

**APPLICATION
NO:**

25/00499/KMBC1

CASE OFFICER:

Reece Black

WARD:

Northwood

PARISH:

LOCATION:

Pizza Delight, 77 Kennelwood Avenue, Northwood

PROPOSAL:

APPLICATION FOR A CHANGE OF USE FROM A HOT FOOD
TAKE AWAY (USE CLASS SUI GENERIS) TO A COMMUNITY
HUB (F2 LOCAL COMMUNITY USES)

Site Description

The application site is located at 77 Kennelwood Avenue, Northwood and designated as a Primarily Residential Area in the Development Plan. The site is a vacant unit within a shopping parade (which is identified as a 'minor parade' within the Core Strategy retail definitions) and has a most recent use as a hot food take away (pizza shop). There is a small section of dedicated parking to the front of the parade. Other uses within the parade include a charity shop, tattoo parlour, pharmacy and newsagents / Post Office.

There are residential dwellings to the north and east of the shopping parade, a care home (Appleby Court) located to the west and to the south lies greenspace and a children's play area (Old Rough Park) with a line of dense tree coverage. This is a service yard and parking, provided by Beetham Way, accessed either side of the shopping parade and adjoining onto Kennelwood Avenue.

Proposal

This proposal is for a change of use from a hot food take away (sui generis) to a community Hub (Use Class F2 Local Community Uses).

The application form outlines that the building will be used as a community information hub with open access to the public but would not be for the sale of any goods or services. The application has been supported by a Planning Statement which outlines that the hub would connect residents of Northwood with local services, support and opportunities.

The opening hours of the premises would be as follows:

8:00 to 20:00 Monday – Saturday and
10:00 to 17:00 Sundays and Public/Bank Holidays

No external alterations or enlargements are included within the proposal.

Consultations

Highway Authority: – No objections.

Environmental Health: – No objections.

Representations

This application has been publicised by letters sent to 3 neighbours. It has also been advertised by way of site notice. No representations have been received.

Planning History

APP. NO: 74/13483/HIST
PROPOSAL: CHANGE OF USE OF SHOP TO A TAKEAWAY PIZZA
PARLOURCONDITIONS
DECISION: GRANTED
DECISION DATE: 12 August 1991

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.

The site is identified as a Primarily Residential Area in the adopted Unitary Development Plan and relates to a commercial unit within an existing minor shopping parade. As such, a change of use to the vacant unit is considered acceptable in principle, subject to compliance with local planning policy and guidance.

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK (NPPF) (2024)

KNOWSLEY LOCAL PLAN: CORE STRATEGY

CS2 - Development Principles
CS6 - Town Centres and Retail Strategy
CS19 - Design Quality and Accessibility in New Development

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

H5 - Development within Primarily Residential Areas
S2 - Diversification of Uses within Existing Centres
S7 - Local Centres and Parades
ENV2 - Noise and Vibration

Article 35 Statement

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

ASSESSMENT

Saved Policy H5 'Development within Primarily Residential Areas' in the Replacement Unitary Development Plan states that *proposals for development within Primarily Residential Areas will be permitted provided that:*

New development within the Primarily Residential Areas (or proposals for the change of use or redevelopment of existing buildings) which is for uses appropriate to a residential area will be permitted provided that the development (either by itself or in conjunction with other developments) would not:

- a) Have an unacceptable impact on the amenity occupiers by reason of noise, disturbance, overlooking, visual intrusion, smells, fumes, on-street parking or other causes; or,*
- b) Adversely affect the character or street scene of the area.*

Saved Policy S7 (Local Centres and Parades) in the Replacement Unitary Development Plan states that *the Council will grant planning permission for the re-use or re-development of properties within local shopping centres or parades for small scale town centre uses within Use Classes (A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, B1, C3, D1 and other miscellaneous town centre uses (see appendix 7) provided that:*

- a) The development accords with policy S2; and*
- b) Local shopping needs would still be met by existing shopping facilities within safe and convenient walking distance of where people live in the surrounding area.*

Saved Policy S2 (Diversification of Uses within Existing Centres) in the Replacement Unitary Development Plan states that *proposals for new buildings, or for the change of use or alteration to existing buildings, to provide town centre uses (as defined in Appendix 7) within existing town and district centres will be permitted provided that the following criteria are met:*

- a) The proposal would be compatible with the scale and role of the centre and would not have a detrimental impact on the retail function of the centre;*
- b) The proposal would not result in a grouping of uses which would have a negative impact on the character of the centre;*
- c) The use would not (by reason of smells, noise, visual intrusion or general disturbance) have a detrimental impact on the environment of the surrounding area; or on the amenity of any neighbouring residents; and*
- d) The proposal would not cause or exacerbate on-street parking, traffic or amenity problems.*

It is important to note that the Government's Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) was amended on 1st September 2020. This included the revocation of the former Use Class D2 (Assembly & Leisure) and reclassification into amended Use Classes. For the consideration of the proposed use, this would now fall within

Use Class F2 (Local Community Uses), which include hall or meeting place for the principal use of the local community.

The Management Plan (contained within the Planning Statement) details that the hub would be staffed by local residents co-ordinating the activities and an informal drop-in. This offer is complementary to other units on this parade – primarily the TANGO community charity shop (which is also run by local residents).

Appendix 7 of the Replacement Unitary Development Plan outlines that the uses contained within the appendix can often be appropriately located in a town, district or local centre, provided that they are appropriate to the scale, role and function of the centre concerned. The (former) Use Class D2 (now F2) is listed as such a Use Class and therefore uses which fall within this Use Class would be considered acceptable.

The accompanying guidance of S7 (7.44) contained within the Replacement UDP states that *in considering proposals affecting the parades, the Council will ensure that the shopping needs of residents are met whilst ensuring a viable long-term future for the centres. This may require redevelopment or re-use of some of the units for non-retail uses, together with further action to improve the environment around some of the centres. Some centres could, for example, be appropriate locations for small-scale employment or community uses, or for partial redevelopment for residential purposes.*

The proposed change of use would complement the other uses within the shopping parade and would bring back into use a vacant unit within the parade. Therefore, the proposal would comply with Saved Policy S2 and S7 of the Replacement UDP.

The Planning Statement details that the day-to-day activities at the hub will include a programme of access to key local agencies and services which would encompass:

- *Peer support sessions for families and individuals, including those related to Special Educational Needs (SEN)*
- *Welfare advice clinics, delivered in partnership with specialist providers.*
- *Health-focused drop-ins, supported by organisations such as Mersey Care, Knowsley Public Health Team and the Cancer Alliance.*
- *Access to the area's Social Prescribing offer, helping people find community-based solutions to health and wellbeing needs.*
- *Opportunities to engage with the Family Connector service, offering tailored local family support.*

DESIGN AND RESIDENTIAL AMENITY

The proposed change of use would not involve any external alterations to the existing unit and there is no extension, enlargement etc associated with this application. Access arrangements to the unit would not be altered. No crime or anti-social behaviour (ASB) concerns are raised from the proposal. The proposal is designed as a central point connection for the Northwood community.

The proposed use would not be considered to result in any adverse impacts on residential amenity. The proposal would not be deemed to be incongruous or discordant to the rest of the uses within the shopping parade with most to all activity taking place internally within the premises. The proposal would be considered to generate some more activity to the shopping parade but not be anticipated to substantially increase footfall.

It is not considered that the proposed use, by and for local community uses, would result in any greater degree of adverse harm to residential amenities and living conditions of neighbouring occupiers, by way of noise and general disturbance, than the most recent use associated with the unit (hot food take away). This view is supported by the Council's Environmental Health Officers who have reviewed the application and not raised any objections to the proposal.

Despite the applicant not outlining any firm hours of operation, it has been agreed with the applicant that the premises would be open to visiting members of the public between:

8:00 to 20:00 Monday – Saturday and
10:00 to 17:00 Sundays and Public/Bank Holidays

These hours agreed with the applicant would be further secured by condition, in the interest of ensuring that no detrimentally adverse impacts would occur to occupants of local residents as a result of the proposed development.

HIGHWAYS

The Planning Statement details that the proposed use is intended primarily for use by local residents from the Northwood area and will also be staffed by local residents. There is currently on-street parking available to the front of the site, and this currently serves the existing parade of shops.

The Planning Statement outlines that due to the high levels of social and economic deprivation within the target population it is anticipated that there would be low levels of private car use. Moreover, given the scale of the centre and that most visitors would be local residents, it is anticipated that most staff and visitors would walk, cycle or travel via public transport. The project is primarily designed to promote active and sustainable travel by being used predominately by local residents who would be within a walkable proximity to the unit. The application site is also located in an area which is accessible by public transport as it is serviced by local bus routes. Therefore, it is not considered that the proposal would result in a significant increase in private car activity. This view is supported by Highways, who have been consulted on the application and not raised any objections to the proposal.

There is a small-covered area at the front of the shop behind railings which can be used for prams, wheelchairs and/or mobility scooters if needed. There is also a private courtyard at the back which can be used for cycle storage if needed, therefore not blocking the main pedestrian area to the front of the shops. Where necessary staff members can utilise the parking space to the rear of the shops accessed via the gated entrance (Beetham Road).

The proposed development would not be considered to result in any significant material increase to trip generation and activity utilised by private car. The site benefits from sound accessibility by public transport and active travel (such as walking and cycling). The proposal would not be anticipated to result in any unacceptable parking, traffic congestion or highway safety issues.

OTHER ISSUES

USE CLASS

Use Class F2 (Local community) captures the following:

- (a) A shop mostly selling essential goods, including food, to visiting members of the

public in circumstances where –

- (i) The shops premises cover an area not more than [280 square metres] and
 - (ii) There is no other such facility within 1000 metre radius of the shop's location,
- (b) A hall or meeting place for the principal use of the local community,
- (c) An area or place for outdoor sport or recreation, not involving motorised vehicles or firearms,
- (d) An indoor or outdoor swimming pool or skating rink.

For the purposes of allowing a proper assessment on residential amenities, adequate parking and potential retail impacts to the minor parade, it is pertinent to include a restrictive condition prohibiting any change of use to the premises to other uses within the F2 Use Class, without a further application for planning permission being submitted and approved.

Conclusion

The proposal is acceptable in terms of design, residential amenity and highways. The proposal also complies with the relevant Core Strategy, Replacement UDP policies and guidance in the NPPF and is therefore recommended for approval subject to conditions.

Recommendation

That planning permission be granted subject to the following condition(s):-

- 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) The premises shall not be open to visitors or service users outside the hours of:

8:00 to 20:00 Monday – Saturday and
10:00 to 17:00 Sundays and Public/Bank Holidays

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of nearby residents and to comply with the NPPF, Policy CS2 of the Knowsley Local Plan: Core Strategy, adopted January 2016 and Saved Policies S2, S7 and ENV2 of the Knowsley Replacement Unitary Development Plan, adopted 2006.

- 4) Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended), the premises shall not be used for any other purpose, other than the proposed use hereby granted, including any other use falling within Use Class F2 of the Schedule to that Order or in any provision equivalent to that Class in any statutory instrument revoking and re-enacting that Order, except with the prior grant of a further planning permission.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to enable the Local Planning Authority to assess any proposal for a further change of use, whether or not it falls within the same Use Class, to comply with Policy CS2, CS6 and CS19 of the Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy, adopted January 2016 and Saved Policies H8, S2, S6 and ENV2 of the Knowsley Replacement Unitary Development Plan, adopted June 2006.

SCHEDULE 1

Date Received	Ref. No	Version	Drawing/Document Title
28/08/2025	AS/065/2023	-	LOCATION PLAN
03/09/2025		-	PLANNING STATEMENT
01/12/2025	002	REV 3	PROPOSED GROUND FLOOR PLAN

Signed Case Officer¹:

Reece Black

**Signed Authorising
Officer²:**

Jo Sheridan

Date:

14/01/2026

Informatives

Not applicable.

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

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