

PLANNING, DESIGN, ACCESS AND HERITAGE STATEMENT

APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION

For the conversion of 3 former agricultural buildings to create 2 dwellings,
garden study, associated garaging, means of access and external
landscaping works.

Former Coach House Farm, Cut Lane, Knowsley, L33 3AQ



Applicant:

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Version 1: May 2022

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1.0 Purpose and Brief

This document has been prepared to support an application submitted to Knowsley Council relating to Coach House Farm, Knowsley. The description of development given on the application form is:

“conversion of 3 former agricultural buildings to create 2 dwellings, garden study, associated garaging, means of access and external landscaping works, former Coach House Farmhouse, Cut Lane, Knowsley, L33 3AQ.”

The purpose of this document is as follows:

- To describe the site and its context;
- To provide details of the proposed development;
- To demonstrate that the proposed development is sustainable and complies with relevant national and local planning policies;
- To assess impact on heritage assets and historic significance;
- To describe how the design of the proposed development responds positively to its surroundings;
- To demonstrate how the proposed development can be accessed in a sustainable manner;
- To consider any other material considerations;
- To demonstrate a planning policy presumption in favour of the proposed development.

2.0 The Site and its Context

Site Location

The site is located in the open countryside 2km north east of Knowsley Village. The OS Grid reference for the development site is SJ 45572 97381.



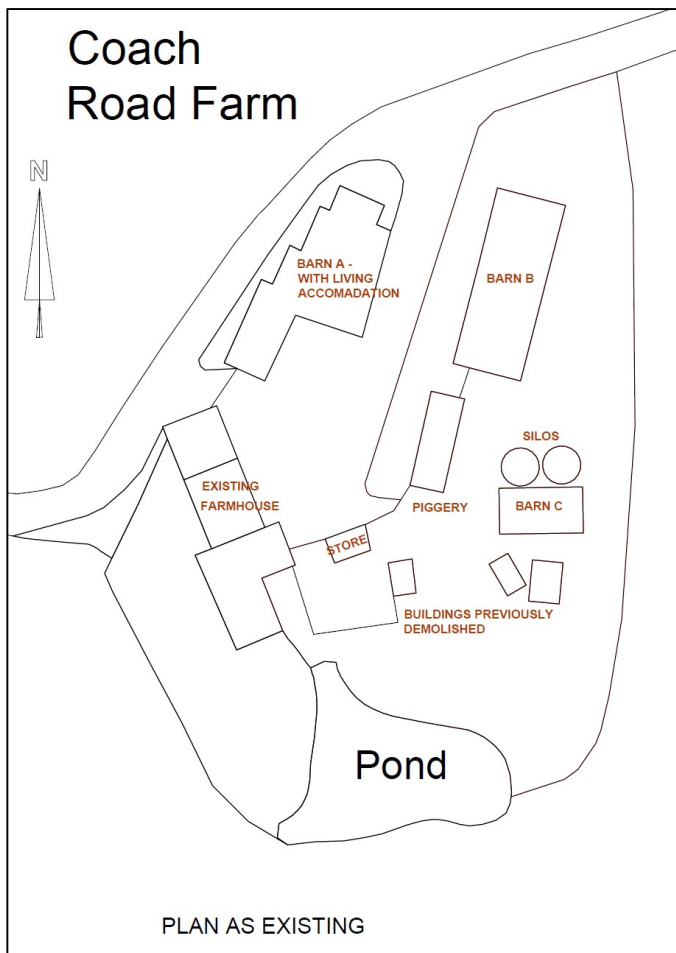
Images taken from Google Maps.

Description of the Site

A thorough assessment of the evolution of the site since the mid-18th Century is included in the Heritage Statement in Section 6. The application site area measures 0.25 hectares (0.62 acres) and currently accommodates a large brick / stone barn, brick-built piggery, hardstanding areas and a steel-framed Dutch barn relating to the site's former use as part of a much larger working farm.

The application site was formerly part of a larger agricultural holding, but has since been split off and the fields were sold to a neighbouring farm leaving the former farmhouse and outbuildings within an 'island' plot to which this application relates.

Access is gained from Cut Lane, which is paved and adopted as far as the site, before becoming an unadopted track which connects to Coach Road. A group of trees and hedges separate neighbouring agricultural land and provide the southern and eastern boundaries and Cut Lane provides the northern and western boundary.



Surrounding Area

The site is in open countryside within the south west Lancashire Green Belt, which has existed since the 1960's and last updated in 1983 and exists to protect the open countryside between the large settlements of St. Helens, Kirkby, Skelmersdale and Prescott.

The site does not lie within any defined settlement boundary within the settlement hierarchy for the Borough and is therefore a countryside location. However, the buildings within the site form a discernible group with the dwellings immediately to the south west of the site (Moss Cottages) and, to a slightly lesser degree, the house at the junction of Coach Road and East Lancashire Road.

The form of development in the vicinity of the site is characterised by sporadic buildings, often one or two houses and agricultural buildings. This is typical of the dispersed and sporadic groups of buildings dotted around the surrounding flat agrarian landscape that is typical of this part of the Green Belt. It is interesting to note (see Section 6 Heritage Statement) that there were at least 4 other farmsteads within a half mile radius of the site; and these are recorded on historic maps surveyed between the early 19th and early 20th centuries, but have since disappeared from the landscape. This is probably a consequence of those farms being combined into larger units resulting in the redundancy of those farmhouses.

The site has been used as a working farm for several hundred years. The stone barn is dated 1759 with later additions, the farmhouse has been recorded since 1769, together with later barns and silos dating from the mid-20th century. The gross area presently on site occupied by buildings and structures is 817.5 sq. m. and the detailed breakdown is as follows:

Coach House Farm – Existing Buildings		
Building	Gross site area (sq. m.)	Gross volume (sq. m.)
Farmhouse	230	1,181
Barn 'A'	231	1,404
Barn 'B'	210	1,470
Barn 'C'	61	195
Piggery	53	188
Two silos	16	166.4
Store	16.5	47
Total	817.5	4,651.4

3.0 The Proposed Scheme

The proposed scheme has been developed following a pre-planning application made to Knowsley Borough Council in September 2021 (reference 21/00050/PREAPP). During these discussions, two development options were presented and the planning authority expressed a preference for the re-use of the existing buildings on site and identified the presence of non-designated heritage assets. This has informed the following proposal which is hereby submitted:

- Conversion of 2 substantial barns to provide 2 new dwellings, including the sympathetic conversion of the 1759 barn in accordance with Historic England's published guidance in the re-use of redundant rural heritage buildings;
- Conversion of existing piggery to provide a garden office / study / store for one of the new dwellings;
- Means of access from Cut Lane;
- Landscaping and boundary treatment.

4.0 Site Planning History

According to the Knowsley Council Planning Explorer website and pre-application planning report, there does not appear to be any recent planning history for the site.

5.0 Relevant Planning Policies

The site forms part of the Green Belt under Knowsley Council's Core Strategy Policy CS5. The main purpose of this policy is to provide a barrier to prevent coalescence of neighbouring settlements and to retain the open landscape character of the area.

The Council's planning policy and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) state that to maintain openness, development within the Green Belt must be strictly controlled and that when considering applications for planning permission in this location, a presumption against inappropriate development will apply. Substantial weight should be attached to any harmful impact which a development would have on the purposes of Green Belt designation.

Paragraph 147 of the NPPF states that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. However, planning policy allows for the change of use, adaptation and the construction of new buildings within the Green Belt in certain circumstances. Paragraph 150 of the NPPF sets out the forms of development that are not inappropriate in the Green Belt, provided that they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. The re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction is considered to be not inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

There are no local development plan policies that specifically address conversion of rural buildings to dwellings, but saved Policy G6 of the Knowsley Replacement Unitary Development Plan, adopted June 2006, relates to the conversion or change of use of existing buildings in the Green Belt. Policy G6 states that proposals for the conversion or change of use of existing buildings in the Green Belt will be permitted provided they meet all the following criteria:

- a) The proposals would not have a materially greater impact than the present use on the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land in it;
- b) The building is of permanent and substantial construction and major reconstruction would not be necessary to accommodate the proposed development;

- c) Any intrinsic architectural qualities of the building itself would be preserved or enhanced;
- d) All building work involved would be in keeping with its surroundings, respecting local building styles and materials;
- e) Any associated vehicular access routes, boundary treatments, utility services, gardens, storage or vehicle parking areas would be provided without harming the appearance of the surrounding area;
- f) In the case of buildings which may be used by bats, barn owls or other protected species, the possible presence of such species must be investigated and where appropriate, measures must be implemented to ensure that any damage to habitats is minimised;
- g) Where the change of use is associated with farm diversification the proposal would not lead to the subsequent fragmentation of the agricultural unit by separate sale of the building;
- h) There would not be an unacceptable impact on the amenity of existing neighbouring occupiers;
- i) The traffic generated would not be detrimental to either highway safety or environmental quality;

There are further detailed local planning policies and supplementary planning documents which seek to encourage high design quality and accessibility in new developments, manage the borough's historic environment and ensure sustainable travel, waste management and drainage; and are all applicable to this development.

It is considered that this proposal to convert the agricultural buildings to residential use would be acceptable in principle. The development would preserve the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. The existing buildings are of permanent and substantial construction and major reconstruction would not be necessary to accommodate the proposed development. An assessment of heritage has been undertaken and has informed the design approach to retain original fabric and ensure changes are legible.

6.0 Heritage Statement

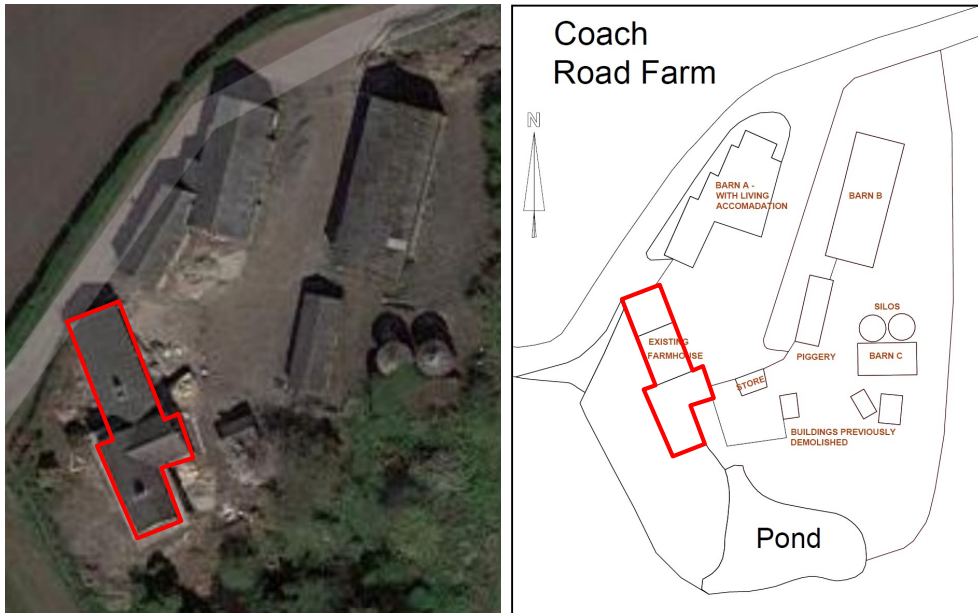
There are no listed buildings within or adjacent to the development site and it is not within a conservation area, but there are two non-designated heritage assets within and adjacent to the proposed development site and are recorded on the Historic Environment Record. These are recorded as 'MME12046 - Barn or outbuilding of Coach Road, Cut Lane, an 18th century building' and 'MME6139 - Farmhouse of Coach Road Farm, Cut Lane, an 18th century building'.

NPPF Paragraph 203 states the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

The farmhouse (MME6139) does not form part of the development, but is immediately adjacent to the development site and the proposed development has the potential to impact upon the setting of this building. A 3D model has been prepared to show how the scale and massing of the development relates to the farmhouse.

The stone barn (MME12046) forms part of this proposal for conversion into a dwelling and this has the potential to remove, alter or obscure historic fabric. A historic buildings assessment has been undertaken to identify the significant elements of this building that should be retained; and help to ensure any changes made are legible in accordance with best practice in the adaptation of historic buildings.

The historic environment record has been consulted and historic maps reviewed to understand how the site and immediate surroundings have evolved since these records began.



MME6139

Coach Road Farm, Cut Lane, Kirkby

Description: Coach Road Farm, Cut Lane, Kirkby. (1)

The Molyneux estate plan of 1769 shows a building on this site and records it as No. 93, a messuage, garden and fold, occupied by Henry Pickering. (2)

The Tithe map of 1839 records it as No. 1124, a house, buildings, fold and garden owned by the Earl of Sefton and occupied by William Owen. (3-4)

The 1st edition 6" OS map of 1850 shows it as a small L-shaped building.

The 1st edition 25" OS map of 1893 shows it extended to the north and labels the site as Gore's Farm.

Country: England

District: KNOWSLEY

Parish: KIRKBY

Townland: KIRKBY

Grid Reference: SJ455973

Map Reference: [EPSG:27700] 345551, 397371

Period/Subject: 1769 TO 2050 - HOUSE

Identifiers:

[ADS] Depositor Id: MME6139

[ADS] Associated Id: HBSMR Id: MME6139

[ADS] Associated Id: Related Monument: MME12046

[ADS] Associated Id: Related Resource: SME1

[ADS] Associated Id: Related Resource: SME1000

[ADS] Associated Id: Related Resource: SME1001

[ADS] Associated Id: Related Resource: SME999

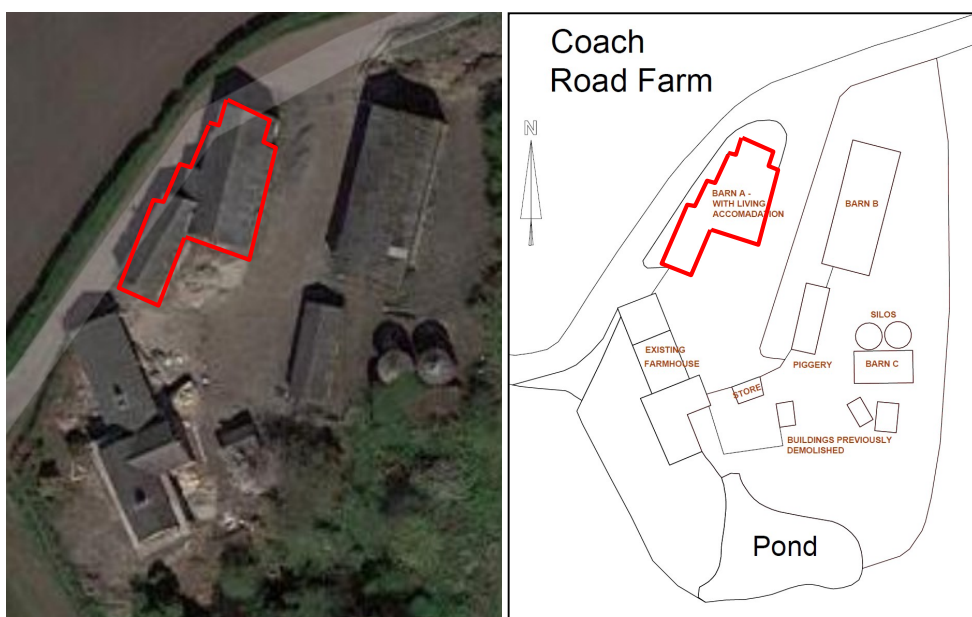
[ADS] Associated Id: Related Casework: CME2152

[ADS] Import RCN: MHER15-MME6139

People Involved:

[Publisher] Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service

<https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archsearch/record?titleId=3306072>



MME12046

Barn and outbuildings of Coach Road Farm, Cut Lane, Kirkby

Description: Barn and outbuildings of Coach Road Farm, Cut Lane, Kirkby.

The Molyneux estate plan of 1769 shows a small building on this site. The field is recorded as Barn Hey, part of holding No. 92, occupied by Henry Pilkington. The house to the south is recorded as No. 93, a messuage, garden and fold, occupied by Henry Pickering, with no mention of outbuildings. (1)

The Tithe map of 1839 shows the same arrangement and records it as No. 1124, a house, buildings, fold and garden, owned by the Earl of Sefton and occupied by William Owen. The fields of the two holdings recorded in 1769 are listed together under this one larger holding. (2-3)

The 1st edition 6" OS map of 1850 shows the current structure.

It is unclear if any of the earlier structure is contained within the extant buildings.

Country: England

District: KNOWSLEY

Parish: KIRKBY

Townland: KIRKBY

Grid Reference: SJ455974

Map Reference: [EPSG:27700] 345562, 397403

Period: 1850 TO 2050

Subject: BARN, OUTBUILDING

Identifiers:

[ADS] Depositor Id: MME12046

[ADS] Associated Id: HBSMR Id: MME12046

[ADS] Associated Id: Related Monument: MME6139

[ADS] Associated Id: Related Resource: SME1000

[ADS] Associated Id: Related Resource: SME1001

[ADS] Associated Id: Related Resource: SME999

[ADS] Associated Id: Related Casework: CME2152

[ADS] Import RCN: MHER15-MME12046

People Involved:

[Publisher] Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service

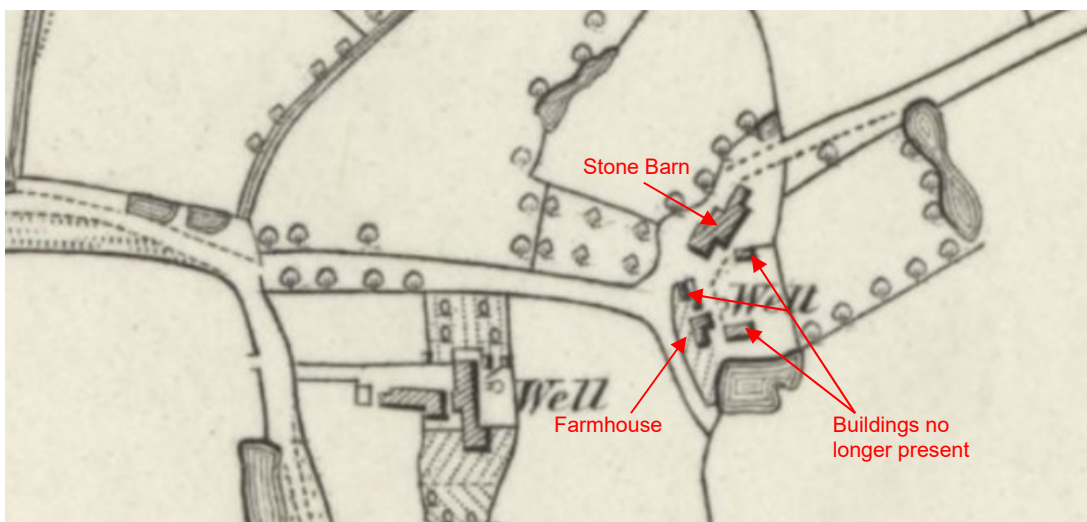
<https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archsearch/record?titleId=3310281>

Historic Maps Review

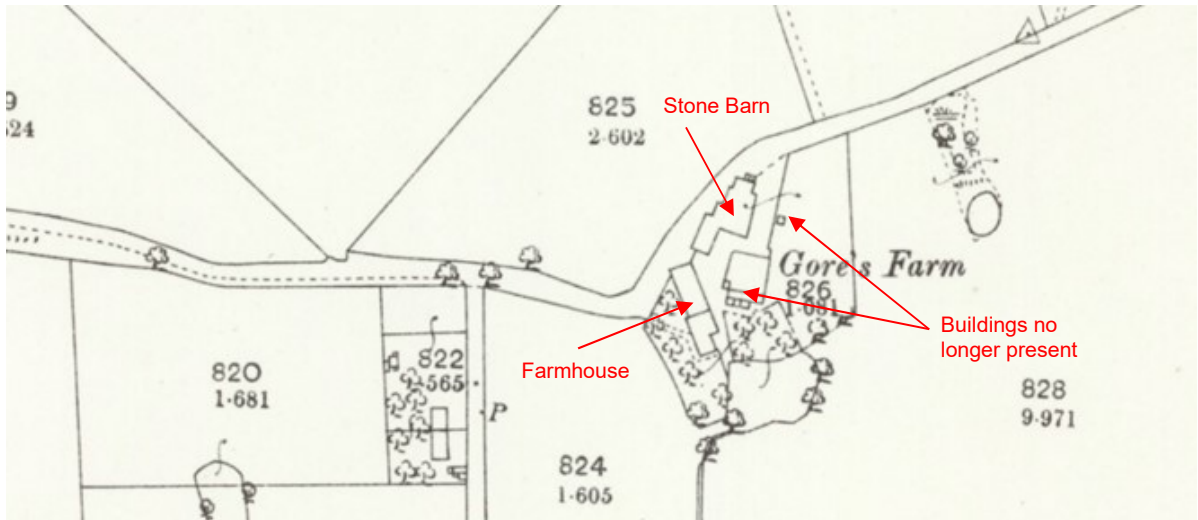
A review of historic maps published since the early 19th Century has been undertaken to determine how the site and immediate surroundings have evolved. The stone barn is shown in its entirety since the first historic map record dated 1845 and this footprint remains constant up to the most recent historic map of 1939 and indeed, this is the footprint currently present on site. The barn has an inscribed stone window head recording a date of 1759 together with the letters 'H P' which are probably the initials of either the 'Henry Pickering' or 'Henry Pilkington' tenants referred to in the HER.

The farmhouse is shown on the 1845 map as an 'L-shaped' structure smaller to that which currently exists, and by the 1892 map, the building had achieved its current footprint with the earlier 'L-shaped' portion incorporated to the south side. It appears the farmhouse was further altered in 1906 as there is a stone plaque inscribed 'Coach Road Farm 1906' on the gable end, yet maps record the site as 'Gore's Farm'. The piggery, although not a designated heritage asset, first appears on the 1907 map and by this time, the farm had developed with a number of other structures that are no longer present. A large open-sided structure to the north of the Piggery had appeared after 1907 and is present on the 1939 map, this is roughly in the same location as the current Dutch Barn, although this dates from the mid-20th Century.

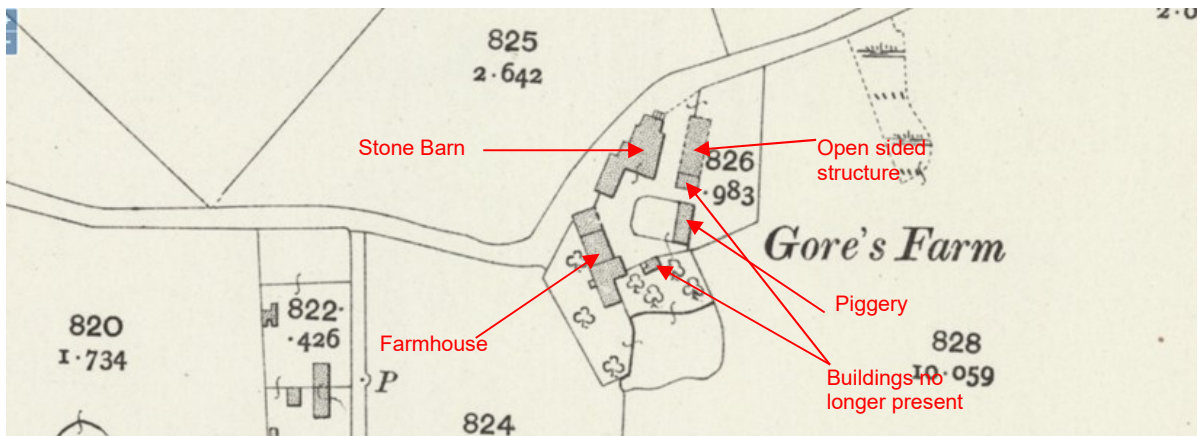
The historic maps also show that within a half mile radius of the site, there were three other named farmsteads, for example "Cut House", but these had all disappeared by the mid-20th Century. This is probably a consequence of smaller farms being amalgamated into larger land units, leading to the redundancy of these dwellings.



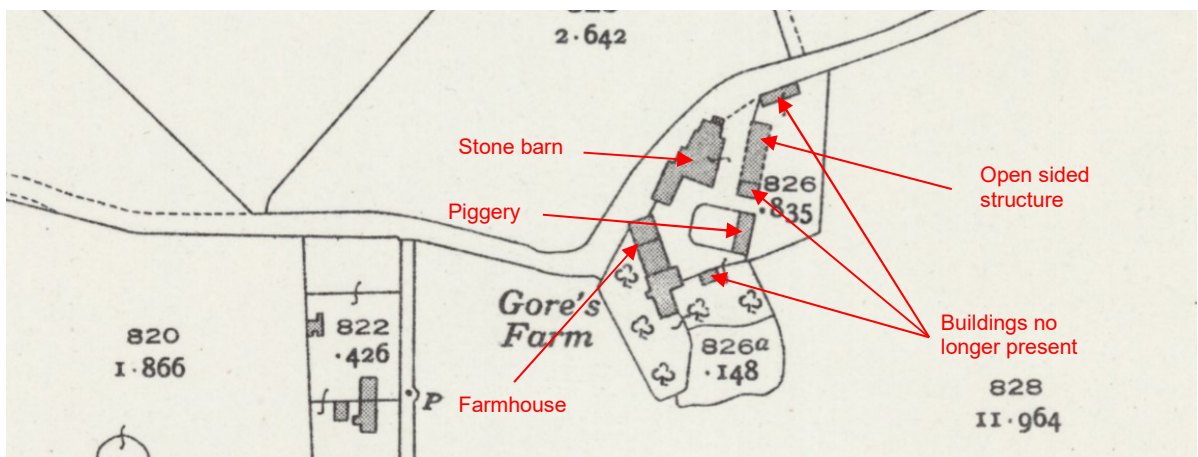
1845 Map



1892 Map



1907 Map



1939 Map

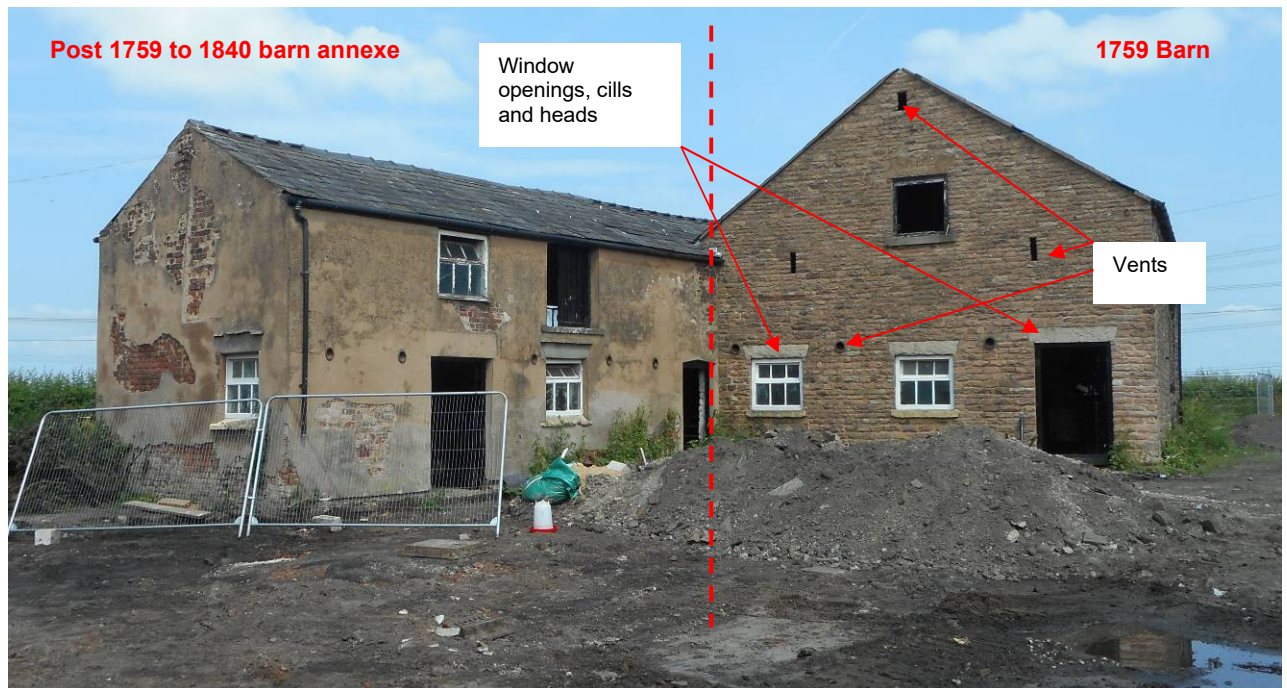
Assessment of Significance

We have prepared this Heritage Statement and assessed significance using established guidance on the assessment of significance contained in the National Planning Policy Framework together with English Heritage / Historic England publications including 'Informed Conservation' and 'Conservation Principles'. Knowsley Council have no specific guidance on the adaptation of historic rural buildings, but Historic England has published 'Farmstead Assessment Framework' and 'Adapting Traditional Farm Buildings Best Practice Guidelines for Adaptive Reuse', which provide guidance on how significance and character can be assessed and how it can be retained and enhanced through sympathetic development. The following table is an assessment of the significance of the site that has informed the approach to design.

Element	Significance and character	Design considerations
Historic landscape setting	High significance The hedgerows and trees on the eastern and southern site boundary are highly visible in the surrounding flat landscape and serve to increase the prominence of the site in the wider landscape. There are more open views into the site when viewed from the west and north directions and the barn buildings are highly prominent.	Retain hedgerows and trees and supplement with new planting to strengthen the green edge to the site and improve wildlife habitat. Enhance significant views to and from the site, through careful use of local materials for boundaries, access and surfaces so they respect local character. Minimise external lighting which can lend a suburban character to rural areas.
Farmhouse	High significance HER established this dates from the 18 th Century and is a non-designated heritage asset. Farmhouse does not form part of the proposal, but its setting is highly significant. The farmhouse is visible from outside the site boundary and retains its external traditional appearance and the phases of development shown on the historic maps can be clearly discerned.	Retain the space and separation between the farmhouse and the stone barn. No extensions on south side of the stone barn as this will reduce the spatial separation with the farmhouse. Ensure views to and from the farmhouse are not obscured.
Stone Barn	High significance HER established this dates from the 18 th Century and is a non-designated heritage asset. Barn is proposed for conversion into new dwelling and this will need to preserve its existing character and appearance.	Retain existing historic details - particularly openings (including windows, cart door and breather vents), roof details and external masonry detailing such as quoins, heads and cills. Minimise alterations to prominent and significant external elevations through careful attention to internal planning and circulation and how and where to

	There are various original openings including windows and breather vents, inscribed stone lintel 'H P 1759', original stonework to walls including feature sandstone lintels and quoins and diminishing course slate roof. The barn is highly prominent when the site is viewed from the west direction.	introduce light. The size, proportion and detail of window and door design and materials will have a major impact on overall appearance and significant changes should be confined to less visible or less significant areas that have already been subject to change. Repair historic fabric with suitable traditional materials and techniques. Conserve double-height open interior in part of the internal space and allow original roof elements including substantial king post trusses and purlins to remain visible in the new dwelling.
Dutch Barn	Low significance. Mid-20th Century steel frame barn structure with solid profiled metal roof and profiled metal / timber wall cladding. This is a highly visible structure within the group, particularly from the north and west directions.	Barn is proposed for conversion into new dwelling and this will need to carefully consider how best to use traditional materials like natural stone and brick used in the farmhouse and stone barn, but in a contemporary manner with no attempt to recreate an 18th Century pastiche.
Below ground archaeology	Medium significance Human use for several hundred years and buildings shown on early maps that are no longer present, provide an opportunity to investigate the potential for below ground archaeology.	A desk-based archaeology survey should be requested as a planning condition, together with a record of the stone barn prior to and during conversion works.

Stone Barn – Key External Architectural Features



Above: Stone Barn internal courtyard elevation looking north



Above: Stone Barn annexe north west external elevation



Above: Stone Barn annexe south west external elevation



Above: Stone Barn east facing elevation



Above: Stone Barn internal view showing original principal roof timbers to be retained

Design considerations in relation to the conversion of the Stone Barn

- Retain original openings including windows, doors and breather vents (note the vents will be blocked internally but this will not be discernible from the exterior);
- Changes to window and door openings should be legible to identify change – for example retain original lintels and opening width where windows are converted to doors, blocked up windows to be set in reveal. All new openings to be set in reveal;
- Retain natural diminishing slate roof and internal primary roof timbers. Note that the external roofline needs to be raised by 200mm in order to provide roof insulation in a manner that does not obscure the original purlins.
- Retain original cart entrance on east elevation, but infill with timber window within the original opening and set in reveal. Remove later sliding door gear and fascia in order to reveal original stone lintel.
- Barn annex provides greater opportunity for change than the main 1759 portion, as the original brickwork has been damaged by modern applied cement render and outer wall is bowing and requires re-building in accordance with the structural engineer's report.

7.0 Design Statement and Assessment of Landscape Character

Assessment of surrounding landscape character

The landscape character assessment was undertaken to demonstrate how the development would be appropriate within the Green Belt as it would not conflict with its purpose, is appropriate in scale to its location, would maintain the spacious open landscape character and not be incongruous within the wider landscape.

A survey of the site and surrounding landscape was undertaken and an appraisal made of the landscape character using published guidance from Natural England together with detailed guidance in Knowsley Council's Supplementary Planning Document: 'Design Quality in New Development'.

The following issues have been considered:

- Assessment of surrounding landscape character;
- Minimising visual impact on the surrounding landscape;
- Site layout and design;
- Access, traffic generation and parking.

The Council's Core Strategy includes a requirement that all development proposals should recognise environmental limits, protect and enhance environmental assets, enhance local character and promote quality of place by understanding and respecting the character and distinctiveness of places and landscapes.

Visual impact on the surrounding landscape

The site is low lying and is visible within the surrounding landscape for quite some considerable distance of up to 500m away. The following key views from surrounding routes and publicly-accessible land have been plotted:

- View 1 - looking north from East Lancashire Road;
- View 2 – looking east from Cut Lane;
- View 3 - looking south west from Coach Lane;
- View 4 – looking north west from Coach Lane;
- View 5 – general views from within the Green Belt from up to 1km away.

These are shown in Figure 1 below. The site is screened along the southern and eastern boundaries with perimeter landscaping comprising mixed deciduous trees and hedges. These coalesce together to screen the site from the east.





View 1: Looking north from East Lancashire Road. The existing buildings to be retained provide the dominant features. This view will remain unchanged and the 200mm increase in roof height for the Barn will not be apparent.



View 2: Looking east from Cut Lane. The existing buildings to be retained provide the dominant feature and this view will remain largely unchanged



View 3: Existing view looking south west. The perimeter landscaping effectively screens the site



View 4: Looking north west from Coach Lane



View 5: Typical longer range view from within the Green Belt

Site Layout and Design

The proposal has been developed following the landscape character appraisal and site analysis. It must be emphasised that all the existing perimeter landscaping including hedges and trees will be retained and strengthened.

The conversion to residential use is accommodated within the existing footprint of the Stone Barn and Dutch Barn, but with a modest increase in the height of the roofline to allow for insulation. The Dutch Barn footprint will be increased to accommodate a modest single storey porch. A detached garage is proposed to serve the Stone Barn. The single storey porch and garage will be effectively screened by the perimeter landscaping.

The Dutch Barn will be re-clad utilising the existing steel frame, wall and roof supporting structure and foundations (please refer to structural engineer's report) and this is of permanent and substantial construction and major reconstruction would not be necessary to accommodate the proposed development. It is intended to re-clad the Dutch barn in a traditional facing brick to complement the historic structures on site.

Impact on the Green Belt

The proposal would not result in additional built form or sprawl in the countryside as it would re-use existing buildings, but due to having to raise the roofline of the Stone Barn by 200mm in order to accommodate roof insulation in a manner that allows the historic roof timbers to remain visible internally, there will be a modest increase in total volume of 1.1%. The guidance notes to Local Plan Policy G6 states that as a guideline, increases of less than 10% in the volume of the building will not normally be considered to have a materially greater impact on the openness of an area. However, in all cases the design of a scheme must be of high quality and preserve any intrinsic architectural qualities of the building and its setting. It is considered that the retention of the historic roof timbers to allow for modern insulation standards required by building regulations satisfies the test of preserving the intrinsic architectural qualities of the building.

A 200mm increase in height is considered to have no detrimental impact on the spacious and open nature of the Green Belt, following an assessment of key views into the site from the surrounding countryside. There will be no increase in coalescence between the farmhouse and barn buildings from the key views. The

dense perimeter landscaping, which will be strengthened, will obscure views of the modest single storey garage. The increase in volume arises from a proposed 200mm higher raised roofline to facilitate roof insulation within the barn conversions and porch addition and this would represent a modest height and volume increase, but is countered by the removal of other buildings from the site, particularly the silos, which would avoid a reduction in the openness of the GB.

The removal of the silos and other agricultural structures will see a reduction in the overall building volume and building footprint within the site. This will result in a more open site and it could be argued that the proposal would increase openness and would therefore go beyond the Framework's requirement to merely preserve openness.

The current massing of the structures on site would be unchanged when viewed against the backdrop of the existing landscape. The dominant features would still comprise the retained existing farmhouse and barns. The site would retain its compact 'island' appearance against the vast openness of the Green Belt and there would be little discernible difference. The residential use will also see the removal of large farm vehicles and other machinery from the site which would result in some visual improvement.

When considering the visual or perceived impact on openness, the site is set back at the end of the lane. The site is contained by the existing trees and hedges that grow along its boundaries. The proposal would improve site permeability by opening up views into the site by the removal of the silos, the size of the vehicles using the site would reduce and the balance of hardstanding and garden would represent an improved level of visual openness compared to the existing agricultural yard use.

It is accepted that the creation of enclosed residential gardens for the two new dwellings and vehicular parking bays would alter the character of the former farmyard to one which is more domestic in character, but it would not take on the appearance of a suburban housing estate due to the sympathetic re-use of the existing buildings and wider agricultural character. The proposal would bring vehicles onto the site and these would include private cars and other vehicles associated with a residential use such as trade and delivery vehicles. Other domestic paraphernalia sited in the open such as garden furniture, children's play equipment and refuse bins would also be a feature, however, the proposal would not encroach into the countryside. Rather, the extent of the two garden plots would be contained within

the existing farmyard curtilage and the dense screening would obscure low height domestic paraphernalia.

Streetscape

Proposed streetscape views are shown on drawing MG2022/17. A separate document has also been prepared which contains a number of 3D viewpoints.

Coach Road Farm – Building Volumes

DUTCH BARN

Existing = 1,449m ³	Proposed = 1,619 m ³	% Increase = 10.5%
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PIGGERY

Existing = 187 m ³	Proposed = 198 m ³	% Increase = 5.9%
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STONE BARN

Existing = 1,302 m ³	Proposed = 1,352 m ³	
	+ Garage 105m ³ = 1,457m ³	% Increase = 11.9%

OVERALL VOLUMES

Existing = 2,938m ³	Proposed = 3,274m ³	% Increase = 11.4%
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8.0 Access and Traffic

Access, traffic generation and parking

Vehicular access would be from Cut Lane which forms the northern boundary of the site. During the pre-application submission, The Council's highways officer raised concerns around the proposal, stating that they would likely object to development along Cut Lane, which could result in an intensification of vehicular use as it is narrow and single track for much of its length and without any notable vehicle passing places. The highway officer was concerned that vehicles would either mount the verge or likely reverse for a significant distance should they meet head on. Therefore any proposals resulting in additional vehicles traveling the lane could be viewed unfavourably. However, we do not consider this to be a reasonable assessment.

The proposal is for a minor development of 2 new dwelling houses formed from the barn conversions. Additional trip generation factors of 0.7 or 0.8 vehicle movements in the peak hour would suggest up to 2 additional vehicle movements along Cut Lane during the busiest hour, which will have no material impact on traffic flows on the wider highway network.

The previous agricultural use had the potential to generate far more highway movements, particularly as the Dutch barn was used to store agricultural vehicles which regularly used Cut Lane to access the working farm's fields. This use has now ceased. Cut Lane is not a through road, the adopted paved highway terminates at the site and beyond this it continues as an unadopted and unmade track.

The section of Cut Lane between the application site and it's junction with Molly's Lane / Sandy Brow Lane and Hewitt's Lane is 1.4km in length and would serve the application site, together with the Cottage Kennels & Cattery located to the south and two neighbouring dwelling houses. Along this section of single track road there are 11 passing places, roughly one every 130 metres which provides an acceptable number of passing places given the low traffic volumes. Traffic speeds are very low and less than 20 mph.

The new dwellings would have a total of 9 off-road parking spaces, including internal garage space. This exceeds the Council's parking standards and reflects the rural location where public transport is not readily available. There is sufficient space to manoeuvre vehicles on the site and they would be able to leave the site in a forward gear.

9.0 Flood Risk, Surface Water and Drainage

According to the Environment Agency's Flood Map for Planning, the site is located within Flood Zone 1, therefore, flooding is not considered to be a risk and consequently a flood consequences assessment is not required.

All surface water arising from the development will be discharged using SUDS in line with current legislation.

Foul and grey water will be disposed of via new septic tanks due to the lack of mains drainage.

10.0 The Natural Environment

None of the site falls within a statutory protected category. The principal features of biodiversity interest on the wider site are the boundary trees and hedges which surround the site. There will be no clearance of any boundary hedges or trees as part of this proposal. There is also a large pond on site and this will remain in situ and not be disturbed. The applicant will need to establish whether this is a potential candidate habitat for great crested newts

The dilapidated outbuildings have potential for roosting bats and a survey has been undertaken by ADAS as part of this application and precautionary mitigation measures will be required immediately prior to and during construction, to avoid any potential impacts on bats and nesting birds. Site clearance would be undertaken outside of the nesting bird season and if any active nests are found demolition / clearance works would be delayed until nesting activity has ceased and has been confirmed by the ecologist.

The proposed development of the site will not harm any protected species and has the potential for significant biodiversity gains if the principal features of biodiversity interest within the site are enhanced.

11.0 Summary of the Benefits of the Proposed Development

The applicant believes this proposal would accord with the published planning policy and that there are material considerations which support this proposal.

- The proposal would sustainably re-purpose a currently under-used site to provide much needed new housing;
- There would be no significant new building volume introduced into the Green Belt, therefore the development would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing buildings;
- The proposal would result in a negligible increase in traffic which will not result in any detriment to highway capacity or safety to the existing highway network;
- The proposal would have no detrimental impact on the Green Belt and would maintain its spacious open character. Indeed, the removal of the later silo and steel barn structures would have a positive effect;
- The proposal will not harm biodiversity.
- Amenity for neighbouring properties would be safeguarded by way of the existing landscape screening which blocks all views to the development.
- The proposal will not result in any detrimental visual impact on the wider surrounding landscape or harm long, medium and short range views towards the site from the surrounding landscape when viewed from up to 1km away.