

Knowsley Council
Regeneration and Economic Development Directorate.
Delegated Planning Report

APPLICATION NO: 26/00019/COU

CASE OFFICER: Andrew Hunt

WARD: St Gabriels

PARISH: Tarbock
Parish Council

LOCATION: Sandy Meadows (The Lodge, 1, 2, And Apartments 1A & 2A Sandy Meadows), Wheathill Road, Huyton, Knowsley, L36 5UTT

PROPOSAL: CHANGE OF USE FROM 3NO. DWELLINGS & 2 SELF CONTAINED APARTMENTS (USE CLASS C3) TO AN ADULT CARE FACILITY FOR A MAXIMUM OF 12NO. PERSONS (USE CLASS C2)

Site Description

The application site is a long irregular shaped plot consisting of a detached dwelling at the front of the site with three dwellings formed in a semi circular shape in the middle of the site. There are 3 dwellings and 2 self contained apartments. In addition to the buildings, the site consists of mostly grassed areas with hardstanding and trees.

There are other dwellings to the north west and east of the site with a wooded area and motorway embankment to the south. Access to the site is from the west via Wheathill Road

Proposal

This application relates to a change of use from 3 no dwellings and 2 self contained apartments (use class C3) to an adult care facility for a maximum of 12 persons. The residents would be cared for by 6no. trained carers 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. There would be 6no. staff/carers working on a split shift. Staff handovers would take place each day around 8am.

Consultations

Knowsley Council Commissioning - Would not support at present, but would be interested in a conversation about how the plan for the service could be changed in line with Council priorities.

Environmental Health – No objection. No external changes are proposed, and the internal changes should be minimal.

Highways – No objection subject to a cycle parking condition.

Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service – No objection subject to informatives.

Merseyside Police – Have concerns as the location of the site and the surrounding

area are considered higher risk when compared to other areas of Knowsley. The site is in close proximity to the M62, which is a concern as vulnerable individuals may gravitate towards such areas.

Representations

This application has been publicised by letters sent to 10 neighbours and by a site notice. No representations have been received.

Planning History

Whole Site

25/00284/COU - CHANGE OF USE FROM 3NO. DWELLINGS & 2 SELF CONTAINED APARTMENTS (USE CLASS C3) TO A CHILDREN AND ADULT CARE FACILITY FOR A MAXIMUM OF 12NO. PERSONS – refused – 15.08.2025.

A recent planning application for the change of use to a children and adult care facility for up to 12 persons, was refused on the following grounds:

“1. The proposed development would fail to align with current health and social care service requirements, and specialist housing needs. Furthermore, the style and nature of the proposed care home would not enable cared for children to integrate effectively in their community and raises concerns in respect of safeguarding and the effective matching of children and young people leading to challenges and significant risk situations. The format of the care home would result in safeguarding concerns due to its size, scale and proximity to transport links and areas of anti-social behaviour. The proposal is therefore contrary to Core Strategy Policy CS16, UDP Policies H5 and H7 and the NPPF”.

74/09762/HIST - PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT – granted – 06.11.1986

74/15197/HIST - ERECTION OF TWO STOREY DETACHED DWELLINGS INCLUDING DOUBLE GARAGE PARKING AREA NEW ACCESS AND LANDSCAPING – granted - 05.06.1989

Far eastern part of site

18/00519/OUT - OUTLINE PLANNING PERMISSION FOR THE ERECTION OF 1NO DETACHED DWELLING - APPROVAL SOUGHT FOR ACCESS, LAYOUT, AND SCALE, APPEARANCE AND LANDSCAPING RESERVED FOR FUTURE APPROVAL - granted - 16.11.2018

20/00658/REM - APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF RESERVED MATTERS PURSUANT TO OUTLINE PLANNING PERMISSION 18/00519/OUT (ERECTION OF 1 NO. DETACHED DWELLING) - APPROVAL SOUGHT FOR LANDSCAPING AND APPEARANCE (ACCESS, LAYOUT, AND SCALE APPROVED AT OUTLINE STAGE) – granted - 12.04.2021

22/00092/OUT - OUTLINE APPLICATION FOR THE ERECTION OF ONE DWELLING (LANDSCAPING RESERVED) - granted - 20.07.2022

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.

KNOWSLEY LOCAL PLAN: CORE STRATEGY

CS2 - Development Principles
CS7 - Transport Networks
CS16 - Specialist and Supported Accommodation
CS19 - Design Quality and Accessibility in New Developmen

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

H5 - Development within Primarily Residential Areas
H7 - Provision of flats, nursing and residential homes, hostels and houses in multiple occupation (HMO's)
ENV2 - Noise and Vibration

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.

ISSUES AND ASSESSMENT:

PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

Principle of Development – Policy

Core Strategy Policy CS16 states that the Council will provide or support the provision of new specialist and supported residential accommodation, “which will be located in an appropriate environment, near to highways and public transport links and local amenities”

Replacement UDP Saved Policy H5 (Development Within Primarily Residential Areas) states that: new development within the Primarily Residential Areas which is for uses appropriate to a residential area will be permitted provided that the development would not:

- 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; or
- Adversely affect the character or street scene of the area.

Replacement UDP Saved Policy H7 (Provision of flats, nursing and residential homes, hostels and houses in multiple occupation (HMO's)) states that proposals for residential homes, will be permitted provided that:

- “a) There would be no unacceptable increase in the level of noise or disturbance, or loss of privacy, for occupiers of neighbouring property;
- b) Any necessary vehicle parking areas would be adequate to meet the needs of the development, safe and screened and/or landscaped so as to avoid causing loss of visual amenity in the area;
- c) Bin stores, fire escapes and clothes drying areas would be adequately screened or designed so as to avoid causing loss of visual amenity;
- d) In the case of proposals to convert existing property, the property would be suitable in terms of its size and character to accommodate the development proposed; and
- e) In the case of proposals for nursing or residential homes, hostels or Houses in Multiple Occupation, the proposals would not result in:
 - An existing dwelling having a nursing home, residential home, hostel or HMO on both sides; or
 - More than 2 adjoining properties being used as a nursing home, residential home, hostel or HMO”.

Paragraph 61 of the NPPF states that the overall aim should be to meet an area's identified housing need including an appropriate mix of housing types for the local community. When establishing need the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed. Groups should include looked after children, and evidence of this need can be found in the local authority's sufficiency strategy.

Paragraph 96 in NPPF states that “Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which:

- a) promote social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other – for example through mixed-use developments, strong neighbourhood centres, street layouts that allow for easy pedestrian and cycle connections within and between neighbourhoods, and

active street frontages;

b) are safe and accessible, so that crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion – for example through the use of well-designed, clear and legible pedestrian and cycle routes, and high quality public space, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas;”

Paragraph 135 in NPPF states “Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;

b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;

c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);

f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

Principle of Development – Safeguarding, Crime and Anti Social Behaviour

The site is located close to the M62 which is located immediately to the south of the site. There is also a bus stop just 1 minute walk away from the site on Wheathill Road. The site is also 1.2 miles away, (a 28 minute walk) from Huyton train station.

The site is considered to be part of the Huyton urban area, north of the M62, which in general has excellent public transport links including regular bus links. Most of the Huyton area will therefore have a bus stop within a few minutes walk of a property. The site is therefore not significantly different from other sites in Huyton in this respect.

In relation to access by rail, as the site is located at the southern edge of the Huyton urban area, the site is further away from Huyton train station than large parts of the Huyton urban area.

In terms of motorway access, the site is in close proximity to the M62 motorway, however, there is no junction nearby with the M62 that allows vehicular access onto the M62. The nearest vehicular access point would be Tarbock Island (Junction 6) which is located 2.3 miles away. In terms of pedestrian access to the motorway, there is an embankment immediately to the south of the site, which would allow access to the motorway. During the winter months (with less tree cover) it would be feasible to scale this embankment, however, during the summer months, it would be very difficult to scale, due to the extensive tree cover in place.

However, the potential risk of the motorway could be managed through appropriate risk mitigation strategies. The applicant has submitted a document titled “Risk Assessment for Suicide Prevention: Persons Living Close to Main Roads / Motorways” which contains measures to mitigate the potential risk. This includes the following proposed physical measures to reduce risk:

- High Fencing and Garden Enclosure: Installing 2.5-meter (minimum 1.8m-2.3m) anti-climb fencing to prevent access to main roads or motorways. Consider gated access to vehicular driveways and pedestrian pathways.

- **Defensive Planting:** Using thorny, dense, or high-growth vegetation to outer boundary to physically deter access to sensitive areas.
- **Site Redesign:** Close informal pathways that lead directly to high-risk locations.
- **Preventing Footholds:** Ensuring fences have no toe or foot holds, making it harder for individuals to climb.
- **External Lighting:** Ensure movement sensory lighting is installed to concealed areas.

The following environmental and security improvements are also proposed:

- **Surveillance and Monitoring:** Utilizing technology to monitor high-risk zones can facilitate rapid response from emergency services or crisis teams.
- **Enhanced Lighting:** Increasing visibility in areas adjacent to the motorway can help ensure that individuals in distress are noticed and receive help more quickly.
- **Clear Identification:** Marking structures and access points with clear numbering helps emergency responders locate the exact area during an intervention.

In addition, there are also other measures such as placing information on crisis hotlines such as the Samaritans in visible locations and developing a comprehensive safety plan.

Crisis Intervention & Outreach

- **Support Signage:** Placing information for crisis hotlines, such as the Samaritans, in visible locations provides immediate options for those seeking help.
- **Emergency Communication:** Ensuring there are reliable ways to contact emergency services in the vicinity of high-risk areas.
- **Community Training:** Educating neighbours, residents and staff on how to recognize signs of distress and how to safely engage or contact authorities.

Home and Personal Safety

- **Safety Planning:** Developing a comprehensive safety plan with mental health professionals that includes identifying triggers and establishing clear steps for when a crisis occurs.
- **Support Networks:** Maintaining open communication with healthcare providers and support groups to ensure a collaborative approach to safety.

In addition to the above, adult care homes are regulated by the Care Quality Commission (CQC), who will ensure that risk mitigation measures are in place at the site for vulnerable adults.

Overall, the combination of physical measures combined with safeguarding and training measures is considered to reduce risk to an acceptable level. The site will not present a safeguarding risk that is significantly greater than the majority of buildings within the Huyton urban area. A planning condition is necessary to limit the use to adult care only.

In relation to amenity and street scene impacts. The proposal would not result in harm to the amenity of neighbours or the street scene as there would be no additional built development.

Overall, the proposal complies with UDP Policy H5 Core Strategy Policy CS16 and the NPPF.

CHARACTER OF AREA

Policy CS19 (Design Quality and Accessibility in New Development) in the Core Strategy sets out several criteria that developments will be expected to conform to so that they enhance local distinctiveness and the identity and accessibility of new places. The NPPF identifies that the creation of high-quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development.

The proposal would consist of a change of use only and would therefore not result in any streetscene impacts from additional built development. Overall, the proposal would not result in harm to the character of the area and the development is consistent with Core Strategy Policy CS19.

RESIDENTIAL AMENITY

Core Strategy Policy CS19 (Design Quality and Accessibility in New Development) states that development proposals will be required to avoid unacceptable impacts on existing residents, business occupiers, and future occupiers.

Part e of UDP policy H7 states that an existing dwelling should not have a residential home on both sides.

“e) In the case of proposals for nursing or residential homes, hostels or Houses in Multiple Occupation, the proposals would not result in:

- An existing dwelling having a nursing home, residential home, hostel or HMO on both sides; or
- More than 2 adjoining properties being used as a nursing home”

Existing Residents

There are existing dwellings to the north on Wheathill Road (Bridge Manor is the nearest) with dwellings to the west (on the opposite side of Wheathill Road) and to the east (on Huyton Brook).

In relation to residential amenity, there would be no built development on site, merely a change of use, therefore, there would be no impacts on neighbour amenity through loss of light/outlook.

In terms of privacy, it is noted that there is no fence with the house to the north. However, there is a large hedge along the boundary that provides acceptable levels of privacy. There would likely not be sufficient space within the site for a fence due to the presence of a road but there is the potential for the neighbour to erect a fence for privacy if they wished.

In relation to noise and disturbance from the proposed use, there would not be significant noise impacts on neighbours from the proposed care home. This is supported by the views of the council's Environmental Health team.

Future Occupiers

There is a dwelling approved at the eastern part of the site under (22/00092/OUT). This would be located at the far eastern part of the site and the only route out of the

site either on foot or by car would be to the west (past the care home). However, any future purchaser of the home would be aware of the proposed use of the site and would be able to decide whether this arrangement is suitable for their requirements. Therefore, there would not be harm to amenity.

The other buildings are considered suitable for the proposed adult care use, with sufficient light and outlook to provide acceptable levels of amenity.

Overall, the development will not harm the amenity of neighbouring properties. The development complies with Core Strategy Policy CS19.

HIGHWAYS

NPPF para 115 states that in assessing sites that may be allocated for development in plans, or specific applications for development, it should be ensured that:

b) safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users;

NPPF Paragraph 116 states that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation, would be severe, taking into account all reasonable future scenarios.

Core Strategy Policy CS7 (Transport Networks) states that new development will be required to be:

- 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.
- In compliance with adopted cycle, car, disabled and service vehicle parking standards for different types and scales of new development;

The proposal includes several parking spaces within the site with potential for parking around the mini roundabout with a minimum of 7 spaces without blocking the access road. This is considered to be sufficient to meet the parking needs of the property. The property also has good transport links to the wider area with a bus stop opposite. The existing access arrangement would be unaffected and is considered to be sufficient to accommodate the proposed use.

Overall, there would be no harm to highway safety from the proposal, subject to a condition to secure cycle parking. This view is supported by the council's highways department who have no objection subject to cycle parking. The proposal complies with NPPF para 116 and Core Strategy Policy CS7.

CONCLUSION

The development is acceptable in principle and would not cause harm in relation to the character of the area, highway safety, or the amenity of neighbouring properties. The proposed development complies with policies included within the Core Strategy (2016), Knowsley Replacement Unitary Development Plan (saved policies 2009) and National Planning Policy Framework (2021).

RECOMMENDATION:

That planning permission be granted subject to the following condition(s):-

- 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) Plans

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) Cycle Parking

Prior to occupation of the building, precise detailed elevations and specifications of cycle parking shall have been submitted to and been approved by, the local planning authority. Works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans and retained hereafter. The scheme shall be implemented as agreed before any part of the development has been brought into use. For the avoidance of doubt, long stay cycle parking must be covered and offer a means to secure the cycles.

Reason: In order to provide sufficient and suitable cycle parking.

- 4) Adult Care

The site shall be used solely for the provision of care for up to 12 adults and for no other purpose. No children shall be allowed to occupy the site.

Reason: To prevent inappropriate uses at the site.

Signed Case Officer¹:

Andrew Hunt

**Signed Authorising
Officer²:**

Jo Sheridan

Date:

17/04/2026

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

Date Received	Ref. No	Version	Drawing/Document Title
13/03/2026	-	-	Risk Assessment for Suicide Prevention
23/01/2026	003	-	1 and 2a flats plans and elevations
23/01/2026	2069-RA-XX-XX-DR-A-0000		Location Plan
07/01/2026	002	-	1 and 2 Sandy Meadow plans, elevations and site plan
07/01/2026	001	-	The lodge plans, elevations and site plan.
07/01/2026	-	-	Planning Statement

INFORMATIVES

- 1) Merseyside Fire and Rescue – See Letter