

<u>APPLICATION NO:</u>	26/00057/FUL	<u>CASE OFFICER:</u>	Lee Osborne
<u>WARD:</u>	St Michael's	<u>PARISH:</u>	
<u>LOCATION:</u>	St Aidans R C Church , Adswood Road, Huyton		
<u>PROPOSAL:</u>	EXTERNAL ALTERATIONS TO EXISTING BUILDING, INCLUDING FENESTRATION CHANGES AND NEW DOORS TOGETHER WITH ASSOCIATED EXTERNAL WORKS, INCLUDING ADDITIONAL CAR PARKING PROVISION, NEW FENCING AND NEW TREES.		

Site Description

The application site is St Aidan's R C Church, Adswood Road, Huyton and is situated within a Primarily Residential Area. The application building comprises of a large, detached building, set back from the road frontage and surrounded by both hardstanding associated with the premises and grassed areas. Vehicular and pedestrian access to the site is taken from Adswood Road.

The building is faced with brick to the elevations and predominately served by a shallow dual-pitched roof, with flat roofed sections. The site is bounded by St. Aidan Catholic Primary School to the south-west and St. Aidan's Social Parish Club and St Aidan's Convent situated to the north-east. To the rear there is a parcel of land between the rear boundary of the (red lined) application site and the rear garden boundaries of houses fronting Huyton Lane. There are residential properties on the opposite side of Adswood Road. The building is vacant and the site overgrown.

Proposal

In January 23026 a certificate of lawful use (proposed) was granted establishing that the use of the building/site as a school did not require planning permission. The proposed works are to facilitate the use of the site as a SEN school.

The proposed works consist of external alterations to the building, including new and replacement windows and doors. The site works include new fencing to site boundaries and within the site and additional cart parking. Tree planting is also proposed.

The fencing to be erected would be 1.8m high close boarded fencing to the southwest boundary running from the back of the pavement along the boundary, whilst there would also be 1.8m high close boarded fencing running along the rear boundary of the application site. Similar fencing would also be erected within the site for security purposes and to maintain separation of car park from the pedestrian access and front of the building.

The buildings windows and doors would be replaced, and some door entrances would be enlarged. Installation of additional windows and doors is also proposed, and some windows replaced with door and window.

It is also proposed to extend the hard surfacing at the front of the site to create a car park for 24 cars including 2 disabled persons spaces together with a drop-off area, with separate access and egress using the existing arrangements from Adswood Road.

Consultations

Highway Authority - No objections; request conditions relating to car and cycle parking provision and EVCP provision.

Environmental Sustainability - No objections, biodiversity gain plan required.

Environmental Health - No objections, request conditions relation to construction mitigation, unexpected contamination and testing of imported topsoil.

Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority - No objections, informatives given.

Representations

This application has been publicised by letters sent to 34 neighbours. No representations have been received.

Planning History

25/00585/CLD - CERTIFICATE OF LAWFULNESS FOR CHURCH (F1) TO SCHOOL (F1). Granted: 20.01.2026.

99/00344/APP - ERECTION OF 2.4 METRE HIGH SECURITY FENCING WITH VEHICULAR AND PEDESTRIAN ACCESS. Granted: 26.07.1999.

96/00124/APP - ERECTION OF 2.4M. HIGH PALISADE SECURITY FENCING. Granted: 03.05.1996.

Relevant Policy

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

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

The development plan in Knowsley comprises the Saved Policies of the Replacement Unitary Development Plan, the Core Strategy Local Plan and the Joint

Waste Local Plan. The following policies are relevant to the determination of this application.

KNOWSLEY LOCAL PLAN: CORE STRATEGY

CS2 - Development Principles

CS7 – Transport Networks

CS8 - Green Infrastructure

CS19 - Design Quality and Accessibility in New Development

CS21 - Greenspaces and Trees

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

H5 - Development within Primarily Residential Areas

ENV2 - Noise and Vibration

DQ4 – Trees and Development

Article 35 Statement

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

Assessment

The existing church is situated within a residential area, with a primary school, social club and convent either side of the church. The church has a certificate of lawful for use of the premises as a school. The site will operate as a SEN school, and the proposals are to facilitate this lawful use. The proposal are acceptable therefore in principle subject to design and policy issues.

Design and Visual Amenity Considerations

The proposed works, including the replacement of doors and windows and the installation of a small number of additional windows and doors would not detract from the appearance of the building. It would give an uplift to the appearance as the replacements and additional windows/doors would replace the old-style openings with new ones refreshing the appearance. The installation of the proposed fencing would not detract from the appearance of the site and is of a type found in residential areas. The fencing at 1.8m high could largely be installed without planning permission (except for those parts adjacent the back of footpath along Adswood Road).

The increase in car parking would not be detrimental to the area and would not be overly large; within the remainder of the site the overgrown vegetation would be removed, and it is proposed to plant trees which would add to the visual amenity of the street scene.

The application would comply with Policies CS2 and CS19 of the Core Strategy and Saved Policy H5 of the UDP.

Highways Considerations

The site access/egress arrangements are considered suitable for the range of anticipated vehicle types, including staff vehicles, minibuses and emergency vehicles.

Whilst pick-up and drop-off activity would occur during typical school peak periods, this will be limited in duration and, given the scale and nature of the development, is considered likely to result in only a minor and localised impact on the surrounding highway network, which is already accustomed to school-related movements.

The internal layout provides adequate turning space to enable vehicles to manoeuvre within the site and exit in forward gear.

The level of parking provision does not exceed Knowsley MBC maximum parking standards, and on-site parking provision is considered sufficient to meet anticipated demand associated with the proposed use of the site.

It is considered that a minimum of 4 secure and covered cycle parking spaces should be provided. This level of provision would encourage staff to travel by bicycle and reduce reliance on the private car. Given the absence of detailed cycle parking information, this matter could be secured by a planning condition.

A dedicated, segregated pedestrian route is provided between the Adswood Road footway and the building entrance. This will maintain separation of pedestrian and vehicular access to the school, which benefits pedestrian safety.

Due to the nature of the area and the existing school neighbouring the site it would be prudent to require a CEMP to ensure that development impacts on the highway and local area would be mitigated and would not cause overriding issues to the existing highway and residential amenities).

The Highway Engineer has no objections to the proposals, and the application complies with Policies CS2 and CS19 of the Core Strategy and Saved Policy H5 of the UDP.

Residential Amenity Considerations

The proposals, to provide replacement and new windows and doors to the existing building and to provide a car park at the front of the site to facilitate the use of the site as a SEN school which itself has a certificate of lawful use for such would not impact on the residential amenities of the area. Due to the nature of the area and the existing school neighbouring the site it would be prudent to require a CEMP to ensure that development impacts on the highway and local area would be mitigated and would not cause overriding issues to the existing highway and residential amenities.

The Environmental Health Officer has no objections to the proposals, and the application complies with Policies CS2, CS7 and CS19 of the Core Strategy and Saved Policy H5 of the UDP.

BNG and Ecology

The applicant has submitted a biodiversity net gain assessment, metric calculation and landscape plan which is acceptable and would achieve the required 10% net gain target. A 13.13% net gain in area units and 0.02 unit net gain in hedgerow units

is proposed onsite. The onsite BNG is not considered to be significant enhancement; the landscape plan is basic with species, establishment, maintenance etc details not given. A detailed landscape plan could be secured detailing such. The approval of a biodiversity gain plan before the commencement of development would be required as none of the statutory exemptions are considered to apply, which should take account of any required landscape scheme.

The site is assessed as having low probability of bat roost potential, and no evidence of bat roost was identified on or within the building or any of the surveyed trees on site. The proposed development would result in the loss of an area of other neutral grassland and a single small tree. However, given that a proportion of this grassland would be retained, and that higher -value habitats such as bramble scrub and woodland will remain unaffected, the overall impact on bats is expected to be negligible. Bat boxes (and bird boxes) should be provided within the site in the interests of bio-diversity.

One small tree is proposed to be felled (Silver Birch). However, eleven trees are proposed as shown on the submitted Site Plan Proposed (Full Site) drawing and stated in the submitted Arboricultural Impact Assessment document and such can be secured through a landscape scheme condition.

The application complies with Policies CS2, CS8, CS19 and CS21 of the Core Strategy and Saved Policy DQ4 of the UDP.

Conclusion

The proposal is for works to facilitate the lawful use of the site as a SEN school. The application would not be detrimental to the visual or residential amenities of the area and would not impact adversely upon the highway. The application complies with national and local planning policies.

Recommendation

That planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions: -

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

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

- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans and documents listed in Schedule 1.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt.

- 3) Development mitigation measures shall be installed during all development works onsite. This shall include the following:

- a) Methods for dust control and suppression to be in place, and used when circumstances dictate. .
- b) Control of transfer of mud out of the site shall be in place and used on all vehicles leaving the site.

- c) Areas for the storage of plant and materials to not impact on residential amenities. .
- d) Location of site compound, including any loading/unloading areas to not impact on residential amenities. .
- e) Construction vehicle access arrangements shall not impact adversely on the highway network or residential amenities..
- f) Delivery and collection times (avoiding school peak hours 08:15am - 09:15am and 15:00-16:00).
- g) Contractor parking shall ensure that such do not park on the public highway.
- h) Measures shall be in place to prevent waiting/loading on the highway

All site works shall then proceed only with such measures in place.

Reason: In the interests of highways safety and protecting the amenity of neighbouring occupiers.

- 4) No construction work shall take place outside the hours of 08:00-18:00 hours Monday to Friday, 08:00-13:00 hours Saturday and not at all on Sundays/Public Holidays and deliveries shall only take place in accordance with details set out in the CEMP (condition 3).

Reason: In the interests of protecting the amenity of neighbouring occupiers.

- 5) Prior to the first use of the building as a school a scheme for the provision of cycle parking (minimum of 4 secure and covered spaces), in accordance with the Council's current standards, shall have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, and the agreed scheme implemented as approved, and shall be retained as such thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of air quality and promoting sustainable travel opportunities.

- 6) Prior to the first use of the building as a school details of electric vehicle charging infrastructure (including number, location and specification) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, and the approved infrastructure implemented as approved, and shall be retained thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of air quality and promoting sustainable travel opportunities.

- 7) In the event that contamination is found at any time when carrying out the approved development that was not previously identified it must be reported immediately to the Local Planning Authority. Development on the part of the site affected must be halted and a risk assessment carried out and submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Where unacceptable risks are found remediation and verification schemes shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These shall be implemented prior to the development (or relevant phase of development) being brought into use.

Reason: To protect the ground and water environment and in the interests of protection of end users of the site, local residents and the general public.

- 8) No topsoil is to be imported or used on the site until it has been tested for contamination and assessed for its suitability for the proposed development, a suitable methodology for testing this material should be submitted to and agreed by the Local Planning Authority prior to the soils being imported/used onto site. The methodology should include the sampling frequency, testing schedules, criteria against which the analytical results will be assessed (as determined by the risk assessment) and source material information. The analysis shall then be carried out and evidence submitted to and approved in writing to by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To protect the ground and water environment and in the interests of protection of end users of the site, local residents and the general public.

- 9) The development hereby permitted shall not commence until a biodiversity gain plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and take into account the landscaping scheme required pursuant to Condition 11 of this planning permission. The biodiversity gain plan must include:
- (a) information about the steps taken or to be taken to minimise the adverse effect of the development on the biodiversity of the onsite habitat and any other habitat.
 - (b) the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat.
 - (c) the post-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat.
 - (d) any registered offsite biodiversity gain allocated to the development and the biodiversity and the biodiversity value of that gain in relation to the development.
 - (e) any biodiversity credits purchased for the development; and
 - (f) any such other matters as the Secretary of State may by regulations specify.

The biodiversity gain plan approved shall be implemented prior to the development hereby permitted first coming into use.

Reason: To accord with paragraph 13 of Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and in the interests of biodiversity.

- 10) Prior to the commencement of development an Arboricultural Method Statement shall be submitted to and agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority. The Method Statement shall detail tree protection measures to be used during construction works. All of the issues raised within the submitted Arboricultural Impact Assessment shall be covered by the Method Statement.

Reason: In the interests of tree protection and visual amenity.

- 11) Notwithstanding any details shown on the approved drawings, no part of the development shall be occupied until full details of hard and soft landscaping works have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, and which should accord with the Biodiversity Gain Plan required to be submitted and approved pursuant to Condition 9 of this planning permission.

The details shall relate to all land surfaces not built upon and shall include:

- a) Hard surfaced areas and materials,
- b) Planting plans, specifications and schedules, planting size, species and numbers/densities, plants and trees to be retained and a scheme for the timing / phasing of work.
- c) A detailed regime for the establishment and ongoing and longer term maintenance of all soft landscaping.

The approved landscaping works shall be implemented and completed prior to the first use of the development hereby permitted, or the first available planting season if completed outside the planting season (planting season is October - March).

Any trees or shrubs planted or retained in accordance with this condition which are removed, uprooted, destroyed, die or become severely damaged or become seriously diseased within 30 years of planting shall be replaced within the next planting season by trees or shrubs of similar size and species to those originally required to be planted.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and biodiversity.

- 12) Notwithstanding any submitted details prior to the first use of the building as a school details of bat and bird boxes which shall include number, type and location on an appropriately scaled plan as well as timing of installation shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority (the scheme shall incorporate details submitted within the submitted Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Roost Assessment by Arbtech). Evidence of implementation (i.e. photographs) shall be provided to the Local Planning Authority to verify implementation of the agreed bat and bird boxes.

Reason: In the interests of biodiversity.

SCHEDULE 1

Date Received	Ref. No	Version	Drawing/Document Title
13/02/2026	SAC MHA XX ZZ D A 0100 S0	REV P02	SITE LOCATION PLAN
13/02/2026	SAC MHA XX ZZ D A 0210 S0	REV P01	PROPOSED PLANS GROUND FLOOR
13/02/2026	SAC MHA XX ZZ D A 0220 S0	REV P02	ELEVATIONS PROPOSED
19/03/2026	SAC-MHA-XX-ZZ- D-A-0201-S0	REV P04	SITE PLAN PROPOSED (FULL SITE)
19/03/2026	SAC-MHA-XX-ZZ- D-A-0202-S0	REV P04	SITE PLAN PROPOSED (CROPPED)

Signed Case Officer¹: Lee Osborne

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

**Signed Authorising
Officer²:**

Jo Sheridan

Date:

08/06/2026

Informatives

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

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

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

- 2 Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service
- 3 Breeding Birds:
No tree felling, scrub clearance or vegetation management is to take place during the period 1 March to 31 August inclusive. If it is necessary to undertake works during the bird breeding season then all trees, scrub and vegetation are to be checked first by an appropriately experienced ecologist to ensure no breeding birds are present. If present, details of how they will be protected are required to be submitted for approval.
- 4 Hedgehog:
The habitats on site are suitable for hedgehog (a Priority Species) and Local Plan policy CS8 applies. The following reasonable avoidance measures should be put in place to ensure that there are no adverse effects on them:
 - A pre-commencement check for hedgehog.
 - All trenches and excavations should have a means of escape (e.g. a ramp).
 - Any exposed open pipe systems should be capped to prevent mammals gaining access.
 - Appropriate storage of materials to ensure that mammals do not use them.
- 5 A precautionary working method should be implemented for common amphibians during construction, including the following measures:
 - A staged approach will be adopted for vegetation clearance, whereby the vegetation will be strimmed to 15cm and left overnight to allow any amphibians to disperse. The

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vegetation can then be cleared to ground level and must be maintained at this level

for the duration of construction to deter amphibians from the working area.

- Any rubble piles will be dismantled by hand and debris and brash will be stored on pallets or removed from the site to prevent amphibians from utilising these areas.
- Best practice pollution prevention measures will be implemented to minimise impacts to nearby aquatic habitats that amphibians could use.
- Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations.
- If any common amphibians are found in the working area these should be allowed to disperse of their own accord or, if at immediate risk, should be moved by hand to a sheltered, vegetated area away from disturbance.
- In the unlikely event that a great crested newt is identified, works must cease and advice must be sought from a suitably qualified ecologist.

- 6 The applicant, their advisers and contractors should be aware that if any European Protected Species are found, then as a legal requirement, work must cease and advice must be sought from an ecologist .