

Heritage statement for conversion of Knowsley Village Hall, School Lane, Knowsley Village into three dwellings



Plate 1. The application site

Hinchliffe Heritage
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Heritage Statement for Conversion of Knowsley Village Hall, School Lane, Knowsley Village

1. Introduction

1.1 This Heritage Statement has been prepared to support an application for planning permission for the change of use and conversion of Knowsley Village Hall, School Lane, Knowsley Village into three dwellings.

1.2 Knowsley Village Hall is no longer in use. It has been sold by Knowsley Borough Council to the applicant, who is seeking consent to convert it into three residential units. The building has been disused for several years and it remains vacant.

1.3 This heritage statement aims: to consider the heritage significance of the application site and its setting; to assess the impact of the proposed development on that heritage significance and the townscape and; to meet the requirements of Para 200 of the NPPF.

1.4 This statement has been informed by a visit to the site, desk-based research and an inspection of the records on the building and adjacent sites at Liverpool Local Records Office and the Merseyside Historic Environment Record.

1.5 The application site is within the Knowsley Village Conservation Area and in the vicinity of three Grade II listed buildings. The proposal has the potential to have an impact on these designated heritage assets and/or their settings.

1.6 Knowsley Council stated in its sales/development brief that the village hall is a non-designated heritage asset.

1.7 In preparing this statement, particular regard has been paid to the advice in Para.s 200, 201 and 209 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2023:

200. In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance....

201. Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this assessment into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

209. 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.

1.8 This Heritage Statement has been prepared by John Hinchliffe BA (Hons), BPI, MSc (Blg Heritage & Conservation), IHBC, RTPi of Hinchliffe Heritage.

2. Description of the Application Site and Knowsley Village

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The application site is in the primarily residential centre of the historic Knowsley Village in the Metropolitan Borough of Knowsley, approx 5km N of Huyton and 10km NE of Liverpool City Centre.

2.1.2 It is within an “urban fringe” location of mostly flat land and has a very mixed wider setting. The village retains some large agricultural fields to the SW and NE but: beyond a small open field to the N is a large industrial estate in the SE quadrant of the A580 (East Lancs Road) and the M57 Mortorway and; to the SE is a large suburban estate, which was built within the W edge of Knowsley Park, the majority of which survives as open parkland and the Knowsley Safari Park. The village is served by the B5202 (Knowsley Road) and the B5194 (School Lane).

2.1.3 The application site is part of the historic Knowsley Village, which has evolved since at least the 11th C, with the primary function as an estate village for the Earls of Derby (and their predecessors) at Knowsley Hall, which is approx 2km to the SE within Knowsley Park.

2.2 The Application Site

2.2.1 The application site is the former village hall which was built 1896-7 to the design of John Leslie the Knowsley Estate Surveyor.

2.2.2 The building was used for many years as village hall and parish meeting rooms, and was used as a Covid vaccination centre during the pandemic but has been disused ever since.

2.2.3 The building is located in the historic village centre, opposite the village green, and near the village church and girls school, at the junction of Knowsley Road, School Lane and Tithebarn Lane. It is set back approx 5m from the back of the pavement behind a low brick wall with red sandstone copings and piers.

2.2.4 The building is an odd mix of historic revival architectural styles, with some Arts and Crafts influences, some classical influences and some additions and alterations. It is constructed primarily in red common bricks but has many red sandstone ashlar dressings and a gable of black and white timber framing on the central dormer. It has a roof covering of natural blue slates. At the W end of the axial ridge is a tall brick chimney with a string course half-way up and a stone cap but on the E end is a ball finial.

Pevsner describes it, somewhat unfairly, in *The Buildings of England: Lancashire - Liverpool and SW*:

...both bigger and uglier than one might expect. 1896-7, by John Leslie, estate surveyor.

Front Elevation

2.2.5 The front elevation is a symmetrical arrangement of two front-facing gabled bays on each side of a central arcade of four round arches with keystones on stone doric columns, although a stained timber and substantially glazed porch was built in front of the arcade in the late 20th Century. Above the arcade and linking the two gables is a balustraded stone parapet. The gables have bevelled stone copings and kneelers and are two storeys but due to the great height of the axial hall behind they are not as high as the the main building.

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Another central feature is the timber-framed dormer, which is over the ridge and so is actually a lantern for the hall and extends in similar form over on to the rear roof slope. It has five timber mullioned windows, each divided into two panes by slender glazing bars.

The front has a continuous bevelled stone plinth and string courses at ground floor cill level and above the keystones.

All ground floor window openings have sandstone surrounds, including round heads with keystones. The windows are all one over one painted timber vertically sliding sashes. All first floor windows also have stone surrounds but have bevelled mullions and a thin string course above and are three-light casements in the gables but two-light pivoted windows in the centre, serving the hall.

On the outer sides of the gabled bays are flat-roofed single storey projections with low brick parapets, topped by flat coping stones. Behind these, on all corners of the main building are hexagonal columns, with recessed panels towards the top and surmounted by moulded caps.

NW side elevation

2.2.6 The gabled end of the main building dominates the NW side elevation, framed by the plinth hexagonal columns and the projecting coping stones. It too has similar sash windows at ground floor and mullioned casement windows at First Floor, in pairs at Ground Floor and triples at First Floor at each side of the gable.

To the R of the gable is a recessed side entrance and stairs down to the boiler room. On the W corner, a flat-roofed extension, with projecting fascias, has been added in brown bricks and non-matching windows.

SW Rear Elevation

2.2.6 At the rear, there are two gabled bays, similar to those on the front, but deeper and linked by an even deeper flat-roofed single storey projection which has a brick parapet and flat stone coping, flush stone quoins and windows with flat stone lintels.

A small flat-roofed extension has been added to the RH slope of the LH gable, in non-matching bricks. The RH gabled bay meets the rear elevation of the main hall behind with an original angled turret,

SE Side elevation

2.2.7 The SE side elevation has the same outline as the NW side elevation but it has mullioned windows across most of its width at First floor level, a shorter line of mullioned windows above and two round headed arches at Ground floor in front of a blind wall

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Plate 3. Front elevation of Knowsley Village Hall from the green



Plate 4. Front arcade, currently inside the porch



Plate 5. Front arcade, currently inside the porch

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Plate 6. NW side elevation

Plate 7. Recessed side entrance

Plate 8. Rear extensions



Plate 9. LH rear gable with FF extension

Plate 10. Rear central projection with lantern beyond FF extension



Plate 11. Rear lantern and FF range of windows over single storey projection

Plate 12. Flat roof over rear projection

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Plate 13. RH rear gable



Plate 14. Canted link at rear



Plate 15. SE side elevation



Plate 15. SE side elevation



Plate 16. Vehicular entrance



Plate 17. Central entrance on School Lane

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Interior

2.2.8 The principle feature of the interior is the main hall which is very generous in size. It is open from the sprung maple floor up to the impressive stained timber roof with its: four spere trusses with drop-balls; coffered panels with boards in alternating directions and; lantern. The trusses are supported on large moulded stone corbels. At the E end of the hall is a large raised stage under a proscenium arch with deep Corinthian-style capitals on the supporting walls, which are in the form of pilasters. On both side walls are a pair of ribbed arches, supported on pairs of slender cast iron Doric columns. A cornice runs around the hall above the arches. The hall has a full suite of single and double six-panelled doors.

The building has a large meeting room at the rear, a former care-takers flat at first floor at the W end and several other rooms of varying sizes but no other features of architectural or historic interest

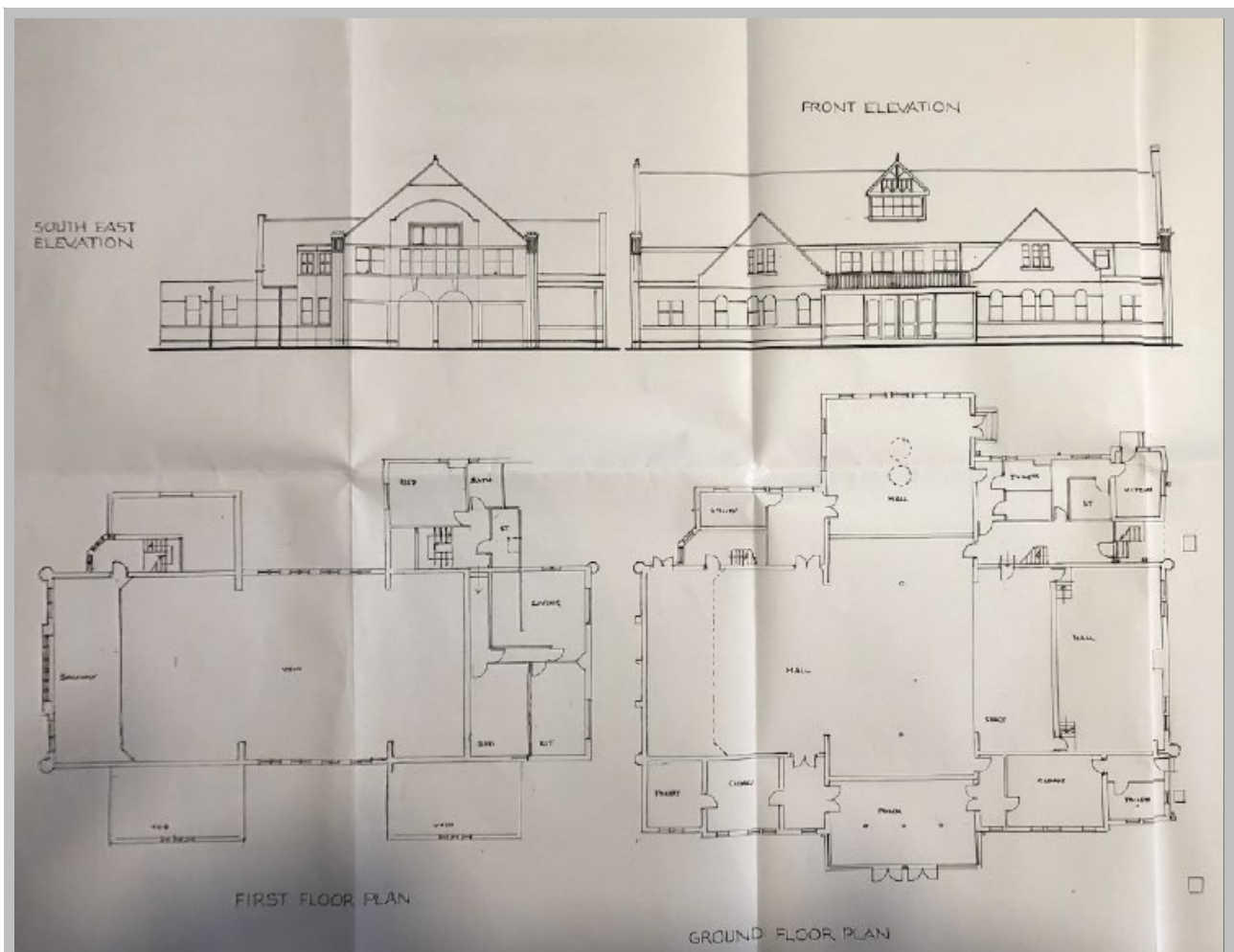


Figure 1. Existing plans and elevations

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Plate 18. Stage in main hall with proscenium arch



Plate 19. Lantern and trusses

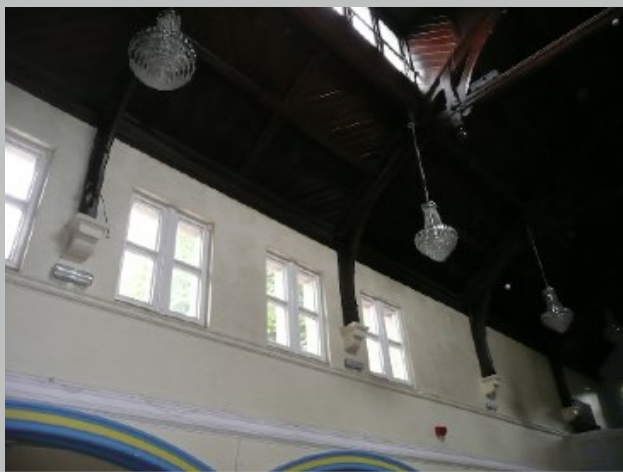


Plate 20. Corbels and high-level windows



Plate 21. Recessed arched in side walls



Plate 22. Panelled double doors



Plate 23. Typical room in caretakers flat

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The Grounds

2.2.9 The pavement has a dropped kerb outside the centre of the front of the building and the front wall has a wide gap between stone piers. There is a further vehicular entrance at the RH side of the frontage, with a modern metal gate.

The grounds at the NW end are triangular in shape, widening out considerably towards the rear where there are several semi-mature trees and shipping container.

The rear of the site is approx 5m deep, with open fields to the W and the cemetery to the S beyond a mix of hedges and fences.

The grounds at the SE end are also triangular in shape, widening out considerably towards the rear where there are several semi-mature trees. A brick electricity substation is sited in this side area, set back a few metres from the road frontage.



Plate 24. Adjacent cemetery



Plate 25. Substation

2.3 The Setting

2.3.1 The application site is immediately opposite the Knowsley Triangle of Maypole Green, which is a small village green - simply a flat surface around the village war memorial. The openness of the green enables views across it to: the application site and the frontages of the buildings on the other two side of the green: Maypole Farm Court on the NW side, which is a combination of historic and new residential buildings and; the historic former Girls School on the E side, which has recently been converted from a restaurant into a dwelling.

2.3.2 Immediately to the NW of the application site, beyond a hedge is a group of buildings at Church Farm, most of which are converted historic farm buildings in brick and stone with slate roof.. Opposite Church Farm are: Church Farm Cottages, a pair of historic cottages which have been much altered with a stone front gable on the one the furthest away; then Highfield Cottage, a small stone-built vernacular two-storey cottage with a date stone of 1758 and then; Highfield, a brick-built single storey cottage from around 1900.

2.3.3 Approx 70m SE of the application site is the Church of St Mary, which is set within an extensive church yard and beyond a traditional loch gate

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Plate 26. War Memorial on Maypole Green and the former Girls School



Plate 27. Front of Maypole Farm Court



Plate 28. Former farm building on School Lane



Plate 29. Former farm building on School Lane



Plate 30. Church Farm



Plate 31. Church Farm Cottages



Plate 32. Highfield Cottage and Highfield

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Plate 33. Knowsley Village Stables



Plate 34. Entrance to Dumbrees House on Ormskirk Road



Plate 36. St Mary's Church



Plate 37. Lych Gate

2.4 Knowsley Village

2.4.1 Knowsley is an ancient settlement which is documented in the Domesday Book of 1086 and was previously known as “Chenulveslei”, albeit the earliest surviving buildings are from the 18th C. It has long been the estate village for the Earls of Derby and their predecessors, who are based at Knowsley Hall, which is approx 2km SE of the application site. The village is located outside and to the W of the historic boundary of Knowsley Park.

2.4.2 In layout, the village has a predominately linear grain of low density buildings, laid out along Knowsley Lane, although there are some off-shoots from Knowsley Road, namely School Lane, Mill Lane, Sugar Lane and Tithebarn Lane. The junction of School lane and Tithebarn Lane with Knowsley Road forms the historic nucleus and centre of the village, where the Church of St Mary (of 1844) with its lych gate and church yard, the former girls' school, the small village green with its war memorial and the former village hall are located. However, following much 20th C suburban development between Knowsley Road and Ormskirk Road, the modern centre is probably around the shops on Sugar Lane.

2.4.3 The Almshouses (Stanley Bungalows) and the Derby Arms are sited further S along Knowsley Road from the historic centre. In addition to the key communal buildings, the village comprises several 18th and 19th C cottages and former farm houses, both detached and semi-

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detached. Some are constructed in simple vernacular style in red sandstone and with slate roofs. An example is Highfield Cottage of 1758, which formerly had horizontally sliding sash windows. However, many of the later 19th C buildings are in more polite, historic-revival architectural styles, such as: the second vicarage, which is constructed in red brick, terracotta and sandstone and has tall chimneys and jettied windows and; The Derby Arms with its polychromatic bricks and tall red brick chimneys. Many houses have been constructed around the village in the 20th and 21st Cs, mostly between Knowsley Road and Ormskirk Road, including the group of houses around Maypole Farm Court.

2.4.4 A strong characteristic of the village is the stone walls at the back of the pavements and the large number of individual mature trees, woodlands and hedges which help to screen some of the more recent surrounding developments and to retain its rural character.

2.4.5 Pevsner describes it in *The Buildings of England: Lancashire - Liverpool and SW*:

There is a small obviously estate-Church built village around the church. 19th century cottages on Knowsley Lane and Tithebarn Lane, somewhat vernacular but mostly Victorian and Edwardian in a number of eclectic forms, and almost certainly designed in-house by successive estate surveyors, for the Knowsley estate had a tradition of designing its own buildings. The school north of the church facing the small triangular green is of 1845 and much less amateurish. Red sandstone, nicely symmetrical.. Tudorbethan – prominent chimneys, Tudor-arch doorway, mullioned and transomed windows (with iron, diamond-patterned casements). Extended in similar fashion at either end with little pavilions. Across the green is the village hall, both bigger and uglier than one might expect. 1896-7, by John Leslie, estate surveyor. On the green is a first world war memorial cross by T Wickford Potter, a later estate surveyor. Dumbrees House, the old vicarage on the west side of Ormskirk Road, is big, Ashlar, asymmetric and Tudor Gothic. It is surely – with eg. a pyramid-capped stair turret – by William Burn, who did a lot of work for the 13th and 14th Earls and produced designs for a parsonage. Now hemmed in by housing built tightly over the gardens.



Plate 38. Historic-revival architectural styles on Church Lane



Plate 39. Stanley Bungalows

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Plate 40. The Derby Arms



Plate 41. Vernacular cottages on Knowsley Road

2.5 Knowsley Park

2.5.1 Knowsley Park is comprised of around 950ha of parkland on undulating land which rises gently to the south-east. The boundary is formed by a stone wall which was built by during the 1830s and 1840s by the thirteenth Earl of Derby. It runs around the whole of the perimeter and is screened by belts of trees apart from an area in the south-east corner of the site. Within the park is Knowsley Hall, which has been the principal seat of the Earls of Derby since the late 17th C, following the destruction of Lathom House, near Ormskirk, after a siege in the English Civil War.

2.5.2 Knowsley Hall is an L-shaped building situated in the south-west part of the park. The earliest fabric identified is thought to date from the C15 (Pevsner 1969) but successive alterations and additions were made during the C18, C19 and C20. It is not known who was responsible for the C18 work, but John Foster made alterations in 1820, William Burn followed in the 1840s and Romaine Walker was active in 1910. The Hall is used for a mixture of domestic and commercial uses (1998).

2.5.3 The park has been created over a long period and through the work of several noted landscape architects, including Capability Brown. The estate has many features which are normally associated with major country houses in parkland settings, although many features and structures have either been lost or much altered and much of the parkland has been developed or adapted to form the Knowsley Safari Park.

2.5.4 Approximately 300m north of the Hall are stables of c.1847, probably by William Burn.

2.5.5 The many lodges around its perimeter are an integral part of the estate. They would originally have been simple gates but over time were replaced with more ornate versions. The most impressive was the Grand Lodge, which was demolished in 1972 during the construction of the M57 Motorway. Thirteen entrances with lodges are shown on the 2nd edition OS map published 1909. On the western boundary, off Knowsley Road, Croxteth Lodge was designed by William Burn in 1837 and survives as an impressive structure. The main approach to the Hall was through an avenue of trees, even today the approach to and through the gates is an impressive experience. Other lodges include Huyton and Croxteth lodges which were also designed by William Burn, in 1837.

2.5.6 The Estate is more than just an ornamental park, as it includes some working farms, including Home Farm.

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Plate 42. Stone boundary wall around Knowsley Park on Old Mill Lane



Plate 43. Knowsley Hall



Plate 44. Estate building/lodge, disfigured by alterations



Plate 45. Croxteth Lodge with greater authenticity

3. Brief History of Liverpool, Knowsley, and the Application Site

3.1 Liverpool

3.1.1 Liverpool was formally established by King John in 1207, as he needed a port in the NW of his kingdom which had easy access for voyages to Ireland and Wales. Liverpool's "Royal" connection is perpetuated in the name of the Royal Liverpool University Hospital and the Royal Liver Building at the Pier Head. The settlement of Liverpool actually began before the royal charter, as a landing point on the East bank of the River Mersey for the ferries across the river which were run by the monks who were based in Birkenhead Priory on the West Bank. The Priory was founded around 1150 and is the oldest building in Merseyside - its setting regrettably damaged by the industrialisation of adjacent sites.

3.1.2 The settlement of Liverpool grew to around 500 people during the 13th Century and, although no building survive from that period, the seven medieval streets laid out then, adjacent to the river in the form of a letter "H" do survive and help us to locate the starting point of the city: Castle Street, Old Hall Street and High Street, parallel to the river and Chapel Street, Water Street, Dale Street, and Tithebarn Street, running towards the river. Successive redevelopments with newer and bigger buildings have transformed the area from a small fishing village to a modern city centre with many Georgian and Victorian buildings surviving. The reclamation of the tidal margins to create docks and the Pier Head has distanced the old centre from the river itself but some memory of its ancient past is evoked by wandering down the narrow cobbled alley of Hackins Hey and into the enclosed yard at the back of Thomas Rigby's Inn on Dale Street.

3.1.3 Little tangible evidence of Liverpool's ancient origins survives, illustrating a long-standing tradition of urban regeneration which has wiped away all buildings from the city's first 500 years, with the Bluecoat School (now a centre for contemporary art) in School Lane being the city's oldest surviving building. Opened in 1717, the Bluecoat celebrated its tri-centenary in 2017.

3.1.4 The growth of Liverpool as a port was despite, rather than because of, its natural geography of the river, as the muddy tidal margins made it unsuitable for the mooring of ships and the loading and unloading of goods. Until the 17th century, the shoreline lay further inland from the present river wall: in the city centre, it was along the line of Strand Street, where the wall of St Nicholas's Church was the river wall, forming the line of the old quay and; further North, the shoreline was approximately along the line of the dock road. The Townsend Windmill, which was later on the E side of the dock road, was originally on the shoreline.

3.1.5 In 1406, Sir John Stanley pulled down an old house on Liverpool's waterfront and built the first Tower known as the Tower of Liverpool, at the shore end of Water Street, demonstrating the major role of the Stanleys with Liverpool. This was used as an embarkation base for their property in the Isle of Man. During the 18th century the Tower of Liverpool was the Jail of Liverpool. A large arch joined the Tower to the building on the other side of Tower Gardens and this building was used to house debtors and Criminals. The Tower had 7 small underground dungeons, each approx 6' sq. There were between 3-5 prisoners per dungeon, hence "jail fever" was prevalent. A room at the Tower was used as a Chapel which later became the Debtors Room. In 1756 during the war with France the Tower was also used to confine prisoners of war. The Tower became the property of the corporation in 1775 when it purchased it for £1535 10s from the then owner Sir Richard Clayton. The Tower ceased being a jail on 3rd July 1811 when all the criminals were moved to the new jail in Great Howard Street. By the end of the 18th century the Tower was in disrepair and was pulled down in 1819 to be replaced by warehouses. In 1856 the warehouses gave way to the second Tower called Tower Buildings, a large Italianate office block by J. A. Picton. This was then demolished in the early 20th century and the present Tower Building, designed by Walter Aubrey Thomas was completed around 1908.

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3.1.6 The town and its maritime activities grew slowly over the first four centuries but by the mid-16th century Liverpool's ships were regularly trading with Spain, Portugal and France, in addition to coastal trading with the rest of England, Wales Scotland and Ireland. When the Spanish Armada put to sea against England in 1588, it was the Liverpool merchant, Humphrey Brooke, who brought the news of the forthcoming attack back to this country. By the middle of the 17th century Liverpool merchants were trading further afield - with America and the Caribbean. For good reason, the statue of Columbus outside the Palm House in Liverpool's Sefton Park bears the inscription: *The discoverer of America was the maker of Liverpool.*

3.1.7 The first recorded American cargo to arrive was brought by James Jenkinson in *The Friendship*, in 1648 and consisted of 30 tons of tobacco. The foundation of European communities on the American continent and the formation of the British West Indian colonies heralded a new era of trade through the port and an increase in shipping across the Atlantic. English manufactured goods, coal and salt were exported and the new colonies sent back sugar, rum and cotton, much through the expanding town and port of Liverpool.

3.1.8 In 1665 a sugar-refining business was established in a building off Dale Street, processing sugar from the West Indies - a precursor to the later and much bigger Tate and Lyle refinery. The greatest trade in any one single cargo was the import of raw tobacco, mostly from Virginia. No such "evil weed" is imported into Liverpool now but for centuries its storage and transformation into smoking and chewing tobacco and snuff was a staple in Liverpool's economy. It generated the need for the construction of the Stanley Dock Tobacco warehouse in 1900 - its 27 million bricks making it the largest warehouse in the world!

3.1.9 By the end of the 17th C, Liverpool was the third trading port in England, behind only London and Bristol. It had 24 streets, and a population of about 6,000. Celia Fiennes, described it as '*London in miniature...with long, handsome, well paved streets lined by...houses of brick and stone built high and even. It was very rich with an abundance of persons...very well dressed and of good fashion.*' Contemporary paintings of the waterfront show that the shoreline, then along the Strand, was dominated by Liverpool Castle (demolished in the 18th C), the Tower of Liverpool (re-built twice on the same site but still standing in the early 20th C incarnation) and the Church of St Nicholas (also still standing but rebuilt in stages).

3.2 The Stanleys, Knowsley Hall and Knowsley Village

The Stanleys and Knowsley Hall

3.2.1 Knowsley Hall was originally a medieval hunting lodge in the estate of the Stanley family of Lathom House, near Ormskirk. The Stanleys have been one of the most influential families in local and national affairs for centuries. The Stanleys built the Tower of Liverpool on the waterfront in the early 15th C and used that as a strategic base to control much of the activity of the town and port.

3.2.2 The manors of Knowsley, Roby, Huyton and Tarbock were all held by the Lathom family before the year 1200.

3.2.3 Thomas Stanley was rewarded with the title of Earl of Derby in 1485 by Henry VII as a reward for his support at the Battle of Bosworth Field which led to Henry Tudor gaining the crown and ushering in the Tudor dynasty. In 1495 Thomas entertained Henry VII at Lathom House and at Knowsley, which was then still a hunting lodge.

3.2.4 James Stanley, 7th Earl, was involved in the Civil War as a Royalist supporter of Charles I but it was Charlotte de la Tremouille, his wife, who famously withstood a siege by Parliamentarians at Lathom Hall for ten weeks in 1644 whilst James was at their estate on the Isle of Man. James later fought with Charles I at the Battle of Worcester, was taken prisoner and beheaded at Bolton. Lathom House was taken in 1645 and reputedly "raised to the ground as though it had never been"!

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3.2.4 Knowsley was inherited by the 10th Earl in 1702, who developed the hunting lodge into a large house and it then became the principal seat of the Stanleys.

3.2.5 Edward, the 12th Earl had a great interest in horse racing and founded The Derby and The Oaks horse races. He created the State Dining Room for the visit of George IV in 1820–21. In the grounds of Knowsley, he maintained a menagerie which contained 94 different species of mammals and 318 species of birds, many of which were rare and valuable.

3.2.6 Edward, the 13th Earl created a large library of works relating to natural history and was a champion of Edward Lear, whom he commissioned to paint animals from the menagerie.

3.2.7 Knowsley Hall is the result of the work of several architects over the centuries, some unknown and some renowned, including John Foster, William Burn and Claude Phillimore. In the early 20th century, Knowsley Hall was updated by W. H. Romaine-Walker for the 17th Earl. After the Second World War, the buildings were considerably reduced by Claud Phillimore, and ceased to be lived in by the family but are used for commercial and celebratory events. A smaller, but still substantial, neo-Georgian family residence was built in the park in the 1960s.

3.2.8 Knowsley Park, which originated in the 13th C. It is shown as a major park on Speed's 1610 map of Lancashire (Map 1). It was landscaped during the late 18th C, incorporating elements of a late 17th C and early 18th C landscape. Lancelot Brown drew up proposals for the park and kitchen garden in 1775 and 1776 and it is possible that parts of the park were altered to his designs. During the 1830s William Sawrey Gilpin advised the thirteenth Earl of Derby on various matters relating to the park. The SE part of the park was made into Knowsley Safari park in 1971 and remains a popular tourist attraction.

Knowsley Village

3.2.9 Knowsley Village, at the application site, is approx 400m to the W of Knowsley Park, but it is within its wider estate and has long been an estate village for the workers on the estate. It is documented in the Domesday Book of 1086 and was then known as "Chenuveslie". It was referred to as: Knuvesle in 1199; Knouselegh in 1258; Knouleslee in 1261; Knusele in 1262; and Knouslegh in 1346! However, little evidence of its medieval origins survive above ground.

3.2.10 A chapel may have existed at Knowsley in the 12th Century but one certainly existed by 1398 when Thomas del Ryding was Vicar of Huyton. It was probably on Riding Hill within the vast Knowsley Park. However, many marriages and funerals of the local inhabitants took place at either nearby Huyton Parish Church or Prescott Parish Church until Knowsley eventually became its own independent parish, even though there was a "Knowsley Chapel" to the NE of the park in the 18th C, shown on the Yates' maps of 1786 (Map 2) and Hennett's Map of 1828 (Map 3).

3.2.11 Knowsley Parish Church, located on Knowsley Lane was built between 1841-1844 and was dedicated to St. Mary the Virgin. The building was consecrated by John Birch, Bishop of Chester on 6th June 1844. The church which cost £20,000 to build, was paid for by the 13th Earl of Derby and since its construction has been extended and altered. The original Knowsley Parsonage was some distance further E, nearer to Knowsley Hall but a new vicarage was built immediately on the NE side of Tithebarn Lane from the church in 1885 and the old vicarage became known as Dumbrees House.

3.2.12 Farms, cottages and community facilities were spread around the outskirts of the park, but historically, the nucleus of Knowsley Village was to the north of St. Mary's Church around the village green, where the village maypole, was sited and which resulted in the name of the adjacent Maypole Farm. The former farmhouse has a date stone of 1727 but it was probably much remodelled in the 19th C and is shown as the Maypole Inn on the first OS map of 1850 (Map 4). This area is known now as the Knowsley Triangle. Other buildings built around the triangle were: the former girls' school of 1845 which subsequently became the Millbrook Manor restaurant until a few years ago but has recently been converted to residential use (the Boys School was much further S) and; Knowsley Village Hall, which opened in 1897, a gift of 16th Earl of Derby.

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3.2.13 The Knowsley War Memorial, which was erected in 1920 to commemorate those connected with the parish who gave their lives during the Great War now stands on the triangular green.

3.2.14 Knowsley Village was expanded massively during the 20th C, with a large residential developments between Knowsley Road and Ormskirk Road but it retains much of its 19th Century character today with several typical estate cottages, its former post office building and alms houses which bear a plaque in memory of Frederick Arthur, 16th Earl who died in 1908.



Map 1. Speed's 1610 map of Lancashire



Maps 2 Yates's 1786 Map of Lancashire

Heritage Statement for Conversion of Knowsley Village Hall, School Lane, Knowsley Village

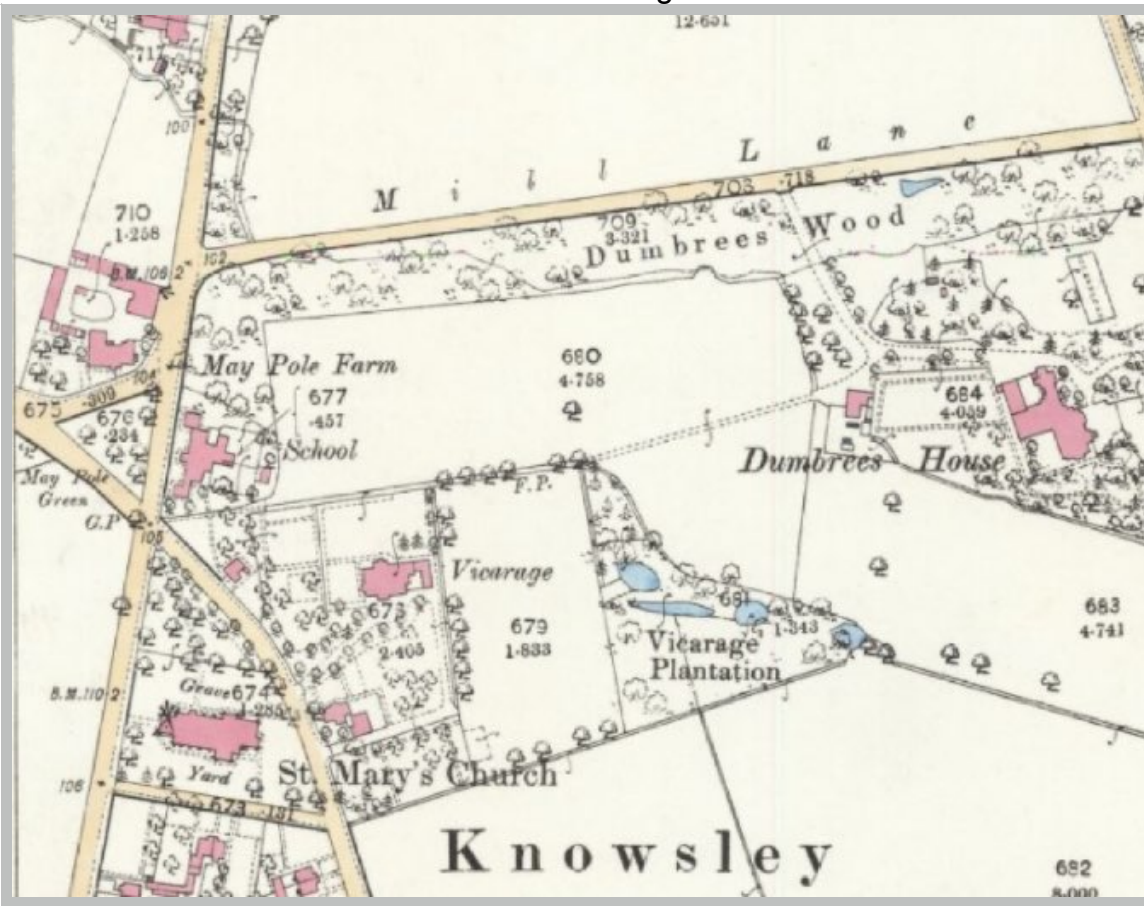


Map 3. Hennet's 1828 Map of Lancashire

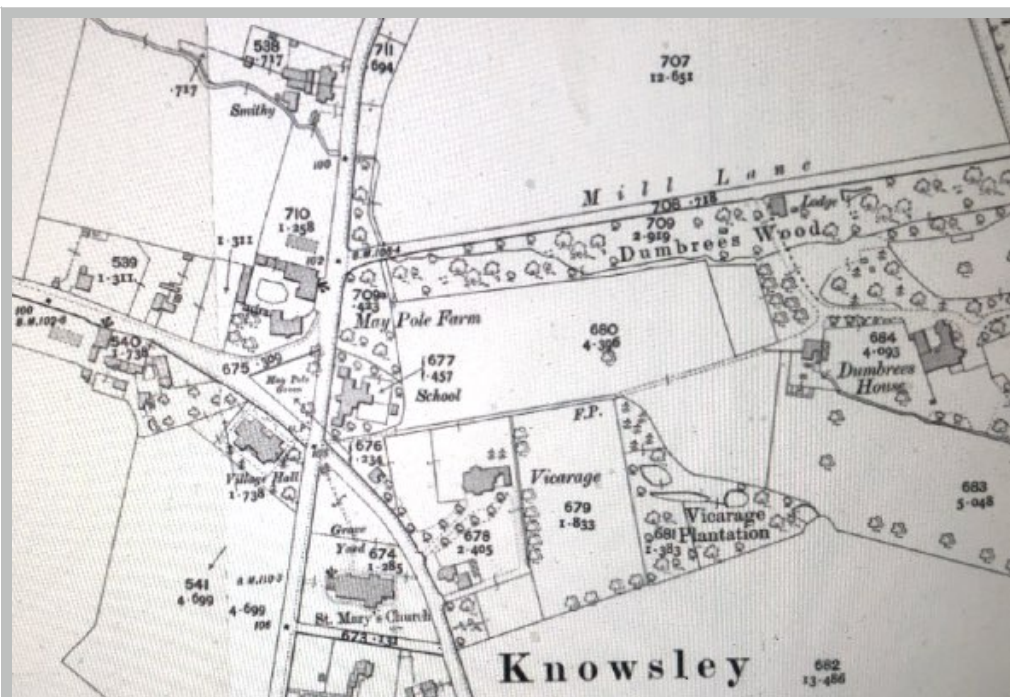


Map 4. 1850 6in OS Map

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Map 5. 1893 25in OS Map



Map 6. 1914 25in OS Map

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Plate 46. Grand Lodge (demolished 1970s)



Plate 47. Huyton Lodge



Plate 48. Historic print of Knowsley Hall



Plate 49. Horse and carriage in Knowsley Road 1910

3.3 Knowsley Village Hall

3.3.1 Most of the application site is shown on the 1850 OS map (Map 7) as being a small field without any trees or buildings the S of May Pole Green. The NW part of the site is shown as being part of the garden of Church Farm, although it is not named as such. May Pole Inn is shown as a group of buildings on the N side of the green. Knowsley Girls School is shown on the E side of the green.

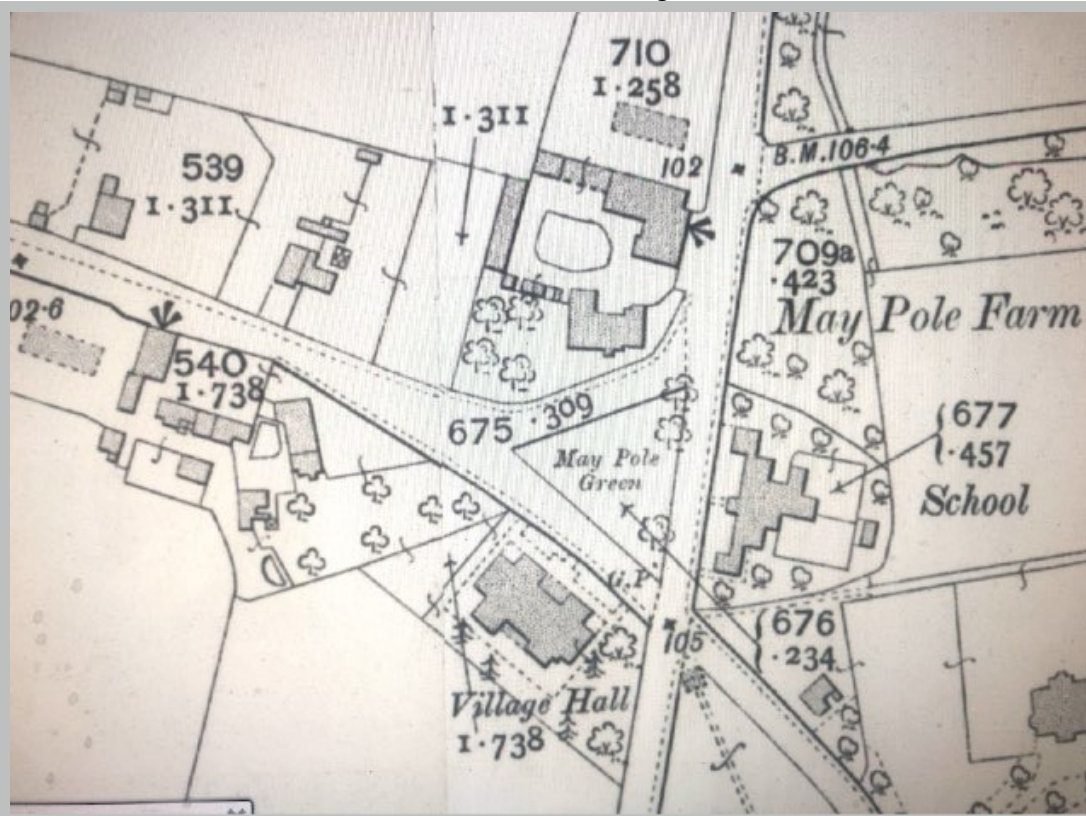
3.3.2 The 1893 OS Map (Map 8) shows that nothing had changed on the site by then.

3.3.3 However, the Village hall is shown for the first time on the 1914 OS Map (Map 9) although grounds to the NW were still attached to Church Farm. It had been built at Lord Derby's expense on land that had been donated by Lord Derby. It was designed by the Knowsley Estate architect, John Leslie and opened on 17th February 1897 by the Sixteenth Earl of Derby.

3.3.4 The site is still the same on the 1938 OS Map (Map 10) but later in the 20th C, the grounds to the NW were acquired and attached to the village hall; the front porch was added and; the two small extensions at the rear were added.

3.3.5 The village hall has been disused for several years and so the car has also been disused. It has recently been acquired by the applicant who now proposed to put the site to a beneficial use.

Heritage Statement for Conversion of Knowsley Village Hall, School Lane, Knowsley Village



Map 8. 1914 25in OS Map



Map 9. 1938 OS Map

Heritage Statement for Conversion of Knowsley Village Hall, School Lane, Knowsley Village



Plate 50. Village hall before the porch



Plate 51. Historic photofrm the village hall



Plate 52. Historic photo of Girls School

4. Heritage Designations

4.1 Definitions

4.1.1 Heritage assets are defined in the glossary of the NPPF (2023) as:

A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).

4.1.2 Designated heritage assets are defined as:

A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation.

4.1.3 Significance (for heritage policy) is defined as:

The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.

4.1.4 Historic environment is defined:

All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora.

4.1.5 Historic environment record is defined:

Information services that seek to provide access to comprehensive and dynamic resources relating to the historic environment of a defined geographic area for public benefit and use.

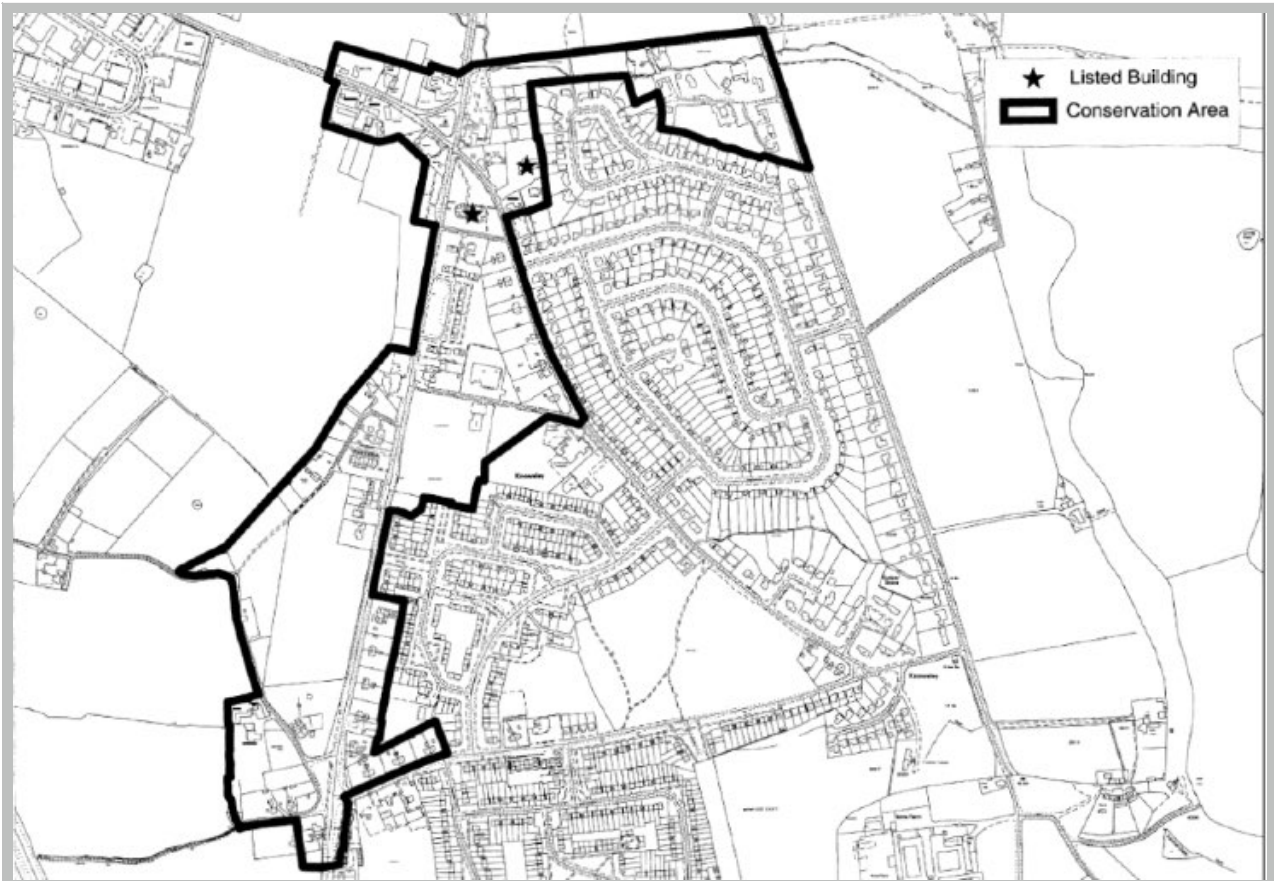
4.1.6 Para 209 is:

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.

Heritage Statement for Conversion of Knowsley Village Hall, School Lane, Knowsley
Village

4.2 Knowsley Village Conservation Area (See Plan 2)

4.2.1 The application site is within the Knowsley Village Conservation Area (KVCA) which was designated by Knowsley Council and for which a brief Conservation Area Appraisal was prepared in 2005.



Plan 2. Knowsley Village Conservation Area

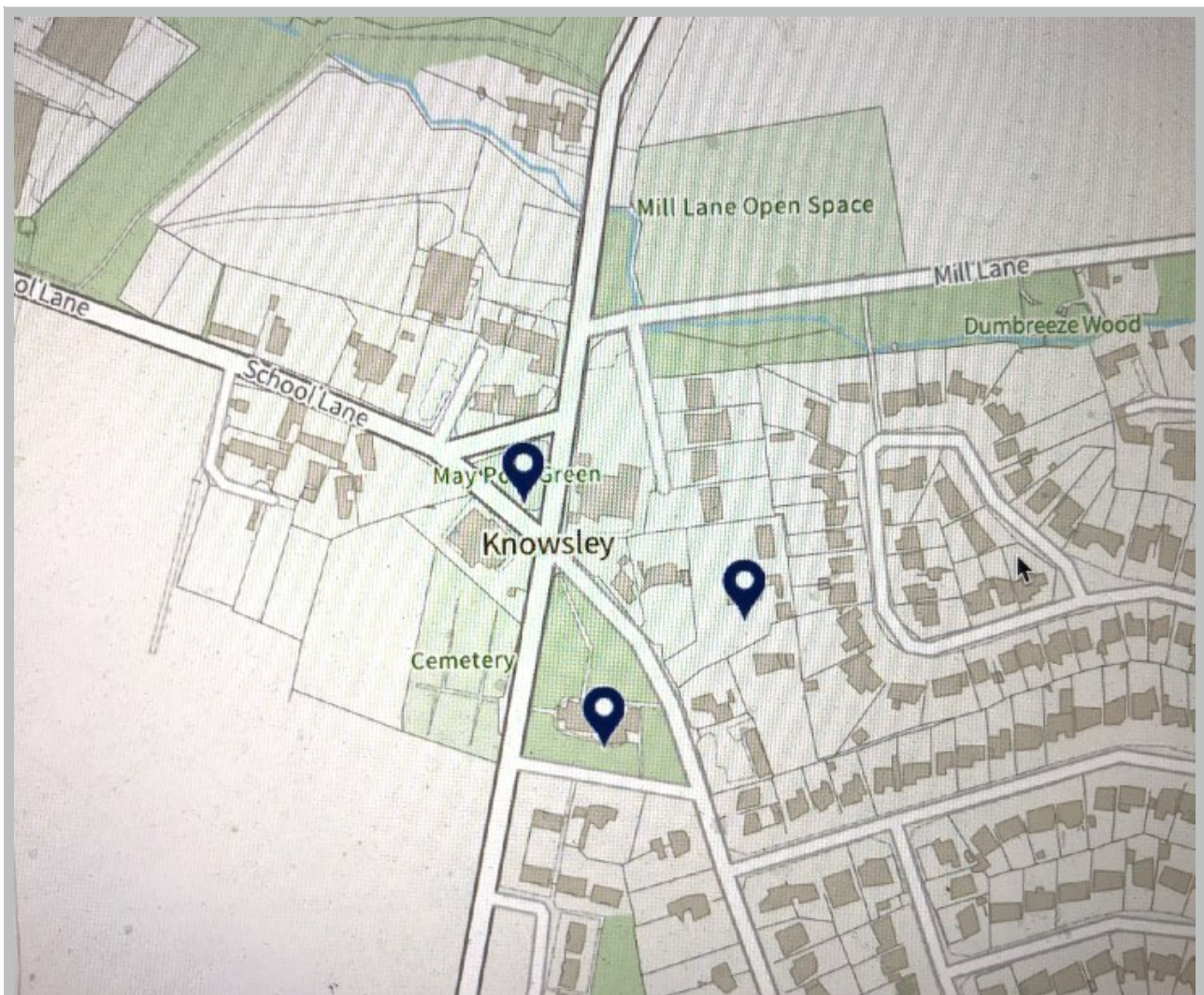
Heritage Statement for Conversion of Knowsley Village Hall, School Lane, Knowsley Village

4.3 Listed Buildings (Plan 3)

4.3.1 There are no listed buildings on the application.

4.3.2 The listed buildings within the setting of which might potentially be affected by the proposal are:

- The Church of St Mary, Grade II* - approx 150m to the SSE of the application site
- The Knowsley Old Vicarage (now -), Grade II - approx 140m to the SE of the application site and
- Knowsley War Memorial, Grade II - approx 45m SE of the application site



Plan 3. Listed Buildings (from HE website)

Heritage Statement for Conversion of Knowsley Village Hall, School Lane, Knowsley Village

Ref	Name/Address	Brief Description	Date
MME1259	6,7 & 8 Maypole Farm Court	Former barn of Maypole Farm	Post 1847
MME15299	6 Maypole Farm Court	Site of a former barn	1777-1847?
MME 5648	Church Farm Cottages	Site of a cottage	1783 - 1893
MME5162	Church Farm	Farmhouse	Pre-1777
MME2081	Maypole Green	Site of a house, possibly a smithy	1777-1847?
MME18241	Maypole Green (vague!)	Site of medieval village	?



Plan 5. Plan of heritage assets from Merseyside HER

4.5.3 Knowsley does not have a list of buildings of local architectural or historic interest, although it is understood that one is in preparation - see <https://lhlp.esdm.co.uk/merseyside/what-are-we-looking-for> .

4.5.4 Although many of the historic buildings in the Knowsley Village Conservation Area are likely to be included on that list (and some probably meet the criteria for addition to the statutory list), it is at the discretion of the Council to assess whether any of them should be regarded as Non-designated heritage assets (NDHAs).

4.5.5 Knowsley MBC stated in its Sales brief for Knowsley Village Hall:

The building is a non-designated heritage asset. A non-designated heritage asset is a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions but which are not formally designated

4.5.6 It is not in dispute that Knowsley Village Hall is a NDHA.

5. Heritage Significance of the Site

5.1 Introduction to Heritage Significance

5.1.1 In preparing this Heritage Statement, regard has been had to the advice at Para 200 of the NPPF 2023:

*200. In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. **The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance...***

Regard has also been had to the definition of “significance” as set out in the Glossary of the NPPF:

Significance (for heritage policy): The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.

5.1.2 In assessing the heritage and visual values which are embodied within Knowsley Village Hall and its setting, regard has been had to the heritage values as defined in Historic England's *Conservation Principles* (2008). This document asserts that a tangible heritage asset can have the following four values:

- 1. Evidential value - the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity.*
- 2. Historical value - the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present.*
- 3. Aesthetic value - the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place.*
- 4. Communal value - the meaning of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory.*

5.1.3 *Conservation Principles* also clarifies that:

3.2 The significance of a place embraces all the diverse cultural and natural heritage values that people associate with it, or which prompt them to respond to it. These values tend to grow in strength and complexity over time, as understanding deepens and people's perceptions of a place evolve.

3.3 In order to identify the significance of a place, it is necessary first to understand its fabric, and how and why it has changed over time; and then to consider:

- who values the place, and why they do so*
- how those values relate to its fabric*
- their relative importance*
- whether associated objects contribute to them*
- the contribution made by the setting and context of the place*

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- *how the place compares with others sharing similar values.*

3.4 Understanding and articulating the values and significance of a place is necessary to inform decisions about its future. The degree of significance determines what, if any, protection, including statutory designation, is appropriate under law and policy.

5.1.4 *Conservation Principles* goes on to state that:

4.1 Change in the historic environment is inevitable, caused by natural processes, the wear and tear of use, and people's responses to social, economic and technological change.

4.2 Conservation is the process of managing change to a significant place in its setting in ways that will best sustain its heritage values, while recognising opportunities to reveal or reinforce those values for present and future generations.

4.3 Conservation is achieved by all concerned with a significant place sharing an understanding of its significance, and using that understanding to:

- *judge how its heritage values are vulnerable to change*
- *take the actions and impose the constraints necessary to sustain, reveal and reinforce those values*
- *mediate between conservation options, if action to sustain one heritage value could conflict with action to sustain another*
- *ensure that the place retains its authenticity – those attributes and elements which most truthfully reflect and embody the heritage values attached to it.*

4.4 Action taken to counter harmful effects of natural change, or to minimise the risk of disaster, should be timely, proportionate to the severity and likelihood of identified consequences, and sustainable.

4.5 Intervention may be justified if it increases understanding of the past, reveals or reinforces particular heritage values of a place, or is necessary to sustain those values for present and future generations, so long as any resulting harm is decisively outweighed by the benefits.

4.6 New work should aspire to a quality of design and execution which may be valued both now and in the future. This neither implies nor precludes working in traditional or new ways, but should respect the significance of a place in its setting.

5.1.5 In Historic England's *Informed Conservation*, Kate Clark advises that:

Significance lies at the heart of every conservation action, which for the historic environment means the recognition of a public value in what may well be private property. Historic buildings and their landscapes are significant for many different cultural rea

5.1.6 Historic England has issued *Statements of Heritage Significance (October 2019)* which explores the requirements for the assessment of significance of heritage assets to be part of a staged approach to decision-making in which assessing significance precedes designing the proposal.

The Advice Note recommends:

For each heritage asset, describe the various interests:

Archaeological interest

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There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.

Architectural and artistic interest

These are interests in the design and general aesthetics of a place. They can arise from conscious design or fortuitously from the way the heritage asset has evolved. More specifically, architectural interest is an interest in the art or science of the design, construction, craftsmanship and decoration of buildings and structures of all types. Artistic interest is an interest in other human creative skills, like sculpture.

Historic Interest

An interest in past lives and events (including pre-historic). Heritage assets can illustrate or be associated with them. Heritage assets with historic interest not only provide a material record of our nation's history, but can also provide meaning for communities derived from their collective experience of a place and can symbolise wider values such as faith and cultural identity.

Having described the various interests, assess the level of the general significance of the heritage asset and the particular contribution to that significance of any features which would be affected by the proposal, or of its setting if it, too, is affected by the proposal.

Again in the development of proposals and during works, more information may become available which increases the understanding of the heritage asset, and of its significance. The opportunity may usefully be taken to re-appraise significance in such cases.

The applicant can assist the LPA's decision-making by setting out a clear and succinct explanation of the impact of the proposal on significance and how negative impact on significance has been avoided, by continuing to follow the staged approach, as shown below.

5.2 Methodology for Assessing Levels of Significance

5.2.1 There is no definitive grading system or methodology for assessing the levels of significance or values but the most reliable methodologies have clearly defined criteria for grading, based upon the designations and other values of the heritage assets.

Historic England

5.2.2 Historic England issued the helpful *Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment - Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: 2* in March 2015 but this does not provide guidance on grading of significance.

ICOMOS Methodology

5.2.3 The International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) provides guidance on undertaking heritage impact assessments and how to assess levels of significance, in its *Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessments* (2011). Even though the application site is not a world heritage site, these criteria remain valid for assessing levels of significance and are included at Appendix 1 of this Heritage Statement. ICOMOS recommends that the significance of heritage assets should be assessed partly in relation to their international, national and/or local statutory designations, but linked clearly and objectively to their other values, integrity and authenticity. The methodology was developed for cultural World Heritage Sites but can be adapted to assess the significance of any heritage asset. It recommends that all assets should be graded into one of the following levels of significance, on the basis of how they fit with specified criteria:

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- Very High
- High
- Medium
- Low
- Negligible
- Unknown

5.2.4 Similar categories on heritage value re recommended by the Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC) in its *Guide to the conservation of historic buildings* (BS 7913:2013)

5.2.5 Important considerations when assessing levels of significance are the authenticity and integrity of the heritage assets. These are defined as:

Authenticity is a measure of truthfulness. Understanding of the concept of authenticity is guided by ICOMOS's Nara Document on Authenticity (1994)

Integrity is a measure of the wholeness and intactness of cultural heritage and its attributes

James Semple Kerr Methodology

5.2.6 Other guidelines have been established by James Semple Kerr in *The Conservation Plan* (1996 and later editions), which has been adopted in some cases by the Heritage Lottery Fund, Historic England and others.

The levels of significance in his methodology are similar but based on the following criteria:

Exceptional - important at national to international levels, reflected in the statutory designations of Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings and equivalent nationally graded sites (including those of ecological value).

Considerable - important at regional level or sometimes higher.

Some - of local to regional significance, often for group value (eg a vernacular architectural feature).

Little - of limited heritage or other value.

None - of no heritage or other value.

Negative or intrusive features - those that actually detract from the value of a site

5.3 Statement of Significance of: Knowsley Village Hall and; the Knowsley Village Conservation Area

Knowsley Village Hall

Knowsley Village Hall was built in 1896/7. It is a Non-designated Heritage asset, within Knowsley Village Conservation Area.

It has architectural and aesthetic interest as an example of a late 19th century village hall, designed by John Leslie, the estate surveyor of the Knowsley Hall Estate. It is an unusual combination of stylistic influences, not untypical of late Victorian melange of architectural styles, with: classical columns and arcade; Tudor-style columns at the corners; Elizabethan-style mullioned and transomed windows and Arts and Crafts timber framing (in the lantern).

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The front elevation is impressive as a symmetrical arrangement of two front-facing gabled bays on each side of a central arcade of four round arches with keystones on stone doric columns, although the late 20th C stained timber and substantially-glazed porch in front of the arcade in the late 20th Century somewhat dilutes its historic appearance. Above the arcade and linking the two gables is a balustraded stone parapet. The gables have bevelled stone copings and kneelers and are two storeys but, due to the great height of the axial hall behind, they are not as high as the main building.

The central the timber-framed on the ridge is a further fulcrum in the symmetry. Further external architectural features of interest are: the continuous bevelled stone plinth; string courses at ground floor cill level and above the keystones; the combination of common bricks and red ashlar surrounds, including round heads with keystones; a large roof of natural slates the combination of sliding sashes and casement windows. Notwithstanding the addition of the front porch and two small rear extensions, the building retains a reasonably high degree of authenticity and integrity.

Internally, the only room with any architectural interest, other than the general plan form of a village hall, is the main hall which is notable for: its impressive height and volume from the sprung maple floor up to the impressive stained timber roof with its: four sere trusses with drop-balls; coffered panels with boards in alternating directions and; lantern. The trusses are supported on large moulded stone corbels. At the E end of the hall is a large raised stage under a proscenium arch with deep Corinthian-style capitals on the supporting walls, which are in the form of pilasters. On both side walls are a pair of ribbed arches, supported on pairs of slender cast iron Doric columns. A cornice runs around the hall above the arches. The hall has a full suite of single and double six-panelled doors.

The low brick wall with red sandstone bevelled copings and piers contribute positively to the overall composition.

The building has historic interest as a village hall for an estate village, funded by the land-owner the Sixteenth Earl of Derby, and opened by him opened on 17th February 1897. It also has communal value, not just due to its prominent location at the centre of the historic village but as the venue for many local community and social events and as the base for the local Parish Council until its closure.

Overall, Knowsley Village Hall has **Low** Heritage Significance (using the criteria at Appendix 1)

Knowsley Village Conservation Area

The Knowsley Village Conservation Area comprises the historic core of Knowsley Village around the Knowsley Triangle (Maypole Green) and the linear estate village along: Knowsley Road to Sugar Lane and; Mill Lane

It has high architectural interest and aesthetic value as it includes a variety of historic buildings, with examples of both vernacular styles and polite styles, many of the latter based upon historic revival styles. The most architecturally important building is the Grade II* listed Church of St Mary, which is by Edmund Sharpe and later by other notable architects and which is a local landmark. The other listed buildings which contribute most to the architectural interest are: the former (second) vicarage of 1885 (albeit almost wholly hidden from public view) and; the highly prominent War Memorial of 1920 on Maypole Green. However, the conservation area has special architectural and aesthetic value, due to the many examples of estate buildings of the 18th and 19th Cs built in association with the Knowsley Hall Estate, many designed by in-house architects such as William Burn. It includes examples of farm houses, farm buildings, cottages and community buildings, albeit some community buildings now in different uses. Several of these warrant consideration for being added to the statutory list.

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The predominance of trees, woodlands, stone boundary walls and the open rural setting (albeit much diluted by 20th C development) also make positive contributions to its aesthetic value and its character as a rural village.

The Conservation Area has some high historic value due to its early origins and identification in the Domesday Book and 17th C maps. It has some historic and evidential value: as an example of an estate village for the Stanley Family of Knowsley Hall.

The Conservation Area has a low level of communal value as most of the buildings are now privately-owned with no public access. It is likely that the conservation area holds much archaeological interest, albeit probably of local interest only.

Overall, the Knowsley Village Conservation Area has - ***Medium Heritage Significance***

6. Relevant Heritage Legislation and Policy

6.1 National Legislation

6.1.1 *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Area) Act 1990*

This is the primary legislation for heritage assets.

6.1.2 S.72 of the Act states:

(1) In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a General duty as conservation area, of any powers under any of the provisions mentioned respects in subsection (2), special attention shall be paid to the desirability of conservation preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

6.2 National Policy

6.2.1 National Planning Policy is provided by the National Planning Policy Framework 2023 (NPPF).

6.2.2 On “Achieving well-designed places” it states:

131. The creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the process.

6.2.3 In Section 16 “Conserving and enhancing the historic environment” it states, inter alia:

*205. When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, **great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation** (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.*

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

209. 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

6.2.4 The NPPF effectively identifies three levels of harm to heritage assets: Total Loss; Substantial Harm and; Less Than Substantial Harm. It states:

208. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.

6.3 National Guidance

6.3.1 Historic England issues national guidance to assist LPAs in making decisions about their own cultural heritage at a local level. The key Historic England guidance which is relevant to this proposal are listed below:

a) Conservation Principles: Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment

This is an over-arching document which seeks to establish good policies and practice.

b) Making Changes to Heritage Assets Historic England Advice Note 2

This document provides information on repair, restoration, addition and alteration works to heritage assets to assist local authorities, planning and other consultants, owners, applicants and other interested parties in implementing historic environment legislation, the policy in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the related guidance given in the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).

c) The Setting of Heritage Assets Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition)

This document sets out guidance, against the background of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the related guidance given in the Planning Practice Guide (PPG), on managing change within the settings of heritage assets, including archaeological remains and historic buildings, sites, areas, and landscapes.

It gives general advice on understanding setting, and how it may contribute to the significance of heritage assets and allow that significance to be appreciated, as well as advice on how views contribute to setting. The suggested staged approach to taking decisions on setting can also be used to assess the contribution of views to the significance of heritage assets. The guidance has been written for local planning authorities and those proposing change to heritage assets

6.4 Local Policies

6.4.1 The Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy was adopted in January 2016 and provides the local policy background against which planning decision should be made.

6.4.2 The most relevant policy is:

Policy CS20 Managing the Borough's Historic Environment

1) Development proposals in Knowsley should preserve or enhance the borough's historic and architectural assets, including Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Historic Parks and Gardens and archaeological remains, together with other local areas, buildings and structures of historic importance.

The Council will:

a) Require preservation of the local distinctiveness and character of historic assets through sensitive design of new development, including appropriate integration with their setting and immediate landscape;

Heritage Statement for Conversion of Knowsley Village Hall, School Lane, Knowsley Village

b) Prevent demolition and/or development which would result in substantial harm or the loss of a designated historic asset or its setting, unless the proposal would result in substantial public benefits which clearly outweigh the harm or loss;

c) Where a development proposal will result in less than substantial harm to a designated heritage asset or its setting, assess such harm against the benefits of the proposal;

d) Facilitate long term conservation and enhancement of local assets and areas of historic importance, including through the preparation of Conservation Area Management Plans.

2) The re-use of vacant and underused historic assets will be encouraged, with favourable consideration given, where appropriate, to proposals which will:

a) Enable a use for a purpose sympathetic to its conservation;

b) Retain or introduce public access; and

c) Enhance the importance of the asset for local tourism, leisure or the economy.

3) Development proposals on sites which include, or are considered to have the potential to include, heritage assets or comprising archaeological interest, should be accompanied by a heritage impact statement.

4) Locally important historic assets which are not subject to statutory designation will be identified in a local list and will be afforded consideration in the decision making process.

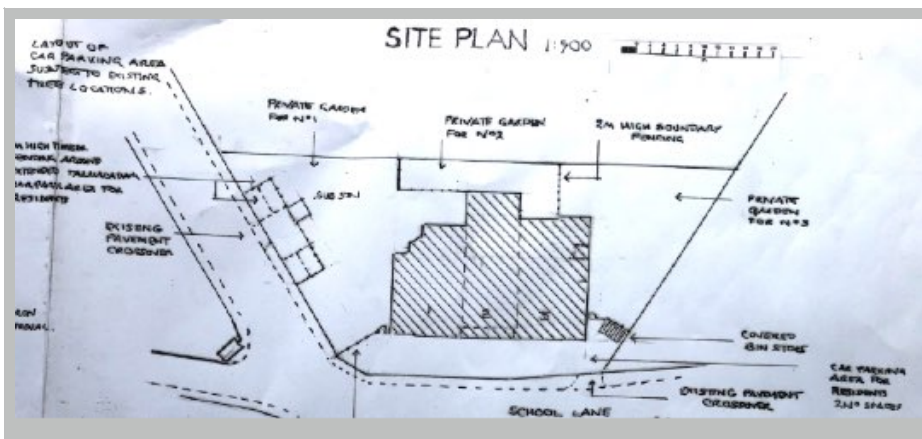
7. The Current Proposal

7.1 The Current Proposal

7.1.1 The current proposal is for:

- The change of use of the Knowsley Village Hall into three dwellings and
- The conversion of the building involving:
 - Comprehensive conservation of the exterior
 - The subdivision of the main hall and interventions to create the three dwellings
 - External interventions
 - Demolition of the front porch
 - Provision of vehicular access
 - Construction of new boundaries and bin store

7.1.2 The proposal is shown on plans to scale submitted with the application and are shown (not to scale) in the plans below for ease.



Plan 5. Proposed Site Plan

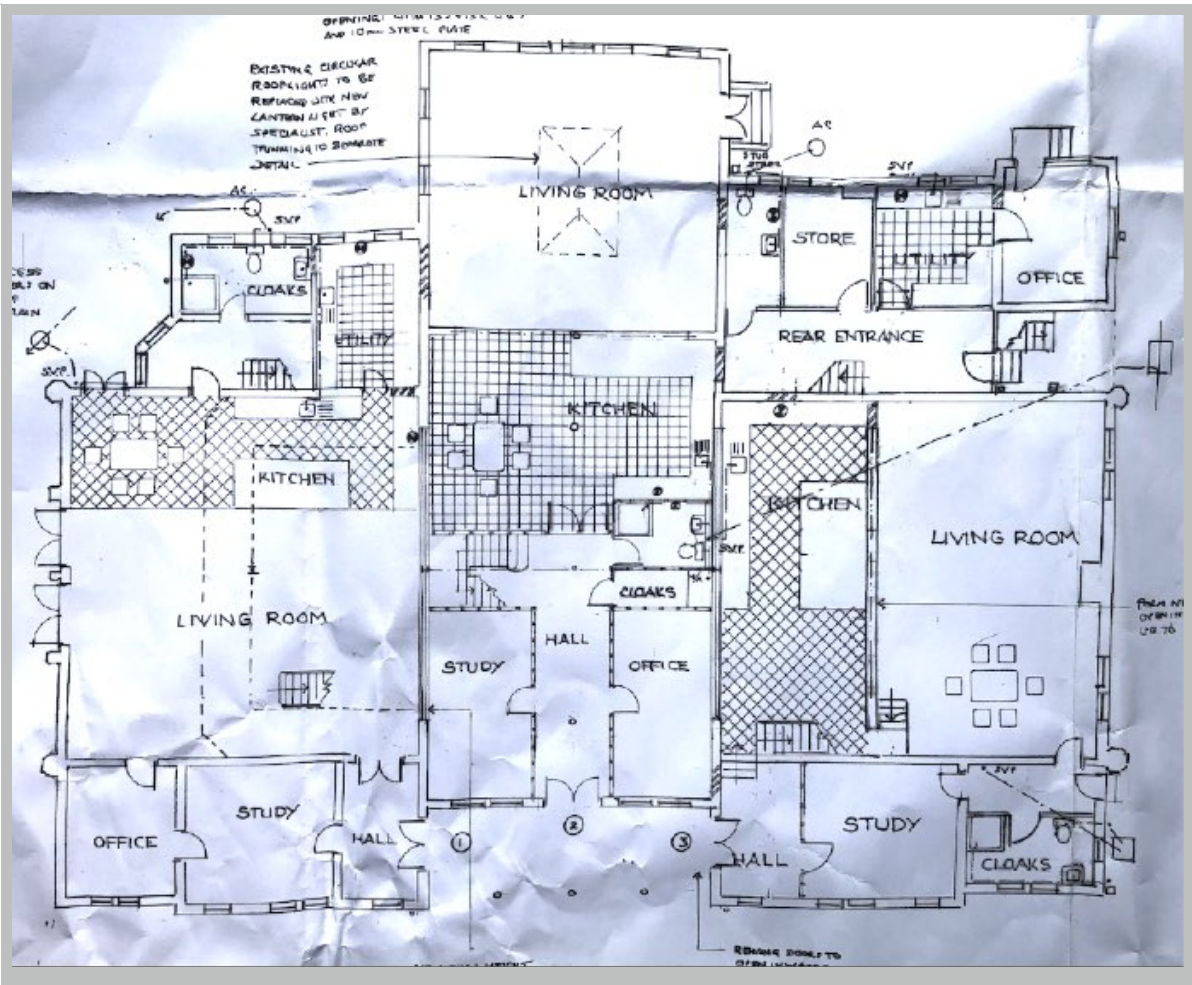


Plan 6. Proposed Front NE elevation

Heritage Statement for Conversion of Knowsley Village Hall, School Lane, Knowsley Village

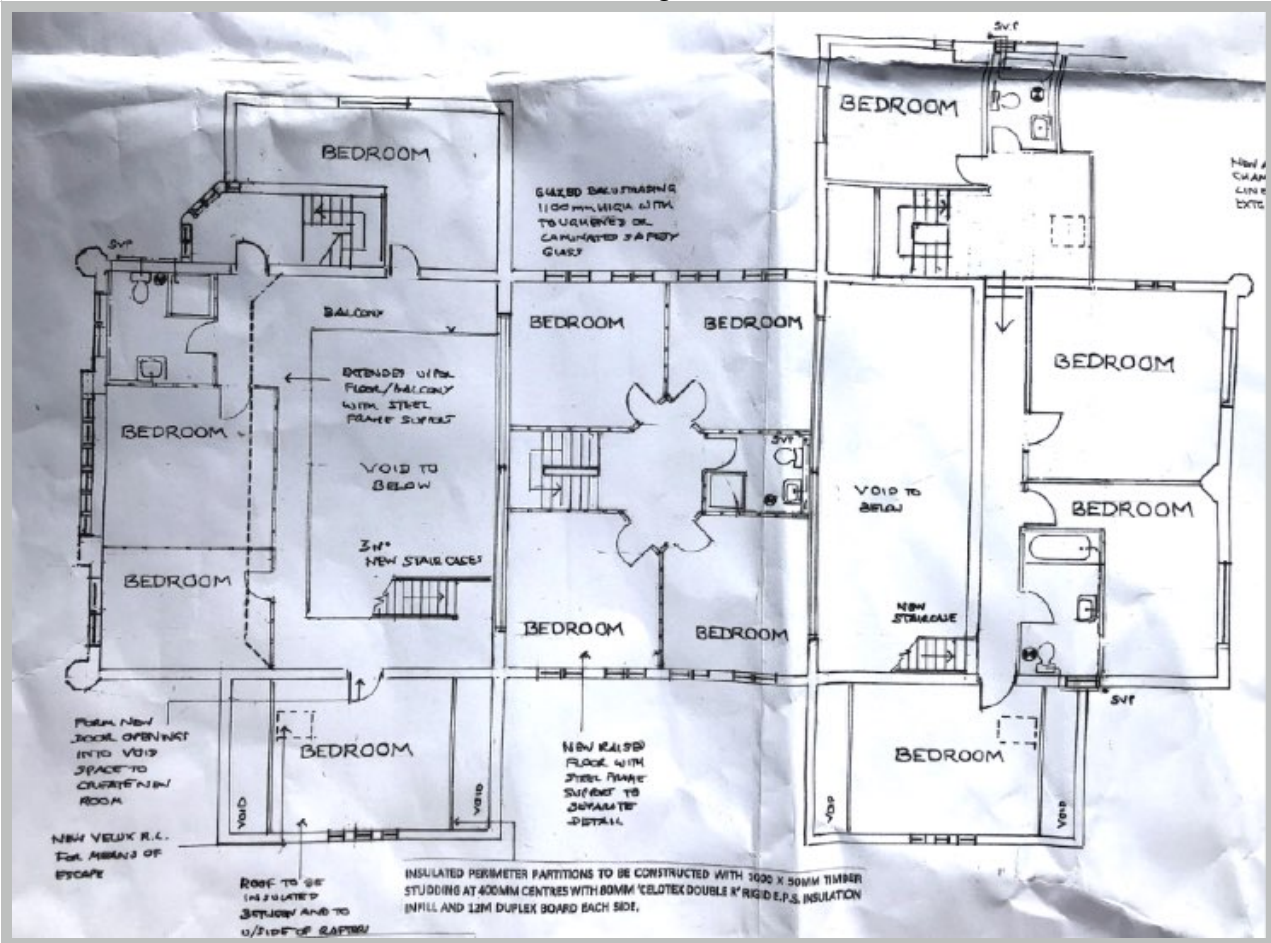


Plan Proposed SE elevation



Plan 7. Proposed GF plan

Heritage Statement for Conversion of Knowsley Village Hall, School Lane, Knowsley Village



Plan 7. Proposed FF plan

8. Assessment Methodology and Assessment of Impact on Heritage Assets

8.1 Change in the Historic Environment

8.1.1 This assessment has been undertaken on the principle that change in the historic environment is not necessarily harmful to the significance of heritage assets and indeed can be beneficial.

The NPPF (2023) acknowledges the potential for new development to enhance a heritage asset or its setting. It states:

190. Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. This strategy should take into account: ...

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

The Glossary of the NPPF defines *Conservation (for heritage policy)*:

The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance.

8.1.2 Similarly, Historic England adopts this approach to change in the historic environment, as set out in its over-arching document, *Conservation Principles*.

It states at 4.1:

Change in the historic environment is inevitable, caused by natural processes, the wear and tear of use, and people's responses to social, economic and technological change.

and asserts at 4.2 that:

Conservation is the process of managing change to a significant place in its setting in ways that will best sustain its heritage values, while recognising opportunities to reveal or reinforce those values for present and future generations.

Conservation Principles states at Para 138 that:

New work or alteration to a significant place should normally be acceptable if:

- a. there is sufficient information comprehensively to understand the impacts of the proposal on the significance of the place;*
- b. the proposal would not materially harm the values of the place, which, where appropriate, would be reinforced or further revealed;*
- c. the proposals aspire to a quality of design and execution which may be valued now and in the future;*
- d. the long-term consequences of the proposals can, from experience, be demonstrated to be benign, or the proposals are designed not to prejudice alternative solutions in the future.*

There is thus no objection in principle by Historic England to change in the historic environment, provided that these criteria are met.

8.2 Assessment Methodology

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8.2.1 Para 200 of the NPPF states:

In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance....

Major applications affecting heritage assets require comprehensive heritage impact assessments, using a recognised methodology. However, in this case the proposal is considered to be relatively minor and so the methodology used in the assessment of the impact of the proposed development on the heritage assets on and around the site is a simple assessment of the physical interventions and their impact on the historic building and the townscape, using ICOMOS's *Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessments* (2011) and BS7913:2013 (*Guide to the Conservation of historic Buildings*) as a guides. Even so, the assessment aims to be comprehensive, systematic and objective.

8.2.2 The ICOMOS Guidance, in *Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessments* (2011), accepts that:

In any proposal for change there will be many factors to be considered. Balanced and justifiable decisions about change depend upon who values a place and why they do so. This leads to clear statement of a place's significance and with it the ability to understand the impact of the proposed change on that significance.

8.2.3 The ICOMOS assessment process is in essence in three very simple stages:

1. *What is the heritage at risk and why is it important?*
2. *How will change or a development proposal impact on the significance of the heritage asset?*
3. *How can these effects be avoided, reduced, rehabilitated (mitigated) or compensated?*

8.2.4 ICOMOS's *Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessments* (2011) recommends that:

5.7 Scale or severity of impacts or changes can be judged taking into account their direct and indirect effects and whether they are temporary or permanent, reversible or irreversible. The cumulative effect of separate impacts should also be considered. The scale or severity of impact can be ranked without regard to the value of the asset as:

- *No change*
- *Negligible change*
- *Minor change*
- *Moderate change*
- *Major change*

1. What is the heritage at risk and why is it important?

8.2.5 The heritage assets which could be potentially affected by the development are described in Sections 2, 3 ,4 and 5 of this Heritage Statement:

- a) Knowsley Village Hall
- b) The Knowsley Village Conservation Area

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8.3 2. How will change or a development proposal impact on the significance of the heritage assets?

8.3.1 Assessment of Impact of the Proposed Change of Use to three Dwellings

The Village Hall was built at the end of the 19th C as a village hall but it has been vacant disused for several years. Buildings which are disused and vacant tend to deteriorate in condition due to lack of maintenance and heating. They are also prone to theft, vandalism and arson. These problems have been experienced at Knowsley Village Hall. It is therefore important that the building is returned to beneficial use as soon as possible to prevent further deterioration.

It is understood that the Parish Council, which managed the building in its latter years, could no longer afford to maintain a building of this size, its continued community use was no longer viable and so it reverted to Knowsley Council which advertised the property for sale with a sales brief.

The sales/development brief stated:

The village hall occupies land identified for primarily residential uses, but a range of alternatives could be acceptable in principle, subject to compliance with relevant local planning policy, including Policy CS19 of the Knowsley Local Plan: Core Strategy (2016) and Saved Policy H5 of the Replacement UDP (2006). These policies generally require that proposals demonstrate a high standard of design, which does not adversely affect the character of the property or street scene; and maintains a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants.

This clearly suggested that residential use of the building would be acceptable and so the building was purchased by the applicant who proposes to return the building to beneficial use as three dwellings.

A fundamental benefit of the current proposal is that it will not only put the building back into beneficial uses, but it will enable it to be restored, conserved and sustained into the future with minimal external interventions so that it retains its main heritage significance.

Para 203 of the NPPF (2023) states:

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

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

This statement in the NPPF reflects the general acceptance of the desirability of putting buildings, which are heritage assets, into viable uses, so that the buildings can be self-sustaining, rather than a drain on resources. The proposed changes of use will put the village hall into a viable use which is “consistent with its conservation”.

Similarly, in *Making Changes to Heritage Assets Historic England Advice Note 2 (2016)*, Historic England advocates the sustainable use of historic buildings and states:

The best way to conserve a building is to keep it in use, or to find it an appropriate new use if it has passed out of use, either that for which it was designed or an appropriate new use which would see to its long-term conservation.

The proposed change of use and conversion will result in an appropriate uses which will “see to its long-term conservation”.

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The principle of the proposed change of use will result in the retention and enhancement of the building per se but also ensure that it continues to make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Knowsley Village Conservation Area and the setting of the War Memorial.

Overall, the principle of the proposed change of use will have a **Moderate Beneficial** impact on Knowsley Village Hall and the Knowsley Village Conservation Area.

8.3.2 Assessment of Impact of the Proposed Conversion

i) The Conservation of the exterior of the Building

An integral component of the conversion of the building is the comprehensive conservation of the external fabric. It is proposed that the whole of the exterior will be comprehensively conserved with alight touch, as necessary, including:

- Repair and repointing of all brickwork and stonework with matching materials and mortar
- Overhaul of the roof, rainwater goods and flashing, using materials to match the existing
- Retention and upgrading of all painted timber windows
- Redecoration

The effect of the conservation works will be to return the building to a good structural, wind and water-tight and decorative condition.

Overall, the conservation works will have a **Minor Beneficial** impact on the heritage significance of the building and on the Knowsley Conservation Area.

ii) The subdivision of the main hall and internal interventions to create the three dwellings

The most significant proposed internal intervention involves the subdivision of the main hall to create the three dwellings. Although this will involve the loss of its fundamental character as a hall for sporting and theatrical events and, in some respects this is regrettable, in assessing this impact, it should be understood that:

- The hall is way too big to be retained as a habitable room within a dwelling
- Planning controls do not normally cover internal alterations to unlisted buildings
- The Sales/Development brief stated: "The historic character and appearance of this non-designated heritage asset should be maintained by retaining traditional features, details and materials to the **building's exterior**". It thus made no reference to retaining the internal features.
- The cast iron columns with two arches will be retained on each side of the central dwelling
- The roof trusses and boarded ceiling will be retained in situ
- The existing maple floor covering will be largely retained in situ
- The balcony will be retained in situ, albeit added to create bedrooms, a bathroom and a passage
- The two end dwellings will retain substantial two storey voids and
- The applicant proposes to retain and re-use all original doors.

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The harm caused by the loss of the hall is thus mitigated and compensated for by these factors in the proposal.

The proposed interventions in the rest of the interior of the building are relatively minor and will cause no appreciable harm to the heritage significance of the building.

Overall, the subdivision of the main hall and internal interventions to create the three dwellings will have a **Minor Adverse** impact on the heritage significance of the building's interior but no impact on the Knowsley Conservation Area.

iii) The external interventions to create the three dwellings

In order to create three dwellings with light and ventilation in habitable rooms, a limited number of additional windows are required.

Windows in front elevation

It is proposed that four new windows and a doorway will be inserted in the front elevation for the central unit but they will be in the recessed wall behind the arcade and so slightly recessive in impact on the appearance of the whole elevation. Furthermore, the brick wall into which they will be inserted has no decorative features and has in fact been painted and boarded over (Plates 4 and 5). The boarding and paint will be removed, which will improve the authenticity of this part of the building. The proposed doorway will be centrally located and the proposed windows will be symmetrically arranged on each side of it to maintain the symmetry of the building. It is proposed that the doorway will have a pair of panelled double doors, the details of which will be submitted for approval by Knowsley MBC. It is proposed that the windows will be painted timber, vertically sliding sashes which will match those at the outer ends of the front elevation with matching stone cills and lintels.

Windows in SE side elevation

It is proposed that two new doorways with French windows will be inserted into the SE side elevation but they will be within the recessed wall behind the arcade and so will be recessive in impact on the appearance of this secondary elevation. The openings will relate to the two arches of the arcade. The proposed French windows will be painted timber and each will be divided into three panes to create a traditional appearance and will have a stone lintel.

Window in NW side elevation

It is proposed that a new doorway with French windows will be inserted into the NW side elevation of the single storey rear projection which is out of public sight and so will have no impact on the public appreciation of the building. Even so, its head will relate to the string course which runs around the building and so it will relate well to the building. The proposed French windows will be painted timber and each will be divided into three panes to create a traditional appearance.

New Lantern on rear projection

It is proposed that the small existing circular roof lights in the flat roof of the central single storey projection will be replaced with a single larger lantern to improve the light levels in the living room of the central unit. The details of the lantern will be submitted for approval by Knowsley MBC but it is intended that lantern will be in PC aluminium and of traditional design and limited height. The proposed lantern will be barely visible from the outside and out of public sight and so will have no impact on the public appreciation of the building. Even so it will be of traditional appearance and will not harm the heritage significance of the building.

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Summary

The proposed new windows, doorways and lantern have been designed and located to minimise their impact on the appearance of the building and to relate to the existing. Building. Overall, the new windows, doorways and lantern will have a **Neutral** impact on the heritage significance of the building's interior but no impact on the Knowsley Conservation Area.

iv) Demolition of the front porch

The front porch was added to the building in the mid-late 20th C. Even though it is symmetrically located and well constructed, its prominent siting in front of the arcade and its contrasting material of stained timber and its overtly glazed design all detract from the original design, appearance and heritage significance of the building. It is proposed that the porch will be carefully removed and that any damage to the original fabric caused by its construction will be made good with matching materials. The proposed removal will substantially re-instate the original appearance of the building and considerably improve the appearance and significance of the building and the conservation area.

Overall, the demolition of the porch will have a **Moderate Beneficial** impact on the appearance and heritage significance of the building and the Knowsley Conservation Area.

vi) Provision of vehicular access

It is essential that the new dwellings will be provided with their own off-street parking facilities and this can be achieved using existing pavement crossings.

The submitted plans show that the four parking for Units 1 and 2 will be provided in the land to the SE of the hall, between the SE boundary and the substation, using the existing pavement crossing and gap in the wall for the substation on Knowsley Road. If acceptable to the local highway authority, this proposal will therefore have negligible impact on the historic fabric.

Alternatively, the applicant is willing to use the existing pavement crossing and gap in the wall opposite the centre of the front of the hall on School Lane for two parking spaces for Unit 2, on the open land created by the demolition of the porch. This will involve the slight widening of the existing gap (Plate 17) by removing short lengths of the wall and relocating the stone piers but the LH wall has already been rebuilt with a new stone pier and so this minor alteration will have a negligible impact on the appearance and significance of the site and the conservation area.

The submitted plans show that the two parking spaces for Unit 3 will be provided in the NW corner in front of the proposed bin store, using the existing vehicular access and pavement crossing (Plate 16) and removing the existing modern metal gate. Alternatively, the applicant would be willing to locate the bin store further into the site and to also locate the parking spaces further into the site. This would have a negligible impact on the appearance and significance of the site and the conservation area.

Overall, the proposed vehicular access will have a **Neutral** impact on the appearance and heritage significance of the building and the Knowsley Conservation Area.

vii) Construction of Boundaries and Bin Store

It is proposed that the existing low brick and stone wall and piers on the front boundary will be retained without any interventions (other than possibly the widening of gaps for vehicular access).

The submitted plans show that a 1m high vertically boarded timber fence with concrete posts and lower panels will be erected from the E corner of the building to the E corner of the site. Although this will be relatively low, it will still be a modern feature in a prominent position. The applicant

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would therefore be willing to erected a fully vertically boarded timber fence of the same height or plant a hedge of a suitable indigenous species to reduce the visual impact of this new boundary between the plots.

Similarly, the submitted plans show that 2m high vertically boarded timber fences with concrete posts and lower panels will be erected along the rear boundary and between the rear plot boundaries. Although these will be at the rear and therefore have only a limited impact on the character and appearance of the conservation area, they will still be modern features and visible from the cemetery. The applicant would therefore be willing to erected a fully vertically boarded timber fences of the same height to reduce the visual impact of these boundaries.

As stated above, the submitted plans show that a bin store for all units will be erected in the NW corner of the site. It is proposed that it will be a small brick-built structure with a felted mono-pitch roof and four vertical boarded timber doors. Even in the location proposed, it will be a very modest and traditional structure which will have negligible impact on the setting of the building and the appearance of the conservation area. Alternatively, the applicant would be willing to locate the bin store further into the site , where it would have even less of an impact on the appearance and significance of the site and the conservation area.

Overall, the proposed fences and bin store will have a **Neutral** impact on the appearance and heritage significance of the building and the Knowsley Conservation Area.

8.3.3 Summary of Impacts

The summary of the assessment of the impacts of the proposals are provided in Table 2. The assessments have found that the proposals will have a range of impacts from Moderate Beneficial to Minor Adverse. The assessment found that:

- The biggest beneficial impacts on the hall and the conservation area will be achieved by the sustainable re-use of the building which will sustain it into the future and the demolition of the front porch which will return the building to its original plan form and appearance.
- The conservation of the external fabric will have a minor beneficial impact
- The subdivision of the interior will have a minor adverse impact
- The external interventions, vehicular access and boundaries and bin store will have neutral impacts.

Overall and on balance, the assessment finds that the net impact of the proposals on the appearance and heritage significance of Knowsley Village hall and the Knowsley Conservation Area will be Moderate Beneficial.

Table 2. Summary of Impacts of Proposals

Proposal/Works	Impact on Knowsley Village Hall and Knowsley Village Conservation Area
Change of Use of Hall to 3 dwellings	Moderate Beneficial
Conservation of External fabric	Minor Beneficial
Subdivision of main hall and internal interventions	Minor Adverse
External interventions	Neutral
Demolition of front porch	Moderate Beneficial
Vehicular access	Neutral

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Proposal/Works	Impact on Knowsley Village Hall and Knowsley Village Conservation Area
Boundaries and Bin store	Neutral

8.4 3. How can these effects be avoided, reduced, rehabilitated (mitigated) or compensated?

As the assessment of impacts of the proposals on the heritage assets concludes that they will have a net beneficial effect on the designated heritage assets, there is no necessity to “avoid, reduce, mitigate or compensate for the effects”.

8.5 Assessment against the advice set out in Para 138 of Historic England’s *Conservation Principles*

8.5.1 The important advice set out in Para 138 of Historic England’s *Conservation Principles* is:

- New work or alteration to a significant place should normally be acceptable if:*
- there is sufficient information comprehensively to understand the impacts of the proposal on the significance of the place;*
 - the proposal would not materially harm the values of the place, which, where appropriate, would be reinforced or further revealed;*
 - the proposals aspire to a quality of design and execution which may be valued now and in the future;*
 - the long-term consequences of the proposals can, from experience, be demonstrated to be benign, or the proposals are designed not to prejudice alternative solutions in the future.*

8.5.2 This Heritage Statement provides sufficient information to enable the comprehensive understanding of the proposal on the significance of Knowsley Village Hall and the Knowsley Village Conservation Area.

8.5.3 This Heritage Statement has demonstrated that the proposal will not materially harm the heritage values of the heritage assets, as set out in the Statement of Significance in this Heritage Statement.

8.5.4 This Heritage Statement has demonstrated that the proposal aspires to a quality of design and execution which may be valued now and in the future.

8.5.5 This Heritage Statement has demonstrated that the proposals have been heritage-led and that the long-term consequences of the proposal will be benign and will not prejudice alternative solutions in the future.

8.5.6 The proposed development and works thus comply with this advice in Para 138 and there is no justifiable objection to them on heritage grounds.

8.6 Assessment against Local Policies

8.6.1 *Policy CS20 Managing the Borough’s Historic Environment* of the Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy seeks to prevent harm to the significance of borough’s heritage assets and their settings. As this Heritage Statement has demonstrated that the proposal will not materially harm the heritage values or heritage significance of the heritage assets, the proposals are in general compliance with this local heritage policy.

8.7 Assessment against S.16. *Conserving and enhancing the historic environment of the NPPF (2023)*

8.7.1 The NPPF establishes the high value which should be attached to the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets:

195. Heritage assets range from sites and buildings of local historic value to those of the highest significance, such as World Heritage Sites which are internationally recognised to be of Outstanding Universal Value. These assets are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations

and

205 When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

8.7.2 The heritage impact assessment above has identified that the current proposal will conserve the character and appearance of Knowsley Village Hall and the Knowsley Village Conservation Area so that they can be “enjoyed for its contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations”. The proposals will cause no net harm to the heritage significance of the building or the conservation area.

8.7.3 This Heritage Statement makes the case that the overall current proposal fully complies with S.16 of the NPPF.

9. Conclusion

9.1 This Heritage Statement has found that the current proposal for the change of use and conversion of Knowsley Village Hall into three dwellings has been heritage-led in order to avoid harm to its heritage significance and that of the Knowsley Village Conservation Area.

9.2 It has found that:

- The biggest beneficial impacts on the hall and the conservation area will be achieved by the sustainable re-use of the building which will sustain it into the future and the demolition of the front porch which will return the building to its original plan form and appearance.
- The conservation of the external fabric will have a minor beneficial impact
- The subdivision of the interior will have a minor adverse impact
- The external interventions, vehicular access and boundaries and bin store will have neutral impacts.
- Overall and on balance, the assessment finds that the net impact of the proposals on the appearance and heritage significance of Knowsley Village hall and the Knowsley Conservation Area will be Moderate Beneficial.
- The proposal follows national advice and guidance for development in historic areas and
- There are no valid heritage or design reasons to resist the proposal.

9.3 Importantly, the proposal complies with the national advice from Historic England and the local heritage policy.

9.4 The advice on *The presumption in favour of sustainable development* in Para. 11 of the NPPF (2023) is most relevant. It states:

Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

...For decision-taking this means:...

c) approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and...

9.5 The proposals represent sustainable development and do accord with the development plan, Section 16 *Conserving and enhancing the historic environment* of the NPPF and the relevant advice from Historic England and so this Heritage Statement strongly advocates that the proposals should be approved without delay.

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Appendix 1. Criteria for Assessing Levels of Heritage Significance

Very High

- Sites, structures or landscapes of acknowledged international importance inscribed as WHS
- Assets that contribute significantly to acknowledged international research objectives
- Urban landscapes of recognised international importance
- Associations with particular innovations or developments of global significance
- Associations with individuals of global importance

High

- Scheduled monuments and undesignated assets of such importance to be scheduled
- Grade I and II* listed buildings, and Grade II buildings with exceptional qualities
- Conservation Areas containing very important buildings
- Undesignated structures of clear national importance
- Urban/Rural landscapes of exceptional importance
- Associations with particular innovations or developments of national significance
- Associations with individuals of national importance

Medium

- Designated or undesignated assets that contribute to regional research objectives
- Grade II listed buildings and undesignated buildings that have exceptional qualities or historical associations
- Conservation Areas that contain buildings that contribute significantly to its historic character
- Historic townscapes with important integrity in their buildings or built settings
- Associations with particular innovations or developments of regional or local significance
- Associations with individuals of regional importance

Low

- Designated or undesignated assets of local importance
- Assets compromised by poor preservation and/or poor survival of contextual associations
- Assets of limited value, but with potential to contribute to local research objectives
- Locally listed buildings
- Assets of modest quality in their fabric or historical associations
- Historic townscapes with limited integrity in their buildings or built settings
- Associations with individuals of local importance
- Poor survival of physical areas in which activities occur or are associated
- Assets with little or no surviving archaeological interest
- Buildings or urban landscapes of no architectural or historical merit and buildings of an intrusive character

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Negligible

- Assets with little or no surviving archaeological interest
- Buildings or urban landscapes of no architectural or historical merit and buildings of an intrusive character