

<u>APPLICATION NO:</u>	25/00624/FUL	<u>CASE OFFICER:</u>	Louise Robinson
<u>WARD:</u>	Prescot North	<u>PARISH:</u>	Prescot Town Council
<u>LOCATION:</u>	14 Merchant Close, Prescot, Knowsley, L34 1AJ		
<u>PROPOSAL:</u>	CONVERSION OF EXISTING GARAGE INTO HABITABLE ROOM		

Site Description

The property is a two-storey detached dwelling located on the cul-de-sac of Merchant Close, Prescot. The dwelling is characterised by Forterra Farmstead antique facing brick to all elevations, a tiled cross gable roof and white UPVC windows.

The dwelling has off-street parking available for 2 vehicles to the front.

The immediate surrounding area is characterised by dwellings of a similar design and facing the application site is a children's play area.

The dwellinghouse is situated within the South Prescot Action Area 1.

Site Constraints:

Former Waste Tipping Site (as per planning application 15/00022/OUT)

Proposal

Planning permission is sought for the conversion of the existing garage to form a habitable room, which would serve as a new lounge.

Condition 5 attached to planning application 17/00081/REM states 'the garages hereby permitted shall not be converted into living accommodation (either in whole or part) and shall be retained for use as garages by the dwellings hereby approved at all times.

The footprint of the existing garage would not be extended in any way. The existing garage door would be replaced with Forterra Farmstead antique facing brick and 1 white UPVC Ovolo frame with internal astragal bar window to match the existing dwellinghouse.

The proposed habitable room would continue to be served by the existing small, gable roof.

Consultations

Environmental Health – No objections in principle.

Representations

This application has been publicised by letters sent to 10 neighbours and 2 site notices displayed near to the site (as of 27 November 2025). No representations were received as a result of the publicity given to the application.

Planning History

15/00022/OUT	OUTLINE APPLICATION FOR MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT COMPRISING UP TO 750NO. DWELLINGS & UP TO 929 SQ M OF COMMERCIAL / INDUSTRIAL BUILDINGS (USE CLASSES B1B2/B8) – ALL MATTERS RESERVED FOR FUTURE APPROVAL Granted (20 December 2016)
17/00081/REM	RESERVED MATTERS APPLICATION FOR 150NO. DWELLINGS IN RESPECT OF PLANNING PERMISSION 15/00022/OUT (PARCEL B) – APPROVAL SOUGHT FOR APPEARANCE, LANDSCAPING, LAYOUT, SCALE & ACCESS Granted (24 July 2017)

Relevant Policy

Paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that planning decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. This means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or where the development plan is absent, silent or out of date planning permission should be granted unless the application of policies in the NPPF that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole.

Paragraph 12 of the NPPF clarifies that the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making. Where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan, permission should not normally be granted. Local planning authorities may take decisions that depart from an up-to-date development plan, but only if material considerations in a particular case indicate that the plan should not be followed.

The development plan in Knowsley comprises the Saved Policies of the Replacement Unitary Development Plan, the Core Strategy Local Plan and the Joint Waste Local Plan. The following policies are relevant to the determination of this application.

KNOWSLEY LOCAL PLAN: CORE STRATEGY

Policy CS2	Development Principles
Policy CS13	Principal Regeneration Area – South Prescott
Policy CS19	Design Quality and Accessibility in New Development

SAVED POLICIES - KNOWSLEY REPLACEMENT UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN (ADOPTED JUNE 2006)

Policy H5	Development Within Primarily Residential Areas
Policy H8	Extensions and Alterations to Residential Properties

SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS

Householder Development SPD
Ensuring a Choice of Travel SPD

Article 35 Statement

The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received and subsequently determining to grant planning permission in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework.

Assessment

Saved Policy H8 in the Replacement Unitary Development Plan (2006) states that proposals for extensions to dwellings, or for the erection of enlargement of domestic garages and outbuildings, will be permitted provided that:

- a) The proposals would not (due to their scale and massing) result in a disproportionate addition to the original dwelling.
- b) The design and materials to be used would reflect those used on the original dwelling.
- c) The proposal would not adversely affect the amenity or privacy of occupiers of adjacent dwellings.
- d) The proposal would not create potential hazards to highway users by obstructing visibility for pedestrians or drivers of motor vehicles.
- e) Adequate parking and garden space would remain for use by the residents of the extended property.

Principle of Development

The application site is situated within the South Prescot Action Area 1, as allocated by the Knowsley Local Plan: Core Strategy.

Policy CS13 of the Core Strategy outlines that 'the comprehensive redevelopment of the South Prescot Principal Regeneration Area for missed uses on previously developed land will be supported where it provided (in no order of priority)':

- b) New residential development, to provide a wider choice of housing types suitable for identified local needs.

As the site is now characterised by a new-build housing estate (built by multiple developers, the garage conversion is considered to be acceptable in principle, subject

to compliance with local planning policy and guidance.

Residential Amenity and Design

The footprint of the garage would not be extended in any direction.

The garage conversion would be visible from the wider street scene of Merchant Close and Prescott Park Way. The conversion would be finished in a Forterra Farmstead antique facing brickwork to match the existing dwellinghouse. Additionally, the brickwork would be built up to a height that would mirror that of the existing ground floor window within the front elevation to ensure congruency in the design of the dwelling. As the materials and design would match the existing dwelling, the proposal is considered to be acceptable in visual terms.

The additional 1 window within the front elevation does not raise any overlooking concerns as it would not provide any additional views not already available from the front of the dwelling.

The window to be installed would be white UPVC with an internal astragal bar. The material and design would match the materials of the existing fenestrations found at the dwelling and is acceptable in this instance.

Considering the impact on the neighbouring dwellings 12 Merchant Close and 2 Midsummer Avenue, the garage conversion would have no impact on the amenity of either neighbouring dwellings.

Therefore, the garage conversion is considered to be acceptable in terms of any impacts on the residential amenity and visual amenity of the host property and the surrounding area and complies with Policy H8 and guidance provided by the Householder Development SPD.

Highways

The Householder Development SPD advises that garages will normally count as contributing to the car parking provision where their internal dimensions are sufficient to allow them to be satisfactorily used as such. Minimum internal dimensions of 5.5m x 2.75m.

Following a google search, it has been confirmed that the property is a 4-bed dwellinghouse. The Householder Development SPD also outlines that the parking provision for a 4+ Bedroom Property should provide 3no. parking spaces within the curtilage of the dwelling.

The existing garage currently has a length of 6m and a width of 3m. As such, the internal dimensions of the garage are considered to count towards the parking provision of the site. Therefore, the garage conversion would result in the loss of 1 off-street parking space.

The application site currently benefits from a driveway to the front of the dwelling which measures approximately 6m in width and 5.6m (at its shortest point) and 6.8m (at its longest point). The length differs slightly due to the angled shaping of the driveway. The driveway has the parking provision for 2 vehicles.

As there would be only 2 parking spaces available on-site, this would fall below the required 3 spaces for a 4-bedroom property. Whilst it is noted that Condition 5 states

that garages shall not be converted into living accommodation, as the application site is situated at the 'top' of a private shared driveway which also serves 10 and 12 Merchant Close, there is availability for the 1 car parking space being displaced from the garage to be re-located to the private shared driveway, directly in front of the application sites 'tarmac' driveway. When measuring from the application sites hedges to the shared boundary line of No.12, there is a length of 8.1m. This is considered sufficient to allow for a further vehicle to park, without impacting the neighbouring dwellinghouse.

Therefore, it is considered that the shortfall of the 1 parking space would not cause significant harm in relation to the highway safety as the space can be safely re-located to the private shared driveway. As such, the proposal is considered to be acceptable.

Environmental Health

The property is located on a former brownfield site which was investigated and monitored under planning approval 15/00022/OUT. As part of the planning permission, earthworks were undertaken, and remediation measures were put into place to ensure that the site is suitable for residential end use.

The build phase remedial measures comprised:

- 600mm clean cover system comprising 150mm topsoil and 450mm subsoil.
- Gas Protection Measures (Characteristic Situation 2)

Environmental Health have no objections to the proposal, and a condition and informative will be included, to ease concerns.

Conclusion

The proposal would be acceptable in terms of any impacts on the residential and visual amenity and highway safety. The proposal also complies with the Knowsley Local Plan: Core Strategy, Replacement UDP Policies and guidance provided in the NPPF, and is therefore recommended for approval, subject to conditions.

Recommendation

That planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:

- 1) The development must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason: In order to comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)

- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and documents:

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt.

- 3) The materials to be used on the external surfaces of the extension hereby permitted shall match those of the existing building in type, size, colour and texture.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and to comply with Policy CS19 of the Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy, adopted January 2016, Saved Policy H8 of the Knowsley Replacement Unitary Development Plan, adopted in June 2006, and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

- 4) During works to make a door opening into the residential property and sealing up the garage door, ensure that the gas membrane is not damaged, as this will cause the gas membrane to be ineffective.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt.

SCHEDULE 1

Date Received	Ref. No	Version	Drawing/Document Title
20.11.2025	680/01	A	Existing and Proposed Plans Elevations

Signed Case Officer¹: **Louise Robinson**

Signed Authorising Officer²: **Jo Sheridan**

Date: **06/01/2025**

Informatives

- 1) The proposed development lies within a coal mining area which may contain unrecorded coal mining related hazards. If any coal mining feature is encountered during development, this should be reported immediately to the Mining Remediation Authority on 0345 762 6846 or if a hazard is encountered on site call the emergency line 0800 288 4242.

Further information is also available on the Mining Remediation Authority website at: Mining Remediation Authority - GOV.UK

Standing Advice valid from 1st January 2025 until 31st December 2026

¹ I confirm that I do not have a personal relationship with the applicant, agent or other interested parties; I also confirm that I do not have a financial interest in the site or the development proposed

² I confirm that I do not have a personal relationship with the applicant, agent or other interested parties; I also confirm that I do not have a financial interest in the site or the development proposed

- 2) Based on the information available to this division and the previous remediation undertaken at this site, in relation to contaminated land, there is the potential that some contamination may still exist below the hard standing of the patio area and beneath 600mm within the garden. The responsibility to properly address contaminated land issues lies with the owner/developer of the site, irrespective of any involvement by this Authority. The applicant/developer is requested to contact the Council's Environmental Protection Unit (Tel: 0151 443 4712) as soon as is practicable should contamination be encountered during the development of the site.

If contaminated material is encountered the applicant/developer is required to dispose of the contaminated arisings appropriately. They should also be aware of their health and safety responsibilities to workers in respect of handling such materials. The developer should also ensure that no pathways are created by which any contamination may either migrate off-site or affect site users. Therefore, we have also suggested a condition to control any dust during the excavation works.

Site Photographs

