

Agenda



Knowsley Council

29 May 2024

To: The Chairperson and
Members of the Planning Committee

Dear Councillor

A Meeting of the **PLANNING COMMITTEE** will be held on **Thursday, 6th June, 2024**, in the Council Chamber, Municipal Buildings, Huyton at **6.00pm**.

If you have any queries regarding this meeting, please contact Keith Glover on telephone number 0151 443-3502.

Yours faithfully

Chief Executive

Please Note:-

1. *Access to the Council Chamber is limited. Meetings will be live streamed but, if members of the public or press wish to attend in person, please contact Keith Glover on (0151)-443 3502 in the first instance to discuss. The live stream can be accessed from the following link - <https://knowsley.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>.*
2. *If you have submitted a representation in respect of any of the planning applications that are included on the agenda for determination at this meeting, and wish to speak at the meeting, there is a procedure to be followed which can be accessed via the link below:-*

<https://www.knowsley.gov.uk/residents/building-and-planning/make-a-planning-application/speaking-at-planning-committee>

APPLICATION NO: 23/02389/FUL

APPLICANT: W Bennett & Son

WARD AFFECTED: Whiston & Cronton

DEVELOPMENT:

NEW ACCESS AND LANDSCAPING SCHEME OF APPROVED AGRICULTURAL GRAIN STORAGE BUILDING (APPLICATION 23/00005/AGR)

LOCATION OF SITE:

Land Adjacent to Prescott Road, North of Red House Farm and South Of Cronton Road, Cheshire, Widnes, WA8 5PS

DEVELOPMENT PLAN ALLOCATION:

Green Belt

REPRESENTATIONS:

13 representations have been received objecting to the proposals.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Members delegate authority to the Head of Planning & Building Control to grant planning permission subject to the conditions set out in the attached schedule.

CASE OFFICER:

Andrew Hunt (0151) 443 2204

SUMMARY:

This application is an application for amendments to the existing landscape scheme of approved agricultural grain storage building (Application 23/00005/AGR).

The relevant key issues are:

- Principle of development.
- Access and highway safety;
- Landscaping
- Impacts on residential amenity;

1. SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

- 1.1 The application site is an irregularly shaped piece of land at the intersection of Prescott Road and the A5080 (Cronton Road). It comprises predominantly open farmland with a small rectangular gravel area previously that was used as a temporary construction area for the construction of the nearby roundabout.
- 1.2 There are trees at the south western part of the site, and northern part of the site facing the A5080. There are residential dwellings to the south of which Red House farm is the nearest (at over 100 metres away from the tarmac area), a residential property to the north (on the opposite side of the A5080) and to the east (approximately 250 metres away) on the southern side of Cronton Road.

2. PROPOSAL

- 2.1 This application is for the creation of a new vehicular access from Prescott Road and the approval of a landscaping scheme pursuant to a previously approved agricultural grain storage building (ref: 23/00005/AGR). The proposed new access will serve this agricultural building.

3. RELEVANT SITE HISTORY

- 3.1 A prior approval application for an agricultural grain storage building was refused on the grounds of not complying with the technical requirements of the General Permitted Development Order 2015 (22/00378/AGR – refused 13/12/2022).
- 3.2 An application for prior approval for a grain storage building was approved (ref: 23/00005/AGR on 16/05/2023). This was subject to a condition to require details of landscaping to be approved by the local planning authority. The current application relates, in part, to satisfy the requirements of this condition.

4. EQUALITIES ACT 2010

- 4.1 In determining this application, the Local Planning Authority has considered the requirements under S149 of the Equalities Act 2010.
- 4.2 Section 149 of the Act sets out a general duty that requires the council to have due regard to the need to:
- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;

- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it, and;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

5. REPRESENTATIONS

- 5.1 The application was publicised by individual neighbour letters to 9 properties. 13 objections have been received to the application, each of the representations make the following identical points;
- The road is narrow and turning area will encroach onto the opposite side of the road causing safety issues.
 - The proposal will cause visual harm to the landscape.
- 5.2 The points made in the submitted representations are addressed later in the report.

6. CONSULTATIONS

Local Highway Authority (Knowsley Council) – No objection. The applicant should be reminded that works cannot be carried out in the highway without Highway Authority consent (which planning approval does not provide).

Landscaping – No Objection. The proposed details are acceptable.

7. POLICY CONTEXT

- 7.1 Paragraph 11 and 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2023), an extract from which is set out below, states that:

“Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision-taking this means:

c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or

d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:

i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or

ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making. Where a planning application conflicts with an up to date development plan, permission should not usually be granted. Local Planning Authorities may take decisions that depart from an up-to date development plan, but only if material considerations in a particular case indicate that the plan should not be followed.”

7.2 In this regard, the Knowsley Local Plan: Core Strategy was adopted in January 2016, although certain saved policies of Knowsley Replacement Unitary Development Plan (UDP) remain operational as part of the Statutory Development Plan and are still given weight in reaching a decision under the provisions of paragraph 213 of the latest NPPF. The Joint Merseyside and Halton Waste Local Plan was adopted in 2013, and is also part of the development plan.

7.3 The site is designated as within the Green Belt on the Local Plan Policies Map.

Local Plan: Core Strategy (2016)

SD1 - Sustainable development
CS2 - Development Principles
CS5 - Green Belt
CS7 - Transport networks
CS8 - Green Infrastructure
CS19 - Design quality and accessibility in new development
CS21 - Greenspaces and Trees
CS24 - Managing Flood Risk

8. ISSUES AND ASSESSMENT

Principle of the Development

8.1 Policy CS5 (Green Belt) states that inappropriate development will not be permitted in the Green Belt except in very special circumstances in

which it has been demonstrated that the harm to the Green Belt (including any harm to its openness, purposes or to its visual and recreational amenities) would be clearly outweighed by other considerations.

- 8.2 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) para 152 states that inappropriate development is harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. The types of development that are considered to be appropriate in the Green Belt are set out in paragraphs 154 and 155 of the NPPF.
- 8.3 The development is located within the Green Belt. A prior approval (ref:23/00005/AGR) allows an agricultural grain storage building to be built on the site. The current application relates only to the creation of a new access from Prescott Road and landscaping matters.
- 8.4 The creation of the new access meets exception c) as set out in paragraph 155 of the NPPF which considers the creation of local transport infrastructure as being appropriate development so long as the requirement for it to be within a Green Belt location is justified. The purpose of the access is to allow safe access to the approved grain storage building. The applicant currently farms approximately 900 acres of arable land in the area and the new access serving the approved grain store will allow them to meet current contractual requirements and support the local business.
- 8.5 The applicant can justify the need for the proposed access in this Green Belt location and this aspect of the proposal complies with paragraph 155 c) of the NPPF and is therefore appropriate development within the Green Belt.
- 8.6 The proposed landscaping is considered appropriate in the Green Belt and planning permission would not normally be required for this undertaking. The details are only included in this submission to address the requirements of condition 1 of approval ref 23/00005/AGR.
- 8.7 In principle, the proposals comply with the relevant paragraphs in the NPPF and the requirements of Policy CS5 of the Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy.

Highway Safety

- 8.8 Policies CS2 and CS7 in the Local Plan Core Strategy combine to require new developments to be located and designed to prioritise accessibility and sustainable modes of travel whilst ensuring new vehicular accesses are not detrimental to highway safety.

- 8.9 Paragraph 114 b) of the NPPF requires new developments provide safe and suitable access to site is achieved and Paragraph 155 states that development shall only be refused on highway grounds where an unacceptable impact on highway safety would be severe.
- 8.10 The proposed access is located on the eastern side of Prescott Road, approximately 120 metres to the south of the junction of Prescott Road and Cronton Road.
- 8.11 The access is proposed to be 6 metres wide with a radii of 10 metres on either side. Also proposed is a hardstanding which allows for large vehicles to turn within the site as well as being able to pull clear of the carriageway whilst awaiting access into the site should other vehicles already be at the site. There would be sufficient parking and turning areas within the site to allow for the unloading of vehicles.
- 8.12 There would be planting to the north and south of the access with sufficient distance between the landscaping and the access to maintain visibility. These access arrangements have been reviewed by the Highways team and have been found to be acceptable. The application will not result in any material harm to highway safety, this is supported by the Highway's team who have no objection to the development.
- 8.13 The proposal would not result in harm to highway safety and complies with Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy Policies CS2 and CS7, and NPPF paragraph 115.

Residential Amenity

- 8.14 Policy CS19 (Design Quality and Accessibility in New Development) in the Core Strategy requires new developments to maintain a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings by avoiding unacceptable impacts on existing residents and future occupiers.
- 8.15 The proposed planting and access arrangements do not impact residential amenity as the nearest dwelling is over 100 metres away from the access. The planting does not materially affect the light or outlook of neighbouring properties due to its distance, and in any event wouldn't normally require planning permission. Overall, it is considered that the development would provide acceptable living conditions for neighbours and would comply with Core Strategy Policy CS19.

Landscaping

- 8.16 Policy CS21 Greenspaces and Trees states that the council will encourage new development to incorporate:
- a) Retention of existing trees, woodland, vegetation and other habitat features which offer a positive contribution to the local environment in terms of visual amenity, recreation value or biodiversity/wildlife interest;
 - b) Appropriate planting of trees, other soft landscaping and installation of habitat features for the benefit of biodiversity; and
 - c) Adequate replacement provision where tree loss is unavoidable, comprising two additional trees for every tree lost and taking account of species and size.
- 8.17 There is proposed landscaping in the form of a planted copse to the south, 4 oak trees either side of the access and indigenous hedging along the northern part of the site facing Cronton Road. Overall, this planting is considered to soften any visual impact from the approved grain storage building and to present an attractive frontage. This is supported by the views of the Council's Landscape Officer who has no objection to the proposal.
- 8.18 Overall, the proposed development would provide appropriate landscaping and will have a positive impact on habitats through the creation of appropriate native planting therefore the proposal complies with Core Strategy Policy CS21.

9. CONCLUSION & PLANNING BALANCE

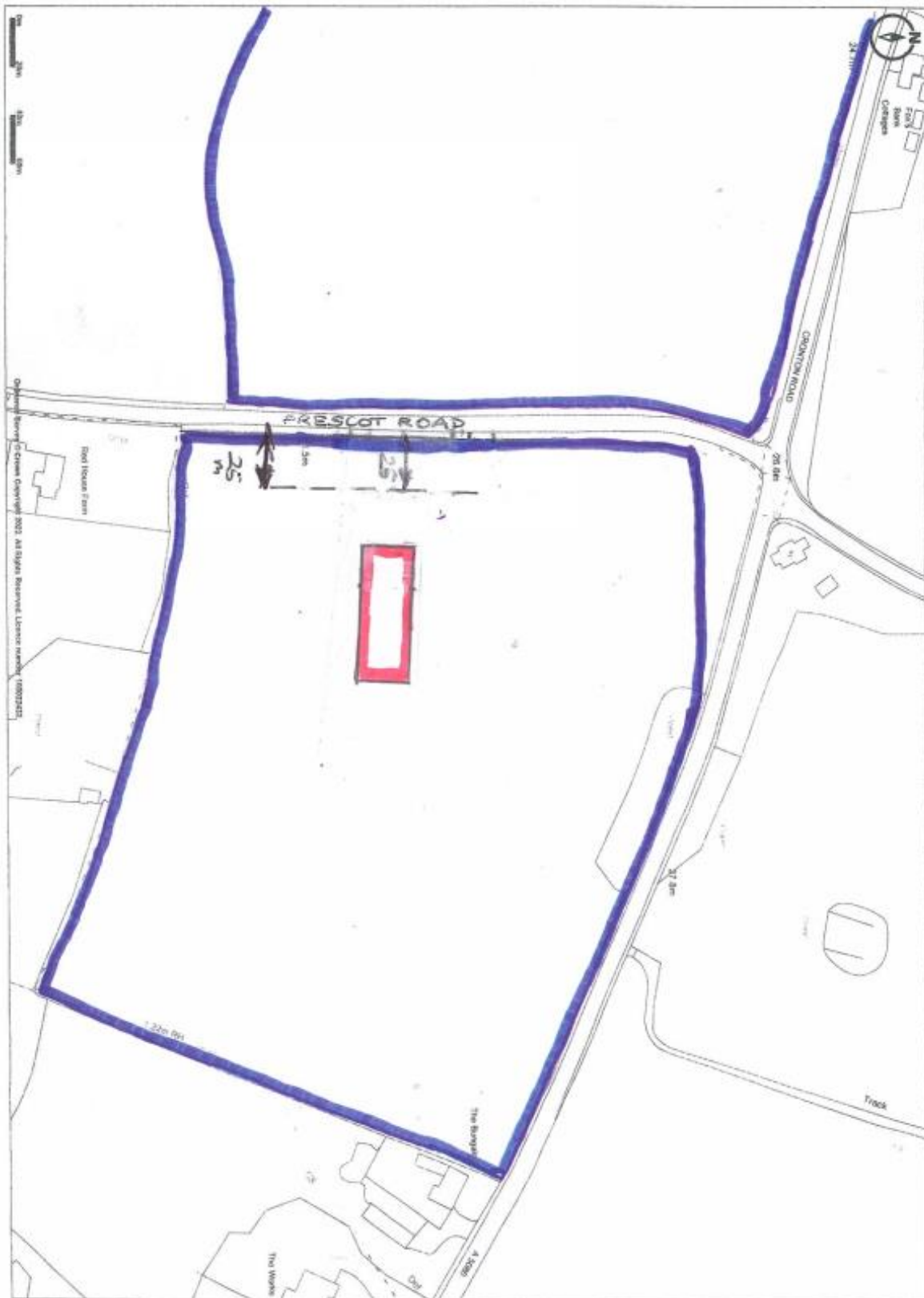
- 9.1 The proposal is appropriate developments in the Green Belt and are acceptable in principle. The proposed new access will not have any adverse impact in relation to highway safety, or ecology, or the amenity of neighbouring properties. The proposed landscaping to address the requirements of condition 1 of 23/00005/AGR are considered acceptable.
- 9.2 In conclusion, the proposed development would comply with policies included within the Core Strategy (2016), and National Planning Policy Framework (2023).

10. RECOMMENDATION:

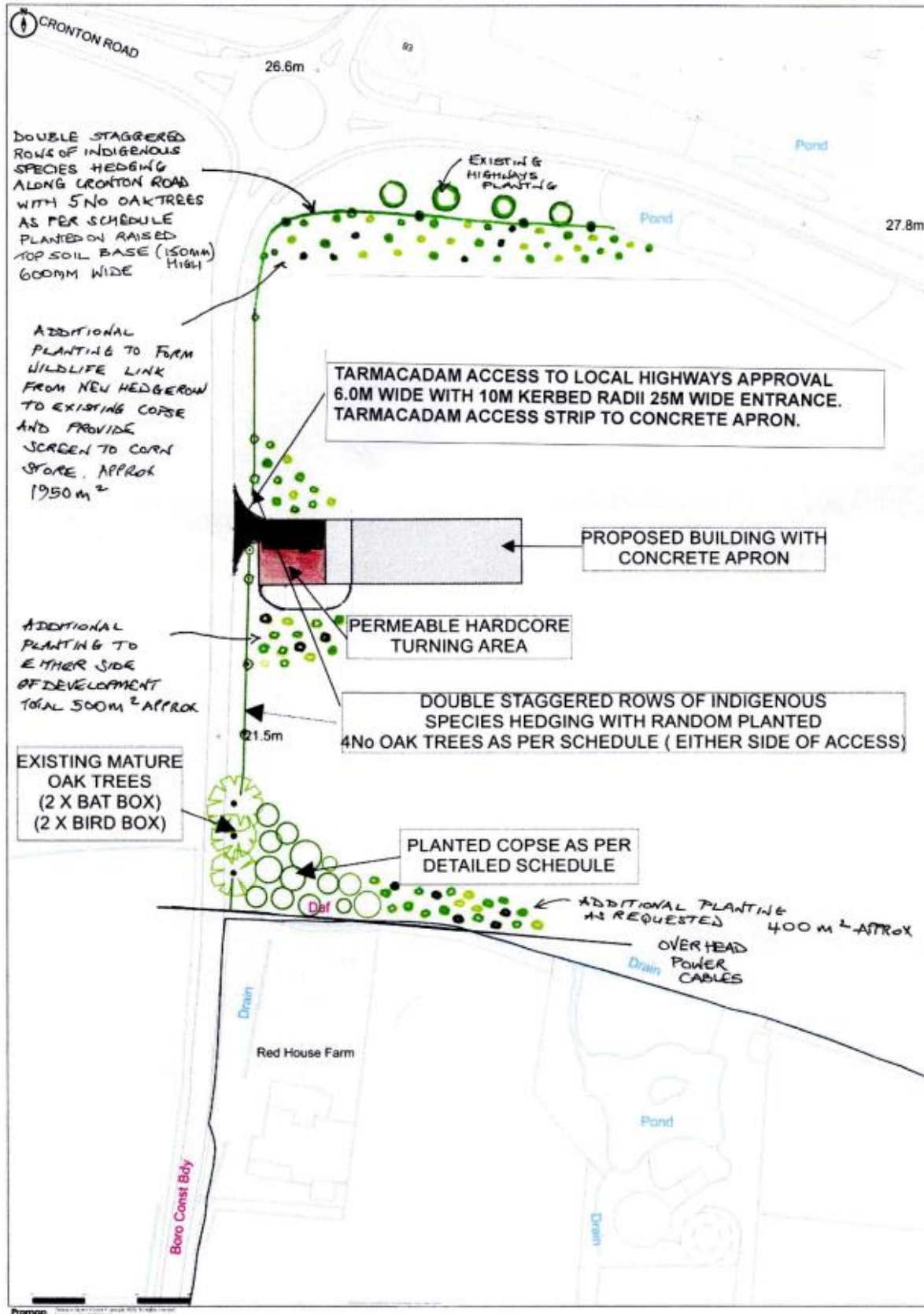
- 10.1 That Members delegate authority to the Head of Planning to grant planning permission subject to the conditions set out in the attached schedule.

SCHEDULE OF CONDITIONS

1.	Time Limit	Advisory
2.	Plans List	Advisory
3.	Planting Implementation	Ongoing



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