

Heritage Statement



Erection of gates and side panels

**2 Knowsley View,
Knowsley Road
Ainsworth
BL2 5PT
August 2024**

Kirkwells

The Planning People

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This heritage statement has been prepared to support the submission of an application for the erection of gates and side panels to the garage entrance and the erection of electric gates at the driveway entrance at 2, Knowsley View, Knowsley Road.
- 1.2 Planning permission was granted for the conversion of the wash house to a dwelling on 22 June 2020, planning reference: 65412. The permission included the erection of an extension to the building to provide additional living accommodation. A further application for a garage was submitted in September 2022. A full Heritage Assessment was submitted as part of the original application, with the garage heritage statement providing an addendum to the 2020 Heritage Assessment. This statement now forms a further addendum to the 2020 Heritage Assessment, to assess the impact of the proposed gates on the significance of the heritage asset.

2. Description of site and proposed development

- 2.1 The building is not a Statutory Listed Building and it is not within a Conservation Area. None of the other buildings on the site are Statutorily Listed or in a Conservation Area.
- 2.2 The site has been identified as a non-designated heritage asset and is on the draft local list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest.
- 2.3 No specific building is identified as being locally listed and it appears that the site as a whole has the designation.
- 2.4 The buildings were constructed in the early 1900s for use as a smallpox isolation hospital. They replaced an earlier isolation hospital known as 'Broomfield', which was demolished when the current buildings were constructed. The buildings now on the site were designed, by architect Henry Lord of Messrs. Thompson and Brierley of Bury, on behalf of the Bury and District Joint Hospital Board.
- 2.5 They are constructed in simple Renaissance style and built of a red stock brick with terracotta features. The new isolation hospital for the treatment of smallpox cases was brought into use around 1905 and continued in use until around 1982 when the hospital closed. The site was taken up by Ainsworth Nursing Home and this use continued until around 2018. Since then, the buildings have remained vacant and are now deteriorating. Several of the buildings on the site have received planning permission for conversion to residential properties.

3. Heritage Statement

- 3.1 Paragraph 200 [inter alia] of the National Planning Policy Framework states: *“In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.”*

Policy context

- 3.2 The relevant national planning context is established by Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment, December 2023). Paragraph 209 states that

“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.”

Assessing the Impact of the

- 3.3 The former nursing home site is considered to be of heritage value because of its architectural, historical and social significance as a former isolation hospital.
- 3.4 In terms of architectural significance, none of the buildings have merited Statutory Listing but they are of some architectural interest as examples of public buildings of the early 1900’s. The buildings are not architecturally outstanding, but they are attractive buildings. They are relatively simple in design, being constructed of stock red brick with sparse ornamentation of terracotta features, including arched brick heads and detailing to the window and door openings. The high-pitched slate roofs with terracotta ridge tiles, incorporating dormers and two storey projections give a distinctive character to the site.
- 3.5 The architect, Henry Lord, is not known as a prominent architect but was involved in many local projects, mostly public buildings, around the Manchester area.
- 3.6 In terms of its historic significance, the site has some value, having existed on the site since the early 1900s.
- 3.7 In terms of social significance, it is considered that the main significance relates to the social history of the site and its role in the wellbeing of the community of the area. Smallpox was the most feared disease since The Plague and an estimated 300 million people died from smallpox in the 20th century alone. This virulent disease, which killed a third of those it infects, is known to have affected human beings for thousands of years. Patients who

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contracted the disease were isolated as it was highly contagious and mostly fatal.

- 3.8 For these reasons the isolation hospital would have played an important part in the social fabric of the community of the early 1900s and beyond, until vaccination became more established.
- 3.9 The proposed gates and side panels subject of the current application do not impact on the form of the original wash house. They will support the use of the dwelling, ensuring a viable future for the building. It would form a subservient and unobtrusive addition to the former wash house and would have no material impact on the integrity of the site in terms of its architectural, historic and social interest.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 National policy guidance requires that a balanced judgement is made having regard to the scale of any harm or loss to the significance of the heritage asset (para 209).
- 4.2 The gates would sit adjacent to the existing buildings which have been part of the landscape for many years. They are well designed, sympathetic to the former wash house building and other buildings on the site and would not result in loss or harm to the significance of the heritage asset.
- 4.3 In the absence of harm to the heritage asset it is concluded that the application may be approved, taking a proportionate approach. There will be no meaningful impact on the significance of the site as a non-designated heritage asset, in terms of its architectural, social or historic interest.
- 4.4 This proposal is in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and local historic environment policies.

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