



Liath Heritage

Park Hall, Huyton Hey Road, Huyton

Heritage Statement

January 2024

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Park Hall, Huyton

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INTRODUCTION 1 | ONE

1.1 OVERVIEW

This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Liath Heritage in support of an application for listed building consent (the 'Proposed Works') and planning permission for the conversion of the Park Hall, Huyton Hey Road, Huyton (the 'Application Site') to 5 no. apartments with associated parking. These are resubmissions with some minor variations of a 2018 a planning application (ref 18/00178/FUL) and a listed building consent application (ref 18/00179/LBC) which were approved in November 2018.

At that time, the former listed Church and School was considered to be a 'listed building at risk' as the condition of the building was in a deteriorated state having last been occupied as a shoe factory in 2008. The 2018 permission were partially implemented by the then owners however, many of the associated conditions remain un-discharged and the quality of finish is of concern as there is clear evidence of damp within the apartments.

The site is Grade II Listed. The building lies within Victoria Road and Huyton Church Road Conservation Area which was first designated in 1978. A Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Conservation Area Management Plan were adopted in 2015.

It is the intention of this report to demonstrate that the Proposed Work will not undermine the architectural or historical significance of the Grade II Listed Building, the Victoria Road and Huyton Church Road Conservation Area nor that of any listed buildings within who's setting the Application Site lies.

This statement has been prepared in accordance with the guidance from Historic England 'Conservation Policies and Guidance' and the heritage policies outlined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2023, specifically Chapter 16. The legal context is set by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

1.2 INVESTIGATION AND RESEARCH METHODS

Site visits were carried out on in October 2023 and January 2024 to assess the physical character, nature and setting of the Application Site. Additional desk-based research has also been carried out to provide contextual and background information to better inform the statement of significance.

In accordance with the NPPF, the scope of this research has been proportionated to the nature of the site, with particular emphasis placed on the special architectural and historic significance of the listed building and conservation area, and those planning policies and legislation that affect and control future change.

1.3 ORDNANCE SURVEY GRID REFERENCE

SJ 44484 90726

1.4 BUILDING ADDRESS

Park Hall, Huyton Hey Road, Huyton, L36 5SE

RELEVANT LEGISLATION & PLANNING POLICIES 2 | TWO

A review of the planning policy context associated with the Proposed Works at statutory, national and local level is provided within this section of the Statement. An assessment of the accordance of the proposals with this legislation and policy is provided in chapter 4's 'Impact Assessment'.

All schemes are assessed against legislation and national and local planning policies, so - in the first instance, any proposals should adhere as closely to the legislation and policies as possible. The following are relevant to this application.

2.1 LEGISLATION

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states, that in considering whether to grant listed building consent or planning permission for any works to a listed building, 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 (s.16 and s.66).

Section 72 of the 1990 Act requires that in the exercise of planning functions with respect to any buildings or land in a conservation area that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of that area.

The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 states that the determination of planning applications must be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless other material considerations indicate otherwise. This establishes the Development Plan as the

primary decision-making document when considering planning applications (s.38(6)).

2.2 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

The recently updated National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2023) is pertinent and provides a full statement of Government policies for the identification and protection of heritage assets which includes historic buildings, conservation areas, world heritage sites, archaeology and other elements of the historic environment.

Paragraph 195 of the NPPF lays out that heritage assets range from sites and buildings of local value to those of the highest significance, such as World Heritage Sites. It states that these assets are irreplaceable and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations. Significance is defined in the NPPF Glossary (2023) as:

'The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.'

In determining applications, the NPPF advises that the local planning authority should take account of positives associated with the heritage asset and that the more important a heritage asset, the greater weight that should be given to the protection of its significances. It also outlines the approach that local planning

authorities should take when determining applications. The following paragraphs are relevant:

Paragraph 200 states:

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

Paragraph 203 states that in determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

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

Furthermore, Paragraph 205 advises that :

'When considering the impact of a Proposed Development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to

substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.'

Paragraph 206 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.

Moreover, the NPPF advises that where harm will occur:

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

210. Local planning authorities should not permit loss of the whole or part of a heritage asset without taking all reasonable steps to ensure the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred."

Please note: those paragraphs which deal with substantial harm are omitted as they are not relevant to the works under consideration as part of this application.

Planning Practice Guidance: Historic Environment (2019) advises on enhancing and conserving the historic environment.

Paragraph 001 states that:

'Conservation is an active process of maintenance and managing change. It requires a flexible and thoughtful approach to get the best out of assets as diverse as listed buildings in everyday use...'

'In the case of buildings, generally the risks of neglect and decay of heritage assets are best addressed through ensuring that they remain in active use that is consistent with their conservation. Ensuring such heritage assets remain used and valued is likely to require sympathetic changes to be made from time to time.'

Paragraph 015 identifies optimum viable for a heritage asset in terms of the NPPF, and states that 'the vast majority of heritage assets are in private hands. Thus, sustaining heritage assets in the long term often requires an incentive for their active conservation. Putting heritage assets to a viable use is likely to lead to the investment in their maintenance necessary for their long-term conservation.'

Harmful development may sometimes be justified in the interests of realising the optimum viable use of an asset, notwithstanding the loss of significance caused, and provided the harm is minimised.

Paragraph 020 goes on to identify the term public benefits in regard to the NPPF and states that 'Public benefits may follow from many developments and could be anything that delivers economic, social or environmental objectives as described in the Framework. Public benefits should flow from the proposed development. They should be of a nature or scale to be of benefit to the public at large and not just be a private benefit. However, benefits do not always have to be visible or accessible to the public in order to be genuine public benefits, for example, works to a listed private dwelling which secure its future as a designated heritage asset could be a public benefit.'

Examples of heritage benefits may include:

- sustaining or enhancing the significance of a heritage asset and the contribution of its setting;
- reducing or removing risks to a heritage asset;
- securing the optimum viable use of a heritage asset in support of its long-term conservation.

2.3 LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy

Locally, the LPA's policy guidance is contained within the adopted Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy, (formally adopted in January 2016). Whilst the application will be assessed directly against numerous adopted policies, it is considered that Policy CS20 is highly relevant and as such carries significant weight.

Core Strategy Policy CS20 intends to secure appropriate integration of development with Knowsley's heritage assets and provide a positive approach to their future management to safeguard their preservation.

The part one of the policy 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. 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."

Part two of The policy states:

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

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

b) Retain or introduce public access; and

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

Part three of the policy states:

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

Part four of the Policy states:

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

The Design Quality in New Development Supplementary Planning Document (formally adopted in January 2016) identifies the overarching context for design in the Borough, and highlights Boroughwide issues which should be taken into account in designing new development, including guidance relating to preserving the built heritage.

The building lies within Victoria Road and Huyton Church Road Conservation Area which was first designated in 1978. A Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Conservation Area Management Plan were adopted in 2015.

2.4 HISTORIC ENGLAND GUIDANCE

Historic England's '**Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (March 2015)**' contains useful information on assessing the significance of heritage assets and the impact of any proposed works. It is a useful tool when considering alterations within the historic environment.

The '**Historic Environment Good Practice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (2nd edition) (March 2015)**' provides guidance for managing change within the setting of heritage assets, including historic buildings, sites, areas and landscapes.

Historic England '**Advice Note 12 'Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets (October 2019)**'. This document provides information on the analysis and assessment of heritage significance in line with the National Planning Policy

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Framework (NPPF) to assist owners, applicants, local planning authorities (LPAs), planning, consultants and other interested parties, in implementing historic environment legislation, the policy in the NPPF and the related guidance given in the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).

ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE 3 | THREE

3.1 LOCATION

The site comprises the Grade II Listed Park Hall which was originally constructed as a church and attached school house. The building is located along Huyton Hey Road in Huyton and sits within the Victoria Road and Huyton Church Road Conservation Area which was originally designated by Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council in 1978.

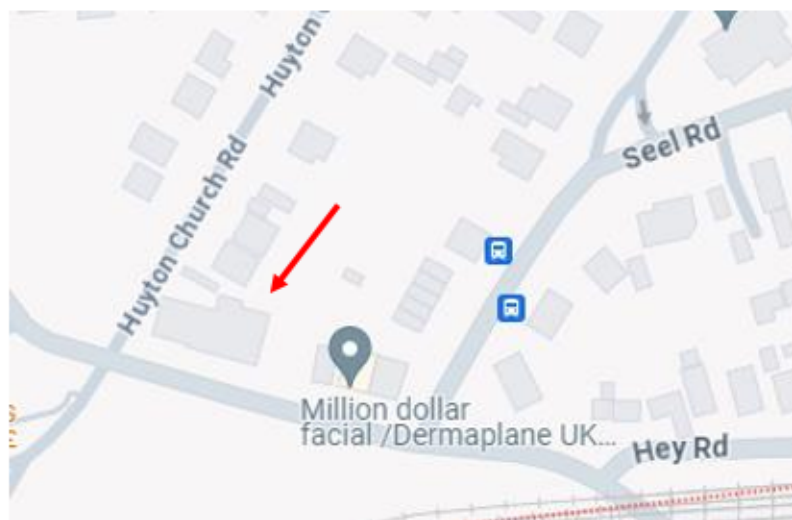


FIGURE 1 - LOCATION OF PARK HALL © GOOGLE MAPS 2024

The building is located on the corner of Huyton Hey Road and Huyton Church Road to the south and west respectively. To the north are No's 2 & 4 Huyton Church Road and to the east is the Grade II Listed

residential villas known as 'Newland'. The site is located on the south eastern edge of Huyton town centre.

3.2 PLANNING HISTORY

The site has an extensive planning history, therefore historic applications which do not relate to the current proposal have been omitted from this list.

In 2018 a planning application (ref 18/00178/FUL) and a listed building consent application (ref 18/00179/LBC) were submitted for the conversion of the former church building to form 5 no. apartments, including the installation of additional doors and windows to front and rear. Both applications were granted consent on 23rd November 2018. Some of these works have been implemented, however these have not been entirely in accordance with the approved plans with some minor variations to the floorplans. Some of the implement details have also not had formal approval.

Two variation of condition applications were submitted in 2019 (ref 19/00541/FUL and 19/00542/LBC). These applications related to the variation of condition 2 of the previously granted permission to allow for amendments to approved plans. These applications have yet to be decided and in light of these new applications, are likely to be disposed of.

3.3 HERITAGE ASSETS

As set out above, the Application Site contains a Grade II Listed building (Park Hall) and is also located within the Victoria Road and Huyton Church Road Conservation Area. These designated heritage assets are assessed within this report.

The site is also in proximity to the Grade II Listed Newland but due to the enclosed nature of the Application Site and the extent of the proposals, the building is not considered to be affected and has therefore not been assessed within this report.

3.4 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE AREA

Huyton dates back to at least the 11th century with the earliest settlement situated to the south of St Michael's Church. The area of Victoria Road and Huyton Road Church primarily developed during the mid to late 19th century following the opening of the railway. The area developed as a large Victorian suburb of villas with extensive gardens.

3.5 HERITAGE AND ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE OF PARK HALL

ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST

Park Hall dates to the mid-19th century (c.1856) and was constructed as the original Congregational Church for Huyton. Shortly after in c.1861, the attached School House was constructed on behalf of the brewing magnate Sir Andrew Barclay Walker under designs by the Liverpool architect Henry Hill Vale (more commonly known as H.H. Vale). It first appears on the 1894 OS Map (Figure 2).

To the central bays of the southern elevation are plain 3-light windows with a taller light in the centre and framed within a blended pointed arch. The windows are currently blocked up. To the west is a pointed entrance with what appears to be the original timber door with decorative ironwork straps. Historic photographs of the building

confirm that there was originally a porch to the front entrance of the church which appears to have been enclosed by the late 19th century before being removed at some point in the 20th century.



FIGURE 2 - PARK HALL FROM HUYTON HEY ROAD CIRCA 1880 © NATIONAL LIBRARY OF SCOTLAND

The buildings are designed as a small picturesque neo-gothic church and school house constructed from rock faced sandstone with red sandstone ashlar dressings (sourced from Huyton Quarry) under a slate roof with cresting. The former church is relatively plain in its design consisting of 5 bays to the southern elevation, the last 2 of which project under gables decorated with 3-light single chamfered mullioned windows (both blocked and the left bay converted into a doorway) above which is an awkwardly placed string course with

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small rose dressed stone windows above. The eastern bay forms into a lean-to structure under a cat slide roof.



FIGURE 3 - PARK HALL FROM HUYTON HEY ROAD CIRCA 1880

The School House consists of 2 bays and is located to the east of the former church, resulting in 7 bays in total to the southern elevation. The first bay of the school forms the entrance to the church with a segmental-pointed entrance and hood mould with head stops, cornice and datestone reading "AB\N 1861" which also includes a hood mould. Flanking the entrance are diagonal buttresses. The entrance then rise with a frieze with consoled cornice and gargoyles with a tall 'witches hat' swept slate hung spire. The next bay forms a gabled cross-wing with 5-light window decorated with cusped pointed heads and rose window above, in a similar but more elaborate design to

the church. This bay also includes diagonal buttresses and 2 further small buttress flanking the main window. This part of the building incorporates decorative animal rainwater heads.



FIGURE 4 - PARK HALL CIRCA 1900

The eastern elevation of the School House is similarly decorated with 4 bays of 3-light windows, the central lights of which are taller and traceried with gablets. Between each of the bays are further small supporting buttresses. The western elevation to the former church consists of a 5-light window (blocked up) within a blended pointed arch. Above is a string course and large rose window above. The windows and string course are flanked by the supporting buttresses. To the rear (northern) elevation is a more informal arrangement with single window openings and a further projecting bays to both the church and School House, including a later 19th century brick extension.

The exterior of the building is currently of concern due to a number of ill-fated repairs that were carried out as part of the 2018 application approvals. The stonework repairs are of particular concern, but there is also poor pointing and ill-conceived placement of rainwater goods. The surrounding ground level also needs to be cut back as it is currently causing damp internally.

The interior of the building had been largely altered and adapted prior to the more recent works associated with the 2018 applications. This was in response to the changing requirements of its occupiers, particularly during its whole use as school and later as a community hall. Further images and plans of the building prior to work can be seen on previous applications. As of today, the 2018 applications have in part been implemented with minor variations in floor plans.

In terms of loss of historic fabric since 2018, the floors have by and large been replaced, the crested stain glass windows to the school room have been damaged/lost, the iron strapwork to the external doors removed (in storage) and the remaining iron railings removed from the wall (in storage).

HISTORIC INTEREST

The building represents a former congregational church from the mid 19th century with an attached school of 1861 which was designed by the H.H. Vale for Sir Andrew Barclay Walker. Walker was a notable figure in Liverpool during the mid to late 19th century, being the owner of Walkers Warrington Ale, the Lord Mayor of Liverpool (1873-1876) and constructed the Walker Art Gallery between 1874 and 1877 which he then donated to the City.

Vale was a Liverpool based architect who designed several buildings in the City Centre, including the Sunday School (c. 1872) to the Church of St Andrew on Rodney Street and the YMCA building (c. 1874-77) on Mount Pleasant. Vale was commissioned by Walker on a number of projects (many of which were mostly unrealised) but he did design the Walker Art Gallery (in conjunction with Cornelius Sherlock) before his death in 1875. Given the relatively early date of the School House to the Huyton Congregational Church, the building appears to be one of Vale's earliest known surviving works.

In the late 19th century, the church became too small for use as a place of worship and the growing congregation within Huyton eventually moved to a new larger Congregational Church (now known as the United Reformed Church) designed by the architect William Douglas Caroe. The building was subsequently re-named Park Hall and reconfigured to form a school which it remained up until the early 1930's. The building then became a community hall until it closed and was sold in 1986. Since then the building was utilised for a number of uses including a shoe factory up until 2008.

The building was listed as a Grade II listed building in March 1987. Its description is a legacy description and therefore is primarily for identification purposes only.

3.6 CONTRIBUTION MADE BY THE SITE TO THE VICTORIA ROAD AND HUYTON CHURCH ROAD CONSERVATION AREA

Park Hall forms a prominent focal point at the entrance to the Conservation Area from Huyton Church Road. The building contributes to the diverse character of the Conservation Area.

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The buildings within the Conservation Area primarily consist of large red brick villas designed in the Italianate architectural styles. Interspersed within the area are a number of focal buildings with differing materials and design including Park Hall, Huyton Reformed Church and Huyton Hey Cottage. Within the grounds are a number of mature trees and planting which contribute to the verdant character of the Conservation Area.

The vacant and deteriorating nature of Park Hall could however be regarded as having a negative effect upon the special character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT 4 | FOUR

4.1 OVERVIEW

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 confirms that special attention is to be paid to the desirability of preserving listed buildings, their setting or any features of special interest it may possess. The Act also seeks to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of a conservation area.

The Grade II listed Park Hall was originally constructed as the first Congregational Church for Huyton before being converted into a school and then a community hall, with its last use as a shoe factory in 2008. The works involve the change of use and internal/external alteration of the building. These works represent minor variations to the approved 2018 planning application (ref 18/00178/FUL) and listed building consent application (ref 18/00179/LBC) for the formation of 5no. residential apartments with associated parking. These variations involve a number of external and internal works to the listed building and are as follows:

- External: Addition of rooflights, alteration of two doorways & the replacement of stained glass elements.
- Internal: Subdivision of internal plan form, introduction of a first floor and modern partitions.

The 2018 permission was partially implemented by the then owners however, many of the associated conditions remain un-discharged and the quality of finish is of concern as there is clear evidence of damp within the apartments. There have also been some changes to

the layout as built, which largely relate to the relocation of stairways to improve the layout of the apartments.

Given its current unoccupied status and the implications of some of the ill-fated repairs, the former listed Church and School are considered to be that of a 'building at risk'. The proposals therefore represent an important opportunity to convert and reuse the listed building in a sustainable manner.

4.2 IMPACT ASSESSMENT: PARK HALL

As set out earlier, the building is no longer in the use for which it was originally designed and has had a number of historic adaptations for various uses. As part of the original 2018 applications to convert Park Hall to residential apartments, minor works were proposed to the external elevations of the listed building.

These works principally related to the introduction of rooflights to allow for sufficient natural light into the proposed apartments. The rooflights were conservation style rooflights, which are flush fitted with the remainder of the Welsh slate roof. The position and size of the rooflights has been carefully considered to ensure they respond to the architectural composition of the listed building. This has necessitated the reconfiguration of the original rooflight layout, including the introduction of one additional rooflight to the north elevation, two to the south elevation and one to the west elevation which are proposed for retention. Three rooflights have not been installed to the east elevation. When considered as a whole there are only 3 additional rooflights compared to the 2018 approved plans. Those existing rooflights which are missing their central mullions will have those reinstated and those that are lacking a mechanical

means of opening where a physical one is not possible, will have the necessary opening mechanism installed. It is proposed to make repairs to the roof where necessary. Please refer to the schedule of work for detail.



FIGURE 5 – PARK HALL FROM HUYTON HEY ROAD 2023

The existing doorway entrances have all been utilised as principle access points where possible which has reduced the number of openings required to the exterior. Where possible the existing doors have been retained and refurbished. Where these have been

replaced, the doors have followed the same design in hardwood timber with mortice and tenon joints and finished in a suitable Victorian external timber paint colour. It is also proposed to reinstate the decorative cast iron detailing to the existing doors of apartment 1 and apartment 5. These are currently in storage and will be repaired and reinstated if possible or new matching cast iron 'hinges' will be introduced.

In addition to the existing doorways, two doorways have been added in order to create access for apartment 4. These comprise of a hardwood timber door to the west of apartment 4 and a double glazed door to the east. The timber door follows the same design as those doors already seen on site.

The windows have been replaced with powder coated aluminium windows set behind the existing stone tracery. This allows for the practical re-use of the building and helps to improve its overall thermal efficiency. The replacement of the windows did not involve the removal of historic fabric which contributes to the significance of the listed building. The stone window surrounds which are currently painted black internally are proposed to be painted a bright colour in order to retain natural light but also as a more sympathetic finish for the listed building. It is also proposed to repair the stonework around the window openings that was damaged as a result of post 2018 window installation.

The gable end rose window serving apartment 1 is proposed for replacement with that of a slim double-glazed unit that will sit closer to the stone tracery and address any water tabling concerns which the current post 2018 glazing appears to have. A working detailing will be provided for the consideration of the conservation officer and these works will be carried out to the agreed specification.

It is also proposed that the post 2018 glazing which has been installed into the two smaller rose windows to the north elevation, will be replaced with metal windows with glazing bars in a cross formation. The lower section of these windows will be frosted so as to ensure the privacy of the neighbouring property. Moreover, an opening element will be introduced to ensure adequate ventilation of these rooms but also as a means of escape in the event of a fire. The proposed detailing of these windows will be subject to final agreement with the Council conservation officer.



FIGURE 7 AND 8 – STAINED GLASS IN 2018 © KNOWSLEY COUNCIL



FIGURE 9 – STAINED GLASS IN 2018 © 28 DAYS LATER

In respect of the four stained glass windows to the east elevation and within the original School House, it is possible that 1 no was quite damaged prior to 2018 but since then, the 3 remaining windows have been lost. Whilst they were in a state of disrepair, their condition was not such that they should not have been repaired. There are images taken by both Knowsley Council and Twenty Eight Days Later (Figures 7, 8 and 9) which evidence the images depicted in 3 of the windows however it has not been possible to locate any images of the 4th window.

Therefore, it is the intention of the applicant to reinstate and replicate these windows only where there is evidence available. Replacing the fourth would be conjecture and if done so incorrectly, could harm the building significance. The post 2018 glazing in this location will consequently stay in place. There will also be a review of the low level window details to ground floor of the former school with a detail that addresses sound and fire considerations to be agreed with the conservation officer. Please refer to the schedule of works for further detail.

The post 2018 rainwater goods are painted black metal and the gutters have an ogee profile. By and large, it is proposed to retain these rainwater goods though there will be some re-ordering of the installed downpipes to the former School House with a more sensitive approach to be taken. This will not be implemented without the conservation officer's agreement. It is also proposed to retain the existing exterior lighting. The ground surrounding the building will be cut back to allow for adequate drainage and ventilation. The internal extract system terminates within the roof with a lead slate fitted to each extract point.

As part of the post 2018 works, the original ridge tiles were removed and replaced with 19th century style ridge tiles which do not replicate the original. It has not been possible to source replicas of the original ridge tiles despite further investigation post submission of the application and it is consequently the intention to retain and re-bed the existing ridge tiles on site where possible. Matching ridge tiles will be sourced to replace damaged ones where necessary.

The above external works are relatively minor in their nature and extent and all sit within the existing envelope of the building. The proposals do not alter the legibility of the original function and use of the listed building and it continues to read as a former church and school house. Its overall architectural composition from the surrounding area remain appreciable. Overall, these external works are considered to sustain the significance of the listed building.

As set out earlier, the interior of the building had been altered and adapted to suit the changing requirements of its occupiers, particularly during its former use as School House and later as a community hall. Prior to the post 2018 works being carried out, the plan form and phasing remained partially legible allowing for an understanding of the layout of the former church and school house. There were however limited features of architectural interest remaining within the building.

The original 2018 adaptation and conversion of the listed building involved dividing it into 5 residential apartments, utilising the main structural walls as the break points for the proposed party walls. The principal intervention to the interior of the building involved the subdivision and introduction of floors to the two open halls to the west (former church nave) and the east (former school hall). These

were required in order to provide bedrooms for the proposed apartments which are accessed by their own independent staircase.

The church nave with its original timber roof and arches were concealed by a modern suspended ceiling prior to 2018. As part of the 2018 applications, the subdivision of this space was designed to allow the timber arches, window frames and heads to be exposed and appreciated within the first floor accommodation. The use of the newly introduced first floor as living areas with bed rooms to the ground floor where possible also reduced the need for sub-divisions of these space allowing the dramatic roof form and details such as the top of arches to be fully appreciated. This approach will be retained.

The ground floor space has been partially subdivided with lightweight modern partition walls which have been sensitively positioned to ensure they do not adversely affect the existing arches. The exact detail of how the modern partitions sit within the existing arches can be found on the architectural drawings. Where possible, full height spaces have been designed in the allow the arches to be fully appreciated.

With regards to the former school hall, a new floor within this space has been created together with subdivision to form four bedrooms to the ground floor. This allows its open character along with views of its historic timber beams to be retained to the first floor which is to be used as living space/kitchen. Further works included the insertion of a staircase, which has been carefully positioned so as to not involve the removal of any features of interest.

In relation to the centre of the building, the design of this had been carefully considered to ensure that it worked with the existing plan form where possible and did not alter any features of architectural

interest. Where elements of the original plan form of the building remain, these have been retained where possible with the exception of some openings to allow for introduction internal doorways or creation of open plan living spaces. The majority of required demolition works to the interior of the listed building related to modern partition walls introduced in the late 20th century.

The floorplan as built is largely the same as the floor plan approved in 2018. There have however been some minor changes:

- Flat 1 – The location of the staircase has been changed to provide a better layout for the flat.
- Flat 3 – The location of the stairs has been changed and the hallway is no longer double height. There have also been alterations to the dining room wall. It is also proposed to retain the exposed archway detail to bedroom 3 and the timber trussed structure to the en-suite.
- Flat 4 – The entrance door has been moved and the stairs relocated.
- Flat 5 – The location of the stairs has been changed and an additional bedroom created by the altering of the modern partition walls.

These changes have been made to provide a higher quality accommodation and do not alter the legibility of the building. As a whole they represent an improvement on the previous approved 2018 proposal.

Lastly, any proposed landscaping works will make use of traditional and appropriate materials to ensure that the setting of the building

is maintained. Tarmac will be introduced where hard surfacing is required, and the remaining areas will be grassed. Hedges will be planted to the internal face of the wall and railings. The curtilage listed wall will be carefully repaired using appropriate lime mortar and original cast iron railing reinstated (or replicated if its condition is found to be beyond repair) to Huyton Hey Road. A rail will be also introduced around the TPO tree to ensure its protection.

The existing outbuildings will also be retained and repaired and used for bike storage. Bin stores of reclaimed brick with timber gates and an attached post box will be introduced near the car park entrance. Their position and overall design have been carefully considered to ensure that they do not detract from the setting of the listed building. The schedule of works outlines repairs to the boundary wall.

The proposals are informed by the knowledge that maintaining a listed building in active use is the best way to ensure its conservation in the long term. The conversion of the building for apartments will secure a continued viable use for the listed building in accordance with paragraph 203 of the NPPF. Overall the internal works are considered to have a negative effect upon the significance of the listed building. In the context of the NPPF, this is considered to cause "less than substantial harm". This is principally as a result of the loss of open character to the former church nave and school hall and through reducing the legibility of the original plan form.

In accordance with Historic England guidance (Historic Environment GPA Note 2), this harm has been reduced through the design of the proposals where possible. This includes the following design measures:

- The careful positioning of the modern partition walls to the existing arches be it within the arches or by off setting them to allow the retention of a double height space so that an arch can be appreciated in its entirety.
- The retention of double height spaces to the first floor and the limiting where possible of any subdivision of these spaces thereby still allowing an appreciation of the original plan form;
- Retaining, repairing and exposing the original timber roof to both the church nave and school hall;
- Removing ivy from the walls of the building.

Whilst this has reduced the harm to the significance of Park Hall, the proposals are still considered to result in "less than substantial harm" but at the lower end of the scale. Such harm needs to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, bearing in mind the considerable importance and weight to be applied to the 1990 Act.

In accordance with PPG, public benefits can include heritage benefits and those which derive from the proposals comprise of:

- Securing the optimum viable use of the listed building;
- General repair and refurbishment of the listed building; and
- Improving the special character and appearance of the Victoria Road and Huyton Church Road Conservation Area

4.3 IMPACT ASSESSMENT: VICTORIA ROAD AND HUYTON CHURCH ROAD CONSERVATION AREA

As aforementioned, Park Hall contributes to the diverse character of Victoria Road and Huyton Church Road Conservation Area (in terms of its architectural detailing, composition and former use) but its overall vacant and deteriorating nature could be regarded as having a negative effect upon the special character and appearance of the conservation area.

Externally, the proposals include minor alterations through the addition of a number of conservation rooflights to allow for the practical use of the spaces to the upper floors. As set out earlier, this does not alter the legibility of the original function and use of the listed building as a former church and school house. The architectural detailing and composition will remain appreciable, thereby continuing to contribute to the diverse character of the conservation area.

Some works have been carried out by the previous owner. During these works quarry tiles were removed from the area surrounding the entrance to apartment 1. A sensitive landscape approach to the whole site includes a path in this area. These works also included the removal of the stained glass. The current proposal seeks to reinstate these features where there is evidence of their previous appearance. The overall refurbishment and repair of the building has therefore the potential to improve the character and appearance of this part of the conservation area.

Further improvements include the provision of designated parking spaces for the apartments and the repair of the stone boundary wall which encloses Park Hall together with the addition of a privet

hedge and reinstatement of the original railings to St Johns Road. These are all considered to assist in improving the appearance of the site. Overall, the proposals are considered to preserve the special character and appearance of the Victoria Road and Huyton Church Road Conservation Area. The proposals also offer the opportunity to improve the area.

4.4 CONCLUSION

Building conservation is distinctly different from the physical processes of simple repair, adaptation, or preservation. It is an attitude of mind, a philosophical approach, that seeks first to understand what people value about a historic building, or place, beyond its practical utility. This understanding is then used to make well inform decisions to ensure that any work undertaken does as 'little harm as possible' to the characteristics that hold or express those values.

As aforementioned, the proposals are informed by the knowledge that maintaining a listed building in active use is the best way to ensure its conservation in the long term. The conversion of the building for apartments will secure a continued viable use for the listed building in accordance with paragraph 203 of the NPPF.

Overall, the proposed external works are relatively minor in their nature and extent and all sit within the existing envelope of the building. The proposals will not alter the legibility of the original function and use of the listed building and it will continue to read as a former church and school house. Its overall architectural composition from the surrounding area will remain appreciable.

The proposed internal works are considered to have a negative effect upon the significance of the listed building. In the context of the NPPF, this is considered to cause "less than substantial harm". As aforementioned, this harm needs to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, bearing in mind the considerable importance and weight to be applied to the 1990 Act. In accordance with PPG, public benefits can include heritage benefits and those which derive from the proposals comprise of:

- Securing the optimum viable use of the listed building;
- General repair and refurbishment of the listed building; and
- Improving the special character and appearance of the Victoria Road and Huyton Church Road Conservation Area

Overall, the proposals are considered to preserve the special character and appearance of the Victoria Road and Huyton Church Road Conservation Area. The proposals also offer the opportunity to improve the area.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

Official list entry

Heritage Category: **Listed Building**

Grade: **II**

List Entry Number: **1075533**

Date first listed: **19-Mar-1987**

List Entry Name: **PARK HALL**

Statutory Address 1: **PARK HALL, HUYTON HEY ROAD**

Parish: **Non Civil Parish**

National Grid Reference: **SJ 44488 90731**

Details

HUYTON-WITH-ROBY HUYTON HEY ROAD SJ 49 SW (north side)
5/6 Park Hall -

- II

Congregational church and school, now church hall. Church, 1856, and school, 1861. Rock-faced stone with ashlar dressings and slate roof with cresting. One storey, 7 bays, the last 2 bays former school. 3rd and 4th bays project under gables, the 5th bay forming lean-to under cat-slide roof to right return with low roof ridge behind this and 6th bay. 7th bay forms gabled cross-wing. 2nd and 3rd bays

have 3-light windows, the central light is taller, pointed and traceried; now blocked. 4th and 5th bays have 3-light single-chamfered-mullioned windows, now blocked; small rose windows above, to 3rd and 4th bays, with sill course. 7th bay has 5-light window; with cusped pointed heads and rose window above; diagonal buttresses and 2 small buttresses flanking window tiled roof dormer to 5th bay. Pointed entrance to 1st bay, entrance inserted to 4th bay. 6th bay has small tower forming porch. Diagonal buttresses, segmental-pointed entrance of one order has hood mould with head stops; cornice with weathering above and datestone reading: "ABW/1861" with hood mould. Top frieze with consoled cornice and gargoyles, swept slate-hung spire. Left return has blocked 5-light window with rose window above. Right return of 4 bays, 3-light windows, the central lights taller and traceried with gablets between buttresses. Animal rainwater heads. Rear has later C19 brick extension.

Listing NGR: SJ4448890731

AUTHORS

Lorraine Ward (MA) has held various roles in the Conservation and Urban Design industry. This includes 10 years as a 'Senior Conservation & Design Officer' at Liverpool City Council followed by over 2 years with St Helens Council. These roles involved dealing with a broad range of major projects - involving listed buildings, conservation areas, and the safeguarding and management of Liverpool's World Heritage Site.

Her qualifications include a degree in Architectural and Building Conservation, a Masters' degree in Heritage Management and she is a full member of the Institute of Historic Building Conservation.

Charlotte Hetherington (MA) has held various roles in the Conservation and Planning industry. This includes a year working as a Planning Officer for Leicester City Council specialising in applications affecting listed buildings and conservation areas. This was followed by 2 years working as Project Manager for Historic England's High Street Heritage Action Zone programmes in both Leicester and Newark-on-Trent. These roles involved dealing with a broad range of projects, including listed buildings, at risk conservation areas and the regeneration of historic high streets.

Her qualifications include a degree in History and a Masters' degree in Building Conservation.



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