

<u>APPLICATION NO:</u>	25/00542/FUL	<u>CASE OFFICER:</u>	Louise Robinson
<u>WARD:</u>	Prescot North	<u>PARISH:</u>	Knowsley Parish Council
<u>LOCATION:</u>	Nursery Cottage, Knowsley Lane, Knowsley, L34 4AE		
<u>PROPOSAL:</u>	ERECTION OF 1NO. AGRICULTURAL SHED		

Site Description

The application site is located within the Knowsley Estate and forms part of an established agricultural holding. It currently accommodates a sheep pen used for the management and care of livestock. The initial surrounding land is in active agricultural use, and the site is accessed via existing estate tracks.

To the west of the application site are existing agricultural buildings and the courtyard of buildings with Nursery Cottage at the west end which dates from the late 19th to early 20th century.

The site is also situated within the Knowsley Grade II Listed Park and Garden (Registered Park and Graden (List Entry 1000997)).

Site Constraints

- Historic Parks & Gardens
- Green Belt
- Local Wildlife or Geological Site

Proposal

Planning permission is sought for the erection of a detached agricultural unit designed to cover and enhance the existing sheep pen.

The new agricultural unit would be constructed in a painted steel frame and timber C24 purlins/eaves beams and would have a width of 21.3m and a total length of 24.4m. The unit would also have a natural grey fibre cement roof with vented ridge with 32 polycarbonate rooflights installed and would have a total height of 6.7m. As per the submitted planning statement, the materials chosen would be appropriate to the rural setting and agricultural function, ensuring minimal visual impact in the context of the immediate farm building provision.

The new structure would provide improved shelter and space for livestock, particularly during adverse weather conditions and lambing periods.

Consultations

Environmental Sustainability – No objections.

As the building is being built over a sealed surface, the ESS officer is happy with the exemption letter provided and BNG will not apply.

No ecological assessments are necessary as the surrounding habitat won't be affected.

Conservation – No objections.

Provided comments regarding whether the proposal preserves the special interest of the listed building through development in its setting and whether the proposal preserves the special interest of the Grade II Listed Registered Park and Garden.

Arboricultural Officer – No comments received.

Representations

This application has been publicised by letters sent to 2 neighbouring properties and 2 sites notices displayed near to the site (as of 25 November 2025). No representations were received as a result of publicity given to the application.

Planning History

19/00573/AGR PRIOR NOTIFICATION FOR THE ERECTION OF AN
AGRICULTURAL BUILDING

WITHDRAWN (08.11.2019)

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.

Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

The principal statutory duty under the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 is to preserve the special character of heritage assets, including their setting. LPAs should, in coming to decisions, consider the principal Act, which states the following:

Listed buildings – Section 66 (1)

In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a

listed building or its setting, the local planning authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

The development plan in Knowsley comprises the Saved Policies of the Replacement Unitary Development Plan, the Core Strategy Local Plan and the Joint Waste Local Plan. The following policies are relevant to the determination of this application.

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

Section 16 Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

PLANNING (LISTED BUILDING AND CONSERVATION AREAS) ACT 1990

Section 66 (1) Listed Buildings

KNOWSLEY LOCAL PLAN: CORE STRATEGY

Policy CS2	Development Principles
Policy CS5	Green Belt
Policy CS8	Green Infrastructure
Policy CS19	Design Quality and Accessibility in New Development
Policy CS20	Managing the Borough's Historic Environment
Policy CS21	Greenspaces and Trees

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

Policy G8 Agricultural or Equestrian Development

Article 35 Statement

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

Assessment

Principle of Development

The application site is identified as being allocated within Green Belt in the Knowsley Local Plan: Core Strategy.

Paragraph 142 of the NPPF states that the Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.

Paragraph 143 of the NPPF states that the Green Belt serves 5 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
- e) To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

Paragraphs 153 and 154 of the NPPF explain that inappropriate development by definition is harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in 'very special circumstances.'

Paragraph 154 states that development in the Green Belt is inappropriate unless one of the following exceptions applies:

- a) Buildings for agriculture and forestry
- b) The provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use), including buildings, for outdoor sport, outdoor recreations, cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments, as long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it.
- c) The extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.
- d) The replacement of a building provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces.
- e) Limited infilling in villages.
- f) Other forms of development provided they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it.

Policy CS5 of the Core Strategy outlines that inappropriate development will not be permitted in the Green Belt except in very specific 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.

Policy G8 of the Replacement Knowsley UDP outlines:

1. Proposals for agricultural or equestrian development should as a first preference utilise existing buildings rather than new buildings.
2. Where it is considered necessary to erect a new building or carry out other development associated with agricultural or equestrian uses, the proposal will only be permitted if it satisfies the following criteria:
 - a) Be sited and designed so as to have an acceptable impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the character of the landscape.
 - b) The building is of a design which is appropriate for its intended use, and sympathetic to its surroundings in terms of scale, materials, colour and

architectural detail.

- c) Will not have a significant adverse impact on the character or setting of local settlements or the amenity of existing residents in terms of its visual impact, noise, smell and use.
- d) Will not have a significant adverse impact in terms of traffic generation.
- e) Access and car parking provision is satisfactory.
- f) In appropriate cases, the proposal is accompanied by a landscape scheme, reflecting the landscape character of the area.
- g) In the case of structures of a temporary nature being erected, the structure would be removed on cessation of the use intended.

Assessment

The proposed detached agricultural unit would provide improved shelter and space for livestock, particularly during adverse weather conditions and lambing periods.

Whilst Paragraphs 153 and 154 of the NPPF outline that inappropriate development by definition is harmful to the Green Belt, the proposal would be acceptable under the exception of the agricultural unit being a '(a) building for agriculture and forestry'.

Therefore, given the exception, the proposed development would not be inappropriate development in the Green Belt and would be acceptable in principle, and would be in accordance with the NPPF, Policies CS5 and CS8 of the Core Strategy and Policy G8 of the Replacement Knowsley UDP.

Residential Amenity

There is a distance of 37.2m from the application site to the complex of 'U-shaped' buildings, and 60.2m to what is understood to be the 'residential' part of the Nursery Cottage complex. Additionally, there would be a distance of 145.3m to the 'Nursery House' and 171m to the 'Nursery Farm'.

At present, there are 3 polytunnels containing Sheep situated between the application site and the Nursery Cottage Complex. The proposed agricultural unit would be situated behind these polytunnels and would not create any additional impact on the residential amenity than the existing polytunnels.

Therefore, the proposed agricultural shed is considered to be acceptable in terms of any impacts on the residential amenity and complies with Policies CS2 and CS19 of the Core Strategy.

Impact on Heritage and Design

Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

The principal statutory duty under the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 is to preserve the special character of heritage assets, including their setting. LPAs should, in coming to decisions, consider the principal Act, which states the following:

Listed buildings – Section 66 (1)

In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Paragraph 203 of the NPPF (2024) outlines that plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. This strategy should take into account:

- d) The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage asset and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation.
- e) The wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring.
- f) The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness
- g) Opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.

Paragraph 210 of the NPPF (2024) states in determining planning applications LPAs should take account of:

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

Paragraph 212 of the NPPF (2024) states that when considering the impact of proposals on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be applied. This is irrespective of whether any harm is identified as being substantial, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

Paragraph 213 of the NPPF (2024) states that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification.

Policy CS20 of the Knowsley Local Plan: Core Strategy states that 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.

Background

The application site is located within the Grade II Listed Knowsley Park which is entered on the Register of Parks and Gardens (List Entry: 1000997).

Approximately 850m northeast of the application site is the Grade II* Listed Knowsley Hall (List Entry: 1253241), and approximately 900m northwest of the application site is the Grade II listed Little Wood Lodge (List Entry: 1253469).

Knowsley Park originated in the 13th century and was landscaped during the later 18th century incorporating elements of a late 17th century and early 18th century landscape.

Knowsley Hall is a large mansion of various dates, possibly incorporating parts of a 15th century house, but is externally now largely Georgian. The setting of the Hall includes its immediate formal and productive gardens, and its wider landscape setting, comprising formal driveways, vistas and landmarks, groups of trees with designed walks, and paddocks together with lodges to the entrances to the park. Providing access to the application site is the historic driveway which extended from Liverpool Lodge at the south-west corner of the park. This avenue and the lodge can be seen on the first OS Map and is described in the list entry as having been one of the most ambitious in design (Pevsner, 1969) and was historically one of the principal entrances, though the lodge was lost following the construction of the M57, the tree-lined driveway remains. The application site, until the second half of the 20th century, was an unplanted area between Horse Hey Plantation and the site identified as 'The Nursery'. Part of this area now forms the application site which is accessed off the historic drive. In the wider setting of Knowsley Hall, the application site is considered to make a neutral contribution to its significance, given that it is offset and screened from the historic driveway, and that the driveway today no longer functions as a principal entrance to the Hall.

Comments from Conservation

1. Impact on the setting of the Listed Building

The application site is well screened by existing trees in views looking over the parkland from the Hall and from the nearby main driveways. As such, the proposed open sided shed / shelter would cause no harm / impacts to the setting of Knowsley Hall.

It is recommended that the colour of the proposed frame paint to the steel structure is to be either a dark green or mid-grey.

2. Impact on the Registered Park and Garden

The proposed shed / shelter over the existing established area of pens would not result in any notable harm to the special interest of the Registered Park and Garden, given the degree of screening and would not be seen in any important views / vistas in the park or on the approaches to Knowsley Hall. The building is of an acceptable scale in this location.

Confirmation is required of any proposed lighting, in order to minimise light spillage into the surrounding trees and the proposed colour of the paintwork to the steel frame.

As such, the proposal will cause no discernible level of harm or loss of significance to the Grade II* Knowsley Hall as a result of development in its setting. With regard to the impacts to the Registered Park and Garden, the proposal, currently outlined in the submission documents, in my view, would cause no harm to the special interest of the Grade II listed Knowsley Park Registered Park and Garden.

Assessment

The application site is well screened by trees and vegetation and cannot be seen from the wider site of Knowsley Park (as shown by the site photographs and Appendix A).

The new agricultural unit would be constructed in a painted steel frame and timber C24 purlins/eaves beams and would have a width of 21.3m and a total length of 24.4m. The unit would also have a natural grey fibre cement roof with vented ridge with 32 polycarbonate rooflights installed and would have a total height of 6.7m.

At present, there are 3 polytunnels which house Sheep and a similar agricultural unit which houses various farming machinery and hay-bails on-site. As such, the construction of a new agricultural unit for livestock would not be out-of-character of the existing site, given its agricultural use.

As per the submitted planning statement, the materials chosen would be appropriate to the rural setting and agricultural function, ensuring minimal visual impact in the context of the immediate farm building provision. Given that the existing site is of a green / grey colour and to comply with comments provided by the conservation officer, a condition will be included to ensure that the unit is finished in a dark-green or mid-grey colour.

In response to the conservation officers comments regarding any proposed lighting within the proposal, correspondence with the agent as of 20 January 2026 confirmed that there is no lighting intended as part of the application in relation to the agricultural shed.

Therefore, the proposed agricultural unit is considered to be acceptable in terms of any impact on the visual amenity of the host and wider site and complies with Policies CS5, CS19 and CS20 of the Core Strategy, Policy G8 of the Knowsley Replacement UDP and the NPPF.

Highways

The application site will continue to be served by the existing road network of the wider Knowsley Hall estate and the road which leads to the designated agricultural area of the site. Therefore, the proposal raises no concerns regarding highway safety.

Trees

As per the tree documentation provided, there are 9 trees located along the boundary of the application site. The 9 trees are categorised as Category C trees.

Paragraph 4.5.1 states that no tree works are required solely for arboricultural reasons to enable retention. However, the existing woodland management plan for this part of the estate already identifies the removal of T1-T9 as part of ongoing plantation restructuring and renewal, in accordance with the Knowsley Estate woodland management plan. Their removal will prevent future branch or stem failure towards the new building and is consistent with the ongoing restructuring of the poplar plantation. No pruning works are proposed, and no other trees are directly affected by the development.

Comments provided within Appendix A of the submitted tree documentation indicate that the trees are all in a good condition and have up to 40 years of contribution remaining. The recommendation provided for T1, T2, T3 and T4 are for removal to allow development and prevent branch failure in the future. The recommendation provided for T5, T6, T7, T8 and T9 are for removal to allow development and prevent branch failure in future onto new building.

The Council's Arboricultural Officer has been consulted on the application; however, no comments have been received.

As no trees would be removed as a result of the development alone, the proposal is considered to be acceptable in relation to any impacts on the existing trees along the boundary of the application site, and would comply with Policy CS21 of the Core Strategy.

Conclusion

The proposal would be acceptable in terms of any impacts on the residential and visual amenity, impact on the Grade II Listed Knowsley Park and Grade II* Listed Knowsley Hall, highways and trees. The proposal also complies with the Knowsley Local Plan: Core Strategy, Replacement UDP Policies and guidance provided in the NPPF, and is therefore recommended for approval, subject to conditions.

Recommendation

That planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:

- 1) The development must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason: In order to comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans and documents listed in Schedule 1.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt.

- 3) The development hereby permitted shall have either a dark green or mid-grey finish to the painted steel frame of the agricultural shed.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and to comply with Policies CS2, CS5 and CS19 of the Knowsley Local Plan: Core Strategy, adopted January 2016 and Saved Policy G8 of the Knowsley Replacement Unitary Development Plan, adopted in June 2006, and the National Planning Policy Framework.

SCHEDULE 1

Date Received	Ref. No	Version	Drawing/Document Title
01.10.2025	-	-	Location Plan
01.10.2025	731895/01	-	Plans and Elevations as Proposed
27.10.2025	731895/03	REV A	Site Plan as Proposed
28.10.2025	-	-	BNG Exemption Letter
17.11.2025	-	-	Heritage Design & Access Statement
18.11.2025	-	-	Planning Statement
18.11.2025	-	-	Heritage Design
11.12.2025	-	-	Tree Survey, Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Arboricultural Method Statement

Signed Case Officer¹: **Louise Robinson**

Signed Authorising Officer²: **Jo Sheridan**

Date: **22/01/2026**

Informatives

- 1) The proposed development lies within a coal mining area which may contain unrecorded coal mining related hazards. If any coal mining feature is encountered during development, this should be reported immediately to the Mining Remediation

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

Authority on 0345 762 6846 or if a hazard is encountered on site call the emergency line 0800 288 4242.

Further information is also available on the Mining Remediation Authority website at: Mining Remediation Authority - GOV.UK

Standing Advice valid from 1st January 2025 until 31st December 2026

Appendix A



NB: The red box indicates the application site in relation to Knowsley Hall.

Site Photographs

