent corner pub on Crosby Road South, after closure, was transformed into a training facility (by 2021) with Council support. The change of use brought a vacant building back into productive use and provided skills training opportunities for the community, much like the Princess Drive proposal. The Seaforth example shows that such conversions can preserve the building's external character while achieving a beneficial new use serving local needs.

- Liverpool City Centre – Retail Mall to Education Campus: In Liverpool, parts of the Metquarter shopping centre have been successfully converted into an educational campus for the Liverpool Media Academy (LMA), a performing arts and media college. In 2020 LMA invested over £15 million to retrofit three floors of the former mall with classrooms, dance studios, and music rehearsal rooms, accommodating 500 students. This change of use from retail (A1) to education (F1) was supported by the city as it addressed declining retail space and injected a new use that brings students and activity into the city centre. The LMA Metquarter project demonstrates flexibility in planning to support training and education facilities. It created over 100 new jobs and preserved the vitality of a city centre building by adapting it for learning purposes. The Princess Drive scheme, while smaller in scale, is analogous in that it repurposes an existing building for training to meet student demand and fill a gap in provision. The success of LMA's city centre campus indicates that local planning authorities in the region recognize the wider benefits of education-led regeneration of underused properties.
- St Helens Town Centre – Vacant Shop to Skills Academy: In St Helens (another Liverpool City Region borough), the Council recently approved plans to create a Health and Care Skills Academy in a disused retail unit on Hardshaw Street in the town centre. The project involves converting a former Money Shop pawnbroker (vacant bank unit) into a training hub to prepare residents for jobs in the health and social care sector. Backed by Town Deal funding, this change of use was chosen after a previous plan to build new facilities fell through – demonstrating the appeal of quickly repurposing existing town centre premises. The St Helens scheme is being delivered collaboratively by the Council and an NHS Trust, and it aligns with regeneration efforts to diversify town centres with educational and skills facilities. It shows that even high-street retail spaces can be turned into modern classrooms and training labs. The planning approval in 2025 acknowledged that reusing the empty shop for a Skills Campus would support local employment pathways and bring footfall into the town centre. This is a strong precedent of a Merseyside local authority embracing an education use in place of a defunct commercial use, due to the clear social and economic benefits. Similarly, the Huyton proposal will take a dormant commercial building (pub) and convert it into a skills hub, with the expectation of analogous positive outcomes for the local area.

These case studies from Sefton, Liverpool, and St Helens underline a consistent theme: local planning authorities in the region have been supportive of change-of-use proposals that deliver education and training facilities, especially where they contribute to regeneration objectives and make productive use of vacant properties. The 601 Princess Drive project fits squarely within this pattern. It is a logical and beneficial reuse of the site, comparable to the above examples – and there have been no reported negative impacts from those case study schemes, only benefits in terms of skills provision and site

regeneration. This adds weight to the argument that Knowsley Council should confidently grant permission for the proposed change of use.

### Sequential Test Position Statement

Under the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Knowsley Local Plan, a sequential test is only required for main town centre uses such as retail, leisure, and offices. An F1(a) vocational training use does not fall within this definition and therefore a sequential test is not required.

Notwithstanding this, the following points demonstrate the suitability of the location:

- The building is a previously developed site that is available now and suitable for conversion, aligning with the NPPF objective of making effective use of land.
- The proposal is modest in scale and will not generate retail-type footfall or undermine the role of Huyton Town Centre or any other district centre.
- The training use has specific operational requirements (substantial workshop space, dedicated parking, accessibility for apprentices across the borough) which are not readily met by smaller or fragmented town centre units.
- Locating the facility within an existing residential and mixed-use community ensures good accessibility by public transport (regular bus services on Princess Drive) and by car, with on-site parking provided.

Accordingly, while the sequential test is not applicable, the site represents the most suitable, available and sustainable location to deliver this important community training facility.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, the proposed change of use of 601 Princess Drive from a former pub/function suite to a JTL vocational training centre is fully in accordance with planning policy at all levels. The development will secure a viable new life for a vacant building, delivering a use that yields significant social value in the form of skills training, educational attainment, and improved employment prospects for local residents. It aligns with Knowsley's development plan objectives by fostering economic growth, reusing brownfield land, and providing community infrastructure. It also aligns with the NPPF's core principles of sustainable development – economically (supporting a skilled workforce for local industries), socially (providing a community education service accessible to local young people), and environmentally (making effective use of an existing building with no major new construction).

There are no adverse impacts arising from this proposal: no design or heritage concerns, no amenity issues, and no traffic or safety problems that cannot be managed. By contrast, the benefits are clear and compelling. The scheme will contribute to up-skilling the borough's workforce, directly supporting Knowsley's and the City Region's regeneration initiatives that emphasize education and training. It will help meet the demand for construction and engineering skills fuelled by major regional investments, ensuring local people can take advantage of those job opportunities. The loss of the redundant pub use is outweighed by the positive community gain of the training centre, which itself will likely be a more neighbour-friendly use.

The comparable approved schemes highlighted from across the Liverpool City Region demonstrate that this type of development is not only acceptable in principle but desirable and successful in practice. Knowsley Council has declared support for projects that improve skills and create opportunities for residents – approving this change of use will be a tangible step toward those goals.

Planning Balance: When weighing the application, the presumption in favour of sustainable development (NPPF 11) applies. There are no policies in the Local Plan that conflict with this proposal; on the contrary, the proposal strongly supports the Local Plan's aims (employment, education, reuse of urban land). In the absence of any harm, the significant benefits of the scheme should be given substantial weight. The development will contribute to Knowsley's economic recovery and social improvement, which are top priorities for the Council's post-2020 strategies.

Conclusion and Request: This Planning Statement has demonstrated the compliance of the proposal with the Knowsley Local Plan and the NPPF, and has highlighted the wide-ranging benefits it will bring. The Council is therefore respectfully requested to grant planning permission for the change of use to a Class F1(a) vocational training facility. The proposal represents sustainable development that will make a positive contribution to the borough, and we look forward to working with Knowsley Council to realise this important apprenticeship training centre for the community.

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