

GLAZED EXTENSION AT 5 NORTH END FARM CLOSE

HALEWOOD, METROPOLITAN BOROUGH OF KNOWSLEY



HERITAGE ASSESSMENT

GARRY MILLER
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GARRY MILLER HERITAGE CONSULTANCY

Garry Miller is a heritage consultant, architectural historian and published author who has spent more than 40 years studying and working with buildings of town and countryside, in particular those of North West England. His career as a consultant began in the mid-1980s with the Preston-based Nigel Morgan Historic Building Consultancy, of which he became a partner in 1992 upon its rebranding as Datestone. In 1997 he was commissioned by the Heritage Trust for the North West, a buildings preservation trust based at Barrowford, Lancashire, to produce an in-depth regional study of vernacular houses in southwest Lancashire: the result, *Historic Houses in Lancashire: The Douglas Valley, 1300-1770* was published in 2002. The book was described as ‘scholarship as its best’ by *Country Life* (June 2003), and ‘well analysed and presented’ in *Transactions of the Ancient Monuments Society* (Vol 48, 2004); and was widely cited in the 2006 *Buildings of England* volume on Liverpool and Southwest Lancashire. Extensive research on the houses of Georgian and Regency Liverpool has also been undertaken, with a view to future publication. Following the success of his Douglas Valley book, Garry Miller established his own consultancy, producing analytical and interpretive reports on historic buildings, in particular the heritage assessments required to support planning applications affecting the historic environment. His area of operation encompasses the North West, Midlands, North Wales and parts of Cumbria and North and West Yorkshire. Several local authorities have cited his assessments as examples of best practice, and reports on more than 150 buildings or sites are produced annually.

THIS REPORT

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Purpose: for planning submission

Text: Garry Miller

Site survey: Peter Miller

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1: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report supports proposed works at number 5 North End Farm Close, Halewood, in the Metropolitan Borough of Knowsley, Merseyside. The property was historically part of a group of 19th century outbuildings associated with Weston House, a large villa demolished in the mid-20th century. In heritage terms, the buildings are non-designated. They have recently been converted to residential use.

Proposals have been submitted to Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council for a glazed extension to the front of the application property. The heritage issue arising is the impact upon the significance (heritage interest and value) of the non-designated building.

Weston House dated probably from the 18th century and was of at least middle-class status, with gardens to the south and west and outbuildings to the north. The outbuildings date from the early-mid 19th century and map evidence suggests the application property was originally kennels for hunting dogs, but latterly converted to stables. The subsequent domestic conversion has retained its single-storey four-bay linear form, but with a gabled wing added to the front. Chamfered stone piers on the front elevation have been retained, and the openings between them glazed.

The significance of the application building exists in the local context only (i.e. to Halewood and Knowsley) and derives primarily from its collective role as one of the original buildings of the Weston House group rather than its individual qualities. The group is of interest primarily for its historical association with Weston House. The application building's contribution to this group derives from its role as an early 19th century structure that appears originally to have been dog kennels before being converted to stables.

The proposal involves a light-touch, glazed single-storey extension to the front of the application property. The proposed extension is a simple glass box, intended to provide additional space for a dining area and lounge without intrusive alteration to the fabric of the original building.

The extension will sit to the front of the existing structure and will be visually permeable so as to allow the stone piers, its most distinctive feature, to remain visible. Additionally, the current glazing between the piers does not enhance the appearance of the building owing to the thickness of the framing and hence its removal will have a positive effect.

Additionally, a limited amount of new landscaping is proposed, to relocate the existing car parking spaces at the side of the house and to extend the lawned area in front of the building, with the purpose of creating additional privacy for the occupiers. The works involved are modest and have no heritage implications.

Where heritage assets are not designated, national guidance requires simply a balanced planning judgement that weighs the significance of the heritage asset against the impact of the proposal, as opposed to the presumption to at least preserve that is the case with designated assets. In the planning balance, it is considered that the proposal will not adversely affect the application property, whose significance will be sustained.

The scheme is therefore entirely favourable and merits approval without delay.

2: THE SITE

The application building is number 5 North End Farm Close, Halewood, in the Metropolitan Borough of Knowsley, Merseyside. The property was historically part of a group of early-mid 19th century agricultural outbuildings belonging to Weston House, which lay to the south and was demolished in the mid-20th century. The buildings have recently been converted to domestic use (application reference 20/00064/FUL) and now stand within a modern residential context. The site's wider setting is a transitional area where the outer edge of the Liverpool city conurbation meets its rural hinterland.



Map 1. Location of the application property



1. The application property, a converted 19th century outbuilding



2. Its setting within the new residential development created by converting the outbuildings

3: THE PROPOSAL/SCOPE OF THIS REPORT

3.1 Proposed development

Proposals have been submitted to Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council for a glazed single-storey extension to the front of the application property, along with landscaping.

3.2 Designation

The buildings of the Weston House site were considered to be non-designated heritage assets at the time of the original 2020 application for their conversion. They were described in some detail at that time in the heritage assessment produced in 2019 in support of that proposal by Garry Miller Heritage Consultancy.

3.3 Heritage impact

The heritage issue arising is the proposal's impact upon the significance (heritage interest and value) of the non-designated application building.

3.4 Scope and purpose of this report

Paragraph 200 of Chapter 16 (*Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment*) the National Planning Policy Framework (as revised, December 2023) states that in determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the particular significance of the heritage asset, including the contribution made by its setting. The scope and purpose of this report is therefore to identify the significance of the non-designated building, and to assess how this will be affected by the proposal.

In accordance with paragraph 200, the level of detail is considered proportionate to the importance of the heritage asset, and no more than is necessary to understand the impact of the proposal.

The report is to be read in conjunction with other documentation submitted in support of the application.

3.5 Report structure

This is as follows:

1. A brief summary of the historical background relating to the site (Section 4) followed by a concise, proportionate description of the application building (Section 5)
2. A summary of its heritage significance (Section 6)
3. A summary of the planning policy context in which the application will be determined (Section 7)
4. Evaluation within this context of the impact of the proposal upon the significance of the application building (Section 8).

4: HISTORICAL SUMMARY

4.1 Background

The site was historically associated with Weston House, a large villa that was probably of 18th century date and was well-established at the time of the mid-1840s OS map (Map 2, below). The house was of at least middle-class status, with extensive gardens to the west and south and outbuildings located a discreet distance to the north. The presence of the dovecote among the buildings confirms the site's high status and suggests possible much earlier origins, as in medieval England the right to keep pigeons (*droit de columbier*) was a privilege of the gentry classes only. Weston House was subsequently demolished between 1928 and 1952 on map evidence. On the latter map, the site is named *Weston House Nursery* and a number of glasshouses are depicted. Before their conversion, the remaining buildings were mostly converted to stables or disused.

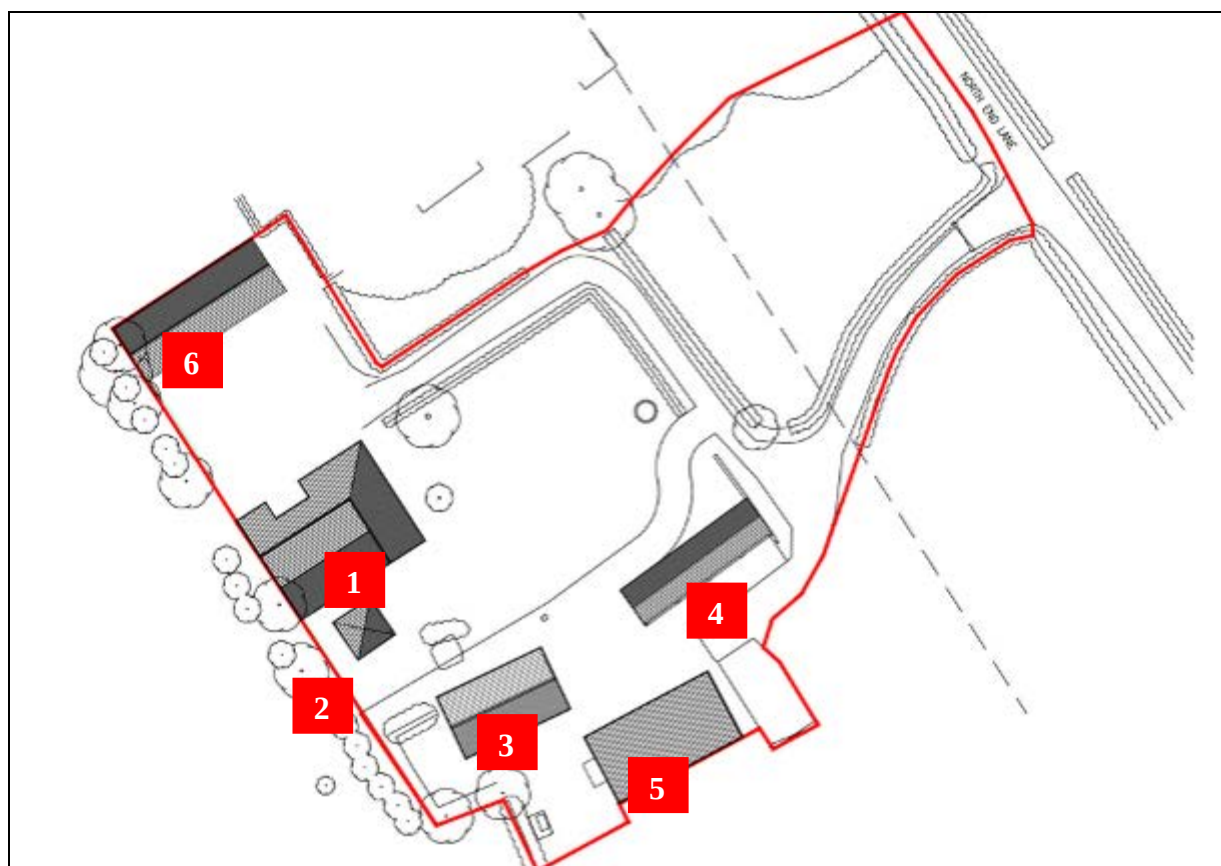


Map 2. Weston House (indicated) and its outbuildings to the north, as depicted by the six-inch OS map of 1845-1846

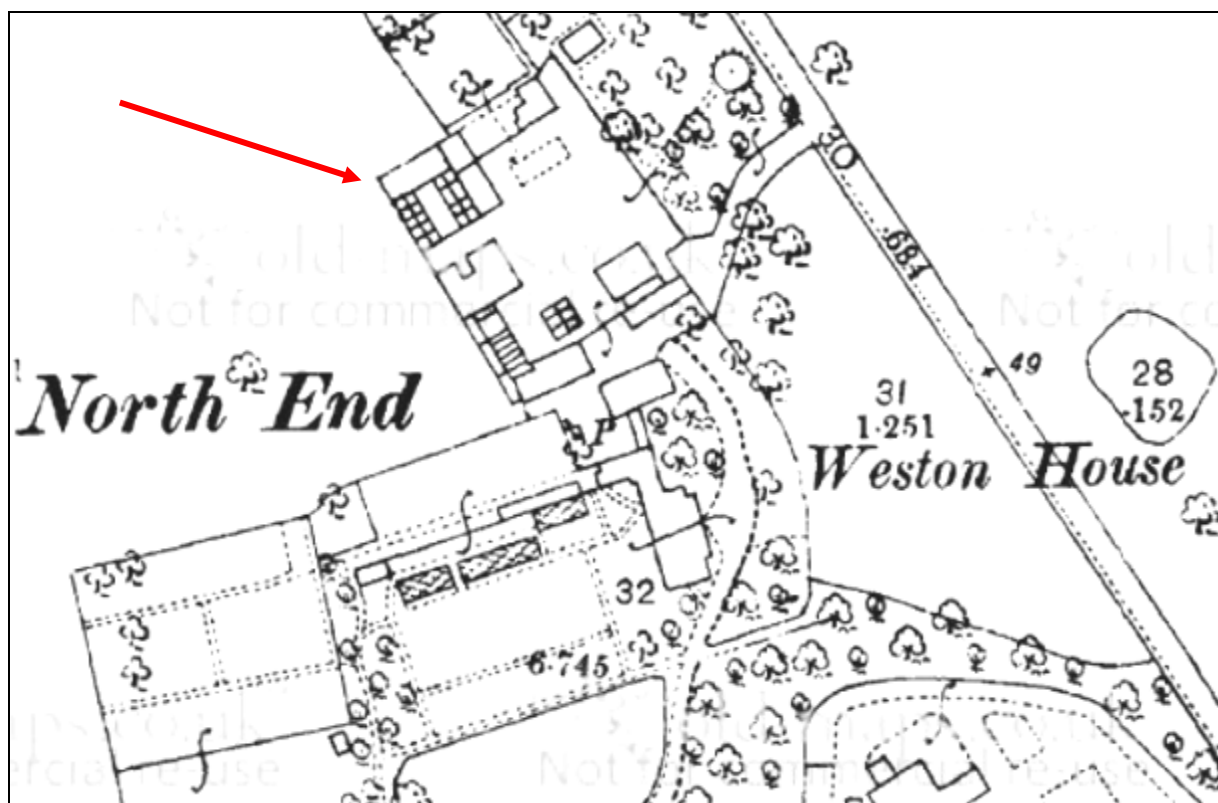
4.2 Buildings of the site

The large group of outbuildings shown on the 1840s OS map then appears to have been rationalised during the mid 19th century as a different configuration is shown by the edition of 1892 (Map 4, following page). The 2019 heritage assessment records that the following buildings of this group had survived:

- 1** A **small combination barn**, mid-19th century and the largest building of the site; it was then disused with the exception of a domestic conversion element on its east side
- 2** A **dovecote** adjoining to the south of the barn, early 19th century
- 3** A **two-storey former stable** southeast of the latter, early 19th century and converted to domestic use by 2019
- 4** **Stable 1**, a single-storey former cartshed northeast of the latter, early 19th century, latterly used as stables
- 5** **Stable 2**, a partly derelict single-storey early 19th century outbuilding altered to form a stable
- 6** **Stable 3 (the current application property)**, an early 19th century single-storey building on the north side of the site, possibly originally used as dog kennels but converted to a stable by 2019



Map 3. Buildings of the site, as identified in 2019



Map 4. The 25-inch edition of 1892 shows the mid-century rationalisation of the farm buildings: application property indicated



3. The site in 2019, looking west

5: THE APPLICATION BUILDING

5.1 Background

The application property is present on the 1840s map, and so is of likely early 19th century date. At the time of the 2019 heritage survey, the application building appeared as a long, narrow single-storey four bay range, with stone walling and a slate roof. Its principal features were chamfered stone piers dividing the bays on the front elevation. While it was then used as stables, the rows of pens flanking a yard to the front of the building shown by the historic mapping suggests its role was originally kennels for hunting dogs, which would align with the high status of Weston House. The building was considered to make a positive contribution to the undesignated group.

5.2 Present appearance

The post-2019 conversion of the building has essentially retained its long linear form, although a gabled wing, in contrasting brickwork, has been built to the front to provide additional accommodation. The chamfered piers have been retained to the right of the latter and the openings between them glazed with thick grey framing



4. The building as it appeared in 2019



5. The chamfered piers, pictured in 2019, are a distinctive feature of the front elevation



6. Present appearance, showing glazing between the remaining piers

6: SIGNIFICANCE OF THE APPLICATION BUILDING

6.1 Rationale

Paragraph 201 of the National Planning Policy Framework states local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of a heritage asset, including its setting, and take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal in order to avoid or minimize conflict between the asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal. Significance is defined in the NPPF Glossary 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.

6.2 Summary

The significance of the application building exists in the local context only (i.e. to Halewood and Knowsley) and derives primarily from its collective role as one of the original buildings of the Weston House group rather than its individual qualities. The group is of interest primarily for its historical association with the now-demolished Weston House, which dated probably from the 18th century but may have had earlier origins. The application building's contribution to this group derives from its role as an early 19th century structure that appears originally to have been dog kennels before being converted to stables.

7: PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

Chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework) provides the guidance on how applications affecting the historic environment are to be dealt with. Paragraph 203 states that in determining 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*

Paragraph 209 specifically applies to non-designated heritage assets:

The effect of 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 judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

The principal local heritage policy is CS20 (Managing the Borough's Historic Environment) of the Knowsley Core Strategy, adopted January 2016m, which requires that development proposals should preserve or enhance the borough's historic and architectural assets.

8: IMPACT OF THE PROPOSAL

8.1 Summary of the scheme

The proposal involves construction of a glazed single-storey extension to the front of the application property as shown in the submitted drawings, which should be consulted for the full details and specifications of the scheme. The purpose is to provide space for a dining area and lounge, as the current kitchen area does not provide enough space for dining.



7. Existing (above) and proposed front elevations



8. Isometric view, existing and as proposed

8.2 Its effect

The proposed extension is a simple, light-touch glass box, intended to provide additional space without intrusive alteration to the fabric of the original building. The extension will sit to the front of the existing structure and will be visually permeable so as to allow the stone piers, its most distinctive feature, to remain visible. Additionally, the current glazing between the piers does not enhance the appearance of the building owing to the thickness of the framing, and hence its removal will have a positive effect.

Additionally a limited amount of new landscaping is proposed, to relocate the existing car parking spaces at the side of the house and to extend the lawned area in front of the building, with the purpose of creating additional privacy for the occupiers. The works involved are modest and have no heritage implications.

8.3 Concluding statement

Where heritage assets are not designated, national guidance requires simply a balanced planning judgment that weighs the significance of the heritage asset against the impact of the proposal, as opposed to the presumption to at least preserve that is the case with designated assets. In the planning balance, it is considered that the proposal will not adversely affect the application property, whose significance will be sustained.

The scheme is therefore entirely favourable and merits approval without delay.