



mosaic  
town planning

# Design and Access Statement

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136 Affordable Homes on Land at the Former  
St Dominics Primary School  
On Behalf of Breck Homes

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## **Document Details**

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# Chapter 1 - Introduction

This Design and Access Statement accompanies a planning application for 136 affordable homes on land off Southdean Road in Huyton.

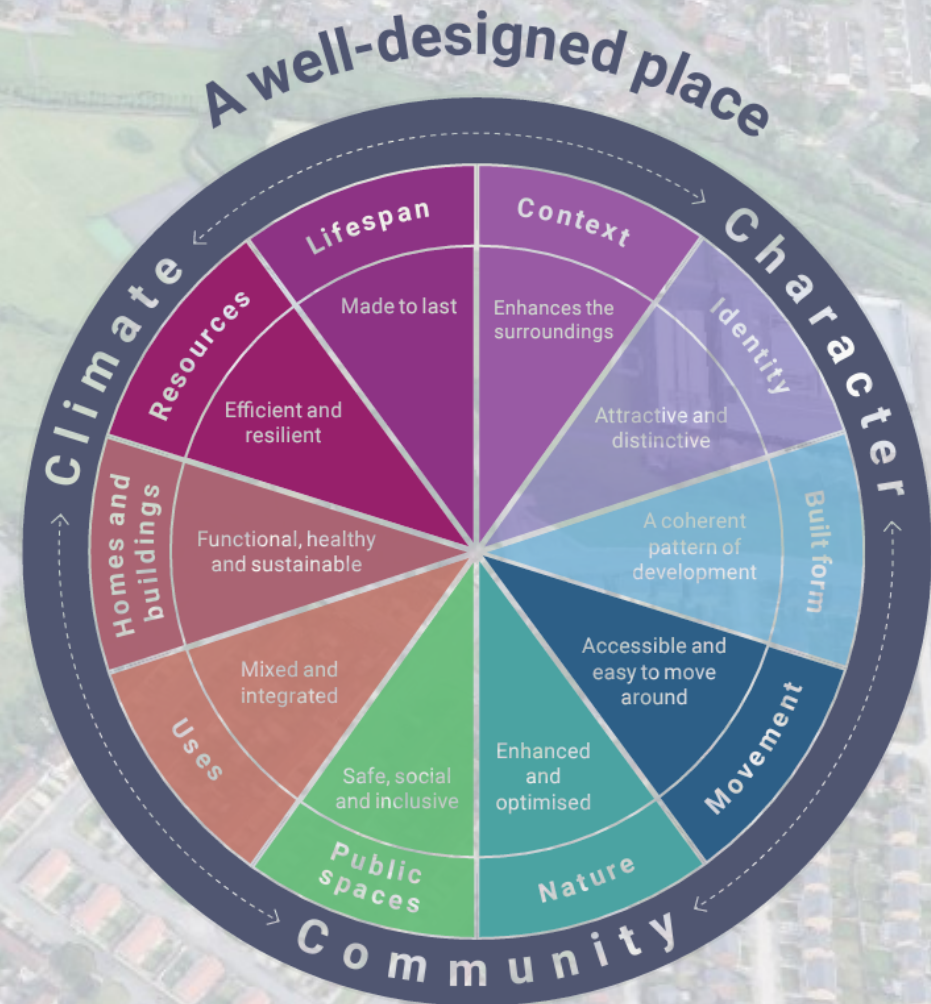
In accordance with Planning Practice Guidance, a Design and Access Statement should:

(a) explain the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the proposed development, and;

(b) demonstrate the steps taken to appraise the context of the proposed development, and how the design of the development takes that context into account. (Paragraph: 031 Reference ID: 14-031-20140306).

This Statement is structured according to the ten characteristics of good design set out in the National Design Guide (MHCLG 2019):

- Context – enhances the surroundings.
- Identity – attractive and distinctive.
- Built form – a coherent pattern of development.
- Movement – accessible and easy to move around.
- Nature – enhanced and optimised.
- Public spaces – safe, social and inclusive.
- Uses – mixed and integrated.
- Homes and buildings – functional, healthy and sustainable.
- Resources – efficient and resilient.
- Lifespan – made to last.



*The ten characteristics of well-designed places, from the National Design Guide.  
(© Crown Copyright, 2019)*

# Chapter 2 - Context

*The Context is defined by the National Design Guide as the location of the development and the attributes of its immediate, local and regional surroundings.*

The site comprises circa 2.77ha of open space and previously developed land located between Page Moss and Stockbridge Village. The site lies entirely within the Metropolitan Borough of Knowsley, however, the western and northwestern boundaries border with Liverpool.

The land was previously occupied by St Dominic's Infant and Primary School. The area is predominantly residential in character and is surrounded by inter-war Council housing and more recent infill, suburban style development. St Dominic's Church is a focal point in the area, comprising a large brick built church circa 1930s.

Adjoining the site to the north-east is Hope Primary School and its associated grounds. Knowsley Community College is located to the east of this with further playing fields. There is a District Centre at the junction of Princess Drive and Finch Road, within 650m walking distance of the site. This comprises a convenience store, GP, pharmacy, take-aways and off-licence.

Knowsley itself is a largely urban authority situated between Liverpool in the west and St Helens to the east. Huyton has seen a significant amount of housing overspill from Liverpool since the 1930s, resulting in urban sprawl. The area is relatively well served in terms of highways accessibility. The M62 runs to the south of the site and the A57 Prescot Road is situated to the north, both of these major arterial routes connect Knowsley with the wider region.



In terms of public transport accessibility, the area is connected by a number of bus services which run along Princess Drive. Roby Station is situated to the south east, providing rail services to Liverpool, St Helens and Manchester.

Pedestrian access to the land is located off Altfinch Close and open land to the north, and Lordens Road to the southeast. Vehicular access has been removed following the demolition of the school.

# Chapter 3 - Identity

*The identity or character of a place comes from the way that buildings, streets and spaces, landscape and infrastructure combine together and how people experience them.*

## Policy CS19

### Design Quality and Accessibility in New Development

- 1) To enhance the local distinctiveness, identity and accessibility of places, new development within Knowsley will be expected to:
  - a) Respond to and integrate positive characteristics of immediate surroundings, including local materials, scale, mass, form, layout, alignment and density of the existing built environment;
  - b) Complement and enhance (where possible), existing landscape, topography, Green Infrastructure; and features of local importance and historic interest;
  - c) Consider provision of landmark buildings and additional detailing at and adjacent to main gateways, movement corridors, town centres and strategic regeneration opportunities;
  - d) Create spaces and places as a focal point, accommodating social interaction and active lifestyles, including provision and integration of high quality public realm and open spaces, public art (as appropriate); and landscaping which promotes biodiversity and integrates existing local habitats;
  - e) Provide safe, secure and convenient routes for movement (including signage), with priority for walking, cycling and public transport, to meet the access needs of all users, particularly pedestrians, cyclists, less mobile people and the elderly;
  - f) Integrate effectively with existing development and link to existing shopping and service provision; and
  - g) Demonstrate community engagement during the design phase of major development proposals.
- 2) To maintain a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of

Core Strategy Policy CS19 requires new development to be designed to enhance local distinctiveness, identity and accessibility.

The identity of North Huyton primarily arises in its role in rehousing Liverpool residents during the 1930s. This resulted in an extensive council housing programme in this area.

Nearby homes are formed in multiple terraced blocks of non-parlour, former council homes built during the Inter-War period. They have distinctive hipped roofs, gable features and bay windows, off mainly linear layouts, with some infill development between comprising contemporary suburban two-storey housing and bungalows. Most of the buildings in the area are faced with brick, pebbledash or render with interlocking concrete roof tiles the dominant roof material.

The subject site will sit comfortably within the established residential properties off Southdean Road. Given the predominant character of the area as an Inter-War council housing estate of modest appearance, there is less need for overly prescriptive design parameters for the scheme.

The design of the homes will be in a traditional in appearance, in keeping with the surrounding residential areas to maintain a strong sense of local character. The front elevations will include detailing such as brick window headers and cills, soldier courses, gables and white render. An alternative brick palette (Marshalls Winterbourne Berry and Southerndown Amber) will also create variety and broken rooflines with gable ended features will offer visual interest.





# Chapter 5 - Movement

## *Patterns of movement include walking and cycling, access to facilities, employment and servicing, parking and the convenience of public transport.*

Pedestrian access will remain off Southdean Road, with two new future points of access to the north and northwest. However, the proposed layout is accessible to pedestrians and vehicles, regardless of futureproofing access to adjacent land.

The layout will encourage low vehicle speeds and improve the road safety of the development. Road widths will typically be 5.5m with pedestrian footways on both sides. Private drives will be 6m width.

Drivers will be able to loop around the site and return to Southdean Road without needing to perform a 3-point turn by turning south-west and following a parallel road back to the site entrance.

There are a total of 196 parking spaces provided on the site. This, is predominantly based on two to three spaces for three and four-bedroom homes and one space for those within the apartments and maisonettes. A total of 3 disabled parking spaces are offered for the apartment blocks.

The main access point is off Southdean Road, linking the site with nearby residential areas. Southdean Road runs parallel to Princess Drive, a dual carriageway, providing easy access to Liverpool Road.

Bus services (#12, #102, #611, #698, #898 and #899) stop nearby on Princess Drive, within a 4 minute walk. Roby Station is also situated within a 30 minute walk to the south, connecting the area to the wider rail network.

The proposed layout and accessibility of the scheme satisfies Policy CS19 criteria in the Knowsley Core Strategy.

The Transport Statement has concluded that the proposed development would not result in an 'unacceptable impact on highway safety' nor have a 'severe' impact on the operation of the highway network in terms of safety and capacity. The proposal complies with local and national policy and guidance and is acceptable on highways, parking and access grounds.



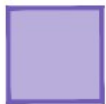
# Chapter 6 - Nature

*Natural features should be integrated into a well-designed development. They include natural and designed landscapes, high quality public open spaces, street trees and other trees, grass, planning and water.*

## Bat Box



Improved Crevice Bat Box  
Double CRevice / EQ  
04No. To Be Fitted in Total



## Bird Box



House Sparrow Nest Box  
04No. To Be Fitted in Total



A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Roost Assessment confirms that the site is not designated for wildlife purposes and contains hardstanding, other woodland, neutral grassland, willow, bramble scrub and scattered trees.

The roost assessment has identified no features that could accommodate roosting bats. The Appraisal recommends precautionary working methods during construction, a sensitive lighting strategy and mitigation including bird and bat boxes.

A Landscape Plan will be provided to ensure that the proposed open spaces can accommodate a mix of native planting and habitats for wildlife and biodiversity.

The BNG baseline is 19 area-based habitat units. To achieve the minimum 10% increase on the baseline, circa 20 area-based units on site. However, this will be provided off-site.

These measures will help to ensure that the net environmental impact of the development is minimised and opportunities for enhancement are taken in accordance with Core Strategy Policy CS8.

# Chapter 7 - Public Spaces

*Public spaces are streets, squares and other spaces that are open to all and which are the setting for most movement. The design of a public space encompasses its siting and integration into the wider network of routes.*

Due to the nature and size of the site, green space is mostly in the form of rear gardens, which all of the private dwellings benefit from. An average of 77 sqm of garden space is provided for the private dwellings and there are communal spaces for maisonettes and apartments. Front gardens and verges are also provided for each dwelling, where available.

Other on-site open space comprises amenity space with a proposed pedestrian footpath to the north. This provides a strong defining boundary and natural surveillance from the apartments. This is intended to link into the development of the wider site on land known as North Huyton Phase 5 to the north-west. This would eventually help to provide a network of routes from Stockbridge Village to Huyton.

Raised tables are designed to reduce vehicle speeds and foster a safe, living environment. This approach encourages greater community interaction and transforms streets into multifunctional spaces. Until the land at North Huyton Phase 5 could potentially connect in to the site via a prospective link road, there will be no through-traffic and vehicle trips will be limited to property access and associated service deliveries only.

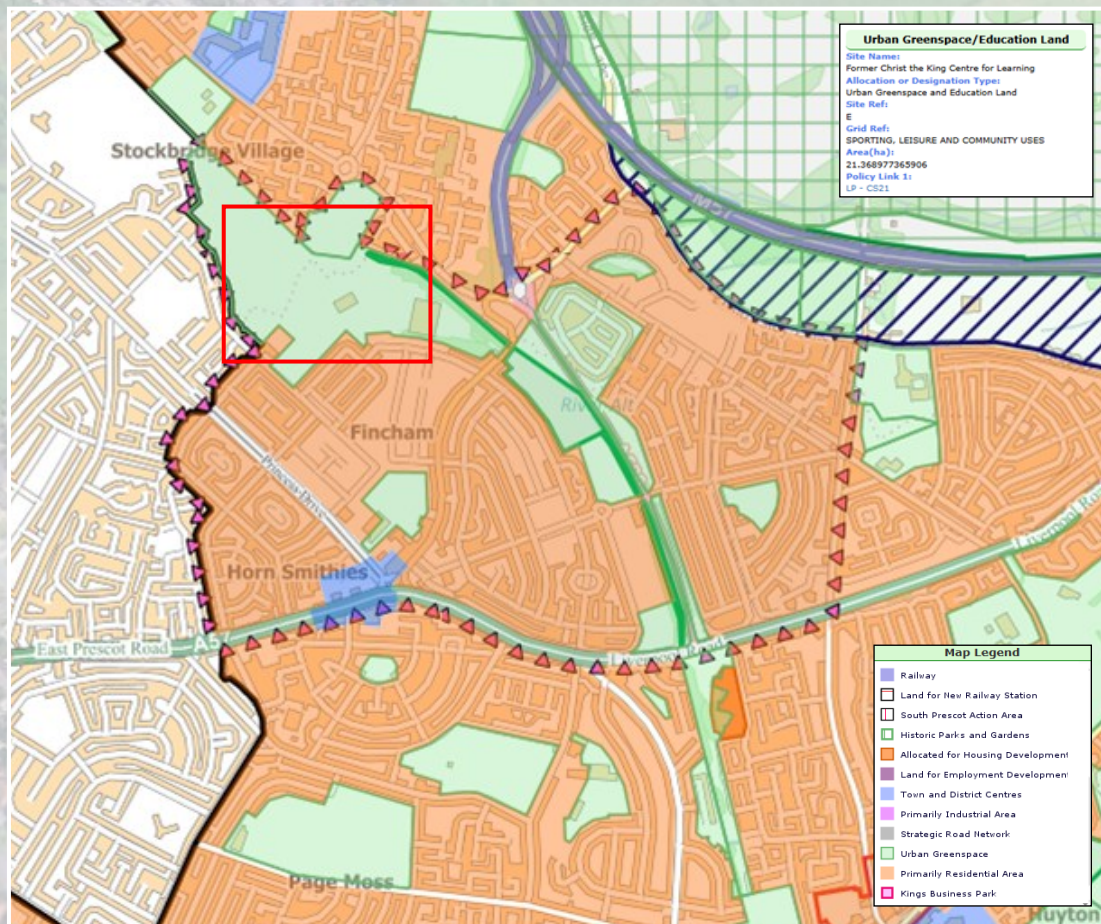
In addition to spaces provided within the development, the site benefits from easy access to Mab Lane Community Woodland, within 1km walking distance to the north-west and Woolfall Heath Meadow, located 600m to the east, both providing woodland and nature walks.

Children's playgrounds are located in Ackers Hall Avenue Park and Alt Park Play Area within 1km walk of the site.



# Chapter 8 - Uses

*Sustainable places include a mix of uses that support everyday activities including to live, work and play.*



The principal use of the site will be residential, with 136 affordable homes provided.

The site is designated as 'educational land' and 'urban greenspace' in the local plan. However, this designation is out-of-date as the proposal site is not in educational use following the demolition of the school and has very limited function as urban greenspace.

There are overwhelming benefits of development including the regeneration of a previously developed site and provision of 136 affordable homes; this more than outweighs a historic designation in an outdated plan.

The proposals are strongly supported by the NPPF, which seeks to significantly boost the supply of housing, building at appropriate densities on previously developed sites in accessible locations within existing urban areas.

We have demonstrated that there is a need for general housing completions in Knowsley, when set against an increased requirement in the Standard Method. We have also shown that the proposals are needed to meet affordable housing demand in the area.

The above analysis of the proposed use confirms that housing is more than appropriate in this location.

# Chapter 9 - Homes and Buildings

*Well-designed homes and buildings are functional, accessible and sustainable, having regard to internal and external environments. They meet the needs of a diverse range of users and are adaptable to the changing needs of occupants over time.*

The National Design Guide notes that well-designed neighbourhoods need to include an integrated mix of house types that reflect local housing need and market demand. The development is socially inclusive in that it provides affordable housing to complement market housing within the wider area.

All homes are proposed to be affordable rented tenure. However, this may be subject to change, pending Homes England grant funding announcements. Regardless, the proposed 100% affordable rented tenure is supported by the evidence base

Several aspects of the proposed dwellings have been designed to make the dwellings suitable or easily adaptable to the needs of the elderly or those with restricted mobility. All of the properties will meet nationally described spacing standards, with 21 of the properties being M4(2) compliant.

The proposals comply with paragraphs 63 and 71 of NPPF, which encourage meeting the needs of different groups, including those requiring affordable homes. They also comply with Core Strategy Policy CS15 requiring affordable homes. As the proposed development comprises 100% affordable housing this level of provision goes significantly beyond this requirement. Such a benefit is a powerful material



# Chapter 10 - Resources

***Well-designed places and buildings conserve natural resources including land, water, energy and materials. Their design identifies measures to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change.***

The proposal makes beneficial use of previously developed land in a sustainable location, close to shops, services and public transport. The land was previously occupied by a primary school and has been vacant since the early 2010s.

The development will make efficient use of the land as encouraged by the National Planning Policy Framework, making an important contribution to housing supply and meeting affordable housing need by utilising a vacant, former school site.

The development will follow a 'fabric first' approach in accordance with the first principle of the Energy Hierarchy, ensuring that dwellings are designed to reduce heat loss and minimise energy demand. Where energy use is required, this is minimised through technology such as ultra-low emission boilers, intelligent heating controls and dual zone space heating

systems. In addition, heat pumps will be installed on the majority of the homes.

The sustainable location will reduce the need to travel, and bus services, walking, and cycling provide realistic alternatives to the use of the private car. The provision of cycle parking facilities and electric vehicle charging points will also help to reduce the environmental impact.

The proposals make the best use of resources, in accordance with Policy CS22 of the Knowsley Core Strategy and the Lifetime Homes Standards.



# Chapter 11 - Lifespan

***Well-designed places should be suitable for long-term stewardship by landowners, communities and local authorities. Management and maintenance regimes should be considered from an early stage and they should be adaptable to changing needs and evolving technologies.***

The development will be built by Breck Homes, who are a respected housebuilder. The dwellings will be sustainable, long lasting with quality assured by the reputation of the developer and their experience throughout the region.

The provision of a 100% affordable housing scheme, which goes beyond the 30% policy requirement, is a significant material consideration. The homes will be constructed by Breck Homes and transferred to Livv on completion for local people on waiting lists.

All of the properties will meet nationally described spacing standards, with 16% of them being M42 accessible and adaptable units suitable for disabled people, exceeding local policy requirements.

The long-term management of planting, landscaping and biodiversity enhancements will be achieved through the control of the entire site by Livv on completion.

In terms of long term benefits of this development, house building plays a significant role in creating and supporting local employment and economy, from developers to contractors down the supply chain and the wider economy.

Not only does it contribute to local affordable housing supply, it also benefits local authorities and businesses. An influx of residents from this development would generate an estimated £273,700 in council tax and £3.6m in tax revenue. These same people will also be putting money into the local economy such as local shops.



# Conclusion

The proposed scheme consists of 136 affordable homes on previously developed land formerly occupied by a primary school.

It has been demonstrated that the policy designation for the site is out-of-date and that there are overwhelming regeneration benefits that more than outweigh a historic designation in an outdated plan.

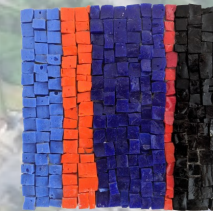
It has been identified that Knowsley is in need of affordable housing and the prospective tenure mix of 110 affordable rent and 26 shared ownership properties makes a positive contribution in meeting local demand.

The proposals will infill a vacant site along a built-up frontage. The proposed density reflects the urban and sustainable location. The homes will be constructed in a traditional style, with building materials which reflect those used in the surrounding area, whilst providing variety and visual interest. The homes will positively contribute towards the character of the area.

The form of development reflects its surroundings and futureproofs access and integration of adjacent land. Open space is provided for future residents, and biodiversity enhancements such as bat and bird boxes are provided. Environmental sustainability is also enhanced by the site's accessible location and sustainable features such as heat pumps.

The development is legible and accessible to pedestrians and motorists. There is also good accessibility to public transport, with regular bus services stopping nearby on Princess Drive. The management and maintenance of the scheme by a locally active registered provider will ensure that the quality of the scheme is maintained over its lifespan.

In summary, the proposals perform well against the 10 characteristics of a well-designed place, as described in the National Design Guide and comply with Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy and New Residential Development SPD. The proposals should be positively received and planning permission granted without undue delay.



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