

Description of proposal

The proposal is to extend the existing dwelling by adding a single storey extension to the side and to the rear, largely by infilling between existing structures.

The new layout rationalises the dwelling into a well-proportioned family home, upgraded for modern living whilst respecting the site and the wider greenbelt surroundings.

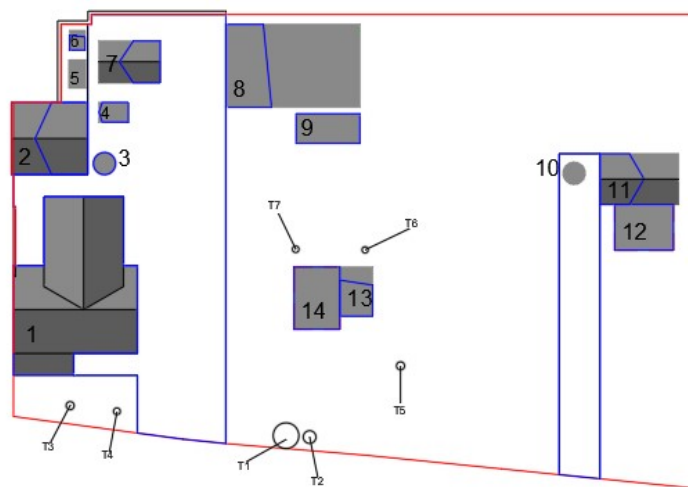
A number of the structures related to the past business use on site have recently been demolished and two large structures remain in whole or part. It is proposed that clearance is completed and the construction of a 5 x 3.5m timber garden office pod replaces all remaining structures. (This has a 2.5m eaves height to the boundary.)

The application also includes a proposed change of use for all the land to the North side of the dwelling.

Construction is hugely damaging to the environment and the previous proposal to demolish the cottage would have a negative environmental impact both in terms of the material sent to landfill and the new materials brought to site, in addition to the negative impact on adjoining neighbours.

Our proposal retains the existing cottage and creates a well-proportioned home, fit for modern family life and one that meets environmental standards. Our proposal retains all the trees on site, retains access and highway arrangements unaltered and has little or no impact on local wildlife.

Demolition



Building Schedule

1	Dwelling	328
2	Outbuilding	56.4
3	Water reservoir	1.26
4	Shed	3.7
5	Gas tank	1.5
6	Coal bunker	0.96
7	Greenhouse	20.14
8	Outbuilding	105.8
9	Shed	14.7
10	Water reservoir	1.26
11	Shed	33.6
12	Midden	7
13	Shed	12.3
14	Pagola	21.28
Grand total m ³		607.9

Existing Site Plan

The proposal includes the demolition of numerous buildings and garden structures:

2. An original masonry outbuilding present since 1880 (washhouse and privy), which sits to the rear of the cottage, within 5m of the original dwelling. It is proposed this is demolished as part of this application. The area for this is included in both existing and proposed plans no planning consent is required to incorporate it into the dwelling. Volume 56.4m³

3. Water storage vessel. Removed

4. Shed, removed.

5. Oil Tank, to be relocated.

6. Coal bunker, to be relocated.

7. Greenhouse, single glazed, to be removed.

8. Large workshop part masonry, part timber, built in 1960's. It is proposed this is demolished as part of this application. Volume 106m³

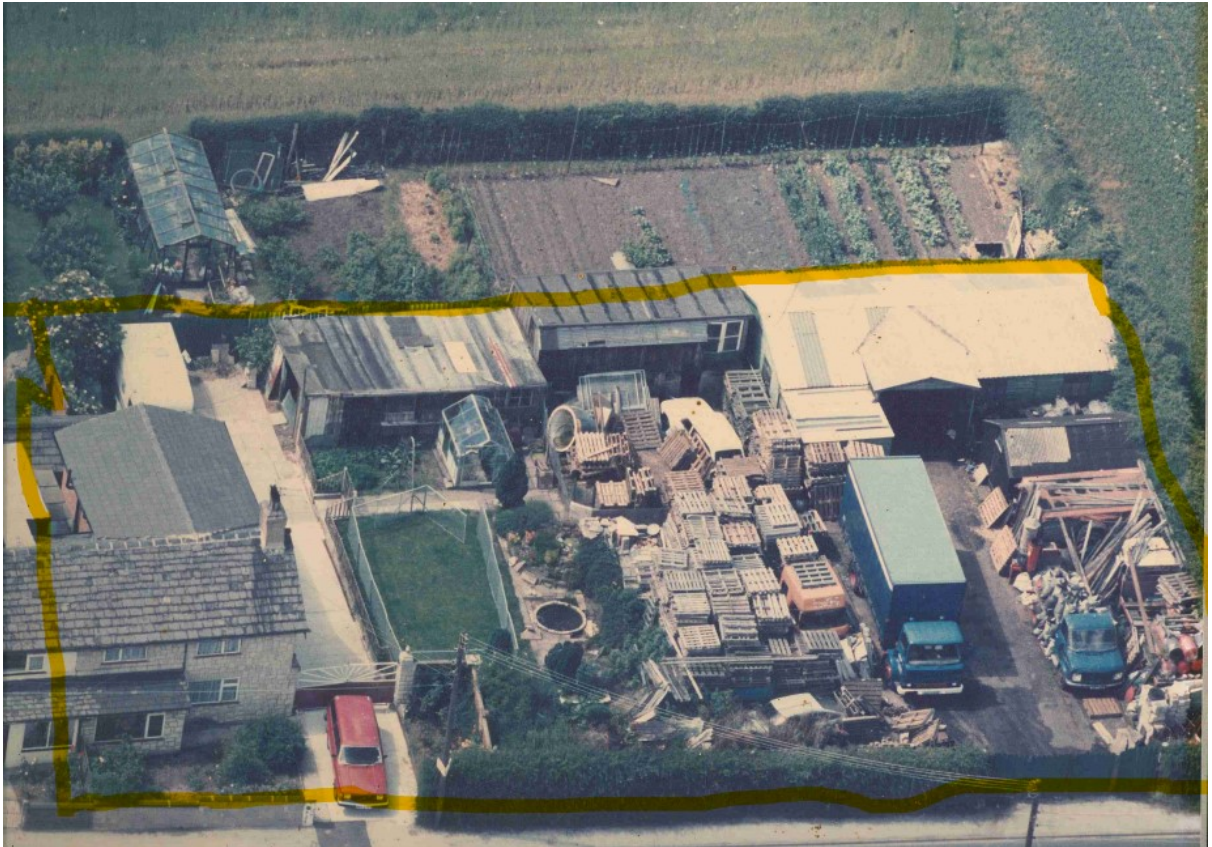
9. Shed/Aviary, timber structure built in the last 30 years in poor condition. Demolished for hygiene, summer 2021. Volume 15m³

10. Water storage vessel. Removed

11. Workshop/garage. Masonry, timber & asbestos structure built 1960's. Superstructure demolished for safety summer 2021. Foundation and masonry to DPC remain intact. Volume 33.6m³

12. Timber/asbestos structure built 1960's. Demolished for safety, Summer 2021. Volume 17m³

13. & 14. Shed/Aviary, timber structure built in the last 30 years in poor condition. Demolished for hygiene, summer 2021. Volume 15m³



Aerial photograph validates the level of development in 1986.

Change of Use

As part of this application we request regularisation of the land to the North side of the house as a residential garden. This land was previously used as part of the previous owner's coal merchants business, as detailed below:

From: KG Planning <kate@kgplanning.co.uk>
Sent: 12 June 2020 12:04
To: Roberts, Chloe <Chloe.Roberts@knowsley.gov.uk>
Cc: Chris Hargreaves <bridgefieldbs@gmail.com>; Chriswarwicksbd <chriswarwicksbd@gmail.com>
Subject: Fwd: Re: Sunnyside

Chloe,

Many thanks for your email dated 29th May.

I've attached three updated drawings (one in black and white as well) which address the height issue raised in 3) and include the details required in the email from highways.

The contents of the letter from United Utilities are noted and I can confirm that the list of conditions are acceptable.

I will send you a number of dated Google images of the property and garden under a separate email, however I can confirm that the garden has been used solely as such since 1999. My client's father did park a haulage vehicle and coal wagon on the drive before this time but the related businesses were sold in 1999.

I hope this answers your question however if you require any further information or clarification please do not hesitate to contact me.

Many thanks,

Kate

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The application requests that the existing use class be changed and the proposed use is for a residential garden attached to the main dwelling.

Design considerations

Sunneyside cottage has existed since around 1650, although sadly not many original features remain. The original cottage consisted of the subject property and the one next door (the cottage), collectively known as Sunneyside cottage. In the late 1800's the owner died leaving the cottage to his two children, each was single and unmarried. They divided the property in half for ease. In doing so, they created two small cottages which were rendered too small to function as independent dwellings. Shortly after, each was extended to the rear to provide additional accommodation. We have provided maps from dating from 1943, 1948 and 1959 which clearly show these extensions.

There is a 1.5 storey original (Victorian) outbuilding to the rear of the house which is currently laid out as a utility room and W/C. This would be "taken into" the proposed new extension and would therefore not contribute to the increase in total volume.

The dwelling was originally extended prior to 1948 and we can demonstrate the position of the original building line. It is this datum line from which our proposed extension is to be measured. We have provided case law to support our position.

The existing staircase is not compliant with building regulations and is patently dangerous. To install a compliant stairway, one of the small bedrooms has been lost.

The ceiling height throughout the cottage sits just under 2.2m, therefore the eaves of the extension sits at 2.6m. This is lower than in newly built property but is in proportion and continuity with the cottage, minimises impact to neighbours, reduces the effect on the openness of the Greenbelt and reduces the impact on the total volume.

Design summary

Proportion & Volume- Under permitted development, the side extension (to which entitlement is already enjoyed) is considerably larger, longer, and more intrusive on the openness of the Greenbelt than the proposal. The maximum ridge height of this extension under permitted development is 4m. Therefore, the extension we already enjoy a statutory right to construct is far larger and of significantly greater volume than that proposed in this application.

A similar right to extend 3m from the rear boundary is enjoyed under permitted development, although the eaves height is restricted to 3m due to the proximity of the boundary. Given the position of the original outbuilding, the proposal actually constitutes limited infill of the site and therefore the actual volume increase is minimised.

The two extensions to which we are entitled are in addition to the 50% made available under the Local Plan, of which the site has currently utilised only 17%.

Therefore, should this proposal be refused, the resulting development arising from permitted development would be of both greater volume and visual impact.

Greenbelt Considerations- This proposal has been carefully considered to be sensitive to the openness of the Greenbelt in terms of impact and volume. The proposal is single storey only and is set back from the road to the front, behind private gates to the side. The storey height is minimised by matching to existing. The proposal has minimal impact upon the openness of the greenbelt as it largely consists of infill to the rear.

Neighbourly matters - The proposal has no impact upon neighbours as it sits beneath the height of the existing boundary walls. The proposal does not impact in any way on neighbours' amenity.

Highways- The proposal does not impact upon highways. The visibility splay has been recently improved by removing a low wall to the frontage without any requirement to alter dropped kerbs etc. The site enjoys parking facilities for multiple vehicles due to having two existing driveways.

Design and access- The subservient nature of the extension respects the original proportions of the original cottage which dates back to 1690. With considerable care, cost and expertise, demolition has been averted and the original property entirely restored. Although no duty exists via listing or conservation status, original timbers have been sympathetically repaired/ retained in accordance with Conservation and SPAB (Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings) principles. All main elements of the original cottage have been repaired and stabilised sympathetically and all thermal elements now meet or exceed current building regulations. Differing floor levels have been regularised and a building regulations compliant staircase installed. The home now benefits much improved environmental credentials due to incorporation of the external wall insulation, upgraded roof and a thermally insulated floor slab.

The proposed layout is aligned to that of a dormer bungalow with bedroom and bathing accommodation offered to both the ground and first floors. The existing and proposed ground floor areas will be wheelchair accessible and offer flexible accommodation for multigenerational family living. Poor interior light levels due to low eaves have been offset by increased areas of thermally efficient glazing, increasing natural light, passive ventilation, and thermal comfort.

Policy summary

The site falls within designated green belt but sits outside the Tarbock Green conservation area.

Policy G7 within Knowsley's UDP permits extension and alterations to residential dwellings within the Green Belt, providing they respect the appearance of the existing dwelling, its setting and preserve the openness of the green belt.

The proposal should not by itself, or in conjunction with earlier developments, result in a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original dwelling. The explanation goes on to state that as a general guideline, enlargements of over 50% will normally be classed as disproportionate and not allowed. The size of the original dwelling is defined as that which existed on 1st July 1948, or the dwelling as originally built if this was later. The NPPF also stipulates that extensions or alterations of a building are listed as exceptions to inappropriate development within the green belt.

Paragraph 145 C) Allows for extensions or alterations of a building if it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.

NPPF and Policy CS5 'Green Belt' in the Core Strategy state that inappropriate development in the Green Belt will only be allowed where the harm caused to the green belt and any other harm is clearly outweighed by 'very special circumstances'.

"Very special circumstances" are demonstrated as follows:

National Planning Policy Framework, March 2012, Department for Communities and Local Government states the following in relation to the Greenbelt.

"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.

Green Belt serves five purposes:

- *to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;*
- *to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;*
- *to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;*
- *to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and*
- *to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land."*

In respect to the proposed development, we would refer to the above aerial photograph taken in 1986 showing the site to be both previously and extensively developed land. It is a matter of public record that Bates Coal merchants operated from the site for many years and at least some of the considerable associated outbuildings currently remain in situ. The previous owner, Mr Hargreaves, has confirmed the nature of the previously developed land in the email above in connection with application 20/00123/FUL.

The stated fundamental aim of the Greenbelt policy does not apply in this case as the openness of the greenbelt has already been improved by the demolition of some of the outbuildings (footings remain currently). The proposal further enhances openness by utilising the land as a domestic garden. In summary, the proposal enhances the openness of the Greenbelt, it does not detract from it. With regard to the five purposes of the greenbelt we respond as follows:

- *to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas*- This criterion does not apply as the proposal does not constitute urban sprawl and is considerably less impactful than the previous development on the site.
- *to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another* - This criterion does not apply in this case and therefore has no bearing.
- *to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment*- This criterion does not apply as the site has never formed part of the open countryside, therefore this criteria has no bearing.
- *to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns*- The site does not form part of a historic town or even the conservation area, and therefore this criteria has no bearing.
- *to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land*- The site was previously extensively developed land and the proposal is less impactful than the previous use in terms of density, openness and spatial impact.

Therefore, the proposal positively impacts the Greenbelt and the five primary criteria do not apply in this case.

Further, considering the spirit of PG05 Planning Policy Guidance 2 - Greenbelts, which states: "C3 Limited infilling at major developed sites in continuing use may help to secure jobs and prosperity without further prejudicing the Green Belt." Where this is so, local planning authorities may in their development plans identify the site, defining the boundary of the present extent of development and setting out a policy for limited infilling for the continuing use within this boundary. Such infilling should: x (a) have no greater impact on the purposes of including land in the Green Belt (paragraph 1.5) than the existing development; x (b) not exceed the height of the existing buildings; and x (c) not lead to a major increase in the developed proportion of the site."

It is conceded that we are not in this instance debating a major development site, but this guidance provides the LPA with relevant discretionary powers.

In this case, limited infilling to the rear of the property and use of the Curtilage as garden provides greater openness and also provides a modest number of jobs. The jobs created in this instance are professional roles which also satisfies CS4: Economy and Employment.

CS2 - Development Principles - applied via the environmental impact of repairing rather than replacing the existing structure and upgrading it to modern home standards.

CS19 - Design Quality and Accessibility in New Development- applied via redesign of the ground floor to provide improved accessibility to the dwelling and the hard landscaping.