



THE WATERING CAN, GREENBANK PARK, LIVERPOOL

## **PLANNING, DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT**

on behalf of      Keith Perryman

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# 1 Introduction and the Purpose of the Development

- 1.1 This Planning, Design and Access Statement relates to The Watering Can at Greenbank Park. The application property is used as a café with an incidental takeaway service. Greenbank Park is located in the Sefton Park Conservation Area and is a designated green space in the Unitary Development Plan (UDP)
- 1.2 Planning permission for the café was given in 2016 :  
“To part demolish rebuild and extend former potting shed to form cafe with outdoor seating area” (application number 15F/2900)
- 1.3 This permission has been implemented and the café is now an established and popular amenity in Greenbank Park..
- 1.4 There has also been a series of applications to make minor changes to the original design and a successful S73 application to vary the hours of opening from those set out in the original planning permission.
- 1.5 This application details extensions to the café to address the need for additional servicing and storage space and to increase the size of public areas. The main changes are:
1. Extensions to the rear of the building (the walled garden) to provide improved staff space and improved storage together with an enlargement of the garden room.
  2. A small extension to the pergola terrace on the front face of the building to rationalise the area used for ice cream sales.

## The Need for the Changes

- 1.6 The general experience of operating the café and the particular experience of operating the café through the Covid 19 pandemic have highlighted deficiencies in the layout and the spaces provided for the public.
- 1.7 The Watering Can, over the past year, has been dealing with the ongoing impact of Covid 19, which has imposed pressures on the operation of the business.
- 1.8 The Watering Can was initially been designed with an intimate internal environment including three contrasting spaces - main seating area, garden room and terrace.
- 1.9 Restrictions, advice, and health and safety requirements on social distancing and staff well-being have at times during the last year restricted internal capacity and operational functions.
- 1.10 The Applicant wishes to plan ahead, for better times, and in so doing ensure that the business has the option to expand to accommodate the likely social distancing requirements that will be imposed upon the hospitality sector.
- 1.11 The extensions include a break out space for the staff. At present this does not exist. It will be an important and necessary facility for the staff as they adjust to working in a more restricted environment.
- 1.12 The kitchen area is reorganised to allow for better distancing. Segregated work spaces are included to make the food preparation task more efficient and safer.
- 1.13 The extended garden room allows for better social distancing and creates a more relaxing area for visitors.
- 1.14 The extension to the pergola terrace allows for better social distancing around the takeaway area.
- 1.15 The larger area for waste storage gives the opportunity to work with more recycling bins and provides dedicated storage for chemical cleaning products.

## 2 Planning Policy Context

2.1 There are two dimensions of planning policy which are relevant in this instance:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- Liverpool Unitary Development Plan (UDP)

2.2 The policy documents need to be reviewed in sequence.

### National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

2.3 The NPPF puts in place a presumption in favour of sustainable development. There are economic, social and environmental dimensions to sustainable development.

2.4 There are three aspects of the NPPF which are of particular significance:

***Building a strong and competitive economy.*** Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The approach taken should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future.

***Achieving well designed places.*** The creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, it creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.

***Conserving and enhancing the historic environment.*** Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

### Liverpool Unitary Development Plan

2.5 The key policies of the UDP that are relevant to this application are:

HD11	New Development in Conservation Areas
HD18	General Design Requirements
HD19	Access for All
HD22	Existing Trees and Landscaping
HD23	New Trees and Landscaping
OE11	Protection of Greenspace
T6	Cycling
T12	Car Parking Provision in New Developments
EP9	Waste Storage Facilities

### 3 The Proposed Development and Consistency with Planning Policy

- 3.1 The principle of a café use at this location was established by the original planning permission in 2016. This permission also allowed for the rebuilding and remodelling of the potting shed – the former use.
- 3.2 The changes now proposed represent the proportionate extension of the café using the form of building and the facing materials that already exist. The development is consistent with the aims of Policy HD11 of the UDP in so far that the modest scale will not cause harm to the Conservation Area in which it sits. One of the most **significant** aspects of the Conservation Area is the sense of enclosure and tranquillity in the walled garden. This will not be affected in any material way. There will be no material impact on the significant qualities of the Conservation Area. The new development represents an extension of development that has already been assimilated into this space. It will be low in profile and discrete and in no way will it be visually dominant.
- 3.3 There will be a minor loss of open areas in the walled garden but this is justified in the overall planning balance by the fact that any loss of green space is wholly taken up by the café which is ancillary to the use of the park for recreation. The extended café will boost this important community facility and will enhance the overall value and attraction of the park for local residents and visitors. There is no conflict with Policy OE11.
- 3.4 Moreover, the extension into the walled garden is sympathetically designed to be low profile and of limited visual intrusion. It will have little impact on the character of this space. There would be no entrance to back of house facilities from the walled garden and so, although more people may be drawn to explore the walled garden as a result of the café being there, there is no reason to suggest there would be any change in the overall character or tranquillity of the garden from the running of the café or specific problems with noise. From a design perspective the development is consistent with the principles in Policy HD18.
- 3.5 Whilst there is no dedicated parking within the site curtilage, there is unrestricted on-street parking which serves the café. Furthermore, some customers arrive on foot from nearby dwellings and service buildings such as the hospital thereby reducing the need for parking. The size and nature of the small extensions to the café is unlikely to generate activity levels that would have a material impact on the highway network or highway safety. There is consistency with Policy T12.
- 3.6 There is no anticipated impact on trees in the park. The extensions in the walled garden will necessitate some localised re-planting of the planting beds. This can be accommodated as part of the mitigation. There is consistency with Policy HD22.
- 3.7 The extensions will give improved opportunities for waste storage. In turn, this will lead to the more effective recycling of the waste generated by the business, in accord with Policy EP9.
- 3.8 The improved spatial layout of the building for both staff and visitors will contribute towards making it accessible for those with differing levels of mobility. This is consistent with the aims of Policy HD19.
- 3.9 Overall, there is a good level of consistency with the aims and objectives set out in the relevant policies of the UDP.
- 3.10 There is also consistency with the most relevant parts of the NPPF. The new extensions will support an enterprise that provides jobs and investment and is an important local amenity. At the outset of this Statement it has been explained why the changes are needed. There is a strong business rationale for the proposed extensions. There will be no impact on the significance of the Conservation Area and the design approach maintains the low profile form of the building and embeds continuity by the use of facing materials used in the original café.