

Knowsley Core Strategy Policy CS6 Compliance Note

Our ref 69995/01/SPM/HR
Date 8 October 2025
To Mark Quinn (Principal Planner, Knowsley Council)
From Lichfields

Subject Land at Huyton Lane, Huyton (ref. 25/00458/FUL)

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This note has been prepared by Lichfields on behalf of Breck Homes Ltd [the applicant] to accompany an application for full planning permission (ref. 25/00458/FUL) and listed building consent for the redevelopment of the former Huyton Cricket Club, Huyton Lane [the site]. The application seeks full planning permission and listed building consent for:
- “Change of use of the existing redundant pavilion building to a flexible use falling within Use Class E, F1 or F2 and the erection of 81 dwellings, provision of roads and sewers, open space and other associated works; together with listed building consent for improvements and repairs to the pavilion building.”*
- 1.2 The purpose of this note is to set out why the Grade II Listed former pavilion would be preferable to other vacant sites located within nearby town centres and shopping parades, for Class E (a, b, c and g) Uses, at the request of the Local Planning Authority.

2.0 Site Context and Proposed Development

- 2.1 The site is located off Huyton Lane, approximately 100m to the north of Huyton Town Centre, as designated by the Local Plan Policies Map. This is to say that it is located on the edge of the designated centre. The site is in a highly sustainable location and is within walking distance to a range of facilities and services, including Asda Supermarket and the amenities within Huyton Village Shopping Centre.
- 2.2 The site extends to approximately 2.2 hectares and comprises the former Huyton Cricket and Bowls Pavilion (Grade II Listed) and vacant grassland/scrub associated with the site's former use. The site, including the pavilion, has had no formal use since the closure of Huyton Bowls and Cricket Club in 2012. Since then, the site has been subject to trespassing and vandalism, and the former pavilion has deteriorated. The Heritage Impact Assessment [HIA] submitted as part of the application provides a full assessment of the condition and significance of the building.
- 2.3 Of most relevance to this note, the proposed development seeks to refurbish and change the use of the redundant pavilion building, to a flexible end-use within Use Class E, F1 or F2. The works to the Listed Building comprise refurbishment works, making the building safe,

weatherproof and suitable for being brought back into use. Securing a flexible commercial, community or leisure use for the pavilion building will greatly increase the likelihood of it being brought back into use. The proposed development will create 163 sq. m. of gross internal floorspace within Use Classes E, F1 or F2.

3.0 Planning Policy

Adopted Development Plan

- 3.1 The adopted Development Plan for Knowsley comprises the Knowsley Core Strategy [KCS], saved Knowsley Unitary Development Plan [UDP] and the Merseyside and Halton Waste Local Plan.
- 3.2 KCS Policy CS4 (Economy and Employment) states that new retail and other main town uses, as defined in Appendix A of the KCS, will primarily be located within existing town centres. A sequential approach to site selection shall be applied with locations in existing centres of an appropriate scale being considered first, then edge of centre locations. For edge of centre locations, preference will be given to accessible sites that are well connected to the town centre.
- 3.3 KCS Policy CS6 (Town Centres and Retail Strategy) states that proposals for retail and other ‘main town centre uses’ outside the above centres will only be permitted if they would complement regeneration opportunities, avoid significant impact upon the viability and vitality of the centres and comply with Policy CS4.
- 3.4 KCS Policy CS20 (Managing the Borough’s Historic Environment) states that the re-use of vacant and underused historic assets will be encouraged, with favourable consideration given to proposals which will introduce public access.

Material Considerations

- 3.5 Paragraph 91 of the National Planning Policy Framework [the Framework] (December 2024) states that local planning authorities should apply the sequential test to planning applications for main town centre uses which are neither in an existing centre nor in accordance with an up-to-date plan. Main town centre uses should be located in town centres, then in edge of centre locations.
- 3.6 The Town Centres and Retail Planning Practice Guidance [the TCR PPG] supports the Framework and states that “*the application of the test will need to be proportionate and appropriate for the given proposal.*”¹
- 3.7 Paragraph 212 of the Framework states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation.
- 3.8 The Historic Environment PPG [the HE PPG] states that sustaining heritage assets in the long term often requires an incentive for their active conservation. The HE PPG confirms

¹ PPG: 2b-011-20190722

that putting heritage assets to a viable use is likely to lead to the investment in their maintenance necessary for their long-term conservation.

4.0 Development Proposals

- 4.1 The proposed development will bring a disused Grade II Listed Building back into use and provide much-needed repair works to restore the building and secure its long-term future. The application seeks permission for a flexible end use (Use Class E, F1 or F2). Securing a flexible commercial, community or leisure use for the pavilion building will greatly increase the likelihood of it being brought back into use. The HE PPG confirms that putting heritage assets to a viable use is likely to lead to the investment in their maintenance necessary for their long-term conservation.
- 4.2 The creation of Class E, F1 or F2 floorspace as part of the proposed development must be viewed in the context of securing the long-term conservation of a Listed Building which is in a state of disrepair. In accordance with paragraph 212 of the Framework, great weight should be given to the conservation of the asset.
- 4.3 This note does not provide an assessment of the availability and suitability of vacant units in nearby designated centres. Whilst it is possible that similarly sized vacant units exist in sequentially preferable locations, the occupation of these units will clearly not deliver the same benefits associated with the proposed development (i.e., restoring, and securing the future of, the Listed Building). The TCR PPG states that the application for a Sequential Test needs to be proportionate and appropriate for the given proposal. It is considered neither proportionate nor appropriate to compare vacant units that do not deliver the same heritage benefits, regardless of whether they are located within a designated centre.
- 4.4 Notwithstanding the above, the site is located on the edge of the centre, approximately 100m from the designated town centre. As set out in the Planning Statement, the site is sustainably located in close proximity to a number of key services and facilities, as well as public transport infrastructure. The former pavilion benefits from proximity to a number of existing neighbouring dwellings and the proposed 81 dwellings within the site boundary. By virtue of its sustainable location in close proximity to residential uses, and Huyton Town Centre, all proposed uses are considered appropriate in this location.
- 4.5 The proposed development will create 163 sq. m. of gross internal floorspace within Use Class E, F1 or F2. Notwithstanding the above, the limited quantum of development will not significantly impact the viability or vitality of the designated centre. Furthermore, the proposed development will regenerate land within the settlement boundary that has had no formal use or been accessible to the public since 2012.
- 4.6 As the development would represent the regeneration of a vacant site within the settlement boundary and not impact the viability and vitality of the centre, the proposals are considered to accord with KCS Policy CS6 (Town Centres and Retail Strategy).

5.0 Conclusion

- 5.1 This note has been prepared to accompany an application for full planning permission (ref. 25/00458/FUL) and listed building consent for the redevelopment of the former Huyton Cricket Club, Huyton Lane. Of relevance to this note, the proposals seek planning permission for the change of use of the existing redundant pavilion building to a flexible use falling within Use Class E, F1 or F2
- 5.2 As demonstrated throughout this note, the proposed development is necessary to secure the future of the Grade II Listed building which is in a state of disrepair after laying vacant for over 10-years. The conservation of the Listed Building is afforded great weight in the planning balance. It is not considered proportionate or appropriate to compare the site to vacant units within a designated centre, as the proposed development will also secure the long-term future of a Listed Building.
- 5.3 In accordance with the PPG, the sequential test therefore need not be applied. Due to the other associated benefits of the proposed development (securing the long-term future of a designated heritage asset and regenerating a vacant site within the settlement boundary), the former pavilion is considered to be a preferable location for the proposed uses from a planning and conservation perspective against other potential units.
- 5.4 In addition to the aforementioned heritage benefits associated with the scheme, as the proposed development represents regeneration of a vacant site, avoids significant impacts upon the viability and vitality of the town, district and local centres, and is in an edge of centre location, it is considered to accord with the requirements of KCS Policy CS6.