

<u>APPLICATION NO:</u>	24/00309/FUL	<u>CASE OFFICER:</u>	Maxine Wishart
<u>WARD:</u>	Prescot North	<u>PARISH:</u>	Knowsley Parish Council
<u>LOCATION:</u>	St John Fisher Catholic Primary School , Tithebarn Road, Knowsley		
<u>PROPOSAL:</u>	ERECTION OF 2.4M HIGH SECURITY MESH FENCING AND DOUBLE ACCESS GATES WITHIN SCHOOL GROUNDS		

Site Description

The application relates to St John Fisher Catholic Primary School, located on Tithebarn Road, Knowsley Village. The school is accessed from both Tithebarn Road (pedestrian) and Shop Road (pedestrian and vehicular).

The school site is bounded by St. John Fisher Church and its associated car park on Tithebarn Road to the south east, existing dwellings located on Singleton Drive to the south west. Knowsley Lane Recreation Ground and Bob Whiley Community Centre are sited to the west and north west of the application site.

The application site relates to an area of land to the south west of the school building and which is located to the rear of properties 26 – 44 Singleton Drive.

Proposal

The application seeks consent for the erection of 2.4 m high weld mesh security fencing with a double access gates which would be off set from the school boundary and would enclose a grassed area to the south-west of the school buildings. The gates would be installed to maintain access between the existing boundary and the new fencing.

The proposed fencing would be erected sit adjacent to trees and vegetation located along the school boundary with the rear of existing residential properties located on Singleton Drive and an area of closed off greenspace adjacent to nos. 44 and 46 Singleton Drive.

The application indicates that the reasoning for the proposed installation of new security mesh boundary fencing is to enhance security and safeguarding of the school.

Consultations

Knowsley Parish Council - No Comments Received.

Arboricultural Officer - No objections subject to the submitted tree reports being approved documents.

Representations

This application has been publicised by letters sent to 26 neighbours. No representations have been received.

Planning History

APP. NO:	74/12684/HIST
PROPOSAL:	ERECTION OF 5 NUMBER CLASSROOMS TOILETS AND STAFF ACCOMMODATION TO EXISTING SCHOOL
DECISION:	Granted
DECISION DATE:	12 October 1990
APP. NO:	98/00032/APP
PROPOSAL:	ERECTION OF EXTENSION TO SCHOOL BUILDING TO FORM WET PLAY AREA
DECISION:	Granted
DECISION DATE:	19 May 1998
APP. NO:	02/00934/FUL
PROPOSAL:	REMOVAL OF EXISTING BOUNDARY FENCE. ERECTION OF NEW 2.4M HIGH PARAMOUNT FENCING TO FRONT AND SOUTHEAST BOUNDARY, WITH 2.4M HIGH PALISADE FENCING TO WEST BOUNDARY
DECISION:	Granted
DECISION DATE:	16 January 2003
APP. NO:	03/00722/FUL
PROPOSAL:	PROVISION OF NEW MOBILE CLASSROOM
DECISION:	Granted
DECISION DATE:	24 September 2003
APP. NO:	03/01215/FUL
PROPOSAL:	ERECTION OF EXTENSION TO EXISTING GROUND FLOOR CLASSROOM.
DECISION:	Granted
DECISION DATE:	14 January 2004
APP. NO:	06/00688/FUL
PROPOSAL:	ERECTION OF SINGLE STOREY EXTENSION TO PART OF THE FRONT ELEVATION OF THE SCHOOL.
DECISION:	Granted
DECISION DATE:	28 September 2006
APP. NO:	07/00032/FUL
PROPOSAL:	ERECTION OF CANOPY TO FOUNDATION STAGE ENTRANCE
DECISION:	Granted
DECISION DATE:	9 March 2007
APP. NO:	09/00414/FUL
PROPOSAL:	ERECTION OF 2.4M HIGH SECURITY FENCING TO BOUNDARY OF PLAYING FIELD SITUATED TO THE REAR

OF THE SCHOOL. INSTALLATION OF STEEL ROLLER SHUTTERS TO THE FRONT ELEVATION OF THE BUILDING.

DECISION: Granted
DECISION DATE: 31 December 2009

APP. NO: 10/00636/FUL
PROPOSAL: ERECTION OF 2.4M HIGH GATES WITHIN EXISTING BOUNDARY FENCE AND CONSTRUCTION OF FOOTPATH

DECISION: Granted
DECISION DATE: 19 January 2011

APP. NO: 12/00773/FUL
PROPOSAL: SITING OF A MODULAR CLASSROOM BUILDING (EXISTING MODULAR UNIT TO BE REMOVED) TOGETHER WITH ALTERATIONS TO CAR PARKING LAYOUT

DECISION: Granted
DATE: 1 February 2013

APP. NO: 13/00543/FUL
PROPOSAL: EXTENSION TO 2NO. CLASSROOMS ADJACENT TO CAR PARK (EXISTING MOBILE ACCOMMODATION TO BE REMOVED FROM SITE).

DECISION: Granted
DECISION DATE: 20 November 2013

APP. NO: 14/00578/FUL
PROPOSAL: ERECTION OF SINGLE STOREY INFILL EXTENSION TO THE REAR

DECISION: Granted
DECISION DATE: 21 November 2014

APP. NO: 23/01731/CLD
PROPOSAL: CERTIFICATE OF LAWFUL DEVELOPMENT FOR EXTERNAL WORKS COMPRISING OF EXCAVATION OF RAISED PLANTER AREA INCLUDING THE REMOVAL OF 2NO. TREES AND THE ERECTION OF A RETAINING WALL ADJACENT TO PUBLIC FOOTPATH

DECISION: Refused
DECISION DATE: 8 November 2023

APP. NO: 24/00130/FUL
PROPOSAL: REMOVAL AND EXCAVATION OF EXISTING RAISED PLATFORM, TIMBER RETAINING WALLS AND TIMBER FENCING AND THE FORMATION OF A NEW SECTION OF RETAINING WALL ADJACENT TO THE SCHOOL BOUNDARY FENCE LINE IN ORDER TO CREATE AN ADDITIONAL LEVEL TARMACADAM EXTERNAL PLAY AREA

DECISION: Granted
DECISION DATE: 14 May 2024

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

- CS2 - Development Principles
- CS8 - Green Infrastructure
- CS19 - Design Quality and Accessibility in New Development
- CS20 - Managing the Borough's Historic Environment
- CS21 - Greenspaces and Trees

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

- OS7 - Educational Uses and Sites
- DQ2 - Security in the Built Environment
- DQ4 - Trees and Development
- DQ5 - Development in Conservation Areas

SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS

- Design Quality in New Development SPD (2016)
- Trees and Development SPD (2016)

Article 35 Statement

The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received and subsequently determining to grant planning permission in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework.

Assessment

Layout and Design

The application proposes 2.4m security mesh fencing to provide security and to deter unauthorised access to the school premises and for the safeguarding of the school. It is also proposed to install double access gates within the fence line at the western end of the fencing to allow access from maintenance.

The proposed fencing and gates are of a type that can typically be seen on school sites across the Borough. The proposed fencing and gates would match the existing weld mesh fencing previously installed at the school powder coated to match existing fencing. The proposed development would not be highly visible from outside of the school site.

The fencing / gates would be located in close proximity to two groups of trees (G1 and G2) on the site and impacts on trees is discussed further in the Arboricultural section below. They would be off set from the site boundary by between approx. 4 m – 12.3m

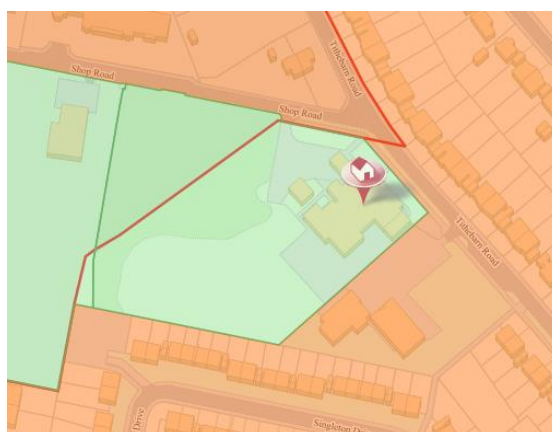
The proposed fencing would not impact on existing access arrangement into the school site and would be in keeping with other fencing on the school site. Provided finished in a colour to match the existing fencing, which can be secure by planning condition, if planning permission is granted, the proposal would be in accordance with Core Strategy Policies CS2 and CS19.

Impacts on Heritage Assets

Context of Site

The application site is not within a conservation area but sits adjacent to the boundary of Knowsley Village Conservation Area. Policy CS20 of the Local Plan sets out the Local Planning Authority's approach to managing the Borough's historic environment and requires development proposals to preserve or enhance the Borough's historic and architectural assets including buildings and structures of historic importance.

Officers acknowledge that the application site is outside the Knowsley Village conservation area boundary. However, due to its proximity, views into and out of the conservation area must be considered. Therefore, the proposal's impact on the character and appearance of the adjacent conservation area should be considered.



Considering Potential Impacts on Heritage Assets

Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

requires that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of a conservation area.

Chapter 16 of the NPPF - *Conserving and enhancing the historic environment*, advises that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.

Paragraph 203 of the NPPF states that In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Paragraph 205 requires that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

There would be either no or very limited inter-visibility between the application site and the conservation area. Officers consider that the impacts on the conservation area and the degree of change would therefore be negligible due to its limited presence in the wider conservation area. In accordance with the terms of the NPPF Officers consider that this falls into the bracket of '*less than substantial harm*'.

NPPF Para 208 states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage assets, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use. In this case the public benefits include the securing the primary school from unauthorised access.

Conclusion on Impacts on Heritage Assets

After a balanced assessment of the proposal's impact on a heritage asset against its broader benefits to the local community, it is concluded that the proposal is acceptable in terms of heritage conservation.

The proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable in terms of impacts on designated and non-designated heritage assets and would subject to relevant conditions comply with the NPPF, Local Plan Policies CS2, CS19, and CS20 and UDP policy DQ5.

Crime and Security

Saved Policy DQ2 of the UDP seeks to ensure that new development is designed to provide good levels of personal and property security. The proposal would improve security of the site and tackle unauthorised access to the school site.

Residential Amenity

The proposed fencing would be erected adjacent to the common boundary of dwellings located on Singleton Drive and an enclosed greenspace which can be accessed from Singleton Drive but which closed by locked gates.

Nos. 28 – 44 Singleton Drive

The proposed fencing and gates would be located adjacent to the common boundary to the rear of Nos. 28 – 44 (inc.) Singleton Drive. As detailed above, the fence line would be set off the boundary by between 4 m and 12.3 metres. The groups of trees and planting on the school site would remain in place between the common boundary and the proposed development.

It is therefore considered that the proposed development would not have a detrimental impact on these properties.

St John Fisher Church

The Church site is located to the east of the school site and the proposed development would be located adjacent to the boundary to the side of the Church site. The fence would be in part immediately adjacent to the common boundary and would be set at an angle such that it would be off set from the side boundary by approx. 9.75 m in the south-west corner of the Church site. Due to existing trees and vegetation on the Church site and the positioning of the proposal, it is not considered that the development would result in adverse impacts on St. John Fisher Church.

Knowsley Lane Recreation Ground

The proposed development would be located to the north east of the application site and shares a common side boundary which is demarcated by fencing and vegetation.

Given the siting and the existing boundary treatments in this location, it is not considered that the proposed development would result in impacts to the Church site.

On balance, it is considered that the development would not have detrimental impacts on neighbouring properties and the proposal would improve security. It is considered that there would therefore also be benefit for residents of adjoining dwellings. The development would therefore comply with UDP Policy DQ2 and Core Strategy Policies CS2 and CS19.

Highways

Due to the location of the proposed development, there are no highway issues.

Arboricultural Considerations

The proposed development would be sited adjacent to two groups of trees and vegetation (G1 and G2) trees both within the application site and on adjoining site.

Core Strategy Policy CS8 seeks to preserve landscape character. Policy CS21 seeks to enhance and protect existing trees, woodland, vegetation and other habitat features that offer a positive contribution to the local environment whilst seeking tree planting and other soft landscaping. Saved policy DQ4 of the UDP seeks to retain and protect those trees that contribute positively to amenity, incorporate integral planting within new developments and make adequate provision for replacement planting either on or off site. The Trees and Development SPD is also a material

consideration.

The location of fencing has taken into consideration the siting of the trees and the fence line has been positioned into the site away from the boundary/ The applicant's agent has provided an Arboricultural Implications Assessment and Arboricultural Method Statement to support the application.

The reports conclude that a precautionary method of working near trees is required and detailed in the mitigation proposals contained with the Arboricultural Implications Assessment. A precautionary method of working near trees is detailed in the accompanying Arboricultural Method Statement. Due to the nature of the development the reports consider that tree protection is not required on this occasion.

The Council's Arboricultural Officer has reviewed the supporting information and has no objection to the proposal providing the supporting reports are approved documents if planning permission is granted.

In conclusion, if carried out in line with the recommendations of the tree reports any negative factors affecting trees would be minimised. It is considered therefore that the proposal would comply with Saved policy DQ4 of the Knowsley UDP, and policies CS8 and CS21. In coming to this view regard has been given to the Trees and Development SPD.

Conclusion

The proposal is acceptable in terms of visual amenity and the development would lead to an improvement to security and safeguarding at the school. It is considered that the less than substantial harm attributed to impacts to the adjoining conservation area would be clearly outweighed by the public benefits of the scheme.

Works within the vicinity of trees would be carried out having regard to protecting those trees and it is not considered that the development would result in any adverse impact on neighbours.

The proposal therefore complies with relevant planning policies and is therefore, recommended for approval.

Recommendation

That planning permission be granted submitted 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 fencing and gates hereby permitted shall be powder coated green to match existing fencing on the site prior to first being installed and shall be retained as such thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and to comply with the National Planning Policy Framework (2023) and Policies CS2 and CS19 of the Knowsley Local Plan: Core Strategy adopted January 2016.

SCHEDULE 1

Date Received	Ref. No	Version	Drawing/Document Title
10/06/2024	-	-	LOCATION PLAN
21/08/2024	7182-P02	-	PROPOSED SITE PLAN
21/08/2024	TRE/SJFCPSK	-	ARBORICULTURAL METHOD STATEMENT (21 AUGUST 2024)
21/08/2024	TRE/SJFCPSK	-	ARBORICULTURAL IMPLICATIONS ASSESSMENT (21 AUGUST 2024)

Signed Case Officer¹: **M Wishart**

Signed Authorising Officer²: **K Foster**

Date: **16 October 2024**

Informatives

None.

Cont....

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

Appendix 1 – Site Photographs





