

Heritage Statement

The Nursery, Knowsley Hall, Knowsley Lane, Prescot, L34 7HE

1.0 Introduction

Planning Permission is sought for the replacement of the telecommunications mast and equipment within the woodland adjacent to the woodland at the Nursery, Knowsley Hall.

This Assessment provides information with regards to the significance of the historic environment to fulfil the requirement given in paragraph 194 of the Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (the NPPF) which requires:

"...an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting".

In order to inform an assessment of the acceptability of the scheme in relation to impacts on the historic environment, following paragraphs 199 to 203 of the NPPF, any harm to the historic environment resulting from the proposed development is also described, including impacts on significance through changes to setting.

2.0 Proposed Development

The development proposed is as follows:

The removal of the existing 24m lattice mast (26m to top of antennas) supporting 6 no. antennas and 2 no. dishes and associated ancillary equipment. Their replacement with a 30m lattice tower (30.2m to top), supporting 12 no. antennas, 2 no. relocated 0.3m dishes and 2 new 0.3m dishes, 3 no. equipment cabinets, associated ancillary equipment and works thereto.

3.0 Site Description and planning history

The site subject to this application is the existing telecommunications site located within a mature wooded area to the west of the Nursery on the south western side of the Knowsley Park Estate. Knowsley Park is a Grade II Registered Park and Garden. The M57 runs to the south of the site.

4.0 Policy Framework

Legislation relating to the built historic environment is primarily set out within the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, which provides statutory protection for Listed Buildings and their settings, and Conservation Areas.⁸ It does not, however, provide any statutory protection for the setting of Conservation Areas.

In addition to the statutory obligations set out within the aforementioned Act, Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that all planning applications, are determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

National Planning Policy guidance relating to the historic environment is provided within Section 16 of the Government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), an updated version of which was published in 2023. The NPPF is also supplemented by the national Planning policy guidance (PPG) which comprises a full and consolidated review of planning practice guidance documents to be read alongside the NPPF and which contains a section related to the Historic Environment.¹⁰ The PPG also contains the National Design Guide.

Para 200 of the NPPF states "In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance".

At a local level, applications for Planning Permission are assessed against the policies contained within the Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy (adopted 2016). Policy CS20 relates to Managing the Borough Historic Environment, this requires as follows:

"1) Development proposals in Knowsley should preserve or enhance the borough's historic and architectural assets, including Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Historic Parks and Gardens and archaeological remains, together with other local areas, buildings and structures of historic importance. The Council will:

- a) Require preservation of the local distinctiveness and character of historic assets through sensitive design of new development, including appropriate integration with their setting and immediate landscape;*
- b) Prevent demolition and/or development which would result in substantial harm or the loss of a designated historic asset or its setting, unless the proposal would result in substantial public benefits which clearly outweigh the harm or loss;*

c) Where a development proposal will result in less than substantial harm to a designated heritage asset or its setting, assess such harm against the benefits of the proposal;

d) Facilitate long term conservation and enhancement of local assets and areas of historic importance, including through the preparation of Conservation Area Management Plans.

2) The re-use of vacant and underused historic assets will be encouraged, with favourable consideration given, where appropriate, to proposals which will:

a) Enable a use for a purpose sympathetic to its conservation;

b) Retain or introduce public access; and

c) Enhance the importance of the asset for local tourism, leisure or the economy.

3) Development proposals on sites which include, or are considered to have the potential to include, heritage assets or comprising archaeological interest, should be accompanied by a heritage impact statement.

4) Locally important historic assets which are not subject to statutory designation will be identified in a local list and will be afforded consideration in the decision making process"

The Code of Practice for Wireless Network Development in England (2022) (published by DCMS) has a section dedicated to heritage assets. Para 58-63.

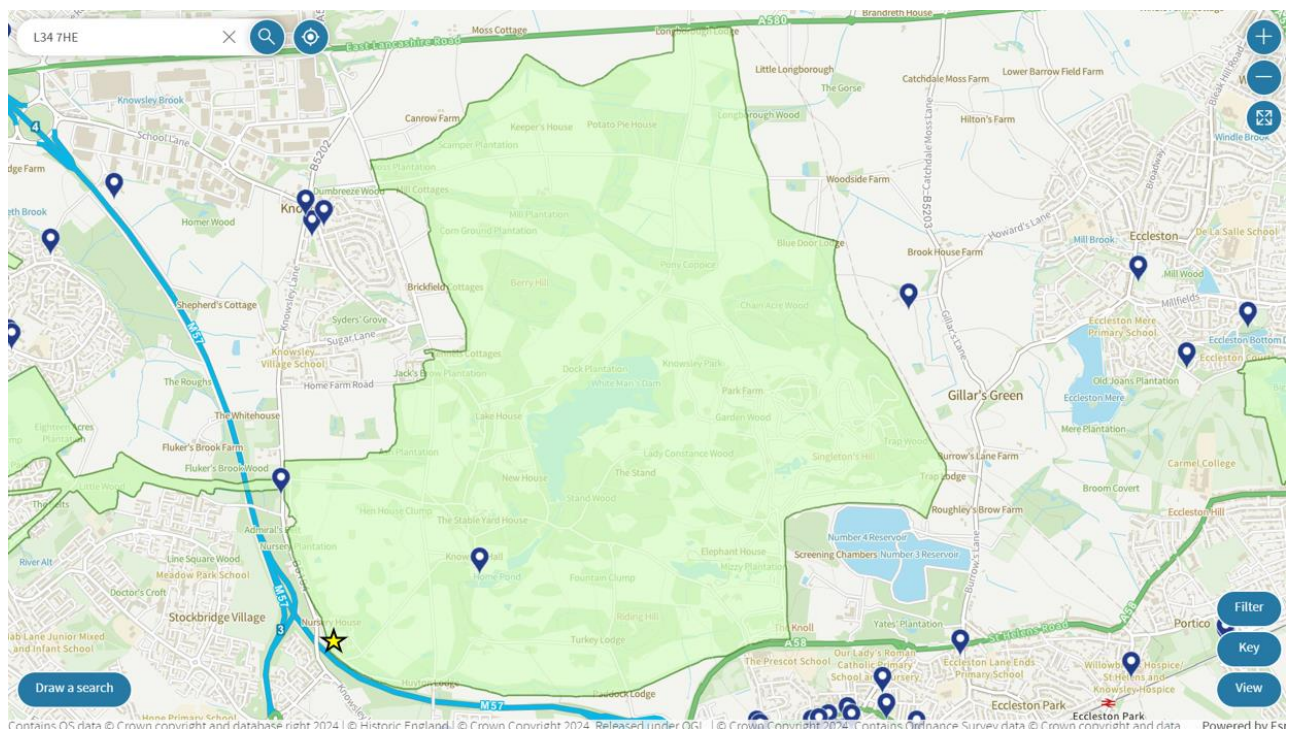
Paras 60-61 state "60. Where proposals would impact a designated heritage asset, the NPPF requires that great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be), and that any harm requires clear and convincing justification³⁴. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.....61. Particular care should therefore be taken for sites that are located within heritage assets or their settings to ensure that they are conserved in accordance with the requirements of the NPPF. The design and siting of equipment should, as far as possible, avoid or minimise impacts on local context and character, and the significance of heritage assets or their setting"

Para 63 states "Where heritage sites and assets require service provision, infrastructure will be needed within or in close proximity to them. Operators and the relevant bodies should work collaboratively to ensure the proposal of least impact is progressed, while considering technical constraints and the need to provide connectivity in these areas".

5.0 The Heritage Assets and their significance

This site is located within the Knowsley Park Grade II Registered Park and Garden to its south western boundary not far from nursery house.

Approximately 903m to the north of the site is Knowlsey Hall which is Grade II* listed. Beyond this to the north of the site, approximately 770m is Little Wood Lodge which is Grade II listed. There are numerous other listed buildings in proximity however these are located further from the site and given the sites location within the woodland and to the north of the M57 then no impact is anticipated. The below map from Historic England shows the extend of the registered park and garden and nearby heritage assets. The site location is shown by the yellow star.



The Historic England entry for Knowsley Park reads as follows:

"A park which originated in the C13 and was landscaped during the late C18 incorporating elements of a late C17 and early C18 landscape. Lancelot Brown drew up proposals for the park and kitchen garden in 1775 and 1776 and it is possible that parts of the park were altered to his designs. During the 1830s William Sawrey Gilpin advised the thirteenth Earl of Derby on various matters relating to the park."

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

The earliest reference to a park at Knowsley is in 1292 when it was owned by Robert de Lathom. The estate passed to the Stanleys by marriage in 1385. Sir Thomas Stanley was created Earl of Derby in 1485 by Henry VII as a reward for his support in the battle of Bosworth and the estate has remained in the

hands of the family since that time.

DESCRIPTION

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING Knowsley Park is situated immediately to the south and east of the village of Knowsley within the area enclosed by the A580 to the north, the B5203 to the east, the A57 and M57 to the south and the B5202 to the west. The c 950ha park is on undulating land which rises to the south-east. The boundary is formed by a stone wall which was built by during the 1830s and 1840s by the thirteenth Earl of Derby. It runs around the whole of the perimeter and is screened by belts of trees apart from an area in the south-east corner of the site; here the boundary was altered in 1921 and is now marked by a fence. The northern part of the west boundary, where the wall runs parallel to Ormskirk Road between Dumbrees Lodge and Ormskirk Lodge, appears to follow the line of an avenue shown on an early C18 estate map. The southern boundary was altered and the wall rebuilt in places in connection with the construction of the M57 motorway. The boundary of the park was altered on several occasions before it was walled. The drive connecting Ormskirk Lodge and Huyton Lodge was formerly a public highway. It was stopped up and the land to the west of it taken into the park in 1777. At some point during the C18 the southern boundary was extended south from a line shown on an early C18 estate map, enclosing an area now occupied by paddocks south of Riding Hill. The setting is urban and suburban on the south and west sides and agricultural elsewhere.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES

Thirteen entrances with lodges are shown on the 2nd edition OS map published 1909. Running in a clockwise direction starting from a point where Mill Lane joins Park Road at the north-western end of the site, the first is Dumbrees Lodge which was rebuilt in the late C20; Elbow Field Lodge was on the A580 but the gateway is now blocked and the buildings have been demolished; Longborough Lodge, also on the A580, is a mid C19 red sandstone building. On the eastern boundary there is a gated entrance c 900m south of the A580. Blue Door Lodge is a red-brick late C19 building off the B5203, and Trap Wood Lodge, also off the B5203, is similar in style to Longborough Lodge. On the southern boundary St Helens Lodge was in an area now outside the park and has been demolished. Prescott Lodge was built in the late C20 to replace a lodge cut off from the park by the A57. Paddock Lodge is a red-brick C19 building and Huyton Lodge is a mid C19 red sandstone building. Liverpool Lodge, situated at the south-west corner of the site, was one of the principal entrances and was considered the most ambitious architecturally (Pevsner 1969). It was demolished when the M57 motorway was built. On the western boundary, off Knowsley Road, Croxteth Lodge is a red sandstone mid C19 building, and Home Farm Lodge is a single-storey brick building probably of C19 date. Ormskirk Lodge is now one of the principal entrances and it is situated at the end of Ormskirk Road, which

continues south as a drive through the park and connects with approaches to the Hall. Huyton Lodge, Croxteth Lodge and Liverpool Lodge are thought to have been designed by William Burn (Scholl 1985).

PRINCIPAL BUILDING Knowsley Hall (listed grade II*) is an L-shaped building situated in the south-west part of the site. There is a reference to a building at Knowsley from the period 1377-99 but the earliest fabric identified is thought to date from the C15 (Pevsner 1969). Successive alterations and additions were made during the C18, C19 and C20. It is not known who was responsible for the C18 work, but John Foster made alterations in 1820, William Burn followed in the 1840s and Romaine Walker was active in 1910. Some 300m north of the Hall are stables of c 1847, probably by William Burn (Scholl 1985). In 1963 Claude Phillimore designed a new house for the eighteenth Earl and this is situated c 600m north-west of the Hall. The Hall is used for a mixture of domestic and commercial uses (1998).

GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS On the west side of the house there is a forecourt in the angle of the L shape formed by the Hall. It has a steep bank on the north side and the west side has entrance gates and railings. This was created in the C20 and was designed to resemble what is shown in a painting of c 1728 by Mollineux. The south side of the Hall has terraced lawns overlooking a stretch of water called Home Pond. On the east side of the house is a late C19 or early C20 terraced garden. There is a change of level between the southern and northern parts of this area; on the south side the lower garden has lawns and an arcaded retaining wall of red brick with stone dressings divides it from the upper garden which is reached from balustraded stone stairs. The upper garden is walled and has lawns. The gardens overlook a stretch of water called Octagon Pond with views of a mid C18 classical building called The Octagon (attributed to William Kent, Scholl 1985) c 80m beyond the water.

Home Pond is situated c 60m to the south of the Hall and Octagon Pond c 150m to the east. Both stretches of water are suggested on an early C18 estate map and they are also shown on an estate map of 1785 where they have formal rectangular outlines in contrast to the present irregular, rounded edges. Paintings of late C17 or early C18 date suggest that these may have been elements within a series of water features including a rectangular pool between Home Pond and the east front of the Hall.

A path leads from the Hall along the west side of Octagon Pond and on north-east through woodland to a sunken garden c 200m north of Octagon Pond. This is shown as a stretch of water on the 1st edition OS map published 1850 and earlier maps. The garden was created in the mid C20, to take advantage of the fall of water from a dam on the north side. Between this garden and the Octagon Pool is a castellated building called Bridge Lodge which was probably designed by William Burn c 1840 (Colvin 1995).

Some 200m north of the Hall is an enclosed area called the American Garden. The east side has a brick wall which connects with the wall of the kitchen garden to the north. In the centre there is a pond, shown on the 1847 Tithe map, which has a rustic bridge crossing it near its south end much as shown in a photograph of 1911 (Holme 1911). The north end of the garden is formed by a stone aviary shown on the 1850 OS map.

PARK The park, which was created after 1777, lies to the west of the Hall and consists of open land with scattered clumps of trees. A double lime avenue, which was planted in the early C20, is aligned with the west front of the Hall and runs to the park boundary. A drive running north from the Hall is called Dark Entry and it leads through woodland to an area c 600m north of the Hall which was used by the thirteenth Earl of Derby to house an extensive collection of exotic animals and birds during the 1830s and 1840s. Some 400m north-west of the Hall the drive leading from Croxteth Lodge divides, with branches leading east to the stables and south to the Hall, respectively. At this point there is a decorative Gothic Revival-style cottage of the mid C19 called Orchard Lodge.

A large elongated lake called White Man's Dam stretches from a point c 500m north-east of the Hall to a point c 1.6km to the north-east. At its south-west corner there is a castellated building dated 1900 and c 400m north of this on the shore is a boathouse of 1837 designed by William Burn. Open grassland around the lake is planted with scattered trees and clumps. At the northern head of the lake is an area of woodland called the Nightcap which is the reduced remains of a tree belt shown on the 1850 OS map. Lancelot Brown (1716-83) was commissioned to carry out work at Knowsley in 1775, for which he received £100, and in 1776 for which £84 was paid. Brown mentions 'a new kitchen garden' and 'alterations of the Grounds round the House' in his account books. It has been suggested that he proposed the formation of White Man's Dam and the planting of tree belts and clumps in the park (Town and Country Planning 1979). C18 estate maps show that the lake was extant by 1785 and a date of c 1720 has been suggested for its inception (Pevsner 1969).

Stand Hill, which is the highest point within the park, rises to the east of the lake and views are obtained in every direction over the lake and park and to the countryside beyond. Some 40m south of the summit is a square tower, possibly of early C19 date, called The Stand. C17 and later estate maps show a building in approximately the same position. Some 900m south of Stand Hill is another eminence called Riding Hill, and c 700m south-east there is a lake called Mizzy Dam. This area is shown in a horse-racing scene painted by Peter Tillemans c 1730 (private collection) and an estate map of 1785 shows the position of a rectangular racetrack which followed a course around Mizzy Dam between Stand Hill and Riding Hill. The latter was the site of a summerhouse which is shown on two paintings by of c 1730 by Tillemans (private collection) with long views north across the park. South of Riding Hill,

between Paddock Lodge and Prescott Lodge, is a set of early C19 stud paddocks consisting of ten walled paddocks served by five stables. Immediately to the west of these is a set of fenced paddocks and to the south the tree belt between Huyton Lodge and the site of Liverpool Lodge which was the subject of proposals by W S Gilpin (1762-1843) in the 1830s, though it is not clear exactly what was executed. In the area north of the paddocks, between Riding Hill and a drive leading north from Huyton Lodge, there are scattered trees and clumps which appear to conform with the position of an avenue shown on the early C18 map.

The south-eastern part of the park has been turned into a safari park which opened in 1971. An area running from Prescott Lodge northwards around Mizzy Dam up to the margins of Chain Acre Wood is enclosed by a high fence and is used for the display of exotic animals and birds. It is served by a number of late C20 buildings c 150m south-east of Mizzy Dam.

The northern half of the park consists mainly of farmland and plantations which conform broadly with what is shown on C18 estate maps. Some 600m north-east of White Man's Dam is Chain Acre Wood. This appears to correspond with an area of woodland shown on estate maps of the late C17 and the early C18 with walks through it radiating from a central point. Some 600m north-west of White Man's Dam is area of woodland called Berry Hill which is shown, with the same name, on a late C17 estate map. The north-west corner of the park is mainly used for grazing and arable farming.

KITCHEN GARDEN A brick-walled kitchen garden is situated c 220m north of the Hall. It is shown on the 1850 OS map, but it is not known whether it corresponds with a kitchen garden referred to by Brown in 1776. The garden is divided into two halves by a brick wall and entrances are generally tall arched openings with boarded doors. It is shown subdivided into compartments on the 1850 OS map while the 2nd edition OS map revised 1906-7 shows numerous glasshouses, all of which have disappeared or been replaced".

6.0 Impact of the proposed development on significance

The development proposed is in broadly the same location as the existing where the impact of telecommunications development on the registered park and garden has previously been accepted. The development proposed will result in an increase in height and scale, notwithstanding this, the site remains in the wooded area, adjacent to a more functional area within the Registered Park and Garden – the Nursery House. The site will be only slightly more visible than the existing given the presence of mature vegetation and undulating land levels, as well as separation distance from the main areas of the Registered Park and Garden where any impact would be felt more accurately and the listed buildings to the north. When considered in the context of the existing installation and the sites discreet location within the woodland, the

development would not result in a significant harm to the Registered Park and Garden.

Para 208 of the NPPF (2023) states that:

“Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use”.

The proposed works would allow for the provision of high quality communications which may otherwise be lost in line with customer commitments, license commitments, the NPPF (2023 – Chapter 10) and to meet government targets with regard to the provision of high-quality telecommunications networks across the country. This new site will facilitate the provision of upgraded coverage for two operators (VMO2 and Vodafone). The provision of improved coverage and capacity is a significant public benefit which would outweigh any minimal harm that may occur.

The provision of reliable and high-quality data-based technologies are increasingly important to our everyday lives, even during more normal circumstances.

This importance has been reaffirmed in a letter from Matt Warman MP, the previous minister for Digital Infrastructure, to English Local Authority Chief Executives. The letter dated 24 May 2021 accompanied the ‘Consultation on Changes to Permitted Development Rights for Electronic Communications Infrastructure’ and states:

‘Digital connectivity is – now, more than ever – vital to enable people to stay connected and businesses to grow. The demand for mobile data is increasing rapidly, and the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted how important it is that we all have access to reliable, high quality mobile connectivity...The planning system plays a key role in delivering the infrastructure that we need as households and businesses become increasingly reliant on mobile connectivity.’

This consultation document demonstrates the governments acknowledgement of the importance of the continued roll out of high-quality mobile telecommunications infrastructure and represents a desire at a governmental level to remove current barriers to its deployment.

Upgrading digital telecommunications is therefore a key Government priority and one that is also set out in detail in the NPPF (2023) and summarised within the DDCMS Connected Growth Manual (2019).

7.0 Summary

Planning Permission is sought to upgrade the existing telecommunications equipment to meet an identified need in the area for modern technologies and frequencies and additional capacity within the network. The existing equipment cannot be used and a replacement mast and equipment is therefore proposed to facilitate this upgrade.

This assessment has found that the proposals will result in a less than substantial harm upon the overall heritage significance of the Registered Park and Graden. In accordance with para 208 the development allows for substantial public benefits which should weigh heavily in favour of the development. These public benefits are set out within the accompanying planning statement and information sheets.

The proposals are thus in accordance with Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the NPPF (2023) and the policies contained within the Knowsley Core Strategy.