

PLANNING AND CONSULTATION STATEMENT

5. NORTH END FARM CLOSE, HALEWOOD, KNOWSLEY

OCTOBER 2024

This Statement has been prepared by Grimster Planning Ltd in support of a householder planning application (hereafter referred to as the "Application") at the above Property.

This Statement assesses the proposal against the relevant policies of the development plan, and other material planning considerations.

It should be read alongside the drawing package and other technical reports submitted as part of the Application.

Proposed Householder Development

Householder planning permission is now sought as part of this Application from Knowsley Council for the following proposed development at the Property:

"Glass box extension to front of property"

Details of the proposed works to the Property are set out in the accompanying Design and Access Statement, and hence we do not intend to repeat them in this Statement.

Further details of the proposed scale and design/appearance are illustrated on the submitted drawing package for approval.

Planning History/Background

The Property now subject to this Application was granted planning permission by Knowsley Council in October 2020 as part of Application Ref. 20/00064/FUL.

Condition 21 of the planning permission removed permitted development rights to all of the approved dwellings, which would otherwise be allowed under Schedule 2, Part 1 and Part 2, of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended).

Accordingly, this Application is now submitted for the proposed works outlined above.

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Planning Policy

The Development Plan

For decision-taking, Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) requires that if regard is to be had to the development plan for the purposes of determination, then that determination must be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

This requirement of planning law is re-iterated in Paragraph 2 of the National Planning Policy Framework (“NPPF”) published in December 2023.

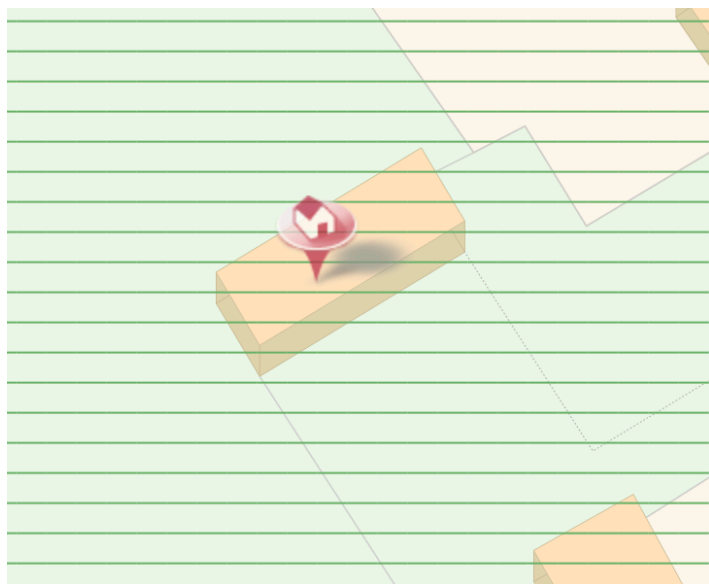
The development plan for the purposes of this Application comprises the following:

- Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy adopted in January 2016
- “Saved” policies of the Knowsley Unitary Development Plan, adopted in June 2006; and
- Local Plan Policies Map.

On the Local Plan Policies Map, the Property is shown as lying within the designated Green Belt, to which Policy CS5 of the Local Plan Core Strategy is relevant.

An extract from the Local Plan Policies Map is provided below, obtained from the Council’s online interactive map:

Figure 1: Knowsley Local Plan Policies Map Extract



The development plan as a whole contains a number of other policies which are relevant in the determination of this Application, which consider later in this Statement.

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National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The NPPF is a material consideration in planning decisions. The NPPF sets out the Government's approach to sustainable development and core planning principles. Paragraph 8 sets out the three overarching objectives to sustainable development, namely *economic, social and environmental* objectives. The presumption in favour of sustainable development is at the heart of the NPPF.

Within the NPPF, paragraph 11 requires development proposals which accord with an up-to-date development plan to be approved without delay.

Section 4 of the NPPF '**Decision Making**' requires Local Planning Authorities to approach decision-making in a positive and creative way, working proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.

Section 13 of the NPPF '**Protecting Green Belt Land**' covers matters relating to Green Belt. Paragraph 143 sets out the five purposes of Green Belt. Paragraph 152 states that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Very special circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm arising from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations. In respect of new development, paragraph 154 of the NPPF identifies a number of exceptions to inappropriate development in the Green Belt. This includes part (c), which allows for the following:

"The extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building."

Section 12 of the NPPF '**Achieving well-designed places**' focuses on the development of high-quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places. This is seen as fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design has an important role to play in sustainable development, creating better places in which to live and work and to make development acceptable to communities. Design proposals should function well and add to the overall quality of an area; be visually attractive; be sympathetic to local character and history, whilst not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change; establish a strong sense of place; and optimise the potential of a site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate mix of development. Paragraph 136 of the NPPF recognises that trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments, and can also help to mitigate and adapt to climate change. Opportunities should be taken to incorporate trees in developments, and to ensure that appropriate measures are in place to secure the long-term maintenance of newly-planted trees, with existing trees retained wherever possible. Significant weight should be given to development which reflects

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local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes. The National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code should be used to guide decisions on applications in the absence of locally produced design guides or design codes.

Section 16 of the NPPF covers the conservation and enhancement of ***the historic environment***. This requires the need for Applicants to assess the impacts of any proposed development on a heritage asset, establishing whether development would lead to substantial harm or less than substantial harm.

Other Material Planning Considerations

Knowsley Council has published the following SPDs which are considered pertinent in the determination of this Application:

- Householder Development SPD (2016); and
- Design Quality in New Development SPD (2016).

We consider the compliance of the proposed development against this SPDs later in this Statement.

The Development Plan – Policy Assessment

We go on to assess the proposal within the context of the development plan below. In doing so, we have assessed the proposal on a topic-based approach.

Principle of Development

As documented above, the Property lies within the Green Belt. Furthermore, permitted development rights were removed from the Property as part of planning permission ref. 20/00064/FUL. Accordingly, householder consent is now sought for the proposed works, as documented in the accompanying Design and Access Statement.

In view of the Property's location in the Green Belt, it is necessary to have regard to the relevant policies of the development plan relating to Green Belt development.

To this end, Policy CS5, Part 1 of the Local Plan Strategy states that inappropriate development will not be permitted in the Green Belt except in very special circumstances. It is "saved" policy G7 of the Knowsley Unitary Development Plan which provides the detail on appropriate development in the Green Belt, insofar as it relates to the alteration, extension or replacement of existing dwellings in the Green Belt.

Policy G7 lists 3 criteria for proposals to extend or alter an existing dwelling in the Green Belt. We assess the proposed development now subject to this Application against each of these below:

a) The form and materials of the development would respect the appearance of the existing dwelling and its setting, and preserve the openness of the Green Belt

Details of the proposed materiality are set out in the accompanying Design and Access Statement. All sides of the extension are proposed to be glass, including the roof, which will help to provide natural light into the depth of the rooms and ensure visual permeability. It will also allow visibility of the original building structure and stone. The visualisation provided as part of the accompanying Design and Access Statement illustrates how the design approach will respect the existing features of the Property, including allowing for the central chamfered stone column to be viewed inside and outside of the room.

The use of glass as the proposed material of choice will itself reduce the visual impact on the openness of the Green Belt, maintaining views through the proposed extension to the existing dwelling and design/building features associated with the former stables building. It would not appear incongruous in its setting, nor is a more modern design approach/addition to a more traditionally designed building to be discouraged as documented in paragraph 135(c) of the NPPF.

b) The development and any associated vehicular access routes, boundary treatment, garden, storage or vehicular parking areas would be provided without harming or unreasonably impacting on the amenity of any neighbouring properties and the appearance of the surrounding area

The proposal now subject to this Application does propose to re-orientate the existing car parking arrangements associated with the property, to make more efficient use of the space available. This will allow for the amenity space to be increased in size and better connected/configured than the current, disconnected arrangement.

This will provide greater privacy for the occupants, whilst at the same time not harming nor unreasonably impacting on the amenity of any neighbouring properties, and the appearance of the surrounding area.

c) In the case of proposals to extend an existing dwelling or for the construction of detached buildings within 5 metres of the existing dwellings, the proposal would not (either by itself or in conjunction with earlier developments) result in a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original dwelling.

For the purposes of this test, the existing dwelling is per that which was approved as part of planning permission ref. 20/00064/FUL. As part of this planning permission, the former stables were extended by

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120m³ to form a dwelling (a volumetric increase of 31%). Accordingly, the earlier extension was not made after the Property came into use as a dwelling; it has always formed part of the *original* (and existing) dwelling.

The proposed extension which forms part of this Application would represent an increase of 13 square metres in floorspace over and above the size of the *existing* (and original) dwelling (which currently extends to 116 square metres in total), and an increase in volume of 6.9m³ over the existing dwelling. The scale of increase proposed as part of this Application is not considered to be disproportionate when having reference to the guidance contained in the Householder Development SPD documented later in this Statement. As such, there would be no harm to the spatial openness of the Green Belt.

The height of the proposed extension does not move away from the single storey scale of the existing building, nor does it propose to impact on the stone gable ends of the building which are an existing feature to be preserved (and hence why no side extension is proposed). As such, there will be no harm to the visual openness of the Green Belt.

Overall, the proposed development is considered to comply with Policies CS5 and G7 of the development plan.

Design

Details of the proposed scheme design are documented in the accompanying Design and Access Statement, and addressed in response to Policy G7 above. Overall, the proposed development would represent a high-quality addition in the Green Belt, through its scale, design and materiality, without causing any harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Overall, the proposed development is considered to comply with Policies CS2 and CS19 of the development plan.

Historic Environment

The Property is not identified as a designated heritage asset, and there are no listed or locally listed buildings within its immediate vicinity.

However, as part of Application Ref. 20/00064/FUL, the former stable building (and wider collection of buildings that made up the Weston House site) were considered to be non-designated heritage assets. Accordingly, as part of this Application, a Heritage Assessment has been prepared; this has assessed the impact of the proposed development on the non-designated asset. The Assessment should be read alongside this Statement, and the accompanying Design and Access Statement.

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In conclusion, the Heritage Assessment has found that the proposed development will not, on balance, adversely affect the existing dwelling and non-designated heritage asset, the significant of which will be sustained.

Overall, the proposed development is considered to comply with Policy CS20 of the development plan.

Natural Environment

The proposed development would not result in the loss of any features of biodiversity value. Furthermore, no demolition of buildings is proposed that could have any bat roosting potential. Given the nature of the proposal, it is exempt from the requirement to secure a net gain in biodiversity. Accordingly, the proposed development will preserve the natural environment, and through the re-configuration of the garden space and a limited amount of new soft landscaping, provide a larger area of external green infrastructure/amenity space than at present.

Overall, the proposed development is considered to comply with Policy CS8 of the development plan.

Residential Amenity

In view of the small-scale nature of the proposed extension, together with its scale, design and materiality, it will not have a harmful impact on the residential amenity of any nearby residents, including the occupants of property no. 4 North End Farm Close, which lies closest to the Site.

The proposed extension will continue to meet the Council's minimum separation distance requirements and standards.

Overall, the proposed development is considered to comply with Policies CS2 and CS19 of the development plan.

Access

No changes are proposed to the vehicular access to the Property, nor will it generate any additional traffic movements. The only change relates to the configuration of the car parking associated with the plot, which as outlined above and within the accompanying Design and Access Statement, is considered to deliver an overall betterment over the existing parking and garden arrangement.

Overall, the proposed development is considered to comply with Policy T8 of the development plan.

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Drainage

There are no drainage implications associated with the proposed development, with the ability to connect to the existing drainage system as required.

Overall, the proposed development is considered to comply with Policy CS24 of the development plan.

The National Planning Policy Framework – Policy Assessment

The proposed development will align with key objectives set out in the NPPF (as documented earlier in this Statement), including paragraph 154 (c) in relation to the acceptability of the principle of development, paragraphs 8 and 11, and Sections 12 and 16.

Other Material Planning Considerations – Policy Assessment

As outlined earlier in this Statement, Knowsley Council has published a number of SPDs which are applicable in the determination of this Application. The proposed development is considered within the context of these below:

- **Householder Development SPD** – paragraph 9.2 of this guidance confirms that the disproportionate test applies to the *original* dwelling. This is confirmed as the property as it existed on 1st July 1948, or as it was first built if it has been constructed since then. It goes on to state that where a dwelling is proposed to be extended such that cumulative additional would amount to an increase on the original volume of over 50%, these will normally be classed as disproportionate and unlikely to be allowed.

Whilst the *original* dwelling has always comprised the previous extension from when it first came into residential use in early 2024, the previous volumetric increase of 31% over the original stable building, together with the additional 6.9% volumetric increase now proposed as part of this Application, would still cumulatively fall below the 50% volumetric increase allowance documented within the Householder Development SPD.

Paragraph 9.3 of the SPD references “*tall extensions*” as being particularly harmful to the openness of the Green Belt. Accordingly, the proposed development has been designed such that it will maintain the openness of the Green Belt, and not result in any increase to the height of the existing building (as a single storey addition). The use of glazing throughout the proposed extension will also serve to minimise the visual mass and impact on the openness of the Green Belt.

The overall scale, design and appearance of the proposed extension will be appropriate to the dwelling's design and the wider streetscene and setting. It will not appear as an incongruous addition.

- **Design Quality in New Development SPD** – this guidance is typically steered towards larger development proposals. Nevertheless, the proposed development now subject to this Application, whilst only small in scale, does nevertheless align with the General Design Principles set out within the SPD to achieve a positive image, insofar as they are relevant. The accompanying Design and Access Statement provides details of the design approach and rationale, and why the proposed extension is considered to be acceptable.

Conclusion on Planning Policy Assessment

As evident through the assessment of the proposed development against the development plan, the NPPF and other material planning considerations, there is no harm arising from the proposed development to the openness of the Green Belt, nor any technical and policy reasons, why the proposal should not be supported and approved in line with the development plan. It is also lent support by other material considerations in the shape of the National Planning Policy Framework and the Householder Development SPD.

Consultation

Given the nature and type of the proposed development, as a householder extension, the Applicant has not engaged in any detailed consultation with the wider local community. Discussions have taken place with the occupants of No 4. North End Farm Close, who advised that they have no objections to the proposed development. Discussions have not taken place with the occupants of No. 2 North End Farm Close at the time of writing.

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October 2024

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