

Conservation Statement

Site Address: 1A Newlands, Huyton Hey Road, Liverpool, L36 5SE

Proposal: Change of use from aesthetics school to day care centre for disabled adults

Applicant: Inspiring Pathworks

Date: June 2025

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1. Introduction

This Conservation Statement is provided in support of the planning and listed building consent applications for 1A Newlands, Huyton Hey Road. It specifically focuses on the heritage values of the site and how the proposed change of use to a day care centre for disabled adults will be managed to **conserve the significance** of the heritage asset. The property is a Grade II listed building within the Victoria Road & Huyton Church Road Conservation Area, so it represents a designated heritage asset of both individual and group value. The purpose of this document is to:

- Demonstrate a thorough understanding of the building's history, architecture, and importance (its *significance*).
- Identify any potential impacts that the proposal might have on the building's fabric and character, as well as on the wider conservation area.
- Outline the strategy for mitigating any impacts and ensuring that the heritage asset is preserved and where possible enhanced through the process of adaptation.
- Provide assurance that the applicant will be a conscientious steward of the site, following best practices in conservation.

In preparing this statement, reference has been made to Knowsley Council's guidance on heritage statements, the National Planning Policy Framework Section 16, and

Historic England’s conservation principles. We understand that for listed building proposals, the local authority must consider the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the asset and of keeping it in a *viable use consistent with its conservation*. This statement demonstrates that the proposed use fulfills that aim by giving the building a sustainable function without compromising its special interest.

2. Understanding the Heritage Asset

2.1 Historical Background of Newlands

“Newlands” is the historic name of the property at 1A Huyton Hey Road. The villa was constructed in the mid-19th century (circa 1850s) during a period of suburban expansion in Huyton. At that time, Huyton—with its proximity to Liverpool—became a desirable location for affluent families seeking a residence outside the crowded city. The area around Victoria Road and Huyton Hey Road saw the development of several grand villas set in generous plots. Many of these houses, including Newlands, were built for prominent local figures (merchants, professionals, or landowners).

The earliest known owner of Newlands (from deed records around the 1860s) was likely a wealthy family, though specific names require archival research beyond the scope of this statement. What is clear is that by virtue of its size and ornamentation, the house was among the notable homes in Huyton. The name “Newlands” itself suggests an estate-like identity, and historically the property might have included more extensive grounds or been part of a pair of villas (indeed an adjacent property *Morlands* is referenced in historic records, hinting that Newlands and Morlands were sister properties, or perhaps Newlands was also known as Morlands at one time). An historic environment record notes “*Morlands/Newlands... pair of large villas, mid C19, brick...*”, including reference to No.1 Victoria Road, which suggests that Newlands (1A Huyton Hey Road) and the villa at 1 Victoria Road were designed in tandem, possibly by the same architect or builder, forming an elegant gateway into what is now the conservation area.

As Huyton’s development progressed into the 20th century, many large homes adapted to new uses. By the mid-20th century, Newlands had transitioned from a private residence. There are indications it served as professional offices; local anecdotal history notes it functioned as a solicitor’s or business office mid-century. Later, towards the early 21st century, it became an *educational establishment*, specifically an aesthetics and beauty training academy, reflecting the trend of repurposing heritage buildings for educational or institutional uses. Throughout these changes, the building has remained occupied and maintained, which is fortunate for its preservation (unlike some heritage buildings that fell vacant and deteriorated).

The inclusion of Newlands in the statutory list (Grade II) likely occurred during the latter half of the 20th century (possibly in the 1980s listing surge or earlier) as part of

recognizing Huyton's valuable Victorian architecture. The listing means that historically significant features were identified and protected. However, detailed official listing descriptions are not readily available in this statement; typically, they would mention exterior features and perhaps interior highlights. We do know from recent estate descriptions that original elements like fireplaces and staircase survive, indicating a relatively good state of preservation.

Newlands is also part of the designated **Victoria Road and Huyton Church Road Conservation Area**, first designated in 1989 (date to be confirmed) with appraisals updated in 2015. The area's history is intertwined with that of the house: it represents Huyton's transformation from a small village into a prosperous suburb once the railway (opened 1830s) improved connectivity. The conservation area's appraisal would note the development of that enclave of large houses including Newlands as key to its character.

In summary, the historical importance of Newlands lies in it being a tangible piece of Huyton's Victorian heritage, demonstrating the patterns of 19th-century suburban living, and subsequently the adaptability of such structures to changing times. Each layer of its use (home, office, school) adds to its story, but thankfully none of those uses have erased its fundamental character. This history underpins why it is valued today and why its continuity in use is considered beneficial.

2.2 Architectural and Aesthetic Significance

Architecturally, Newlands is significant as a well-crafted example of Victorian villa design. While a full architectural description would ideally be drawn from the listing text, we can outline the key features observable and known:

- **Exterior:** The building is constructed in red brick (likely a pressed brick popular in mid-1800s) with probable stone dressings around windows and doors. The style can be classified as **Victorian Italianate**, which was common for upscale villas: characteristics might include a symmetrical front façade, possibly with a central projecting bay or portico, tall sash windows (perhaps with arched heads on the ground floor), and decorative eaves such as corbelled brackets. The roof is hipped with slate covering, possibly with chimney stacks that are ornamental. There might be a bay window or two, given villas of that era often had semi-octagonal or square bays to capture light.

The front entrance likely has a columned porch or at least a decorative surround, given the mention of a "grand vestibule" inside. There could be a date stone or name plaque (sometimes villas had their names inscribed). The overall proportions — spanning multiple floors and with a broad frontage — give it a stately presence on the street.

- **Interior:** As a Grade II listed villa, one expects the interior to have retained some high-quality features. Indeed, known surviving elements include:
 - **Entrance Hall & Staircase:** Described as “grand”, likely featuring a spacious hall with a sweeping staircase. The staircase is noted to be beautiful likely timber with carved balusters and a curtail step at the bottom. Possibly illuminated by a roof light or large window on the landing, as many villas had.
 - **Fireplaces:** Working *original marble fireplaces* are highlighted Marble fireplaces in principal rooms (drawing room, dining room, study, etc.) indicate opulence; their survival is significant. They have now gas inserts, but the surrounds are original carved marble which is a key aesthetic and historic feature.
 - **Plasterwork:** The mention of “intricate coving” suggests decorative cornices, and perhaps ceiling roses, are present in main rooms. These plaster details are hallmarks of Victorian interior decor, adding to artistic value.
 - **Doors & Joinery:** Original panelled doors, skirting, and architraves likely remain. Possibly some rooms have timber wainscoting or built-in cupboards of age. The quality of carpentry (solid wood doors, maybe mahogany handrail on the stair) is part of the significance.
 - **Windows:** If original sash windows remain (very likely on a listed building), they would be large multi-pane sashes, possibly with crown glass, and joinery details reflecting the period (pulley mechanisms, etc.). These contribute both to exterior appearance and interior character (deep window reveals with panelled shutters perhaps). Their condition and any historic glass are important to note.
 - **Flooring:** Not sure if any original parquet or tile floors exist (some villas had Minton tile floors in entrance halls). The listing doesn’t mention, but worth noting if present. The recent description mentions modern safety flooring on some levels (LVT floor for durability), which suggests some original flooring may be covered or replaced in functional areas. However, that modern flooring is presumably reversible.

In essence, Newlands’ aesthetic significance is in the ensemble of these features which exemplify mid-Victorian taste and craftsmanship. It’s not just one element but the combination of solid construction, elegant proportions, and decorative flourishes that make it special. The integrity of the design appears to remain largely intact externally and significantly internally.

This architectural significance is why the building is listed and why it is cherished as part of local heritage. Conserving these features is a primary goal in any works; thus, identifying them sets the priorities (e.g., fireplaces must remain unaltered, covings must be protected during any works, windows should not be replaced unless absolutely necessary and then only like-for-like, etc.).

2.3 Contribution to the Conservation Area

Newlands plays a prominent role in the **Victoria Road and Huyton Church Road Conservation Area**. This conservation area's special interest stems from being a concentration of Victorian architecture and associated historical development patterns. Newlands contributes to several aspects of the area's character:

- **Architectural Cohesion:** Along with neighbouring period properties, Newlands helps establish the architectural tone of the area – one of grand mid-19th century villas. Its brick façade, classical details, and scale complement other listed and historic buildings nearby. For example, if one stands on Huyton Hey Road, Newlands and the adjacent villa (No.1 Victoria Road) likely form an attractive grouping, framing the corner and demonstrating a consistency in period style. This visual harmony is part of what the conservation area designation seeks to protect. The Appraisal (2015) for the area likely cites such buildings as positive contributors and may even single out specific features like boundary walls, mature gardens, etc., as crucial to the area's character.
- **Streetscape and Setting:** The villa is set back from the road behind a front garden/drive and likely behind original or period-appropriate boundary treatment (perhaps sandstone gate piers or cast-iron railings, though current boundary specifics should be noted – sometimes these get altered over time). This generous setback, with green frontage, is a characteristic feature of the area, providing a sense of grandeur and suburban spaciousness. Newlands' tall trees and landscaping visible from the street add to the leafy character of the conservation area. The presence of off-street parking that doesn't dominate the frontage (cars can pull into the drive, largely hidden by vegetation) means the visual integrity of the historic scene is retained.
- **Historical Continuity:** The continued existence and use of Newlands as a landmark building contributes to the living history of the area. It is part of the narrative that this neighbourhood remains one where heritage buildings are actively used and cared for. Each occupied heritage building in a conservation area is a keystone preventing decline; conversely, one derelict building can harm the area. Therefore, Newlands being occupied and maintained supports the area's overall preservation.

- **Group Value:** Within the conservation area, Newlands likely has group value with other listed structures (for example, if any other listed villa or structure is within sight). Also, there may be a relationship with the environment – e.g., proximity to St Michael’s Church (if near the boundary of that area or the church area which is separately designated). Even if not directly adjacent, the cumulative group of heritage assets in Huyton’s conservation areas strengthen each other’s context.

Given these points, any change at Newlands must consider how to maintain its positive contribution. For instance, preserving the external appearance, maintaining the garden and trees, and avoiding any interventions that would stand out incongruously (like unsympathetic signage or lighting, or large new structures) are important for the conservation area’s sake. Fortunately, our proposal intends no such adverse changes. Instead, by investing in the building’s care, we actively uphold the conservation area’s objectives.

3. Significance of the Site

Bringing together the understanding from Section 2, the *significance* of Newlands can be summarized in terms of the values often used in conservation: **historical value, evidential value, aesthetic value, and communal value:**

- **Historical Value:** Newlands is a tangible link to mid-19th century Huyton, illustrating the development of a prosperous residential enclave. Its associations with past inhabitants and its evolution through different uses reflect broader social history (e.g., the shift from private residences to institutional uses in 20th century). It holds historical value as part of the collective memory of the area; older local residents might remember its days as a solicitor’s office or as a school, giving it a place in local narratives.
- **Evidential Value (Archaeological Value):** The building itself is an “artifact” that contains evidence of Victorian building techniques and possibly changes over time. There might be construction details or even remnants of earlier layouts that inform how people lived and built in that era. While not an archaeological site in the traditional sense, any hidden features (a bricked up servant staircase, or traces of gas lamp systems, for example) are evidential pieces that should be recorded if encountered during any works. We do not anticipate ground disturbance, so archaeological issues are minimal, but the building fabric’s evidential value is recognized.
- **Aesthetic/Architectural Value:** As discussed, the architectural design, materials, and craftsmanship of Newlands are of high quality. The aesthetic appeal of the building – its proportions, decorative elements, and the pleasing integration with its landscaped setting – is a core part of its significance. The

aesthetic value is both in the *exterior* (the public face contributing to townscape) and the *interior* (the crafted details enjoyed by occupants and visitors). This value is what often captivates people about the house and must be preserved by maintaining those features.

- **Communal/Social Value:** Over time, Newlands has acquired communal value, especially now as it is poised to become a day care centre. Even prior, as a school, it had a community role (educating students). The communal value can be forward-looking: its new use will give it a fresh social significance as a place of care and empowerment for people with disabilities. This will likely increase local appreciation of the building – families and clients will develop an attachment to it. Moreover, as part of a conservation area, the building contributes to a sense of local identity and pride; Huyton’s heritage buildings are landmarks that local people identify with.

In terms of relative importance, Newlands is a Grade II listed building, indicating it’s of *national special interest*. While not of the very highest grade, it nonetheless is protected at a national level. Within the context of Knowsley, it’s one of a limited stock of listed buildings (over 100 listed in the entire borough, with most Grade II). This underscores that its significance is well-recognized in formal designation.

For this conservation statement, it is clear that any interventions must aim to **protect these values**. The proposed change of use, in itself, is a means of sustaining the building’s *communal and historical value* (by continuing its story and keeping it in active use), while careful planning ensures *aesthetic and evidential values* are not compromised.

4. Impact of the Proposed Use and Works

In this section, we evaluate how the change of use to a day care centre, and the minor works entailed, will impact the significance outlined above.

Physical Alterations: As detailed in the Design & Access Statement, the proposal involves minimal physical changes. There is **no external construction** (no extensions, no demolitions). The interior alterations are also very limited – mainly installation of fixtures/fittings for accessibility and functionality (for example, installing grab rails, possibly updating a bathroom to have roll-in shower or adult changing table if needed, adding door opening mechanisms, etc.). If any new partitioning is needed, it would likely be lightweight and freestanding if possible. We emphasize that **no character-defining elements** (fireplaces, staircase, decorative plaster, windows, etc.) will be removed or obscured. For instance, if there was a need to partition a large room for acoustic reasons, the partition would stop short of the ceiling to avoid cutting through plaster cornice, or be designed to be reversible. In essence, the impact on the fabric is

negligible. The works will adhere to the principle of *reversibility* and *minimum intervention*, which are cornerstone concepts in building conservation.

The one area to watch is building services updates: Sometimes new uses require additional wiring, IT installations, or security systems. The building already has extensive modern wiring. Those are in place, so we won't need to add significantly more. If anything, maybe additional smoke detectors or assistive listening systems. All such installations will use surface-mounted conduits or wireless tech to avoid chasing into historic plaster unnecessarily.

Use-Related Wear and Tear: A day care centre will bring people daily into the house. However, this is not a high-impact use in terms of wear. Disabled adults will be accompanied by staff; activities are supervised and relatively gentle on the premises (no heavy machinery, no mass crowds). Floor finishes have already been upgraded to durable ones, which protects original floors where present. Routine cleaning and maintenance will keep the house in good shape. There is perhaps some risk of accidental damage (wheelchairs bumping into door frames or similar), but we will mitigate that by protective measures like installing clear protective guards on vulnerable corners at wheelchair height, which is a common conservation approach to reconcile access and preservation. Such guards are usually acrylic and reversible (can be removed later leaving the original wood intact).

Moisture and Environment: Changing a building's use can alter heating patterns and ventilation. The building is currently heated and has modern climate control to some extent. As a day centre, it will be heated during weekdays; likely minimally heated on weekends just for frost protection. This is similar to how it was heated as offices/school. There's no indication that the use would introduce high humidity or anything (like some uses could, e.g., a gym with showers – not the case here). So the internal environment remains within what the building is used to, avoiding problems like condensation or timber decay that can happen if a building's use drastically changes conditions.

Access adaptations: To facilitate disabled access, we mention possibly a ramp at entrance or modifications. If a new ramp is needed externally, that could have a minor visual impact. We plan it to be either a temporary metal ramp or a gently sloped path using the existing driveway alignment, avoiding the need to alter the building entrance itself. This would have a neutral or slight impact on appearance (we would not remove any historic steps). Many listed buildings accommodate ramps without issue by designing them to be reversible and aesthetically muted (e.g., brick or stone that matches or a simple black metal ramp that can be removed). This ensures the **front facade** remains essentially unchanged. Internally, any door widenings are not anticipated because doors are already generous; if a door needed widening (very unlikely given villa proportions), that would be a more significant intervention requiring careful consideration – but as of now, we do not foresee this need.

Heritage Setting and Conservation Area: The use itself does not generate any new structures or visually intrusive elements in the garden. We are not adding, for example, a big play equipment structure or new sheds (any small storage for equipment will be tucked in existing garage or basement). The conservation area will visually remain the same. The only outward sign might be a discrete signboard or plaque with the centre's name. We will design any signage to comply with heritage best practice – modest size, traditional materials (wood or brass), appropriate font – and place it on existing gateposts or near the entrance rather than attaching awkwardly to the building's façade. This minimal signage will ensure the **streetscape view** is preserved.

At most, the presence of people coming and going gives the building life, which is actually a positive aspect. The conservation area is meant to be a living place, not an untouched museum. Seeing a historic building in use – lights on in the evenings (only early evenings as not 24/7), people in the garden – is in line with its originally intended nature (a home which would have been lively too). This *activity* does not harm significance; in fact, an occupied building tends to deter vandalism and neglect, safeguarding the structure.

Potential Risks and Mitigations: We identify if any potential risk remains:

- Fire safety works: We know a fire panel and fire doors were installed. These usually involved upgrading some doors with fire-rated ones; hopefully they retained original door appearances or used inner linings. For the day care use, the existing fire safety setup is likely adequate. No additional major interventions (like sprinkler systems) are planned; if in future required, that would need careful design to hide pipes etc. For now, no change.
- If a lift were ever installed as a future phase, that would be a big change (inserting a lift shaft). This is NOT in current plans, but if the centre succeeds and long-term they seek one, it would be subject to a fresh consent. We note it here just as a theoretical future impact. The strategy then would be to locate it in a secondary area (maybe corner of building) to avoid main spaces. But again, this is not part of current impact – current scheme is fine without it.
- Use intensity: If in future the use expanded to significantly more users, that could put more pressure on the fabric (like heavy usage might wear things faster). However, any such expansion would likely require another planning review or adaptation. At present, the modest user numbers pose no such risk.

In conclusion, the **impact of the current proposal is minimal and well within acceptable bounds for conservation**. It causes no harm to the significance of Newlands; on the contrary, by necessitating maintenance and by introducing sensitive adaptations, it will fortify the building's condition. The key heritage values – historical,

architectural, communal – are not only preserved but in some cases enhanced (communal value especially, through new community use).

5. Conservation Strategy and Mitigation Measures

To ensure the above remains true in practice, a clear conservation strategy will be followed throughout the implementation of the project. This strategy includes:

Engagement of Conservation Professionals: The project team will include or consult with a **conservation-accredited architect or consultant** for any works that directly affect historic fabric. For instance, if adjustments need to be made to the building (like designing a ramp or adapting a doorway), we will have input from someone with expertise in historic buildings. This ensures that solutions are sympathetic and in line with best practice.

Adherence to Guidelines: We will follow established guidance such as Historic England's advisory documents for work on listed buildings. For example, guidelines on installing accessibility features in historic buildings, or Historic England's guidance on making changes without harm. The approach will be one of **repair rather than replace**: existing elements will be repaired if damaged rather than swapped out for new, wherever possible. If any materials must be introduced (e.g., to patch plaster or wood), they will match the original in composition and appearance.

Protective Measures During Works: Before any minor works commence, we will implement protective measures. This includes dust and impact protection for fragile features: covering fireplaces, shielding decorative floors, and wrapping the stair balustrade if there's risk of construction traffic. If contractors are moving furniture or equipment in, floor runners and corner guards will be used to prevent scuffs. Any drilling in walls for mounting equipment will avoid areas of decorative plaster or tiled surfaces; instead we'll target plain sections or mortar joints (for exterior fixes) – this can be planned and supervised.

Log and Document Changes: Although the changes are small, we will maintain a log of any alterations made to the building as part of this project, with photographs. This creates a record that could be useful for future conservation work – aligning with the principle of documenting the evolution of a listed building. It's also helpful if any discoveries are made (e.g., uncovering an old wallpaper fragment behind a panel – we'd document and preserve it where feasible).

Maintenance Plan: Inspiring Pathworks will develop a **maintenance schedule** as part of their occupancy. Regular maintenance is crucial to conservation. This will cover routine tasks: clearing gutters and drains (to prevent water damage), checking roof for slipped slates annually, ensuring timber elements are kept painted and in good condition, servicing the heating system to avoid bursts or failures, pest control

monitoring (to protect wood from beetles, etc.), and gardening upkeep (trees trimmed appropriately to not undermine structures). A well-maintained building is less likely to need invasive repairs later. This forward-planning aligns with Historic England's ethos that preventative maintenance is key to preservation.

Reversibility and Future Changes: All interventions we do now are designed to be reversible. For example, the ramp (if a fixed one is built) will be constructed so it could be removed and the facade steps fully restored if ever desired. Likewise, interior modifications (like any new door openers) can be taken out leaving original fabric intact. We commit that **no irreversible removal of historic fabric** will occur under this proposal. If future changes become necessary (like the mooted lift in a long-term scenario, or other improvements), we will approach them with the same conservation mindset and seek the necessary consents.

Monitoring and Review: After the centre opens, we will monitor how the building performs in its new role. If any unexpected issues arise that could affect the building (for example, if a certain doorway gets a lot of wheelchair traffic and is getting dinged up despite precautions), we will review and possibly reinforce protections there (like adding a sacrificial wooden strip that can be replaced, saving original jambs). This adaptive management means we're ready to tweak operations or physical measures to better conserve the place once actual usage patterns are observed.

Collaboration with Authorities: We will maintain open communication with Knowsley's conservation officer. If there is any doubt about a small change (say we want to install a fold-down ramp vs. a fixed one), we will consult to get their input. It's better to agree methods beforehand than to inadvertently do something that isn't optimal. The applicant respects that listed status means ongoing responsibility and is willing to abide by any conditions the Council attaches (for instance, perhaps a condition requiring details of any new fixtures in historic walls to be approved, or the exact signage to be agreed – we will happily comply).

Through these measures, the conservation strategy ensures that **the heritage asset will not only survive but thrive** under the new use. The approach is cautious, respectful, yet practical – acknowledging the building must function for its new purpose but insisting that function not override preservation.

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, this Conservation Statement finds that the proposal for 1A Newlands is fully compatible with the **conservation of its heritage significance**. The key points can be summarized as follows:

- **Significance Acknowledged:** We have identified Newlands as a building of notable historic, architectural, and communal significance, integral to the character of the Victoria Road Conservation Area. This significance stems from its Victorian origins, well-preserved architectural features, and role in local history. Every aspect of the project has been developed with a clear understanding of these values in mind.
- **No Harmful Alteration:** The intended change of use to a day care centre requires no harmful physical alterations. The building's exterior will remain unchanged, and interior modifications are minimal and sensitive. As such, the proposal causes **no adverse impact** on the fabric or appearance of the listed building. It therefore meets the tests of national policy that heritage assets should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance. We have carefully considered the *setting* as well, concluding that the conservation area's appearance and atmosphere will be preserved.
- **Sustaining the Asset:** The new use is a **sustainable solution** for the building's future. By keeping the site in active use and in good repair, we prevent the decline that can threaten historic structures. As cited earlier, continued use is the best form of preservation – this project exemplifies that principle by giving the building a meaningful purpose aligned with community needs, ensuring that resources will be allocated to its upkeep. This is a win for conservation, as the building's long-term prospects are strengthened.
- **Mitigation and Management:** We have set out a proactive conservation management approach, from the design stage through to occupancy. Protective measures, expert involvement, and maintenance commitments are in place to mitigate any minor risks. The project will adapt to any future needs in a controlled way, always prioritizing the building's welfare.
- **Compliance with Policy and Best Practice:** The approach aligns with local and national conservation policies, including Knowsley's heritage objectives and the NPPF. There is no conflict with the duty to preserve listed buildings and conservation areas – indeed, the scheme facilitates that duty by providing the building a sympathetic use.

We conclude that **the heritage asset's significance will be preserved and indeed enhanced in its social value** by this proposal. There is a clear public and heritage benefit to securing the building's future in this manner, with no down-side in terms of loss of historic character. As such, we respectfully submit that the conservation considerations fully support approval of the application.

The applicant and design team are mindful that the stewardship of a listed building is an ongoing responsibility. This Conservation Statement is not just a formality; it represents

a commitment to honor the history and architecture of Newlands throughout the life of the project. Inspiring Pathworks looks forward to being part of the story of Newlands – caring for both the people who will use it and the fabric that has stood for over 160 years, so that this beautiful building can continue to be enjoyed by future generations as **a living part of Huyton's heritage.**