



For and on behalf of
Knowsley Council

Planning Statement

**5-8a Cavendish Walk,
Huyton, L36 9YG**

**Prepared by
DLP Planning Ltd
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by DLP Planning Ltd on behalf of Knowsley Council (the “Applicant”) in support of a change of use application from a retail unit (Use Class E) to a mixed use containing a community library (Use Class F1) and offices (Use Class E) at Units 5-8a, Cavendish Walk in Huyton.
- 1.2 This development proposal seeks to revitalise a currently vacant unit along Cavendish Walk into a mixed-use development. The 2-storey unit is proposed to be redeveloped into a ground-floor community library and upper floor office space.
- 1.3 The statement follows the following structure:
 - Section 1: Introduction
 - Section 2: The Application Site
 - Section 3: The Proposed Development
 - Section 4: Planning Policy Context
 - Section 5: Planning Assessment
 - Section 6: Planning Balance and Conclusions

2.0 THE APPLICATION SITE

- 2.1 This section describes the Site and the surrounding context.

The Site

- 2.2 The Site is located within Huyton village at Units 5-8a, Cavendish Walk, Huyton, Merseyside L36 9YG.
- 2.3 The building is a 2-storey end unit at the north end of the Huyton Village retail area.
- 2.4 The ground floor of the site is currently vacant; however, was last occupied as a retail unit (Class E of the GDPO). The proposed use of the site is for a community Library (Use Class F1)
- 2.5 The first floor of the site has remained unused since its construction and is proposed to be used for offices (class E).

Wider Site Context

- 2.6 The Site is located within Huyton Village. Huyton Village is the main shopping area for Huyton and features a range of retail options alongside other amenities including restaurants, and financial and professional services.
- 2.7 The site is bordered by units to its south that are currently occupied by various retail businesses. There are further retail units facing the unit.
- 2.8 The front of the site faces east onto the pedestrianised 'Cavendish Walk' which runs through Huyton Village.
- 2.9 Archway Road (The B5199) is a dual carriageway situated directly north of the site.
- 2.10 The rear of the site faces west onto an existing service yard.
- 2.11 The Site has been acquired by Knowsley City Council as part of a wider master plan for the regeneration of Huyton Village.
- 2.12 Huyton village is a designated 'Main Town Centre' within the Knowsley Local Plan. It has been recognised as a Development Opportunity Site within the Local Plan.
- 2.13 The Site has no local or national heritage designations; however, St Michaels Church Conservation Area is located north of the site, separated from "core of the town centre by Archway Road. The Victoria Road and Huyton Road Church Conservation Area and The Orchard Conservation Area are also located within 1km of the site.

Planning History

- 2.14 No relevant planning history relating to the site has been identified.

3.0 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 This application is seeking full planning permission for a change of use from a retail use (Class E) to a mixed use including a community library and a separate office space (Class F1/Class E).
- 3.2 The ground floor will be utilised as a community hub/library featuring a large open room. This will be accessible along Derby Road; with the proposal including both stepped and level access.

- 3.3 The upper floor of the unit is proposed to be developed into office space having never been developed fully since its construction.
- 3.4 Further details of the design specification of this proposal are available in the supporting plans and Design and Access Statement which have been submitted alongside this application.

4.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

Planning Policy Context

- 4.1 Section 38 (6) of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (The 2004 Act) requires that the determination of planning applications and appeals is undertaken in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.2 For the purposes of this application, the adopted Development Plan comprises:
- Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy (“KLPCS”)
 - Saved policies of the Unitary Development Plan (“UDP”).
 - Merseyside and Halton Joint Waste Local Plan
- 4.3 Material considerations include:
- The National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024 (“the Framework”), and associated Planning Practice Guidance (“PPG”)
 - Relevant Supplementary Planning Documents (“SPD”) including the Huyton Village Masterplan (April 2017).
- 4.4 The policies considered to be of relevance to this proposal are set out below.

Development Plan

- 4.5 The Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy, adopted in January 2016, sets out the overall spatial strategy for the borough and the objectives and strategies that will help achieve the vision for the area:
- **Policy SD1 – Sustainable Development:** This policy states that “*When considering development proposals, a positive approach will be taken, which reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework*” and sets out the plans goals to “*secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area*”.
 - **Policy CS2 – Development Principles:** This policy sets out the underlying principles of the local plans vision, all of which should be considered against future

development proposals. The principles include key points of relevance to this application including *“enhancing local character and promoting quality of place”*, and the principle to *“Make the most efficient use of available resources and infrastructure by prioritising locations consistent with the spatial strategy”*.

- **Policy CS6 – Town Centres and Retail Strategy:** This policy lays out the hierarchy of the town centres. It places Huyton at joint top of the centre hierarchy. *“Huyton, Kirkby and Prescott Town Centres will enhance their equal role in providing comparison and convenience shopping. This will be supplemented by a complementary mix of leisure, health, residential, education, cultural, employment, service uses and complementary evening and nighttime uses.”*

The National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024)

- 4.6 The NPPF sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and is a key material consideration in the determination of planning applications.
- 4.7 At the heart of the NPPF is the presumption in favour of sustainable development (Paragraph 11), which requires that development proposals which accord with an up-to-date development plan should be approved without delay.
- 4.8 Section 7 of the NPPF (Ensuring the vitality of town centres) is of particular relevance to this proposal. Paragraph 85 states that planning policies and decisions should support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities and should promote their long-term vitality and viability. Paragraph 90 further encourages a diverse range of uses on town centres, including retail, leisure, office, and community uses.
- 4.9 Section 8 (Promoting healthy and safe communities) includes Paragraphs 96 and 97 which emphasise the importance of planning positively for the provision of community facilities and services to meet local needs and support inclusive and healthy communities.
- 4.10 Section 12 (Achieving well-designed places):. Paragraph 135 states that developments should be visually attractive, sympathetic to local character, and create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible

5.0 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

Principle of Development

- 5.1 The proposed development would support sustainable economic growth through the re-use of a vacant unit within Huyton Village, contributing positively to the vitality and viability of the town centre. Paragraph 85 of the National Planning Policy Framework (“NPPF”) states that

planning policies and decisions should support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, including by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation.

- 5.2 The introduction of a community library at ground floor level would provide a valuable and accessible service to the local community, supporting social inclusion, education and access to digital resources. This aligns with Paragraph 97 of the NPPF, which recognises the importance of planning positively for the provision of community facilities and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities.
- 5.3 The proposed office use at first floor level would support continued employment and service provision within the town centre, contributing to the local economy. In combination, the proposed uses would assist in addressing deprivation and improving access to services, consistent with the objectives of Policy CS2 of the KLPCS and the overarching presumption in favour of sustainable development set out at Paragraph 11 of the NPPF.

Town Centre Uses

- 5.4 Policy CS6 of the local development plan promotes a diverse range of uses within town centres to support their vitality and viability. The proposal for a mixed-use development comprising a community library (Use Class F1) and office space (Use Class E) is consistent with this approach and would contribute to the diversification of uses within Huyton Village.
- 5.5 Whilst the proposal would result in the loss of a retail unit, this is not considered to be harmful given the unit is currently vacant and the proposed uses would provide an active and beneficial alternative. Paragraph 90 of the NPPF encourages a diverse range of uses within town centres, including community, cultural and service uses, to ensure their continued vitality.
- 5.6 The provision of a community library at ground floor level would maintain an active frontage and encourage footfall within the pedestrianised Cavendish Walk area. This would support surrounding businesses and contribute to the overall function of the centre. The proposal therefore accords with both local and national policy objectives for town centre development.

Social Value

- 5.7 The proposal would deliver clear social benefits through the provision of a community library and accessible council services. Paragraph 97 of the NPPF highlights the importance of

access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for communities to engage in social, recreational and cultural activities, while Paragraph 96 supports the delivery of social, recreational and cultural facilities and services that communities need.

- 5.8 The proposed library would provide a multi-functional community space, supporting literacy, learning, and social interaction. It would also provide access to digital services, helping to address digital exclusion within the local area.
- 5.9 The co-location of council services within the building would further enhance accessibility to public services, creating a convenient and integrated community hub. The reuse of a vacant building would also have wider social benefits, including improving the appearance of the area and reducing the potential for anti-social behaviour.
- 5.10 Overall, the proposal would contribute positively to the social wellbeing of the local community and aligns with the objectives of national and local planning policy.

Design

- 5.11 The proposal relates primarily to a change of use and would not result in any significant external alterations to the building. As such, the character and appearance of the existing street scene along Cavendish Walk would be preserved.
- 5.12 Paragraph 135 of the NPPF states that planning decisions should ensure that developments are visually attractive, sympathetic to local character and history, and establish or maintain a strong sense of place. The proposed development would retain the existing building form and ensure continued active use at ground floor level, thereby supporting the vitality of the town centre environment.
- 5.13 The proposal also incorporates appropriate access arrangements, including level access, ensuring that the building is inclusive and accessible in accordance with best practice.
- 5.14 Overall, the proposal represents an appropriate and efficient reuse of an existing building, consistent with Policy CS2 of the local plan.

Heritage

- 5.15 Given that the proposed development would comprise a change of use only, there would be no alterations to the visual character of the building or the surrounding area. The proposal would not therefore have any material impact on the setting of the nearby Listed Buildings

and Conservation Areas, complying with relevant policy in the NPPF and Local Plan.

6.0 PLANNING BALANCE AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 This Planning Statement is submitted on behalf of Knowsley Council in support of a full application for the Change of Use from a retail use (Use Class E) to a mixed use comprising a community library (Use Class F1) and offices (Use Class E) at Units 5-8a, Cavendish Walk in Huyton Village.
- 6.2 As demonstrated in this Statement, the proposed development would comply with all relevant policies in the Local Plan and material considerations would also weigh in favour of the grant of planning permission. This includes the policy in the NPPF.
- 6.3 Given that the proposed development complies with the development plan and material considerations weigh in favour of a grant of planning permission, it is respectfully requested that planning permission is granted in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development in the NPPF and Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act.