

Heritage Impact Assessment for the proposed new residential
access and driveway to serve Smithy House, Halebank Road,
Halebank WA8 8NH

On behalf of Ms Mckenna

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01 Introduction

Introduction

- 1.1 This supporting Heritage Impact Assessment has been prepared on behalf of Ms Mckenna (the 'applicant') by Fisher German LLP (the 'agent') and submitted in support of a proposed new residential access and driveway to serve Smithy House, Halebank.
- 1.2 This statement should be read in conjunction with other supporting information supplied as part of the planning application including:
- Application Form;
 - Location Plan;
 - Existing Site Plan;
 - Proposed Site Plan;
 - Proposed Elevations;
 - Planning Statement.
- 1.3 The purpose of the assessment is to assess how the proposal does not subsequently impact on heritage assets in the area. This HIA has been produced in line with Section 16 particularly Paragraph 202 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 1.4 This statement should be read in conjunction with other supporting information supplied as part of the planning application.

02 Site and Surrounding Context

- 2.1 Smithy House is a detached dwelling located directly off Halebank Road, a main route leading through to Halebank Village. The dwelling is located within the administrative boundary of Halton Borough council.



Figure 1. Aerial View of Smithy House (Google Earth).

- 2.2 The site is located within Halebank Conservation Area. There are no Listed Buildings or designated heritage assets on or in the immediate area surrounding the site.
- 2.3 Halebank is a village and civil parish north of the River Mersey and east to the boundary of Merseyside and 3 miles east of Speke in Liverpool.
- 2.4 The area is located within Flood Risk Zone One, therefore not liable to flooding.

- 2.5 There are no Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) on the proposed site.
- 2.6 The site is located within the cusp of the Merseyside Green Belt, allocated as plot GB094, with a size of 0.49 Ha.
- 2.7 The proposals are detailed in the Planning Statement submitted with the application.

03 Identified Heritage Assets

- 3.1 The site lies within the Halebank Conservation Area. This area was formerly designated in 1984 by the local planning authority. Conservation Areas are statutory historic designations created under the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
- 3.2 The aim of this CA is to preserve and enhance the village's special heritage value and grade II agricultural land classifications. This area is characterized by traditional buildings, mature trees, and hedgerows, contributing to its unique rural charm.
- 3.3 The Halebank Conservation Area (CA) is surrounded by a Green Belt Area of Special Landscape Value. The area includes a variety of architectural styles, predominantly featuring cottages and farmhouses that reflect the village's agricultural heritage.
- 3.4 The Conservation Area is predominantly linear and follows the pattern of development along Halebank Road.
- 3.5 There are no designated Listed Buildings or Scheduled Ancient Monuments within the Conservation Area.

04 Relevant Planning Policy and Guidance

- 4.1 Under Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 local authorities must consider the desirability of preserving the setting of listed buildings and Conservation Areas when assessing applications.

'In considering whether to grant permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses'

'With respect to any buildings or other land in the conservation area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area'

- 4.2 The Halton Local Plan 2022 sets out the policies for the area, with the most relevant being:

- Policy HE2: Heritage Assets and The Historic Environment

- 4.3 Assessing significance is embedded in national planning policy. Heritage values contribute to a greater understanding of significance are identified by Historic England in 'Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance (April 2008)' as being:

- Evidential
- Historical
- Aesthetic
- Communal

4.4 There are four commonly accepted levels of significance. These are as follows:

- Outstanding
- High
- Medium
- Low

Below this would be described as 'no interest.'

4.5 Paragraph 207 of the NPPF requires applicants to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by the proposal, indication any contribution to their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets importance to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.

4.6 Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) states:

“The vast majority of heritage assets are in private hands. Thus sustaining heritage assets in the long term often requires an incentive for their active conservation. Putting heritage assets to a viable use is likely to lead to the investment in their maintenance necessary for their long-term conservation”

Paragraph 015 Reference ID: 18a-015-20190723

4.7 Given the minor householder proposal at Smithy House with no designated listed buildings within the vicinity, there is no requirement for this assessment of significance as a detailed Heritage Impact Assessment is not required.

05 Impact of the Proposal on the Heritage Assets

- 5.1 With reference to the NPPF, the designs presented with the application have aimed at achieving a positive result for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment.
- 5.2 The Halebank Conservation Area is the main heritage asset which is potentially impacted by the proposal.
- 5.3 The proposal is discussed in detail within the supporting planning statement. In addition, the supporting plans and elevations should all be read in conjunction together.
- 5.4 All works proposed are to use traditional materials and colours to combine in with the existing building. Therefore, keeping any impact on the heritage asset to an absolute minimum.
- 5.5 Paragraph 215 of the NPPF states that there is less than substantial harm, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposed including, where appropriate, securing optimum viable use. The proposal will allow for the continuous use of the dwelling for a future, a new driveway and access is not unreasonable to service this. The test set out in the NPPF is clearly met.
- 5.6 The proposal overall is beneficial to the dwellinghouse and proposes no harm on the wider setting of the Halebank Conservation Area.

06 Assessment and Conclusion

- 6.1 The proposal is seeking to seeking householder planning consent to replace create a new access and driveway to the dwelling known as Smithy House. This HIA is in support of an application for householder planning consent to allow these works to be carried out.
- 6.2 Smithy House is located within the Halebank Conservation Area and therefore required this HIA as a validation requirement. Given the minor householder proposal, a fully detailed HIA is not warranted for this application.
- 6.3 The proposed driveway and access is intending to be of residential scale and design, equally appropriate to existing driveways and accesses along this area of Hale Bank Road. Therefore in-keeping with the residential setting of the Conservation Area.
- 6.4 The proposed area has been used for parking vehicles for some time, with Google Earth evidencing this area for parked vehicles and an existing gate into this area on the Smithy House holding (from the previous access).
- 6.5 None of the proposed works would cause harm. The proposal will be beneficial to the continued use and longevity of Smithy House in the Conservation Area.
- 6.6 For the reasons outlined in the statement, these proposals are considered to be well-designed, appropriate and proportionate to the wider Conservation Area.
- 6.7 There is no reason for a fully detailed HIA given the minor householder proposal which does not impact any physical heritage assets.

Conclusion

- 6.8 The HIA has concluded that the impact of the proposed scheme would be either neutral or minor beneficial.
- 6.9 The benefits of the proposal in terms of heritage conservation exceed any losses, and, on that basis the application should respectfully be approved without delay.