



Planning Statement

Proposal: External alterations to dwelling house to include replacement windows and doors, replacement horizontal timber panels, replacement access gates and the installation of an air conditioning unit

At Dragon House Farm, 370A Cronton Road, Cronton, WA8 5QD

On Behalf of Mr and Mrs Creasy

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LANDOR Planning Consultants Ltd

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Landor Planning Consultants Ltd, acting on instructions from Mr. and Mrs. Creasy (hereafter the Applicants). The Applicants are the owner-occupiers of the application site, which is a residential property located at Dragon House Farm, 370a Cronton Road, Cronton, WA8 5QD.

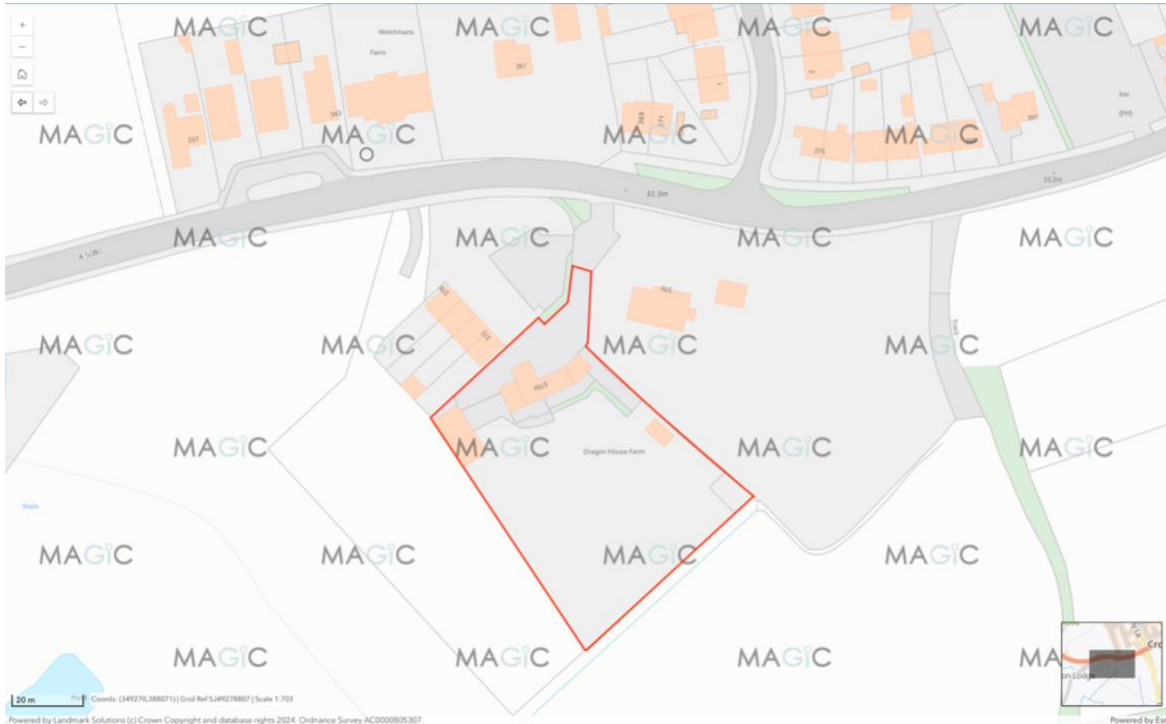


Figure 1: Application Site in context (Source: magic.defra.gov.uk)

- 1.2 This Statement is submitted in support of an application seeking planning permission for a series of minor cosmetic external alterations. The description of development is as follows:

“External alterations to dwelling house to include replacement windows and doors, replacement horizontal timber panels, replacement access gates and the installation of an air conditioning unit”

- 1.3 The purpose of this Planning Statement is to describe the development proposal and to examine the planning issues arising from the proposed development. The scope of this Planning Statement is to justify the proposed development against relevant national and local planning policy with particular regard to the application site context in the Merseyside Green Belt.
- 1.4 This Planning Statement should be read in conjunction with the plans and documents submitted in support of this application including:

- Existing and Proposed Architectural Plans prepared by Smith Young including:
 - Drawing No. 25.045.001: Location Plan

- Drawing No. 25.045.002: Existing Site Plan
- Drawing No. 25.045.003: Proposed Site Plan
- Drawing No. 25.045.101: Existing and Proposed Elevations
- Drawing No. 25.045.102: Existing and Proposed Side Elevations:
- Drawing No. 25.045.103: Existing and Proposed Rear Elevations
- Drawing No. 25.045.104: Existing and Proposed Side Elevations
- Drawing No. 25.045.201: Existing and Proposed Details 01
- Drawing No. 25.045.202: Proposed Details 02

2.0 Location and Site Description



Figure 2: View towards main elevation of dwelling at Dragon House Farm

- 2.1 The application site is located on Cronton Road (A5080) amidst a cluster of residential development located on the southern fringes of the settlement of Cronton in Knowsley, Merseyside.
- 2.2 The site consists of a characterful residential property known as Dragon House Farm, located at No. 370a Cronton Road. Dragon House Farm comprises a detached dwellinghouse created from the conversion and extension of a former farm worker's barn. The elevations of the dwelling incorporate a variety of materials with sandstone, brick, timber clad and white rendered sections under a slate roof covering. The property is set in a garden plot of approximately 4225m² which includes a recently constructed detached outbuilding. The property is accessed via a gated private driveway. The gardens are hard and soft landscaped.
- 2.3 In terms of designations, the site is located in the Green Belt in accordance with Knowsley Council's Local Plan Policies Map, which reflects the policies of the Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy, adopted in January 2016. It is to the immediate south of the

settlement of Cronton, which is identified in the Local Plan as a village and is designated as a Primarily Residential Area.

3.0 Site Planning History

- 3.1 A search of Knowsley Council's online planning public access records indicates the following relevant site planning history:

Reference	Description	Outcome	Date
07/00210/COU	Change of use of former farm workers barn into residential dwelling including two storey extensions to both side elevations and change of use of part of existing barn to form 3 no. stables	Refused	21/06/2007
07/00912/FUL	Change of use of former farm workers barn into residential dwelling inc. 2 storey extensions to both side elevations and change of use of part of existing barn to form 3 no. stables. re submission of refused application 07/00210/COU.	Approved	11/12/2007
09/00086/COU	Change of use of former farm workers barn to form 1 no. residential dwelling with two storey annex accommodation including two storey extensions to both side elevations and change of use of part of existing barn to form 3 no. stables.	Approved	20/05/2010
21/00165/FUL	Erection of 1 No. Agricultural Barn for personal use	Approved	27/04/2021
21/00964/FUL	Retention of timber fence to side boundary adjacent to 370A Cronton Road	Approved	14/02/2022
23/00025/FUL	Removal of Condition No. 5 attached to planning permission 21/00165/FUL (Erection of 1 No. Agricultural Barn for personal use) to allow for the agricultural storage barn to remain permanently	Approved	02/03/2023

- 3.2 The above site planning history references the change of use of the building from a farm workers barn to a dwellinghouse, with two storey extensions and a two storey annexe accommodation as approved in 2007 and 2010. Planning permissions are also in place for the outbuilding, permitted for personal use in originally in 2021, and later on a permanent basis in 2023.
- 3.3 Based on the above planning history, it can be deduced that the application site meets the definition of 'previously developed land' as set out in the Glossary of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) dated December 2024. The definition refers to, 'Land which has been lawfully developed and is or was occupied by a permanent

structure and any fixed surface infrastructure associated with it, including the curtilage of the developed land.’ Residential gardens in built-up areas are excluded from the NPPF definition of previously developed land. However, this distinction does not apply in Green Belts which are not built-up areas as the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and permanence (NPPF ¶142).

4.0 Development Proposal

- 4.1 Planning permission is sought for a series of external alterations to the dwellinghouse to include replacement windows and doors, replacement horizontal timber panels, replacement access gates and the installation of an air conditioning unit.
- 4.2 The intention is to replace all existing windows on the front, rear and side elevations of the property. All existing apertures are retained, and no additional apertures are proposed. The proposed replacement windows replicate the existing windows exactly in terms of size, position and style of glazing bar. The only change is the colour. The existing windows are Chartwell Green (RAL 6021), and the preference is to change these to the neutral shade of Bibury Stream (CWD003). In addition, an existing UPVC door to the main elevation is intended to be removed and replaced with a fixed glazed unit.
- 4.3 The dwelling has a gable feature which is currently treated with horizontal timber panels finished in black. The intention is to replace the existing dark coloured panels with Millworks Southern Grandis Hardwood Horizontal overlap timber boards with a natural wooden finish. The proposal for a more neutral and natural-looking material to the gable feature which lighten the appearance of the dwelling, and will be apparent from the front and side elevations.
- 4.4 The vehicular and pedestrian access to the property are currently secured with a pair of wrought iron gates finished in gold and black. It is proposed that both gates are replaced in natural hardwood.
- 4.5 Finally, a timber refuse enclosure and access gate are proposed along with the installation of an air conditioning unit to the side elevation of the property.
- 4.6 The purpose of the proposals is twofold. Firstly, the intention is to improve the aesthetic of the external elevations by incorporating a neutral palette of materials to replace the prominent green, black and gold shades of the existing windows, timber cladding and metal gates. The lighter tones of the proposed replacement windows and natural wood panels and gates will add balance and harmony to the visual appearance of the property given that there are a range of elevational treatments which include brick, sandstone, render and timber. In addition, the replacement windows and proposed air conditioning unit will improve the thermal efficiency of the dwelling amidst rising energy costs and concerns for climate change.
- 4.7 None of the proposed alterations will add any new-build footprint. As such, none of the proposed changes are considered to result in disproportionate additions to the

building. Consequently, there will not be substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt.

5.0 Planning Policy Considerations

- 5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires the local planning authority to make planning decisions in accordance with the Development Plan unless material planning considerations support a different decision being taken. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. Meanwhile, Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) are capable of being a material consideration in planning decisions but are not part of the development plan.

Development Plan

- 5.2 The development plan in Knowsley consists of the Saved Policies of the Replacement Unitary Development Plan (UDP), which adopted by the Council in June 2006; the Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy which was adopted in January 2016 and the Joint Waste Local Plan. The following policies are relevant to the determination of this planning application proposal:

- Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy Policy CS2: Development Principles
- Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy Policy CS5: Green Belt
- Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy Policy CS19: Design quality and Accessibility in New Development
- Saved UDP Policy G7: Alteration, Extension or Replacement of Existing Dwellings in the Green Belt
- Saved UDP Policy H8: Extensions and Alterations to Residential Properties

National Planning Policy Framework

- 5.3 The most recent Revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was issued by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government in December 2024. NPPF is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. The following paragraphs are particularly relevant to the determination of this planning application:

1) NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied.

2) Planning Law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The NPPFis a material consideration in planning decisions.

3) NPPF should be read as a whole (including its footnotes and annexes).

7) The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, including the provision of homes, commercial development

and supporting infrastructure in a sustainable manner. At a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

8) Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives) - a) an economic objective; b) a social objective; c) an environmental objective.

10) So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of NPPF is a **presumption in favour of sustainable development**.

11) Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development: For decision taking, this means approving development proposals which accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the most relevant policies are out-of-date granting planning permission unless: ; or the application of NPPF policy that protects areas and assets of particular importance, provides a strong reason for refusing the development proposed; or any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against NPPF taken as a whole.

12) The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision-making.

39) Local planning authorities should approach decisions are required to approach decision making on proposed development in a positive and creative way, work proactively with applicants seeking to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.

47) Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Decisions on applications should be made as quickly as possible and within statutory timescales unless a longer period has been agreed by the applicant in writing.

55) Local planning authorities should consider whether otherwise unacceptable development could be made acceptable through the use of conditions or planning obligations.

57) Planning conditions should be kept to a minimum and only imposed where they are necessary, relevant to planning and to the development to be permitted, enforceable, precise and reasonable in all other respects.

58) Planning obligations must only be sought where they meet all of the following tests: a) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms; b) directly

related to the development and; c) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

124) Planning policies and decisions should promote effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, whilst safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring healthy living conditions. Strategic policies should set out a clear strategy for accommodating objectively assessed needs, in a way that makes as much use as possible of previously developed or 'brownfield' land.

125) Planning policies and decisions should give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs; promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings, including by converting space above shops and supporting opportunities to use airspace above existing residential and commercial premises.

128) Local planning authorities should take a positive approach to applications for alternative uses of land which is currently developed but not allocated for a specific purpose in plans.

129) Planning policies and decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land, taking into account the identified need for different types of housing, local market conditions and viability; the availability and capacity of infrastructure, services and sustainable travel modes; desirability of maintaining character and setting and the importance of well-designed places.

142) The Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.

143) Green Belt serves five purposes: a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas; b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another; c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment; d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and e) to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

153) When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt, including harm to its openness. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

154) Development in the Green Belt is inappropriate unless one of the following exceptions applies:

a) buildings for agriculture and forestry;

- b) the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use), including buildings, for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments; as long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it;
- c) the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;
- d) the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;
- e) limited infilling in villages;
- f) limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the development plan (including policies for rural exception sites); and
- g) limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land (including a material change of use to residential or mixed use including residential), whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt.
- h) Other forms of development provided they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. These are:
 - i. mineral extraction;
 - ii. engineering operations;
 - iii. local transport infrastructure which can demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location;
 - iv. the re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction;
 - v. material changes in the use of land (such as changes of use for outdoor sport or recreation, or for cemeteries and burial grounds); and
 - vi. development, including buildings, brought forward under a Community Right to Build Order or Neighbourhood Development Order.

161) The planning system should support the transition to net zero by 2050 and take full account of all climate impacts including overheating, water scarcity, storm and flood risks and coastal change. It should help to: shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure.

231) The policies of the Framework are material considerations to be taken into account from the date of publication.

232) Existing policies should not be considered out of date if they were adopted or made prior to the publication of NPPF. Due weight should be given to them according to their degree of consistency with NPPF (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies of NPPF, the greater the weight may be given).

Annex 2: Glossary- provides definitions of terminology used in the main document.

“Previously developed land” is defined as, ‘Land which has been lawfully developed and is or was occupied by a permanent structure and any fixed surface infrastructure associated with it, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed). It also includes land comprising large areas of fixed surface infrastructure such as large areas of hardstanding which have been lawfully developed. Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land, and any associated fixed surface infrastructure’.

6.0 Planning Issues

6.1 The main issues in the assessment of this application are as follows:

- Principle of Development
- Green Belt Policy
- Design, Visual and Residential Amenity
- Sustainability and Climate Change
- Biodiversity Net Gain

The Principle of Development

6.2 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act require that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The presumption in favour of sustainable development referred to in ¶11 of NPPF requires local planning authorities (LPAs) to approve development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay. The ‘presumption in favour’ does not alter the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision taking (NPPF ¶12).

6.3 Saved UDP Policy G7 refers to the Alteration, Extension or Replacement of Existing Dwellings in the Green Belt. It states that Proposals for the extension or alteration of an existing dwelling within the Green Belt, or for the construction of a detached garage or outbuilding within its curtilage, will be permitted subject to various criteria. Similarly, Saved UDP Policy H8 states that proposals for extensions and alterations to residential properties will be permitted, also subject to various criteria. Accordingly, the principle of development is acceptable in accordance with Saved UDP Policies G7 and H8.

Green Belt Policy

6.7 Local Plan Core Strategy CS5 states that inappropriate development will not be permitted in the Green Belt except in very special circumstances. Meanwhile, NPPF states that the construction of new buildings in the Green Belt is inappropriate unless one of the exceptions set out in ¶154 applies.

- 6.8 In respect of the application proposal, there are two exceptions under NPPF ¶154 which are relevant. Firstly, NPPF ¶154c) which allows the extension or alteration of a building provided it does not result in disproportionate additional over and above the size of the original building is applicable. NPPF ¶154c) is consistent with Saved UDP Policy G7 which also refers to extensions and alterations to dwellings in the Green Belt provided that disproportionate additions would not result.
- 6.9 In this case, the proposed physical alterations, including replacement windows, doors, horizontal timber panels, gates and the installation of an air conditioning unit proposed do not result in any additional built form or footprint and therefore disproportionate additions above the size of the original building do not result. The proposal has an acceptable impact upon the openness of the Green Belt in accordance with NPPF ¶154c) and Saved UDP Policy G7.
- 6.10 Returning to NPPF ¶154, the application site meets with the definition of previously developed land set out in the Glossary of NPPF. Therefore, the application proposal also falls to be considered under the exception set out in ¶154g) which refers to limited infilling, or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land which would not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt. The proposed physical alterations, including replacement windows, doors, horizontal timber panels and the installation of an air conditioning unit proposed do not result in any additional built form or footprint, do not add to the scale and mass of the existing buildings and therefore do not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt.
- 6.11 In the case of the replacement access gates, it is acknowledged that the proposed timber replacement gates would have a more solid appearance than the existing metal gates. However, the impact on openness is mitigated by the fact that the replacement gates are lower in height than the ones to be replaced. This in combination with the fact that timber is a natural material which is appropriate to the rural context of the Green Belt ensures that the impact on the openness of the Green Belt is negligible and would not cause substantial harm.
- 6.12 To conclude, the proposed alterations do not result in disproportionate additions above the size of the original building and would not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt. Accordingly, the application proposal is acceptable when considered against Local Plan Core Strategy Policy CS5; NPPF ¶154c and ¶154g) and Saved UDP Policy G7.

Design, Visual and Residential Amenity Considerations

- 6.13 The design proposal will improve the aesthetic of the external elevations by incorporating a neutral palette of materials to replace the prominent green, black and gold shades of the existing windows, timber cladding and metal gates. The lighter tones of the proposed replacement windows and natural wood panels and gates will add balance and harmony to the visual appearance of the property given that there are range of elevational treatments which include brick, sandstone, render and timber.

- 6.14 The proposed materials are considered to represent a considerate response to the rural context and setting given the site location in the Green Belt. The proposals are considered a visual improvement compared to the existing materials. As such, in design terms, the proposal would not be detrimental to the visual amenity of the area.
- 6.15 The proposals do not result in any concerns for the amenities of neighbouring occupiers such as privacy or overlooking. For these reasons, the proposals are considered to meet with the requirements of CS2 and CS19 of the Local Plan Core Strategy and Saved Policies G7 and H8 of the UDP.

Sustainability and Climate Change

- 6.16 The proposed replacement windows and doors will meet with current Building Regulations Standards in respect of thermal efficiency addressing concerns of rising energy costs and climate change. The proposed air conditioning unit improves the ability of the dwelling to adapt to increasing temperatures. The proposals would therefore accord with the aims of NPPF ¶161 by supporting the transition to net zero by 2050; taking full account of all climate impacts including overheating, water scarcity, storm and flood risks and coastal change; and helping to: shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

- 6.17 Householder planning applications are explicitly listed as an exemption to the mandatory BNG rules under the Environment Act 2021. This exemption applies to the application site and as such the proposal is not subject to Mandatory BNG.

7.0 Conclusion

- 7.1 The proposed external alterations to the dwellinghouse to include replacement windows and doors, replacement horizontal timber panels, replacement access gates and the installation of an air conditioning unit would not result in disproportionate additions to the size of the original building. Moreover, the site is previously developed land, and the proposals would not impact upon or cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt, or the reasons for including land within it.
- 7.2 The proposed alterations would improve the appearance of the dwelling given the context of the site and its location. Additionally, there would be no impact on the amenities of neighbours.
- 7.3 For all the above reasons, the proposal is considered to meet with the requirements of the relevant development plan and national planning policy considerations. In the interests and objectives of achieving sustainable development, it is respectfully requested that planning permission be granted without delay.

