

Former Huyton Cricket Club, Huyton Lane

Statement of Community Involvement

Breck Homes Limited

31 July 2025

Lichfields is the pre-eminent planning and development consultancy in the UK

**We've been helping create great places
for over 60 years.**

lichfields.uk

Contents

1.0	Introduction	1
	Purpose of the Report	1
	Structure of the Report	1
2.0	Planning Policy and Guidance	2
	Localism Act 2011	2
	National Planning Policy and Guidance	2
	Local Planning Policy	3
3.0	Pre-application Consultation	4
	Pre-Application Engagement with the Council	4
	Community Engagement	4
4.0	Summary of Responses	5
	Pre-application Engagement with the Council	5
	Community Engagement	7
5.0	Summary and Conclusions	11

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Statement of Community Involvement [SCI] has been prepared by Lichfields on behalf of Breck Homes Limited [Breck]. This SCI accompanies an application for full planning permission and listed building consent for the erection of 81 dwellings and works to refurbish the former Huyton Cricket Club at Huyton Lane, Huyton [the Site].

Purpose of the Report

- 1.2 This SCI provides a description of the pre-application consultation that Breck have undertaken in relation to the proposed development at the Site. The SCI provides a summary and analysis of the feedback received and sets out how the community engagement process has informed the development proposals.
- 1.3 The SCI should be read in conjunction with the other reports and documentations that form part of this planning application submission.

Structure of the Report

- 1.4 The remainder of this SCI is structured as follows:
- Section 2 sets out the planning policy and guidance relevant to community involvement in the planning system;
 - Section 3 details the consultation process that has been undertaken and how this has provided the local community, the local planning authority [LPA] and key stakeholders with an opportunity to influence and provide feedback on the application proposals;
 - Section 4 provides a summary of the feedback received from the pre-application engagement process; and,
 - Section 5 summarises the consultation process and concludes the statement.
-

2.0 Planning Policy and Guidance

Localism Act 2011

- 2.1 The Localism Act, which received Royal Ascent in November 2011, has made pre-application consultation a statutory obligation for developments specified in a development order. However, the subsequent development order is yet to be issued, and as such these provisions are yet to take effect.
- 2.2 It is assumed that this will require developers to bring the proposed application to the attention of the majority of persons in the vicinity of the development, consult relevant persons about the proposed application and provide contact details for the developer.
- 2.3 The Act further states that developers should “*have regard*” to any responses to the consultation received. This development does not fall within this expected statutory requirement, but a tailored consultation exercise has been undertaken as a matter of good practice.

National Planning Policy and Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework

- 2.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (revised December 2024) [the Framework] sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how these should be applied.
- 2.5 The Framework states that early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Good quality pre-application discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community [§40].
- 2.6 Paragraph 42 of the Framework states that the:

“more issues that can be resolved at pre-application stage, including the need to deliver improvements in infrastructure and affordable housing, the greater the benefits.”
- 2.7 Paragraph 42 continues to state that:

“for their role in the planning system to be effective and positive, statutory planning consultees will need to take the same early, pro-active approach, and provide advice in a timely manner throughout the development process. This assists local planning authorities in issuing timely decisions, helping to ensure that applicants do not experience unnecessary delays and costs.”
- 2.8 The participation of other consenting bodies in pre-application discussions should enable early consideration of all the fundamental issues relating to whether a particular development will be acceptable in principle [§43].
- 2.9 With respect to design, the Framework states that:

“early discussions between applicants, the local planning authority and local community about the design and style of emerging schemes is important for clarifying expectations and reconciling local and commercial interests” [§137].
-

- 2.10 Paragraph 137 of the Framework confirms that applications that can demonstrate early, proactive and effective engagement with the community should be looked on more favourably than those that cannot.

Planning Practice Guidance

- 2.11 The Planning Practice Guidance [the PPG] was published in March 2014. The section entitled 'Before Submitting an Application' was most recently updated in March 2019. This section of the PPG sets out process and expectations on pre-application discussions.
- 2.12 The PPG confirms that pre-application engagement offers significant potential to improve both the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system and improve the quality of planning applications and their likeliness of success (ref. 20-001-20190315). Paragraph 001 of the PPG also states that the approach to pre-application engagement needs to be tailored to the nature of the proposed development and the issues to be addressed.
- 2.13 Pre-application engagement with the community is not mandatory but is encouraged where it will add value to the process and the outcome (ref. 20-010-20150326).

Local Planning Policy

Knowsley Council Statement of Community Involvement

- 2.14 Knowsley Council adopted its own Statement of Community Involvement in June 2023 [the Council's SCI]. Amongst other purposes, the Council's SCI sets local standards for community involvement in decisions on individual planning applications. The 2023 iteration of the Council's SCI is the third version, replacing the 2017 document.
- 2.15 The Council's SCI states that the pre-application service allows applicants understand, from the Council's perspective, the planning issues that proposed developments may raise, their risk to a grant of planning permission and what actions are necessary to achieve a planning permission, if the development is considered acceptable in principle.
- 2.16 The Council's SCI sets out the expectations for pre-application engagement. For larger schemes, the SCI states that it is critical to undertake comprehensive engagement with those likely to be affected. Engagement, with Ward Members, Town and Parish Councils (where they exist) and residents should be undertaken and is strongly encouraged by the Council. The purpose of this engagement is to ensure that a subsequent formal planning application can fully acknowledge and respond to the views and opinions of local people and consultees.

Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy (January 2016)

- 2.17 The Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy [the KCS] was adopted in January 2016 and sets out the vision, objectives and policies which will guide development within Knowsley up to the year 2028.
- 2.18 Of particular relevance to this SCI, KCS Policy CS19 (Design Quality and Accessibility in New Development expects new major development proposals within Knowsley to demonstrate community engagement during the design phase.
-

3.0 Pre-application Consultation

- 3.1 Breck have undertaken a thorough programme of pre-application consultation. The programme has comprised a formal pre-application request with the Council and undertaking a process of community engagement. This has enabled Breck to engage with the LPA, key stakeholders, statutory consultees and surrounding residents. This approach exceeds the requirements set out in local and national policy and other relevant guidance.
- 3.2 The programme of pre-application engagement has identified a small number of issues and concerns, which Breck have pro-actively sought to address prior to the submission of the planning application. The result is a scheme that has been informed by the views of the LPA, surrounding residents and key stakeholders to meet the needs of the local community.

Pre-Application Engagement with the Council

- 3.3 A formal pre-application request was submitted to the Council on 28 February 2025 (ref. 25/00016/PREAPP). The pre-application request was based on a previous iteration of the proposed layout (ref. 1443-JDA-XX-XX-PP-A-0001 rev. P01). A pre-application meeting was held at the Council's offices to discuss the proposed development on 2 May 2025. Representatives from the Council's planning, highways and open space departments were in attendance at this meeting.
- 3.4 As part of the pre-application request, written feedback has been received on matters including design, heritage, highways, flood risk, green space, ecology and environmental health. These responses are summarised in the subsequent section of this statement.
- 3.5 In addition to the formal pre-application request, Breck have also met with key stakeholders at the Council to discuss the proposal, including the Regeneration and Economic Development Team.
- 3.6 As part of this pre-application engagement, Breck sought advice from the Council on how best to undertake engagement with the local community, which directly informed the strategy for community engagement.

Community Engagement

- 3.7 Breck have also undertaken a programme of community consultation and engagement to ascertain the views of local residents and ensure that the proposed development meets their needs.
- 3.8 A leaflet detailing the proposed development was prepared to inform local residents of the scheme. A copy of the leaflet is provided at Appendix 1 of this statement. The leaflet provides an overview of the scheme, including an indicative layout plan, and provides an introduction to Breck. The leaflet also invites local residents to provide feedback on the scheme. The leaflets were distributed on the 23rd of May and requested that respondents provided comments by the 20th of June, to ensure that feedback could be reviewed and implemented ahead of the application submission in July.
- 3.9 The feedback obtained from the community engagement process has informed the scheme's design and layout.
-

4.0 Summary of Responses

Pre-application Engagement with the Council

4.1 As part of the pre-application engagement process, responses were received from the following consultees:

- Knowsley Council Planning Department;
- Highways;
- Heritage;
- Environmental Health;
- LLFA;
- Open Space Officer;
- Planning Policy;
- Merseyside Ecological Advisory Service;
- Social Value; and,
- Sport England.

4.2 The feedback has been reviewed, and where appropriate the design of the scheme has been amended in line with comments. The remainder of this section of the statement summarises the feedback in key themes and sets out the applicant's response in turn.

Principle of Development / Loss of Open Space

4.3 The Planning Policy Officer's comments state that the Site is located within the settlement boundary of Huyton, on land designated as Greenspace. The response confirms that if the loss of the greenspace is proven to be acceptable, and the Listed Building can be preserved to the satisfaction of the Conservation Officer, then residential development should be judged against Policy CS3. With regard to Policy CS3, the officer notes that new development within the settlement of Huyton would comply with the indicative distribution of housing set out in the Local Plan and be sequentially preferable to the development of land outside of the urban area. As a result of the Site's sustainable location, the Officer concludes that they would "*look upon this proposal favourably*" subject to the loss of greenspace being proven to be acceptable.

The Response

4.4 As discussed in greater detail below, Breck have addressed comments from the Conservation Officer and Open Space Officer to ensure that the principle of development is established. Throughout the design evolution of the scheme, Breck ensured that a density of greater than 30dph could be achieved.

4.5 It is anticipated that a financial contribution will be made towards improvements to local open space to mitigate the impact of the loss of open space on the Site. The formal pre-application response confirms that this contribution would improve the quality of existing facilities for local residents. By providing a financial contribution for the improvements of

facilities elsewhere in the local area, the loss of open space is mitigated and it is considered that the principle of development is established.

Layout, Scale and Design

- 4.6 The Case Officer for the application provided comments on the proposed layout and design of the scheme by email dated 23 April 2025. The comments can be summarised as follows:
- The car parking sited to the rear of dwellings should be relocated;
 - Frontage parking should be reduced by changing housetypes, positioning parking to the side of dwellings and/or adding soft landscaping to improve the street scene;
 - The existing trees/hedge and stones to the Huyton Lane site boundary should be retained and where necessary the stones should be replaced/repared;
 - The existing palisade fence along the eastern boundary should be removed and if necessary replaced with a lower metal railing which would be more in keeping with a residential setting;
 - Pedestrian access to the rear of the mid terrace/mews dwellings should be built into the design with an undercoft providing access to the dwellings;
 - Plots 74 and 89 should be dual aspect as these are prominent corner plots;
 - A pedestrian link between the apartments on Huyton Lane is not necessary; and,
 - Further consideration should be given to the type of materials for the parking courts serving plots 75-89.
- 4.7 Of particular note, the proposed development originally included padel courts on the former bowling green. The Officer raised concerns regarding the provision of padel courts and the impact that this would have on the amenity of neighbouring residents.
- 4.8 The Planning Policy Officer's comments highlight the minimum requirement of achieving a density of 30 dwellings per hectare on the Site. The proposals will deliver 81 dwellings on a Site with a gross area of 2.21ha, achieving a density of 36.7dph. This density is above the minimum requirement, regardless of the Grade II Listed Building and its immediate setting, which has significantly reduced the net developable area of the Site.

The Response

- 4.9 Breck have amended the proposed layout to comprehensively address the above comments on design and layout. This has resulted in the submission of a scheme that addresses Officer's comments to respond to local context and meets local and national policy requirements and guidance. In response to the Officer's concerns on the adverse impact of padel courts on the amenity of local residents (and in response to the comments received from the Conservation Officer detailed below), this proposed use was removed from the scheme, with public open space provided instead.

Heritage

- 4.10 The Conservation Officer's comments stated that there will be a degree of harm to the setting of the pavilion as the lawned bowling green would be replaced with 3 courts with
-

hardstanding. The Conservation Officer suggested that to mitigate harm to the setting of the pavilion, the two bungalows situated closest could be removed, allowing for the introduction of additional planting.

The Response

- 4.11 In response to these comments, Breck removed the two bungalows closest to the pavilion and the Listed Building, replacing both with public open space and providing additional landscaping. Whilst this has impacted on the viability of the scheme, Breck have proactively addressed the Conservation Officer's comments.

Transport and Highways

- 4.12 The Highways Officer response to the pre-application request confirmed that highways would have no objection to the proposed development. The response requests that a Travel Plan, Road Safety Audit and Transport Statement be submitted as part of the application. The response also queried whether the shared access to the plots is intended for adoption, requested detailed design of access roads and identification of servicing arrangements (including bin and cycle storage).

The Response

- 4.13 A Travel Plan, Road Safety Audit and Transport Statement will be provided as part of the application for full planning permission. These documents will provide further clarification on the matters raised by the Highways Officer during the pre-application response. The internal highways layout has been reviewed and amended accordingly in response to the comments received. Details of which roads are proposed for adoption, the detailed design of access roads and the identification of serving arrangements will all be provided in full as part of the planning application.

Flood Risk and Drainage

- 4.14 The pre-application response states that the LLFA have "*no objection in principle to the proposed development of the site as it is currently located in Flood Risk Zone 1 and has low surface water flood risk.*"
- 4.15 The LLFA response requests a detailed drainage scheme showing the proposed drainage network, including any calculations and an explanation of how the surface water drainage discharge hierarchy has been appropriately followed.

The Response

- 4.16 The requested details will be submitted as part of the full planning application or secured by condition attached to any future planning permission.

Community Engagement

- 4.17 The responses to the public consultation are summarised below. These views were gathered by email, following the leaflet drop.
-

- 4.18 Thirteen emails have been received following the leaflet drop. The thirteen responses included a range of supportive, neutral and objection responses.
- 4.19 The supportive responses welcome to re-use of the vacant former cricket club land and the vacant pavilion. These responses support the principle of the development and the Site being brought back into use, following a period of laying vacant.
- 4.20 Several of the neutral responses were questions for the developer to confirm. This information will be clarified with the submission of the full application. Nevertheless, the Applicant has responded to the queries raised. In summary, residents' queries can be grouped into the following topics:
- What form of end-user is the applicant looking to manage the former pavilion?
 - What is the massing of the proposed development?
 - Are the proposed apartments to be brought into use as houses of multiple occupation [HMOs]?
 - How will the proposed development be laid out?
 - What are the access arrangements to the rear of the Site?
 - Will the dwellings be made available for older persons (over 55s) or will it be a mixed community?
 - How long will the development take to be completed?
 - Will measures be put in place to protect the roots of mature trees during construction?
 - Are the affordable homes to buy or rent?
 - Will fencing be replaced with suitably high fencing around the perimeter of properties?
- 4.21 These queries have been responded to or will be clarified under the submission of the full application. The applicant welcomes residents' queries and will endeavour to provide clarification where possible. Furthermore, Breck welcome any future queries that local residents may have.
- 4.22 The objections received can be summarised into the following topics. Under each topic, we set out the applicant's response, confirming how they seek to address the concerns of residents.

Reservations about the suitability of padel courts and amenity

- 4.23 Both community engagement and the formal pre-application response highlighted concerns regarding the suitability of padel courts and the potential for an adverse impact on the amenity of existing residents.
- 4.24 The applicant has listened to these concerns and removed the padel courts from the development, opting instead to provide Public Open Space on that part of the site. This will reduce the potential for adverse effects on the amenity of neighbouring residents.
-

Concerns regarding the impact of development on local wildlife

- 4.25 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal [PEA] prepared by UES has been submitted as part of this application. The PEA has undertaken a desk-based and field survey of the site, to identify the baseline conditions or habitats and protected species.
- 4.26 The PEA provides an evaluation of the baseline conditions and sets out possible impacts of the development and recommendations with respect to both habitats and species. The applicant intends to implement these recommendations during the construction and operational phases of the development.
- 4.27 The PEA will be made publicly available as part of the planning application on the Council's online register. This will enable residents to review the information within the PEA and be informed of the mitigation measures proposed.

Flooding

- 4.28 A Flood Risk Assessment [FRA] is submitted as part of the application. The FRA confirms that the proposed development is acceptable from a flood risk perspective. The LLFA were consulted as part of the formal pre-application response. The LLFA consultation response stated that they have no objection in principle to the proposed development as the site is located in Flood Risk Zone 1 and low surface water flood risk. Development is set back from the River Alt to minimise interaction between the watercourse and proposed dwellings.
- 4.29 The LLFA sets out a series of considerations which should be implemented as part of the proposed drainage strategy. The comments from the LLFA have been implemented as part of the drainage strategy submitted with the application for full planning permission.
- 4.30 In summary, it is considered that the proposed development is acceptable from a flood risk perspective and is in accordance with the relevant local and national planning policy.

The scheme will add to housing density in the neighbourhood

- 4.31 The proposed development will provide 81 dwellings across a gross site area of 2.21 ha (1.8ha net site area). This equates to a housing density of 36.65 dwelling per hectare [dph]. The site is in an urban location, in close proximity to several key services and existing public transport infrastructure.
- 4.32 Knowsley Local Plan Policy CS3 (Housing Supply, Delivery and Distribution) states that housing density of a minimum of 30 dph will be required for residential development in Knowsley. Whilst the response is correct that the proposals will add to the housing density in the area, the development makes efficient use of under-utilised land, in accordance with KCS Policy CS3 and national planning policy. The proposed housing density is considered entirely appropriate in this urban location.

Possible strain on local infrastructure

- 4.33 The proposed development is located in the urban area, in close proximity to a number of existing services and key local infrastructure. The impacts of development have been assessed throughout the pre-application process and will be assessed further as part of the planning application. The applicant will make a financial contribution to open space provision in the local area, to improve the quality of existing facilities. This contribution will
-

mitigate the impact of the development and create a betterment of open space for local residents. The development comprises 100% affordable housing, making an important contribution to affordable housing in Huyton and Knowsley more widely.

Potential to impact on the privacy and amenity of existing residents

4.34

The proposed development has been designed to ensure that the amenity of both future and existing residents is protected. The proposed layout has been designed to achieve suitable separation distances between the proposed properties and existing surrounding dwellings. As stated above, the scheme has been redesigned to remove the previously proposed padel courts, in the interest of protecting the amenity of neighbouring residents. Throughout the evolution of the scheme, the applicant has carefully considered the amenity and privacy of residents.

5.0 Summary and Conclusions

- 5.1 Breck Homes Limited has undertaken a comprehensive consultation programme in relation to the proposed development for the erection of 81 dwellings and works to refurbish the former Huyton Cricket Club pavilion at Huyton Lane, Huyton.
- 5.2 The consultation process has comprised the production and distribution of a leaflet to inform local residents of the proposal. This has informed the local community of the proposed development and presented residents with an opportunity to comment on the proposals prior to the submission of the planning application. Breck have also undertaken formal pre-application engagement with the Council and other key stakeholders.
- 5.3 The feedback received during the engagement process has been reviewed and analysed. Careful consideration has been given to all comments received from the Council, key stakeholders and local residents, to ensure that all concerns are properly addressed, and local needs are met. The engagement process has influenced the final detailed design of the scheme.
- 5.4 As demonstrated throughout this statement, Breck have conducted a thorough and proactive consultation process. The consultation undertaken exceeds the requirements of local and national planning policy.

Appendix 1 Community Engagement Leaflet

Huyton Cricket Club Proposals

Breck Homes are pleased to present our vision for the former Huyton Cricket Club. We are proposing a development of around 120 new homes, including accommodation for the elderly and new affordable houses. We want to retain and refurbish the listed pavilion, and bring it back into use, subject to agreement with an end user / community interest group. Breck are also proposing some new padel courts also to bring back sport to the location (subject to demand / operator interest). We are working with the Council and representatives from the England and Wales Cricket Board to agree contributions to facilitate grass root cricket within the Huyton area.



The Breck promise

- ✓ Be honest
- ✓ Be quick
- ✓ Be professional
- ✓ Be dynamic
- ✓ Be fair
- ✓ Be genuine

Breck Homes are the owner and developer for the former Huyton Cricket Club. We are an experienced team specialising in sourcing and purchasing development sites across the North West and delivering high quality homes to Registered Providers. We develop around 250 homes per year and are currently live on 9 sites with numerous other developments in the pipeline.

We want to involve the community as much as we can throughout this process, and we are now asking for your feedback! We would request that you email us your feedback by the 20th June 2025, thereafter a full detailed planning application will be submitted by the end of July 2025 following a review of the communities feedback.



Please submit your comments by the 20th June
deadline to consultation@breck.co.uk

Appendix 2 Leaflet Drop Locations



Birmingham
0121 713 1530
birmingham@lichfields.uk

Edinburgh
0131 285 0670
edinburgh@lichfields.uk

Manchester
0161 837 6130
manchester@lichfields.uk

Bristol
0117 403 1980
bristol@lichfields.uk

Leeds
0113 397 1397
leeds@lichfields.uk

Newcastle
0191 261 5685
newcastle@lichfields.uk

Cardiff
029 2043 5880
cardiff@lichfields.uk

London
020 7837 4477
london@lichfields.uk

Thames Valley
0118 334 1920
thamesvalley@lichfields.uk

@LichfieldsUK

lichfields.uk