

Regeneration and Economic Development Department

APPLICATION NO: 22/00313/FUL

APPLICANT: Ms Roberts

WARD AFFECTED: Roby

DEVELOPMENT: RENDERING OF FRONT AND BOTH SIDE ELEVATIONS OF PROPERTY AND OTHER ASSOCIATED WORKS.

LOCATION OF SITE: 1 Tarbock Road, Huyton, Knowsley, L36 5YB

KNOWSLEY LOCAL PLAN ALLOCATION

Primarily Residential Development

RELEVANT POLICIES

Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy (2016):

Policy SD1 – Sustainable Development;
Policy CS2 - Development Principles;
Policy CS19 - Design Quality and Accessibility in New Development; and
Policy CS20 – Managing the Borough's Historic Environment

Knowsley Replacement Unitary Development Plan (2006):

Policy S9 – Shop Fronts and Security Shutters.

TECHNICAL CONSULTATIONS:

None.

NEIGHBOUR NOTIFICATION:

This application has been publicised by letters sent to 5 neighbours. No representations have been received.

ARTICLE 35

The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by identifying matters of concern with the proposal and determining the application within a timely manner, clearly setting out the reason for refusal, allowing the applicant the opportunity to consider the harm caused and whether or not it can be remedied by a revision to the proposal. The Local Planning Authority is willing to meet with the applicant to discuss the best course of action and is also willing to provide pre-application advice in respect of any future application for a revised development.

ISSUES AND ASSESSMENT:

SITE & PROPOSAL

The application site relates to an estate agents which is the end unit of a 1930s parade of shops that are located in an open and visually prominent location on a major thoroughfare to Huyton Village Town Centre. The parade has commercial uses at ground floor and flats above, the character of the ground floor has been eroded through the introduction of a variety of modern shop fronts, but the materials and features of the first floor have largely been retained.

The application proposes to render the principle and side elevations of the property, together with the installations of new windows, lintols and other associated works.

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RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

74/01373/HIST: Renewal of consent for 11 KV substation.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) requires development proposals to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Policies and guidance relevant to the development proposal consist of the following:

Knowsley Core Strategy (2016)

- Policy SD1 – Sustainable Development
- Policy CS2 - Development Principles
- Policy CS19 - Design Quality and Accessibility in New Development; and
- Policy CS20 – Managing the Borough's Historic Environment

Knowsley Replacement Unitary Development Plan (2006)

- Policy S9 – Shop Fronts and Security Shutters.

Other material considerations:

- National Planning Policy Framework (the “Framework”) (2021); and
- Planning Practice Guidance (PPG); and
- Shopfronts and Signage Design Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (2016).

Policy SD1 sets out the Councils approach to achieving the delivery of sustainable development and mirrors the approach taken in the Framework with regards to the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Policy CS2 sets out local principles which underpin new development in Knowsley. Of particular importance relevant to the consideration of this planning application is principle 4 which seeks to ensure development understands and respects the character and distinctiveness of places, protecting and enhancing the historic environment and promoting good quality design ensuring that development respects its setting taking into account relevant design requirements and best practice.

Policy CS19 sets out the Council's design principles covering a range of matters. In particular, it seeks to enhance local distinctiveness, identity and accessibility of places and requires development to respond to and integrative positive characteristics of immediate surroundings, including local materials, scale, mass, form, layout, alignment, and density.

Policy CS20 sets out the Council's approach to managing the Borough's historic environment and requires development proposals to preserve or enhance the borough's historic and architectural assets including buildings and structures of historic importance. Policy CS20 requires preservation of local distinctiveness and character of the borough's historic assets through sensitive design of new development, including appropriate integration with their setting and immediate landscape.

EFFECT ON NON-DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSET

Whilst the property is not currently identified as a non-designated heritage asset in a defined document such as the Historic Environment Report or Local List, the PPG allows Local Planning Authorities to identify non-designated heritage assets as part of the decision-making process on planning applications¹. As such, the local planning authority through the decision-making process consider the application site to form part of a building which is of architectural significance that makes an important contribution to its surroundings given its prominent location, symmetry and decoration at first floor. This is a material consideration for the determination of this planning application.

¹ PPG Reference ID: 18a-040-20190723

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The Framework requires a balancing act to be undertaken through the decision-making process in terms of a development proposals effects in relation to designated and non-designated heritage assets. Paragraph 203 of the Framework states:

“The effect on an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgment will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and significance of the heritage asset.” (emphasis added)

DESIGN AND AMENITY

As referred to above, policies CS2 and CS19 seek to ensure new development respects the character and distinctiveness of places whilst ensuring new development responds to and integrates positively to the characteristics of the immediate surroundings. Policy CS20 further requires development proposals to preserve local distinctiveness and the character of historic assets through sensitive design including appropriate integration with their setting and immediate landscape.

The proposed works would comprise the application of new render to the principal and side elevations of the building comprising of K-render in wheaten colour. In addition, the proposals seek to replace the existing first floor concrete window surrounds with new frames together with associated works including new cast concrete cills, replacement of the existing lintols with steel lintols and make good any disturbed work.

The applicant's submission states that the application has been submitted because they were concerned about loose concrete falling from the window above the office door. Following inspection, it was found that some of the concrete panels to window surrounds had rotted, and it was discovered that steel rods had rusted and blown the concrete. The applicant suggests that a number of concrete companies were approached but it was not possible to match the panels.

The application property must be considered as part of the parade of shops which make an important contribution to their surroundings. The parade currently comprises of an array of shops with a variety of glazed frontages and signage to the ground floor and brick facing to the first floor. The property features a similar pattern in terms of design to the first floor regarding the concrete surrounds and parapet walls etc. The design to the first floor is uniform and contains architectural merit. As such, the local planning authority wishes to retain these aspects as part of any future development proposals.

The proposals to render the property would cause the application property (and its first floor in particular) to appear as an incongruous feature in an otherwise relatively uniform parade of shops. This would be harmful to the character and appearance of the parade of shops and its surroundings.

The applicant's submission argues that there are other properties that have been rendered nearby and this was apparent during the site visit. However these are residential properties and do not add to the group value of the parade of shops, accordingly the local planning authority does not consider that rendering of properties located on Blacklow Brow are relevant in terms of the character and appearance of the host property.

Turning to the render applied to 3A Tarbock Road, this element of the parade provides access to the flat located at the first floor. There is no planning application history associated with this property regarding the application of rendering to the principal elevation. The local planning authority will investigate this breach of planning control, but this unauthorised development should not carry any weight when considering this proposal.

Before the application was submitted the local planning authority raised concerns that the development proposals are not in keeping with the host property and would result in an adverse effect to the character and amenity of the parade of shops as well as the loss of architectural features worthy of preservation. There would be no objections to the render only being applied to the ground floor level of the property (given the engineering brick next to the shop front and variety of shopfronts installed on the parade), but the applicant chose not to amend their proposal.

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Accordingly, it is considered that the development proposals as submitted which included rendering to principal and side elevations and replacement of concrete surrounds as proposed would not be in keeping with the character and design of the host property when considered as a part of the parade of shops. The proposed works would cause the property to appear incongruous that would diminish the appearance of the parade and have an unacceptable impact on design and character of the area.

The Framework requires that the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining this planning application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgment will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

In this case, the applicant has not put forward a case associated with the public benefits for development relating to economic, social and environmental benefits. The applicant's reasoning that the alterations as proposed are necessary for the building fabric together with providing a new fresh clean look has not persuaded the local planning authority that the significant harm to this non-designated heritage asset associated with the loss of features and materials located at first floor together with the demonstrable adverse effect to the character of the wider property and streets scene by way of inappropriate design. The only perceived public benefit to the development would be from a public safety standpoint however, as the applicant has failed to demonstrate that the concrete needs to be removed or that the concrete cannot be repaired and sympathetically replaced, nor has the applicant demonstrated that the concrete companies are unable to secure matching panels and that this would be unviable, this should not attract any weight.

Accordingly, it is not considered that the applicant has demonstrated that there are benefits associated with the development proposals outweigh the less than substantial harm to the non-designated heritage asset and its surroundings and the development is therefore contrary to Policies CS2, CS19 and CS20 of the Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy. Which require development to respond to and integrate positively with characteristics of immediate surroundings and to preserve of local distinctiveness and the character of historic assets through the sensitive design of new development, including appropriate integration with their setting and immediate landscape.

HIGHWAYS

No issues.

OTHER ISSUES

No issues.

RECOMMENDATION:

That planning permission is refused for the following reason:

The proposed development would have an unacceptable impact on the appearance of a non-designated heritage asset which is a prominent and important feature in its immediate surroundings. The proposed works to the first floor of the building would appear incongruous when considered as part of the parade of shops as a whole and which would cause harm to the buildings and its surroundings.

As such, the proposal would be contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework, Policies SD1, CS2, CS19 and CS20 of the adopted Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy (adopted 2016).

John Fleming
10.08.2022

Alan Kilroe
11/08/22

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