

<u>APPLICATION NO:</u>	25/00686/FUL	<u>CASE OFFICER:</u>	Louise Robinson
<u>WARD:</u>	Halewood South	<u>PARISH:</u>	Halewood Town Council
<u>LOCATION:</u>	33 Leathers Lane, Halewood, Knowsley, L26 0TR		
<u>PROPOSAL:</u>	CHANGE OF USE FROM RESIDENTIAL GROUND FLOOR SITTING ROOM (USE CLASS C3) TO A HEARING TESTING CLINIC (USE CLASS E(Cii)) WITH ALTERATIONS TO FRONT ELEVATIONS		

Site Description

The application site comprises a two-storey end-of-terrace dwellinghouse located on Leathers Lane, Halewood. The property is characterised by white render and a gable tiled roof. The property currently benefits from a two-storey side extension and has off-street parking available to the front.

The application site is predominantly surrounded by residential dwellinghouses to the east, south and west of the site. To the northwest of the site is St Marks RC Church and to the northeast of the site is St Marks RC Primary School.

There is also a large on-street public parking area available opposite the dwellinghouse.

Site Constraints

Primarily Residential Area
Coal Consultation Zone (Low Risk Area)

Proposal

Planning permission is sought to change the use of the use of the existing residential ground floor sitting room (Use Class C3) to a hearing testing clinic (Use Class E(Cii)) and to carry out alterations to the existing front elevation.

The business would operate on three days from Thursday – Saturday 09:00 – 18:00. The opening hours and operating days have been amended following correspondence with the agent to be restricted to three days, and the closing hour reduced from 19:00 hours to 18:00 hours. Each appointment would be allocated an hour timeslot, with treatments taking 20 minutes. There would be 1 full-time staff member on-site.

The proposed visitor numbers would be limited to 3-5 patients per day, with clients attending by appointment only, with no walk-in appointments available.

The external alterations to the property would see the existing door which serves the kitchen be replaced with a UPVC window and the existing window within the front elevation of the existing side elevation at ground floor level be replaced with a UPVC door and glazing.

Consultations

Environmental Health – No objections.

Highways – No objections, subject to condition. Provided comments regarding site access and visibility, traffic impact and trip generation, parking and servicing and public transport access. Also provided a condition regarding a Booking Management Plan to be placed on the planning permission.

Representations

This application has been publicised by letters sent to 8 neighbours and a site notice displayed near to the site. One representation was received from the ward councillor for the Halewood South ward.

The concerns raised by the ward councillor are as follows:

- Concerned about the parking issues that may arise on the road which already has St Marks School and Halewood Shopping Centre nearby.
- There are lots of changes being made on Leathers Lane which is already a busy road with regards to general traffic, buses, delivery vehicles and parents parking related to St Marks drop offs and pickups.

Planning History

05/00669/FUL ERECTION OF TWO STOREY SIDE EXTENSION

Granted (04 August 2005)

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.

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

KNOWSLEY LOCAL PLAN: CORE STRATEGY

Policy CS2 Development Principles
Policy CS7 Transport Networks
Policy CS19 Design Quality and Accessibility in New Development

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

Policy H5 Development within Primarily Residential Areas

SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS

Ensuring a Choice of Travel SPD

Article 35 Statement

The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by identifying matters of concern within the application (as originally submitted) and negotiating with the applicant, acceptable amendments to the proposal to address those concerns. As a result, the Local Planning Authority has been able to grant planning permission for an acceptable proposal, in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework.

Assessment

Principle of Development

The application site is identified as a Primarily Residential Area in the Knowsley Local Plan: Core Strategy.

Policy H5 of the Replacement Knowsley UDP outlines that 'proposals for the change of use of redevelopment of existing buildings which is for uses appropriate to a residential area will be permitted provided that the development would not':

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

The proposed change of use from a residential ground floor sitting room to a hearing testing clinic would be of low intensity and would be compatible with a residential environment, which would operate on a quiet and appointment-only basis.

The small-scale use would be no different to that of beauty treatment / cosmetic treatment, such as hairdressing, based within an existing residential property.

Therefore, the change of use is considered to be acceptable in principle, subject to compliance with local and national planning policy and guidance.

Residential Amenity

The hearing test clinic would operate 3 days from Thursday – Saturday 09:00 – 18:00. There would be 1 full-time staff member on-site to carry out the appointments. Each appointment would be allocated a one-hour timeslot, with treatments taking 20 minutes. Visitor numbers would be limited to 3-5 patients per day on an appointment-only basis.

The clinic would use a small suction device and hearing testing equipment with a computer, which would not create any additional noise levels from the property than expected from a residential dwellinghouse, and would not have a negative impact on the residential amenity.

The clinic operating on 3 days per week with 3-5 patients per day is unlikely to create any substantial impact on the surrounding residential dwellinghouses, as the level of comings and goings from the property would be low and there would be little noticeable change from normal domestic patterns.

Additionally, as each individual booking would be allocated a one-hour timeslot, with appointments taking significantly less than this time, it is unlikely that there would be any crossover between patients on-site.

The application has been amended to restrict the clinic operating days to Thursday, Friday and Saturday and to reduce the operating hours from 09:00 – 19:00 to 09:00 – 18:00. The hours of operation have been reduced to protect the amenity of the surrounding residents and to keep the clinic within standard 'business hours'.

Environmental Health have reviewed the information submitted and have no objections to the proposal.

In summary, the change of use would not negatively impact the residential amenity, and the proposal would comply with Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy.

Design

The existing kitchen door within the front elevation would be replaced with a window. This alteration raises no concerns, as it would not result in any additional views not already available from the front of the property and would match that of the wider dwellinghouse.

The new door within the front elevation of the existing side extension is also considered to be acceptable. While it is uncommon for a property to have two separate doors to the front elevation, this arrangement would not be uncharacteristic of the dwelling, as currently there are two doors within the front elevation.

In summary, the proposal would not negatively impact the visual amenity and would comply with Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy.

Highways

Policy CS7 of the Core Strategy states that new developments will be required to be:

- a) Located and designed to prioritise accessibility and sustainable modes of travel through a choice of walking, cycling, public transport, and incorporate access for private vehicles.

Highways have no objections to the proposal subject to the condition of a Booking Management Plan.

Site access and visibility

The existing site access is appropriate for the low-intensity nature of the proposed use, with vehicle movements expected to remain modest and comparable to a residential use. Additionally, the visibility splays for vehicles and pedestrians appear to be adequate and do not conflict with nearby junctions.

Traffic impact and trip generation

The proposal is low-volume, appointment-only and is not expected to generate material increases in peak-time traffic. A Transport Statement / Assessment was not required due to the small scale of the development.

Parking and servicing

There is sufficient capacity within the nearby lay-by parking area to support occasional appointment overlap; however, parking demand in the immediate vicinity significantly increases during school drop-off and pick-up periods. As a result, any unmanaged client arrivals during these times could lead to inappropriate stopping, short-term waiting, or obstruction on the public highway.

In addition, management measures must be in place to ensure:

- Strict adherence to the agreed appointment times.
- Clear communication to clients regarding where to park and where not to park.
- Visitor vehicles can enter and exit the driveway in a forward gear, supported through operational control within the booking system.

The parking requirements would remain domestic in scale and no abnormal loading or delivery movements are expected. With the above measures in place, the proposal would not generate unacceptable parking or servicing impacts.

Public transport access

The site is well-located on a corridor served by regular bus services, with bus stops located along Leathers Lane within a short walking distance. These provide access to local centres including Halewood, Huyton and Liverpool.

The nearest rail link is Halewood Train Station, accessible via local bus services or on foot within a reasonable walking distance. This provides further opportunities for sustainable travel for both staff and visitors.

The proposal is acceptable in highways terms subject to the implementation of an approved Booking Management Plan. With these operational controls in place, the development is not expected to result in any unacceptable impact on highway safety or the operation of the local road network. Therefore, the proposal would be in accordance with Policies CS7 and CS19 of the Core Strategy.

Other Matters – Councillor Representation

One representation was received as a result of the publicity given to the application.

The concerns raised by the ward councillor have been addressed within this report.

Site Constraints (Coal Consultation Zone)

The proposed development is sited within an area of previous coal mining activity. The Local Planning Authority's records identify the site as a low-risk area.

Conclusion

The proposal would be acceptable in terms of any impacts on the residential and visual amenity and highway safety. The proposal also complies with the Knowsley Local Plan: Core Strategy, Replacement UDP Policies and guidance provided in the NPPF, and is therefore recommended for approval, subject to conditions.

Recommendation

That planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:

- 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 fenestrations to be installed shall match those found at the existing property in type and colour.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and to comply with Policy CS19 of the Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy, adopted January 2016, and the National Planning Policy Framework.

- 4) The use hereby approved shall only operate on Thursday, Fridays and Saturdays between 09:00 and 18:00 hours, and at no other times or any other days.

Reason: In the interests of residential amenity and to Policy CS19 of the Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy, adopted January 2016, and the National Planning Policy Framework.

- 5) Prior to the development being brought into use, a Booking Management Plan shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Plan shall include:

- a) Confirmation that the use will operate strictly on an appointment-only basis.
- b) Adequate buffer times between appointments to prevent client overlap or early arrivals.
- c) Comprehensive measures to prevent any waiting, idling, or parking on the public highway, including:

- d) Clear instructions issued to all clients directing them not to arrive early.
- e) Explicit directions to use the available lay-by parking if the driveway is temporarily unavailable.
- f) Procedures ensuring clients do not stop, wait, or queue outside the property.
- g) Monitoring arrangements and communication methods (e.g., booking confirmations, text message reminders) to ensure compliance.
- h) Management controls to avoid placing any additional demand on the highway during sensitive periods.
- i) Confirmation that visitor vehicles will be able to enter and exit the driveway in a forward gear, supported by appropriate operational measures to ensure safe manoeuvring.

The approved Booking Management Plan shall be implemented prior to first use of the development and retained thereafter.

Reason: To secure an appropriate regime of vehicle arrivals and departures that regulates traffic flow to and from the site, prevents overspill parking, and provides safe access and egress. This is necessary to minimise the potential for conflict with pedestrians and other highway users, particularly during periods of high activity.

SCHEDULE 1

Date Received	Ref. No	Version	Drawing/Document Title
24.12.2025	-	-	LOCATION PLAN
24.12.2025	002	-	PROPOSED GROUND FLOOR PLAN & FRONT ELEVATION
19.01.2026	-	-	SUPPORTING STATEMENT
24.03.2026	-	-	EMAIL FROM AGENT CONFIRMING OPERATIONAL DAYS AND HOURS THURS-SAT 09:00 – 18:00

Signed Case Officer¹:

Louise Robinson

Signed Authorising Officer²:

Jo Sheridan

Date:

02/04/2026

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

Informatives

- 1) The applicant is advised that the Local Planning Authority would not support advertisement consent for any form of signage associated with the use of the premises, due to the impact such signage would have on the visual amenity and the residential character of the area.

Site Photographs

