

21/00477/FUL - The Gate (Community Centre), 600 Princess Drive, Huyton, L14 9NQ

The need for the extension and what it is proposed for

The GATE Community Centre was transferred from KMBC's ownership to North Huyton Communities Future (NHCF) as part of an asset transfer arrangement around 10 years ago.

Since then, NHCF has been working with local community groups to increase the usage of the Centre for the benefit of the locality.

Over the last 10 years, usage has increased tenfold with youth clubs, after school clubs, granny and carer groups, special need groups, pensioner groups, knitting groups, employment initiatives, debt and housing services all operating out of the Centre, along with special events such as Network Bingo, Christmas Grotto's and Halloween Fright nights.

Usage has also been accelerated due to the closure, demolition and relocation of services from KMBC's Round-a-bout Youth Centre and the Library in Page Moss. LIVV housing are also due to close their offices in Page Moss soon.

The need for the extension is therefore to accommodate this ever-growing local need both currently and into the future, as provision is being reduced elsewhere.

Many of the groups require 'active' areas where ball games, toddler play events and craft sessions can be enjoyed. However, these can be in conflict with the traditional usage of the main hall which caters for pension groups, employment training sessions and resident events.

Previously lights have been broken, walls and carpets marked through the use of ball games and similar activities. NHCF has just had the main community room and hallways recarpeted and painted plus all the lights have been renewed ready to welcome back user groups post Covid.

The new multi-use area will therefore complement the existing spaces by providing an alternative area where these more 'active sessions' can be better catered for. It will also provide more storage spaces which are at a premium in the Centre.

Additional activities are also envisaged for the new space, including cinema events and private lettings that will help sustain the income of the building and so meet its running costs longer term.

Concerns has been raised by some local residents in the past around ball games in the Centres car park, but much of this usage will now be taken indoor within the new extension and so hopefully address this historic issue.

Tim Molton

On behalf of NHCF