



PLANNING STATEMENT

**FORMERLY STERLING INKS, NETHERLEY ROAD,
TARBOCK GREEN**

GDB PROPERTY INVESTMENTS LTD.

Date: July 2022

Pegasus Reference: NL/JS/PL/P19-0661/R002v1

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Pegasus Group on behalf of GBD Property Investments Ltd. to support an application for the redevelopment of a former factory to a residential scheme at Netherley Road in Tarbock Green, L35 1QG.
- 1.2 Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, required that a planning application is determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material consideration indicate otherwise.
- 1.3 This statement outlines the planning argument for a new residential development in the Green Belt in line with national and local policies. The statement will be broken down in to the following sections:
- Section 2 will outline the site context and surrounding landscape;
 - Section 3 will assess the planning history of the site including any pre-application engagement that has been made with Knowsley Council;
 - Section 4 will provide full details of the application proposal;
 - Section 5 will outline the relevant planning policy which should be considered in the determination of this application;
 - Section 6 will assess in detail the planning merits of the development and how they accord with local and national planning policies;
 - Section 7 will provide precedent cases of other developments which maintain a similar planning context to this proposed application; and
 - Section 8 will provide concluding remarks.
- 1.4 The proposed application is to be submitted to Knowsley Borough Council for consideration.
- 1.5 A series of additional surveys and plans have been provided as part of this application and they consist of:
- Proposed plan drawings of the development produced by Condry Lofthouse Architects;
 - Design and Access Statement prepared by CLA;
 - Ecology Survey prepared by Ascerta;
 - Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Survey prepared by Delta Simons;

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- Tree Survey prepared by Delta Simons;
 - Land Contamination Survey prepared by Woodford Industries and Peak Associates;
 - Context and Heritage Assessment prepared by CLA; and
 - Landscape Visual Assessment prepared by Pegasus Group;

2. The Site

- 2.1 The proposed application site is located to the north of Netherley Road in Tarbock Green, a small village which is located 1km to the north of Halewood. Netherley Road acts as a through road connecting the east of Liverpool City with Widnes. The site measures approximately 0.8 hectares in size.
- 2.2 The development site is made up of a large building that was previously used for the production of inks by Sterling Inks Ltd before its practices reduced significantly leading to the site becoming semi-derelict and not well maintained. Site photos are provided in figure 1.



Figure 1 – Photos of the existing buildings at the application site.

- 2.3 To the north and west of the site is a paddock along with a woodland which helps contain any viewpoints from these areas, to the east is an environmental waste management site and to the south is Netherley Road, beyond which is the open countryside.
- 2.4 There are numerous buildings located on site which range in size, but most are two-storey and cover a large proportion of the application site. The application site is entirely made up of concrete

hardstands extending from the road to the north of the site where the land then becomes densely vegetated. The aerial view in figure 2 shows the extent of the hardstandings on the site.



Figure 2 – Aerial imagery showing the extent of the hardstandings within the application boundary (in red) and the land ownership boundary (in blue).

- 2.5 The site and surrounding land areas are very flat and because of the dense vegetation are mostly protected from wide ranging views.
- 2.6 Although located in a village the site still retains good connections and access to local services and amenities. Table 1 outlines the accessibility of these services:

Amenity	Distance (Miles)	Time (Mins)		
		<i>Walking</i>	<i>Cycling</i>	<i>Driving</i>
Supermarket	1.5	30	7	3

Primary School	1.5	30	8	4
Secondary School	2.5	46	12	6
Train Station	1.7	33	8	4
Village Hall	0.1	1	1	N/A
Public House	1.5	29	7	3
Motorway	1.8	N/A	N/A	4
Bus Stop	0.1	1	1	N/A

Table 1 – Travel times and distances to local services

- 2.7 The bus stop that is located immediately adjacent to the site along Netherley Road, provide regular services towards Liverpool (approximately every 10 – 15 minutes) and Widnes.
- 2.8 Hough Green train station is located 1.7 miles to the east and provides train connections to Liverpool and Manchester every 30 minutes.
- 2.9 The proposed site is located within flood zone 1 (least susceptible to flooding) and is currently entirely covered in hardstanding area therefore any development on the site would likely improve the sites drainage compared to existing. The site also retains very little surface water flooding.
- 2.10 The site is sandwiched between 2 conservation areas, being Tarbock Village and Tarbock Green Conservation Areas. The relationship between the areas can be found in figure 2 below.

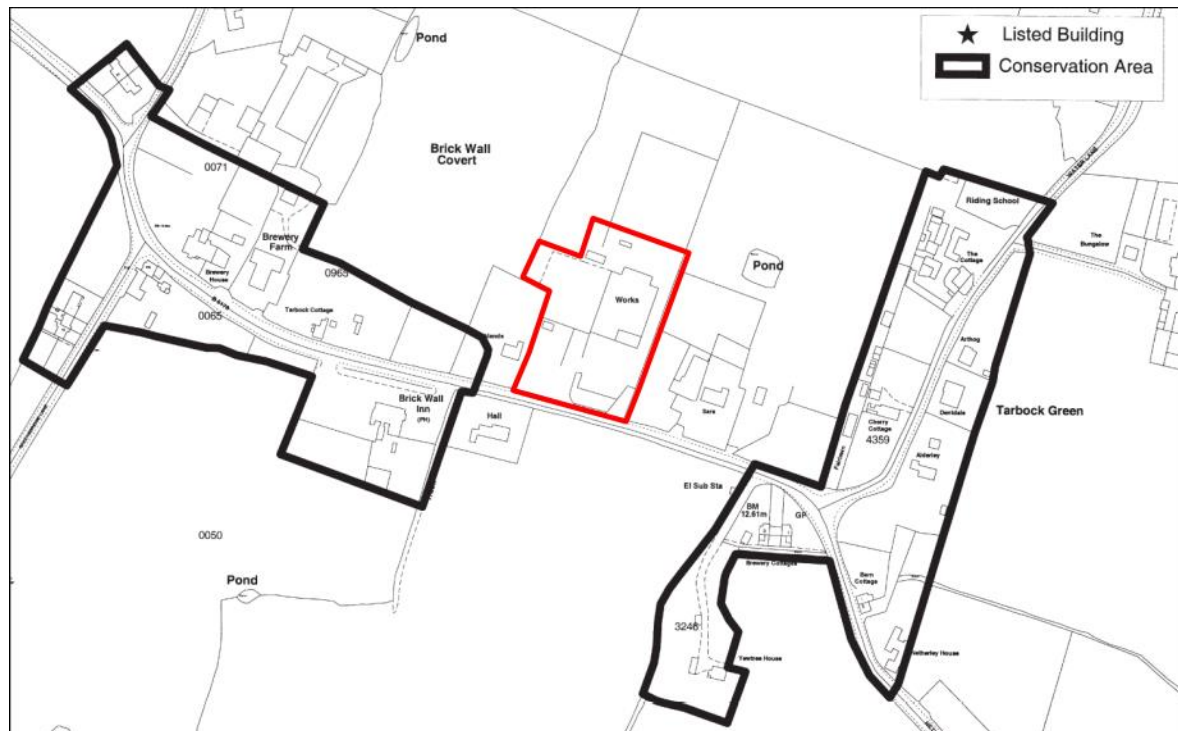


Figure 3 – Map showing the location of Tarbock Village and Tarbock Green conservation areas (in black) in relation to the proposed development site (in red).

- 2.11 As can be seen from figure 3 there are no listed buildings within close proximity of the site.
- 2.12 There are no Tree Preservation Orders on the site, the nearest are the group of trees located to the north west of the site which will not be impact by any future development. The local TPO's can be found below in figure 4.

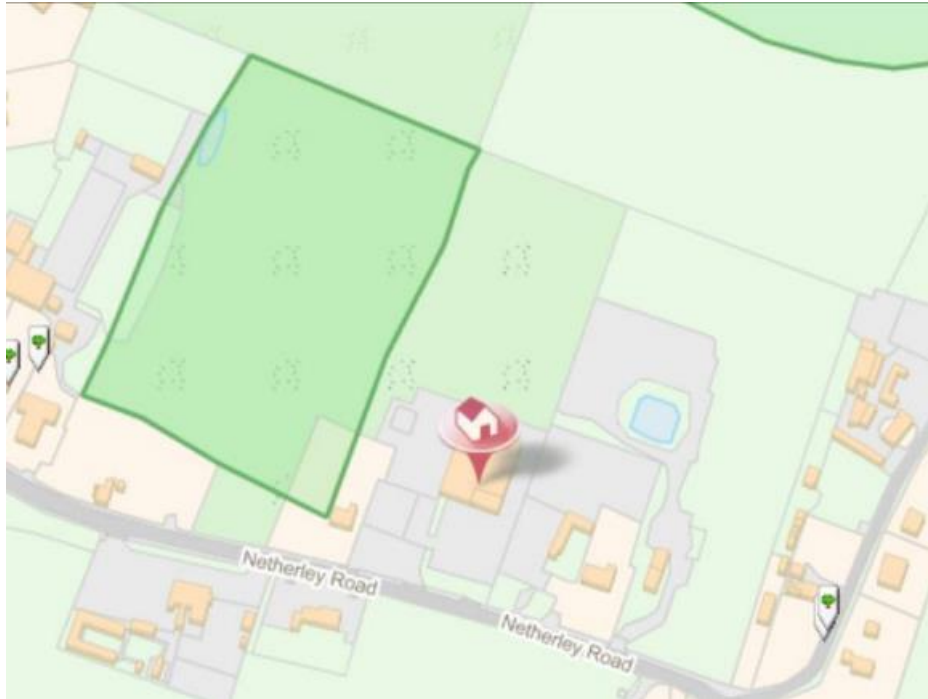


Figure 4 – Map showing the location of TPO's (in green) within proximity of the proposed site.

- 2.13 There are no statutory designations that affect the proposed site, additional ecology and tree surveys have been conducted to ensure any impact created through development is mitigated.

3. Planning History

- 3.1 The below outlines the planning history of the site ranging back to 2002, decisions before this period are not available on the Knowsley Planning Portal. The previous planning decisions at the site help to establish the principle of development and the acceptability of any further development.
- 3.2 There have been 4 previous applications on the site which could be considered relevant to the proposed development, these are outlined below.
- APP/V4305/W/21/3274377 – Planning appeal following refusal of planning application ref. 19/00640/FUL. – Dismissed in November 2021. This is further discussed in Section 4.
 - 19/00640/FUL – Refused – Redevelopment of land at Woodend Industrial Site to a mixed-use development comprising 14 residential units and 14 works units of B1 class with associated infrastructure.
 - 16/00481/FUL – Withdrawn – Demolition of existing industrial buildings and erection of 14 no. dwellings and associated works.
 - 02/00914/FUL – Granted – Erection of 3.8m high bund wall.
- 3.3 Following the advice of the case officer the application in 2017 (ref. 16/000481/FUL) was withdrawn and subsequently the applicant engaged in the pre-application advice service from Knowsley Council.

Pre-application Advice

- 3.4 The applicant engaged with Knowsley Council regarding a resubmission of an application at the site following the dismissal of the appeal. It was agreed between both parties that the principle of development was acceptable and that the remaining issues to be satisfied related to design and noise disturbance.
- 3.5 It was agreed that a 'farmstead' type development would be more appropriate in this location and reference was made to the development at Ox Lane in Tarbock Green.
- 3.6 An on-site meeting was undertaken between the 2 parties whereby the activities of the neighbouring land business was monitored. It was noted that there was very little in the way of activity and the Environmental Health Officer agreed a route forward for an updated Noise Assessment. This has now been completed and supports this resubmission.
- 3.7 Following the on-site meeting, design drawings were sent to the authority, no formal comments have been made and it is anticipated that the updated plans should now be supported.

4. Review of Planning Appeal

4.1 An appeal at the site was dismissed in November 2021 (Ref. APP/V4305/W/21/3274377)

4.2 The appeal decision at the site stated that the main issues related to the development are:

- *The effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area, including the setting of the Tarbock Green and Tarbock Village Conservation Areas; and*
- *Whether the proposal would provide acceptable living conditions for future residents, with particular reference to noise and disturbance.*

4.3 These will be considered separately.

Character and Appearance of Tarbock Green and Conservation Areas

4.4 It is important to firstly consider the character of the existing site in relation to its surrounding, regarding this, the Inspector outlined in paragraph 9 and 10:

the appeal site, which sits in an area of land between the Conservation Areas, has a robust utilitarian and industrial appearance. The existing buildings are set back from Netherley Road and are concentrated to the eastern side of the site. Nonetheless, they comprise a mixture of red brick and metal clad units that are clearly visible from the wide-open access road when approaching from the west and to the front of the site, and in between the gaps in the trees along the eastern boundary. I appreciate that there is a degree of separation provided between these buildings and the western boundary of the site, however this area is hard surfaced and enclosed by security fencing. As a result, I do not consider the appearance and use of the site to be similar to commercial enterprises and sheds that are commonplace in and around farms. In light of all of these factors, I am therefore not convinced that the site helps to maintain some impression of the historic rural divide between Tarbock Village and Tarbock Green.

Therefore, whilst the proposal would result in some change to the setting of the Conservation Areas, I am not persuaded that in its present form, the appeal site makes any positive contribution to their heritage significance. As a result, I do not find that the proposal would cause material harm to their significance, or to the setting of the Conservation Areas.

4.5 As such, it is considered that the site does not contribute to the character of the area or conservation areas. The loss of the development site for an alternative use is not to be prevented. The impact on the local Conservation Areas should not be considered as part of this resubmission.

4.6 The inspector further went on to say that the proposal would result in a suburban form of development which would be at odds with the character of the area.

- 4.7 As part of the resubmission, the applicant has updated the proposed site plans and housing designs following discussions with Knowsley Council. The design inspiration now comes from the traditional farmstead courtyard structure which is present in the local vicinity. The proposal has reduced the number of dwellings to 10 from the 14 that were previously proposed. There will also be a reduction in supporting infrastructure such as roads and pavements to reduce the suburban feel of the scheme.
- 4.8 The applicant has undertaken discussions with Knowsley Council Planning and Design teams who have supported the updated site plans.

Noise and Disturbance

- 4.9 The Inspector concluded that the noise of the neighbouring land management site would have a detrimental impact on the living conditions of future residents referencing machinery highlighted on photos from the Council.
- 4.10 An updated noise assessment has been prepared in agreement between e3P and Knowsley's Environment Team. As such, it is expected that this issue has now been resolved through the provision of softer landscaping in the form of a natural bund and additional planting with the inclusion of an acoustic fence. This mitigation is further outlined in the supporting Noise Assessment.

5. Development Proposal

- 5.1 The proposal is for the redevelopment of the land at Woodend Industrial Site to include the demolition of the existing on-site buildings to a residential development comprising of 10 no. dwellings. The site will be made up of ten 3, 4 & 5-bed detached and semi-detached residential dwellings.
- 5.2 The application red line boundary has been provided in the site location plan. The blue line ownership boundary has also been provided for reference. A site plan has been provided in figure 5 along with CGIs of the development proposal. The application boundary consists of the previously developed curtilage of the building. Previously this extended to include the whole site but since, the northern section has returned to nature.
- 5.3 Below is a table of existing and proposed building sizes which help define the impact on the openness of the Green Belt.

	Existing	Proposed	Percentage Change
Footprint	1,656m ²	1,040m ²	-59.2%
Liveable Area	2,715m ²	2,080m ²	-30.5%
Volume	8,076m ³	4,770m ³	-69.3%

Table 2 – Development Comparisons

- 5.4 The scheme comprises of:
- 5no. 3 bed 6 person dwellings
 - 2no. 4 bed 7 person dwellings
 - 2no. 4 bed 8 person dwellings
 - 1no. 5 bed 9 person dwellings
- 5.5 The development will utilise and formalise the existing access point making which has been previously used for HGV's and will therefore be considered acceptable for the use of private cars and refuse and emergency vehicles entering and exiting the site. The visibility splays measure 2.4m X 120m which is considered to be acceptable for the local road network.

5.6 Informal Open Space has been provided throughout the site to retain openness whilst substantial private amenity space has also been included per plot.

5.7 The proposed development has been offset from Netherley Road by in excess of 20m to accord with Knowsley Council's pre-application comments. Furthermore, the entrance to the site has been heavily landscaped to improve the existing vista when looking from the south towards the site. Additional planting and landscaping have been provided across the site to create a parkland development.

5.8 The internal layout has been designed to allow for the turning of HGV's and provides a sufficient width of access to ensure safe vehicular movements on site.



Figure 5 – Proposed Site Plan



Figure 6 – CGI of proposed development

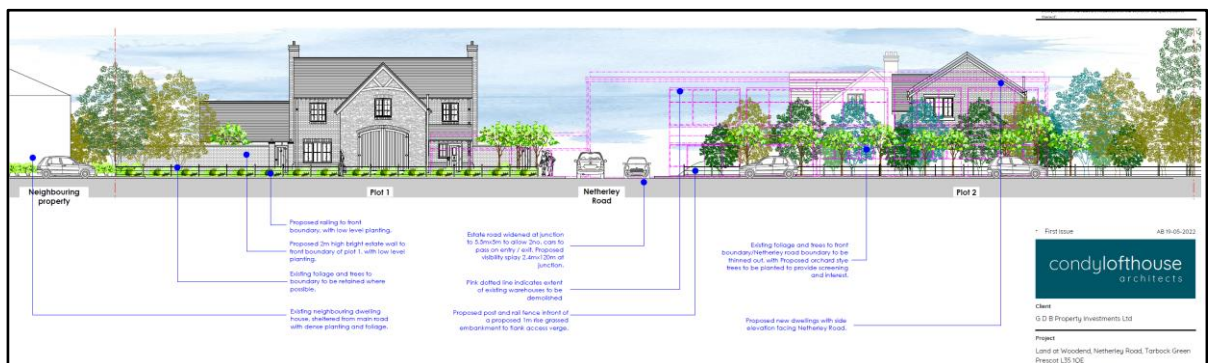


Figure 7 – Proposed Street Scene at entrance including an outline of the existing buildings.

6. Planning Policy Context

- 6.1 In order to consider the planning merits of the application it is worth outlining the relevant local and national planning policies which should be considered. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) provides national planning policy context and should be the baseline by which all applications are determined. The most recent NPPF was published in 2021 and the relevant policies have been provided below.

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

- 6.2 Paragraph 8 – Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways:
- a) An economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
 - b) A social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and
 - c) An environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.
- 6.3 Paragraph 11 – Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development, for decision-taking this means:
- a) Approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or
 - b) Where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:
 - i. The application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or

- ii. Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

- 6.4 Paragraph 40 – Local planning authorities have a key role to play in encouraging other parties to take maximum advantage of the pre-application stage. They cannot require that a developer engages with them before submitting a planning application, but they should encourage take-up of any pre-application services they offer.
- 6.5 Paragraph 47 – Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 6.6 Paragraph 60 – To support the Government’s objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without necessary delay.
- 6.7 Paragraph 79 – To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services. Where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby.
- 6.8 Paragraph 119 – Planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions. Strategic policies should set out a clear strategy for accommodating objectively assessed needs, in a way that makes as much use as possible of previously-developed or ‘brownfield’ land.
- 6.9 Green Belt serves five purposes:
 - a) To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
 - b) To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
 - c) To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
 - d) To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
 - e) To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.
- 6.10 Paragraph 124 – Planning policies and decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land, taking into account:

- a) *The identified need for different types of housing and other forms of development, and the availability of land suitable for accommodating it;*
- b) *Local market conditions and viability;*
- c) *The availability and capability of infrastructure and services – both existing and proposed – as well as their potential for further improvement and the scope to promote sustainable travel modes that limit future car use;*
- d) *The desirability of maintaining an area's prevailing character and setting (including residential gardens), or of promoting regeneration and change; and*
- e) *The importance of securing well-deigned, attractive and healthy places.*

6.11 Paragraph 126 – The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the process.

6.12 Paragraph 147 – Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.

6.13 Paragraph 149 – A local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt. Exceptions to this are: the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, whether redundant or in continuing (excluding temporary buildings), which would:

- Not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development; or
- Not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt, where the development would re-use previously developed land and contribute to meeting an identified affordable housing need within the area of the local planning authority.

Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy (2016)

6.14 The Knowsley Local Plan was adopted in January 2016 and provides the most up to date policies by which the applications should be determined against.

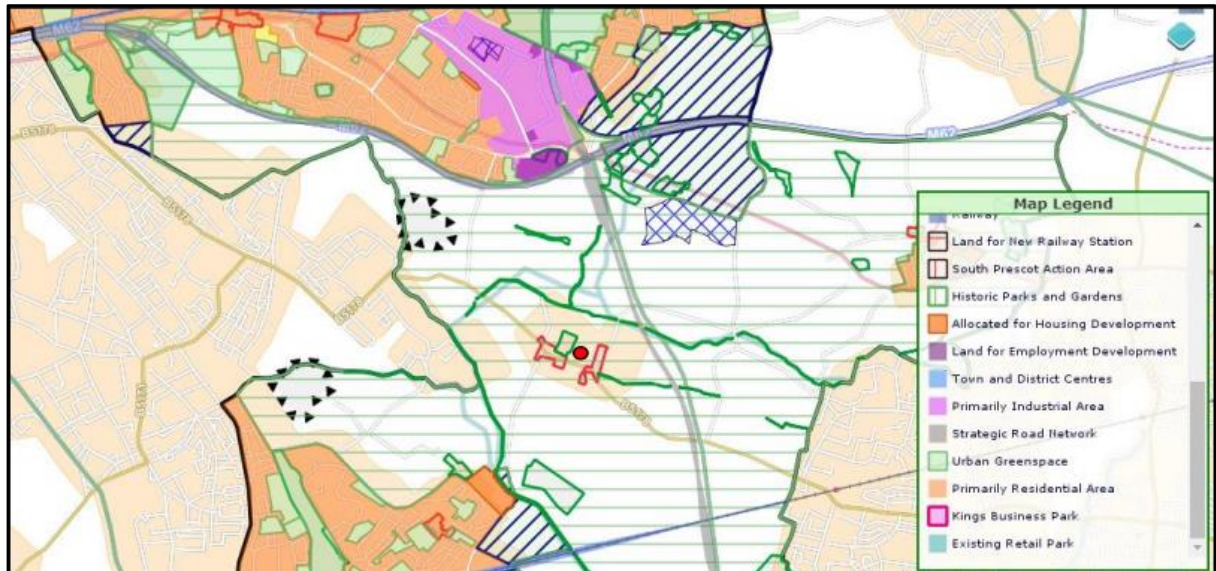


Figure 8 – Interactive policies map showing the proposed land as being a 'Primary Residential Area' (Development site circled in red).

- 6.15 Policy SD1 – Planning applications that accord with the policies in this Local Plan (and any relevant policies in Neighbourhood Plans) will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 6.16 Policy CS1 – The spatial development of Knowsley to 2028 will be achieved by an efficient and sustainable use of land and infrastructure, encouraging where possible the reclamation and reuse of previously developed land.
- 6.17 Policy CS2 outlines the main development principles for the borough.

Principle 1 states:

Promote sustainable economic development, tackle the cause of deprivation and disadvantages and narrow the gap between the richest and poorest neighbourhoods by meeting needs for new housing, employment, retail and other service provision.

Principle 4 part d states:

Recognise environmental limits, protect and enhance environmental assets, enhance local character and promote quality of place by:

Maximising opportunities for the regeneration of previously developed land, including derelict or unsightly areas to improve the image of Knowsley and use land resources efficiently.

6.18 Policy CS3 states that provision will be made for 8, 100 new dwellings to be delivered in Knowsley between 2010 and 2028, at an annual average of 450 dwellings per annum. It then goes on to say that Densities of minimum of 30 dwellings per hectare will be required for residential development in Knowsley. Lower densities will only be acceptable in circumstances where:

- a) The nature of the location in question allows for this; and
- b) It can be demonstrated that an identified local housing need will be met.

Paragraph 5.19 goes on to say *Policy CS3 also complies with the national policy priority to focus new development on previously developed land.*

Paragraph 5.23 states *In meeting long-term housing targets in Knowsley, it is recognised that there is an overall shortage of housing land within the urban area and therefore a need for Green Belt release over the plan period.*

6.19 Policy CS4 provides the employment development strategy and states that:

Planning, site assembly and other available interventions will be used to improve accessibility to an appropriate range of jobs, for example by encouraging mixed use employment/residential schemes where appropriate and improving transport linkages between housing and employment areas and supporting the diversification of the rural economy and encouraging homeworking.

6.20 Policy CS5 – Green Belt:

1. Inappropriate development will not be permitted in the Green Belt except in very special circumstances in which it has been demonstrated that the harm to the Green Belt (including any harm to its openness, purposes or to its visual and recreational amenities) would be clearly outweighed by other considerations.
2. Major Previously Developed Sites in the Green Belt will be identified in the Local Plan: Site Allocations and Development Policies. - * Not yet published
3. Limited infilling and redevelopment of Major Previously Developed Sites in the Green Belt is considered appropriate provided it would not have a greater impact upon the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land within it.

Paragraph 5.43 goes on to say that *The Council wishes to allow appropriate future development within previously developed sites in the Green Belt provided the openness of the Green Belt is preserved. Such sites vary widely in type and size and smaller sites will not be identified specifically on the Policies Map.*

6.21 CS15 – Within all proposed market sector housing developments which have a capacity of 15 dwellings or more, a minimum provision of affordable housing will be sought.

- 6.22 CS17 – Assesses the housing size and design standards for new developments. For smaller residential development sites (below 15 dwellings), a mix of housing sizes should be provided which complement the overall mix available in the area. Table 8.1 further outlines what is required across Knowsley:

Table 8.1: Mix of dwelling sizes for new housing in Knowsley

Housing Type/Size	1-bedroom	2-bedroom	3-bedroom	4-bedroom plus
Market Housing	10%	30%	40%	20%
Affordable Housing – Social Rented	20%	50%	20%	10%
Affordable Housing – Intermediate	20%	70%	10%	0%
<i>Provision of new bungalows is also required across all housing types and sizes</i>				

7. Planning Policy Assessment

- 7.1 In Section 5, the relevant planning policies by which this application should be determined against have been outlined. These policies, along with the pre-application response from Knowsley Council have been analysed and an assessment has been provided below detailing how the proposal accords with these policies and comments.

Principle of Development

- 7.2 Under previous applications and through pre-application engagement the proposed development site has been considered to be Previously Developed Land (PDL). This is confirmed by the Council's pre-application response where they state:

*Although **redevelopment of previously developed sites may be appropriate** the proposed development would adversely affect the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land within it.*

- 7.3 Knowsley Council have recognised that the proposal is the redevelopment of a previously developed site. This type of development is considered acceptable in both local and national policies according to Policy CS5 (3) and paragraph 149 part G of the NPPF which allows for the partial or complete redevelopment of a previously developed site. As the site is recognised as being PDL the principle of redevelopment should be considered acceptable and in line with planning policy.
- 7.4 The redevelopment of the development site accords with other principles and policies that have been outlined in the Local Plan, specifically CS1 which encourages the reclamation and reuse of previously developed land. The development proposal would reclaim a site which is severely underused, the reclamation of the site would also remove potentially dangerous contaminants to provide a safe and more attractive land parcel. This matter is further recognised in CS2 where it encourages sustainable development and the need to enhance environmental assets across Knowsley. The reclamation of the proposed site will undoubtedly lead to environmental improvements in the area providing improved ecological connections with the surrounding environment.
- 7.5 The design of the site is an improvement to what is currently at the site, and as outlined in the NPPF brownfield sites need to be maximised to their full potential
- 7.6 Although the site is located outside that of an established settlement highlighted in the Local Plan, Policy CS5 of the Knowsley Local Plan outlines that Major Previously Developed Sites in the Green Belt will be identified in the Local Plan: Site Allocations and Development Policies. This planning document has yet to be prepared and does not provide a list of major previously developed sites. As the application is for over 10 units it can be considered to be a major application site which has already been established as PDL, there is therefore no reason to believe that the redevelopment would not be considered acceptable and in line with Local Plan policy for the principle of

development. Furthermore, the proposed site area has been highlighted as a primarily residential area according to the adopted interactive planning map for Knowsley as outlined in figure 8.

- 7.7 Policy CS5 (3) then goes on to outline that the redevelopment of PDL should be considered acceptable provided it would not have a greater impact upon the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land within it. The pre-app from Knowsley raised concern of the impact of the development on the openness of the Green Belt and the proposal has been altered to take account of this.
- 7.8 With regard to the openness, it is important to consider the size and volume of the existing buildings and hardstandings on site and the size, scale and massing of the proposed residential units. Table 3 outlines the existing development area and volume compared to that proposed in order to better evaluate the change in built form on site.

Openness of the Green Belt

- 7.9 The principle of development on a previously developed site has been found to be acceptable. In line with National and Local Green Belt policies the redevelopment of a brownfield site can only be considered acceptable when it is shown not to have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt.
- 7.10 The proposed development is for 10 houses located within the curtilage of the existing factory buildings on site. The curtilage of the previously developed land has been established by including all the factory hardstandings and associated infrastructure. This is what has been included in the red line site boundary. Within the glossary definition of previously developed land in the NPPF it states:

Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed infrastructure.

- 7.11 The application boundary has only included permanent structures and associated fixed surface infrastructure, this equates to an area of approximately 0.8 hectares.
- 7.12 Impact on the openness of the Green Belt can be determined in multiple ways and consist of many factors. Table 2 in Section 5 provides an assessment of built form of the existing brownfield site against the proposed residential development.
- 7.13 As evident from Table 2, the proposed development will include significantly less built form compared to what already exists on site. This will contribute to improving the openness of the site within the Green Belt.
- 7.14 Further, when assessing the layout plan in figure 5, the built form has been located predominantly on the area of the existing buildings to the east of the site. A very pronounced corridor has further

been provided to utilise and improve existing views through the site. The incorporation of a green space in the centre of the site provides for a more countryside feel, this is considerably improved on what is existing on the site.

- 7.15 Screening also plays an important role in the openness of the site. Currently, there is a well-established group of trees that front Netherley Road providing significant screening for the buildings on site. These trees will be retained on site and will continue to provide excellent screening from southerly views on the site. Furthermore, existing tree lines located throughout the site have been designed around to minimise the visual impacts of the development on local areas. The development draws upon already established screening from neighbouring properties and vegetation to reduce the impact of the development on the openness of the Green Belt.
- 7.16 The proposal of 10 units will help break up the site's existing built form which is all located in one segment of the site. The 10 units have been located sparsely around the site providing for a less dense development more in line with the existing surroundings.
- 7.17 All of this contributes to an improvement in the openness of the Green Belt compared to that existing. The built form will be reduced by over 62% based on the volumes and the density of development significantly reduced by 59% on that existing according to the floor area and liveable area. This, and the carefully considered location of the development units creates a site which is far more open than that existing. This is therefore in accordance with National Policy and CS 5 of the Knowsley Local Plan.
- 7.18 Knowsley have recognised the need to release Green Belt land, this is confirmed in Paragraph 5.23 of the Local Plan as they prescribe a shortage in housing land in urban areas and therefore a need for Green Belt release over the plan period. The proposed development offers an excellent opportunity to provide for new housing to keep up with the demand in the area and offering this housing on a previously developed site would improve the openness on the Green Belt.

Design and Density

- 7.19 The applicant recognises the conservation areas that are sat either side of the proposed development. The existing properties in Tarbock Green retain interesting design and characteristics, these have been reflected in the house and site designs prepared by CLA.
- 7.20 A Design and Access Statement has been prepared by CLA to better outline the design principles of the site and how they respond to the surrounding area.
- 7.21 Policy CS 3 outlines that new residential developments should retain a housing density of 30 dwellings per hectare. This proposed development offers a density of 12.5 dwellings per hectare however a number of issues need to be considered when assessing this number.
- 7.22 Tarbock Green is a rural area accommodating 2 Conservation Areas and very spacious development. The proposed scheme density is more attuned with the existing townscape of Tarbock

Green and a density of 30 dwellings per hectare would be completely out of context with the area and would constitute poor design. The proposed density would better respond to the character of the area and would not over urbanise it.

- 7.23 The proposal is located within the Green Belt, therefore it has to be shown to not impact the openness of the Green Belt and the countryside sitting within it. The applicants are aware that there are expansive countryside views to the south of the site which need to be respected and considered when assessing the openness of the development. To ensure the site retains its openness and doesn't impact on the surrounding setting the applicant has been kept to provide a spacious 'parkland' development which retains greater separation distances and green space to minimise any impact. This has the effect of decreasing the density of the development to ensure it corresponds with both national and local Green Belt policy. The goal of this proposal is to best retain and/or improve the openness of the site by spreading development and increasing green areas compared to that existing. The proposed development has achieved this through reducing the built form and opening up central views through the site which vastly improves its countryside context.
- 7.24 Public views of the site are only possible from Netherley Road when directly in front of the site as it is already well screened. Therefore, the site does not urbanise the countryside, impact the conservation areas or significantly impact on the openness of the Green Belt.
- 7.25 A density of 12.5 dwellings per hectare should therefore be considered acceptable in this case for the reasons outlined above.
- 7.26 The design has been shaped by technical constraints along with comments received from the pre-application advice of Knowsley Council and the Council's decision of the previous application.
- 7.27 Ahead of this resubmission, the applicant and the Council have met to discuss the revised proposal. This referenced the need for a 'farmstead' type development with significantly increased garden areas to respond to the character of the area. To achieve this it was decided that there needs to be a reduction in the number of units which has gone from 14 down to 10.
- 7.28 The initial feedback from Knowsley Council was positive and has provided suitable scope for a viable scheme.

Housing Mix and Tenure

- 7.29 Because the development is only for 10 dwellings it is not required to provide any affordable homes in line with policy CS15. Instead the development needs to accord with Policy CS17 and offer a range of housing mixes in line with the provision provided in the Local Plan.
- 7.30 The latent demand for house sizes is for 60% of all housing to be 3 and 4+ bedrooms in line with Table 8.1 of the Local Plan. The proposed development is putting forward 10 detached and semi-

detached market homes all of which will be 3 and 4+ bedrooms to respond to the need across the Borough.

- 7.31 The proposed housing mix also responds to the general character of the area and the issues surrounding sustainability. Tarbock Green and specifically the Conservation Areas which cover it consist of large detached properties likely to include at least 3-bedrooms. The inclusion of smaller dwellings and potential semi-detached units would not be appropriate for this site to ensure that it is in keeping with the character of the surrounding area.

Sustainable Development

- 7.32 Paragraph 8 of the NPPF outlines 3 overarching principles of sustainable development, these being economic, social and environmental. The proposed development will achieve these principles in the following ways:

Economic

- 7.33 The development of the site would create substantial economic benefits for the local area and Knowsley as a whole. These will be in the form of construction jobs, household expenditure, first occupation expenditure, increased Council tax and new homes bonus.

Social

- 7.34 The proposed development of the site will provide new family homes to an area currently underutilised in its existing form. The inclusion of new homes is required by Knowsley and this development will enhance the built form standards of the surrounding area creating a more attractive place to live for future and existing residents.
- 7.35 The location of the development in the countryside setting offers significant social benefits with access to countryside activities including footpath networks which are proven to benefit both mental and physical health.

Environment

- 7.36 The re-use of a previously developed site helps mitigate number of housing required on greenfield sites which are, in most cases, more biodiverse. This is especially true as Knowsley have recognised that they need to release more land for housing within the Local Plan period. Therefore, the use of previously developed sites will limit this need and land release elsewhere.
- 7.37 The proposed development site currently contains levels of contamination due to its previous industrial use. This could potentially lead to leaching of hazardous substances in to the soils and potentially in to the water impacting the local biodiversity. The remediation and redevelopment of this site would eradicate this risk and would clean up the land.

- 7.38 The proposed development will significantly increase the biodiversity offering on site through the inclusion of new vegetation, new open spaces and improved ecological connections to the surrounding area. All of this would look to significantly enhance a brownfield site located in the heart of the Knowsley countryside.

Other Material Considerations

- 7.39 As the Principle of Development has been established above it is worth considering other impacts of the development in order to determine its acceptability.

Ecology and Trees

- 7.40 An updated Ecological survey has been prepared as part of this application, this is to identify the baseline ecology for the area.

- 7.41 The site was attended by Ascerta in May 2022, the results of which are included in the Phase One Survey.

Flooding

- 7.42 The proposed site is located within flood zone 1 according to the Environment Agency flood mapping. The site is approximately 0.8 hectares in size and therefore doesn't exceed the 1-hectare threshold by which a Flood Risk Assessment is required.

- 7.43 The development site is currently brownfield and is entirely made up of hardstanding which is impermeable. As shown on the Environment Agency map, there are currently small pockets of surface water flooding to the north of the site. The redevelopment of the site to residential will significantly reduce the impermeable areas as there will be more provision for open green spaces and green infrastructure. This will allow for improvements in surface water drainage on site reducing the likelihood of flooding in the future.

- 7.44 Details of surface water drainage will be provided at a later date and should be conditioned as part of this application.

Highways

- 7.45 Access is to be taken from Netherley Road to the south of the site. The road currently retains a 40-mph speed limit which requires a visibility of 120 metres. This is easily achievable along Netherley Road due to the straight road which stretches in both directions. The approximate visibility splays are provided in figure 9 below:



Figure 9 – Aerial plan showing the appropriate visibility splays for the development access.

- 7.46 The proposed entrance will have a sufficient arc and access widget to allow access for refuse and emergency vehicles along with the traffic generated from the proposed development. The traffic generation would be for 10 new households which would be considered low to moderate in this location.
- 7.47 Previously the site is used as an ink factory with large lorry's and vans along with private vehicles attending the site. The traffic created from a residential development is therefore not anticipated to have as big an impact compared to the site's previous use and the vehicular movements should therefore be considered acceptable.
- 7.48 The internal layout has provided suitable access and turning heads for HGV's such as refuse vehicles. The turning head has been shown on the proposed site plan. The internal layout consists of a single spine road dissecting the centre of the site with housing coming from it. This was designed to retain existing views through the site as evident in the proposed site plan.

Vacant Building Credit

- 7.49 Knowsley Council does not have their own guidance on Vacant Building Credit, therefore Planning Practice Guidance has been used within this section.
- 7.50 Vacant Building Credit promotes development on brownfield sites, allowing for the floorspace of existing buildings that are to be redeveloped to be offset against the calculations for Section 106 affordable housing requirements.

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- 7.51 Paragraph 64 of the National Planning Policy Framework states to support the re-use of brownfield land, where vacant buildings are being reused or redeveloped, any affordable housing contribution due should be reduced by a proportionate amount.
- 7.52 Therefore, within this proposal the affordable housing contribution should be reduced due to the site bringing the current brownfield land back into use.

8. Conclusion

- 8.1 This planning statement has been prepared by Pegasus Group on behalf of GDP Property Investment Ltd. supporting the redevelopment of the former Sterling Ink Factory to 10 residential dwellings.
- 8.2 This application has been made following informal pre-application meetings with Knowsley Council subsequent to the dismissal of a planning appeal at the site. Within these meetings a general design proposal was agreed upon with more details submitted as part of the planning application.
- 8.3 This planning statement shows how the development proposal is in line with local and national planning policy which allows and encourages the partial or complete redevelopment of a previously developed site (Policies CS1, CS2 and CS5 of Knowsley Local Plan and paragraph 149 of the NPPF). This therefore establishes the principle of development of being acceptable if it can be shown that the development would not impact on the openness of the Green Belt.
- 8.4 Due to the size of the development and the implementation of Vacant Building Credit, affordable housing is not required as part of this development. The proposal incorporates housing which has an identifiable need as confirmed by Knowsley and will look to add to the existing housing stock in Knowsley.
- 8.5 This application proposes new housing which have a scale and massing below what currently exists on site. As outlined in table 2, the proposed development will have a significantly smaller floor area, liveable area (if the current building was converted) and volume. The proposed design has been careful to reflect the character of the area including large areas of public and private open space to improve the openness of the Green Belt.
- 8.6 The application includes multiple economic, social and environmental benefits which contribute towards sustainable development. This accord with paragraph 8 of the NPPF.
- 8.7 The proposed design has further considered the closely located conservation area and proposes a development which looks to be in keeping and further enhance the design of properties in the area.
- 8.8 The development has suitable access and highways arrangements which allow for the safety and access of vehicles and HGV's. There are no technical issues which could impede the development site from coming forward.
- 8.9 As the development proposal accords with the Local Development Plan under Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 the planning application should be approved without delay.

9. Appendices

9.1 Appendix 1 – Inspector’s report of appeal ref. APP/V4305/W/21/3274377