



Kingsmere KME

Planning and Design Statement

On behalf of



*Project Reference*  
*Revision*  
*Date of Issue*  
*Prepared By*  
*Checked By*

LSD211 - Kingsmere

19/12/2016

Sean Duggan

Martin Beattie

Unit 2,  
Preston Lodge Court  
Preston Deanery  
Northampton  
NN7 2DS

Tel: 01604 871199  
Email: [info@lsdev.co.uk](mailto:info@lsdev.co.uk)  
W: [www.design.lsdev.co.uk](http://www.design.lsdev.co.uk)

Copyright 2016



## Contents

	<b>Page</b>
1. Introduction	3
2. Liaison with Cherwell District Council	5
3. The Development Proposal	7
4. Design Code Assessment	8
5. Relevant Planning Policies	13
6. Conclusion	20

# 1. Introduction

1.1. Life Space Design Studio Ltd has been appointed by Bovis Homes Ltd, the ‘applicant’, to prepare this design audit against a full planning application to Cherwell District Council for the construction of 207 residential dwellings as part of the Kingsmere master plan, Bicester, the ‘site’. The description of works for the application is to comprise of the following;

The erection of 207 residential dwellings of 2, 2.5 and 3 storey in scale with associated roads, landscaping and Local Area of Play.

1.2. The proposals relate to the parcel at KME which is bordered by KMC & KMD parcels that are within the Urban Village character area (parcel KMF is as yet un-developed). Kingsmere is 12 miles from Oxford, one of the fastest growing and diverse cities in England. The Kingsmere master plan is shown below;

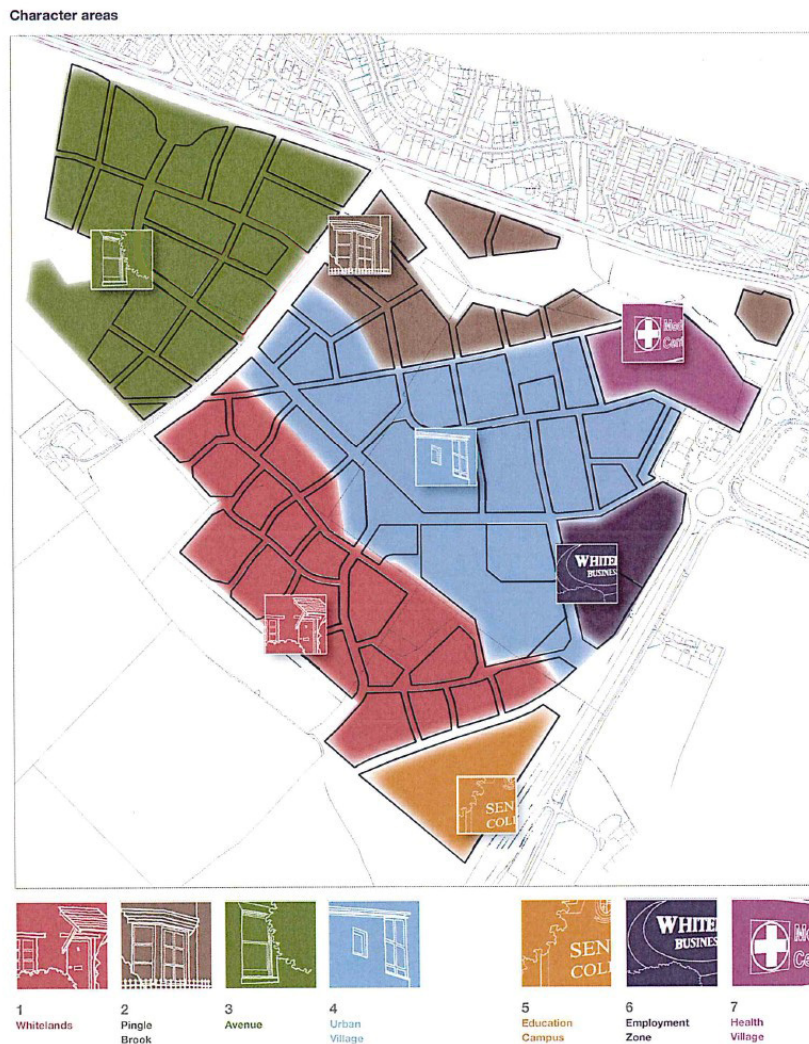


1.3. The purpose of this audit is to demonstrate the layout’s compliance to the Kingsmere Design Code and to verify whether it has addressed both formal and informal comments as an aspect of the design evolution. This process will explore the key criteria as determined by the Design Code July 2008 and apply where necessary within the contextual relationship of the other parcels. The criteria of the Design Code are based on the Policy H13 within the un-adopted Cherwell Local plan. This policy pertains to the inclusion of strategic infrastructure, primary streets, strategic



foul and surface water drainage, structural landscaping, informal public open space and greenways or retained rights of way.

- 1.4. The Design Code aims to provide consistency for the preparation of proposals for Kingsmere by providing detailed design requirements as outlined above. This Code document is to be used as a material consideration and identifies a series of mandatory and flexible requirements that allows for a standard of development and the interpretation for innovation.
- 1.5. The parcel KME is within the Urban Village character area which is notated as blue on the below plan. The Urban Village is characterized by enclosed streets lined with a mixture of building types and styles. Key characteristics include as follows:- most compact with greatest street enclosure, taller buildings, strong urban corners, opportunity for contemporary architecture with buildings employed using either horizontal or vertical emphasis. Also development within secondary and tertiary routes being less formal/irregular blocks.



## 2. Liaison with Cherwell District Council

- 2.1. A previous Design Audit undertaken in February 2013 for parcel KM3 identified the primary issues raised in respect of the layout;
- House Types
  - Landscaping
  - Landmark Buildings
  - Development facing Greenway and Primary Street
  - Parking Courtyard Design and Car Parking Locations
- 2.2. This new parcel KME has received a pre-application response dated 12<sup>th</sup> December 2016 outline reference 06/00967/OUT
- 2.3. The design evolution outlined below establishes the layouts that are made aware by Bovis Homes to Life Space Design Studio. A full summary is provided to the layout iterations at all the stages, the feedback received and the improved variation up until the latest drawing which will form the main assessment of this document.
- 2.4. Iteration one, the proposal is for 207 residential dwellings with a dominant secondary street curving from north to east and then south again. The design creates a series of tight built frontages and minor soft frontages with parking adjacent to the road and ancillary rear parking courtyards. There is also a Local Area of Play in the center of the layout which is a focal space bounded by dwellings. There is a use of mews drives as opposed to side street construction.



- 2.5. Iteration two included an added advantage of parking courtyards and the adaptation of mews style roads to full adoptable side streets. These additions allow for a greater adoption of the design codes and is a positive improvement to the layout. The Local Area of Play is also more central and provides an easier relief from the eastern boundary. There are possible improvements that can be added at this stage such as the frontage along the northern aspect, cohesive affordable core, less adjacent on street parking and a reduction in the density of parking courtyards.



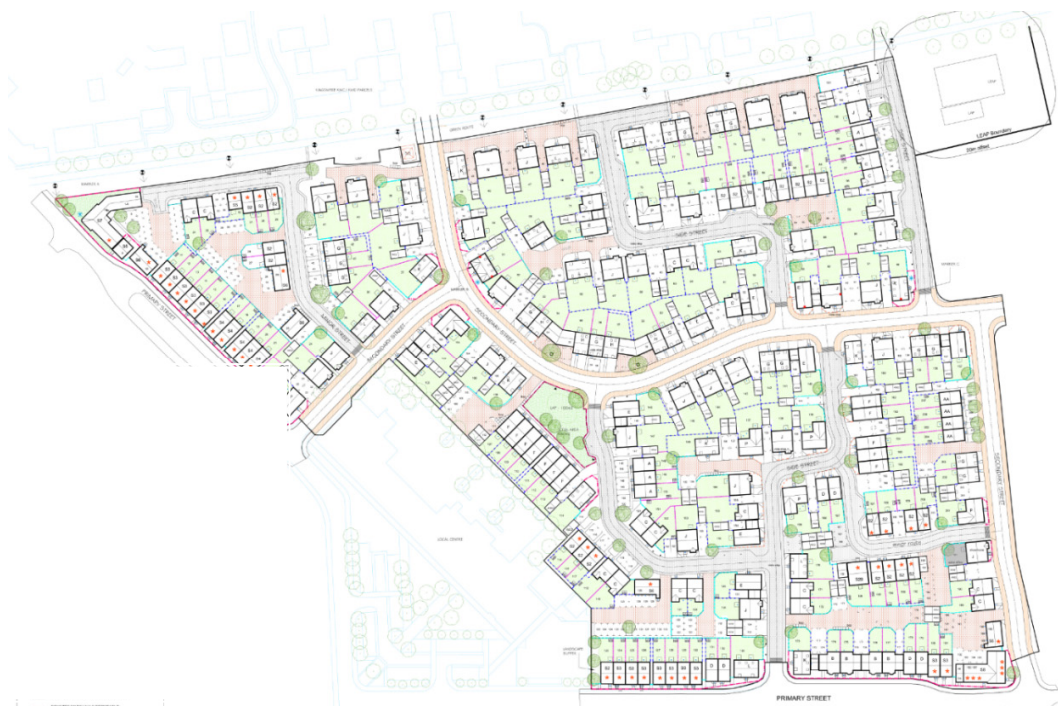
- 2.6. Iteration three. This variant primarily had reduced parking in rear courtyard spaces and sought to address frontages along Secondary Streets to be more parallel as opposed to staggered. The frontage was also addressed in tertiary spaces such as behind the Local Centre for plot 112 which then became plot 107 in this iteration. This provided for a more cohesive frontage for natural surveillance over the Local Area of Play which added to the central identity of the layout. The affordable areas have also become more cohesive to create three specific spaces as opposed to four. This layout has evolved since the second iteration to become more simplistic and efficient.



- 2.7. After further discussions with Cherwell District Council, the comments received were to continue refining the layout specifically around the Marker A and associated parking areas, the closing of vistas and principal entrances. Furthermore there was an issue regarding the exposed gable of a unit type on the layout.

### 3. The Development Proposal

- 3.1. The revised proposal is promoted by Bovis Homes which is intended to be submitted for planning permission.
- 3.2. The layout follows the elements and principles of the Design Code and its parameter plans that form the block structures which are generally delineated by primary and secondary routes to form 'Mega-blocks'. Whilst 'mega-blocks' are mandatory, the 'mini-blocks' within (see fig 3.19 of DC) have a degree of flexibility, providing the routes between neighbouring areas and open spaces remain simple, rational and legible. The north-south 'side streets' through the layout provide a linear model adoptive of the 'lesser routes and avenues' urban hierarchy. This gives opportunities for the route to be defined with more vista or corner buildings increasing legibility. This alignment gives more variety in the mini blocks and can potentially assist with slowing traffic on these side street routes.
- 3.3. The schedule of accommodation on the site is for a total of 207 residential dwellings varying from one and two bedroom flats, two through to five bedroom houses. The split between affordable and private is 32.4% and the revised layout provides three cohesive affordable areas. The total net development area is composed of 13.2 Acres within a site area of 13.7 Acres.
- 3.4. The Local Area of Play is still central to the layout with improved natural surveillance and landscaping to provide a greater identity. The pavement areas within the layout are often met with soft landscaping and minor trees to reduce the visual impact of the built form.





## 4. Design Code Assessment

- 4.1. The Design Codes are to be assessed against the layout with the following subheadings; townscape, scale, density, architectural strategy, materials, contextual relationships, street design, parking and landscaping. These are addressed in turn in the sections below.

### Townscape

- 4.2. Using the Design Code guidance from 3.3 *Urban Form* the latest iteration of the layout maintains the defining street continuing from south, east and then south again from the northern boundary of the site. This helps frame the Marker B and C aspects that are landmark features within the layout to assist in orientation. The total built frontage of this defining street provides active frontage that maintains a continuous presence and natural surveillance over the streetscape.
- 4.3. The layout creates a series of outward vistas and views such as the aspect of Marker A to the north-west that is adjoining the 'Green Route' and supplementary Kingsmere parcels. A further example is the southern and eastern aspect of the site that provides a unique set of serial views across a 'Primary Street', 'Secondary Street' and 'Side Street'. This attribute has the greatest set of application to threshold and verge details in conjunction with the road.
- 4.4. The proposed building lines maintain a coherent frontage with a set of pre-determined set back distances depending on the relationship with their associated parking attribute. An example of this is parking in front of the dwelling or to the side. The distances provide a varying degree of defensible space as well as helping to soften the built environment on the street scene so as to not appear overly dominating and to create a more ecologically healthy area. The design therefore adopts the Design Code elements and adheres to the guidance of the parameter plan figure 3.22.

### Scale

- 4.5. The proposal consists generally of a mix of 2, 2.5 and 3 storey dwellings which is in accordance with the Code (fig 4.8b). The larger scale buildings are used to define key frontages along the primary streets on the southern and north-western aspects of the site. This is fully consistent with fig.4.8b of the Design Code which relates to building heights for the Urban Village area. The code calls for taller buildings of upto 4 storey to help define primary streets.

### Density

- 4.6. The total net development area as specified is 13.2 Acres with a total site area of 13.7 Acres, thereby the residential density of 37 dwellings per hectare. This is in compliance with the specification of the Kingsmere Design Code.

### Architectural Strategy

- 4.7. Layout and buildings combine to address the identified character of the 'Urban Village' which consists of a mix of buildings and styles to provide a rich and varied townscape in this area. The

urban grain is more compact with greater emphasis on street enclosure and as discussed in 'scale', the verticality is accentuated. Dwellings are closer to the pavement with street greenery largely limited to trees and street furniture. These elements are identified on page 107 of the code to provide a hard and distinctive public realm that is key to this character area and focal to the whole development.

- 4.8. Windows are designed with a vertical emphasis. On corner turning aspects such as Marker A, the roofline follows the corner and on the corner turner to the south-east the building form provides a gable end. This variation of detail accords with the response to the primary street as well as the green route. The Design Codes are further reinforced with 85% of the coverage being narrow frontage dwellings.
- 4.9. The terrace blocks are designed to be no more than five in a singular run, with the dominant variation being three in a run. There is a larger compliment of groups that are detached, demonstrating the simple nature of the strategy. The greater runs of terraced units are present within the primary fringes to the south and overlooking the LAP in the centre of the layout.
- 4.10. Corner buildings address both sides of the street, and lineate themselves to the one that is most prominent in terms of character and urban hierarchy. An example of this is from the northern entrance where the units that form the gateway are aligned parallel to the secondary street and not the shared driveways which helps ensure the design makes a fundamental contribution to the series of spaces and routes within the area. The architecture will help reinforce the Urban Village character area which ranges from grandeur to intimacy and combines to define the hierarchy of routes. Taking guidance from the code at 3.3 'Architectural Strategy' which was intern informed by the study of the local vernacular design.

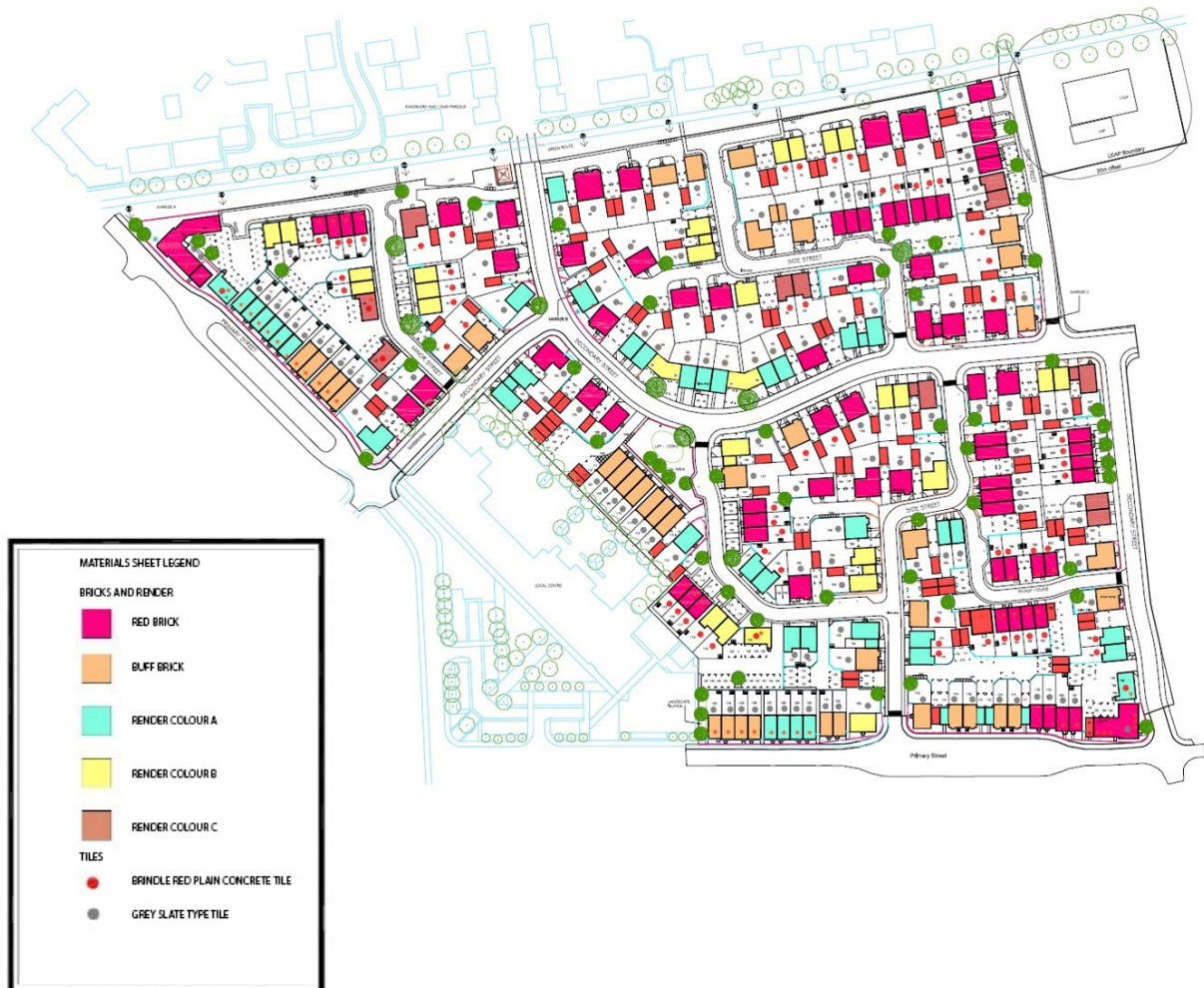
### Marker Buildings

- 4.11. Marker building A is located on the north-western most aspect of the site adjacent to the Green Route to the north and Primary Street to the west. The building is three storey, dropping to two with a hipped roof element with an added chamfered corner to meet the brief of the code. All Marker buildings are designed with the traditional Bicester Market Square in mind with the aim to reflect the character and heritage of the wider context. Pictures are shown below;
- 4.12. Marker building B is located within the Secondary Street Spine through the layout and is distinctive with a double fronted double with white render, sash style windows and black header/cill detailing. This is met in opposite by the continuation of the secondary street and acts as a vista stop for orientation within the layout.
- 4.13. Marker C is located on the eastern fringe of the Secondary Street on the turning to the Side Street. The building is buff brickwork, red voussoirs and distinctive red quoining with sash windows. This is similarly expressed as per the pictures outlined below, on the left.



**Materials**

- 4.14. The proposed building materials were chosen to reflecting the existing built environment as demonstrated within the Design Code and as present in the surrounding ‘Urban Village’ Character area. The material variation within the site has been established to create a mixture of localities and sub-character areas within the site limits. This further generates the interpretation of the space to allow for an ease of legibility and greater orientation in conjunction with the landmark buildings.
- 4.15. All of the materials are in accordance with the code (see page 112 of the code). The dominant brick for the proposed design is the Red brick which accounts for approximately 40% with a further 10% in buff brick. The code also calls for 50% to use a through colour render in the ‘Urban Village’ character area. Other approximate proportions that are followed from the code is for 70% to use artificial grey slate and 30% Brindle Red plain concrete tiles on the roofs. The approach to the material assignment has been largely uniform distribution with the added coherence of render and yellow stock brick to the Primary streets and central core of the layout. The materials schedule is best detailed by the diagram as under.



### Contextual Relationships

- 4.16. By carefully considering the requirements of the code with regards architecture, character, layout and materials the design scheme adopts the key principles of urbanity and provides a transition to the Persimmon Homes sites KMC & KMD beyond. The prominence of render in the development will help relate to the local centre and primary school sites to the south which are required to adopt a distinctive architecture using quality materials and finish. Render is often used on such landmark areas as part of a palette of materials to signify them as key buildings. Where the layout borders the local centre near plot 123, a landscape buffer is included to provide a screen and a transition between the residential and retail/community area. The school and local centre are identified as being within the same 'Urban Village' character area of the code therefore it is important there is a strong identification between this KME residential parcel and the social centre it merges into.
- 4.17. The connectivity can then be established as a positive network of permeable spaces with a cohesive legible development for a more established community. The transport access between the varying parcels is also well considered with sustainability in mind to reduce the region's carbon emissions as well as promote a positive individual and communal lifestyle.

### Street Design

- 4.18. Parcel KME is defined by a Secondary Street. The site utilizes such a street as the formal lineation of the site from north, east then south and throughout the layout this lineation branches into side streets and minor routes to infill the voids to cater vehicular access to the dwellings within. The various route hierarchies conform to the design code in order to maintain the character of Kingsmere as well as reinforce the standard of design.
- 4.19. The code identifies the streetscape requirements of the public realm for the Urban Village character area on page 114. Primary streets will have pavements either side and lined with contemporary railings to delineate private space from the public realm. Turning into secondary streets the hierarchy is reduced by the use of low picket fences or simple grassed/planted front gardens which is also applicable to side street areas. Minor streets and mews areas will utilize hard landscaping , gravel trim or small planted front gardens.
- 4.20. The layout further adopts the requirements of the code with use of asphaltic surfacing on the secondary streets with buff concrete slabs to pavements and conservation concrete kerbs. Moving into side streets the emphasis to a more pedestrian shared surface is evident in the use of porous grey paving that is also used on pavements and defined by flush conservation channels. A similar approach is also adopted on Minor Streets or Mews but with a light/cool grey porous block paving used. The design requirements of each street hierarchy is detailed on page 53 of the code which also highlights envisaged design speeds.



11



### Parking

- 4.21. All properties provide the required number of parking spaces with a minimum of two as per the code and the latest requirement of the local plan. They are provided in varying ways such as courtyards, side and front bays and also garages which are attached or detached from the property and set back further from the street scene. Parking and cycle storage requirements are covered in the code on page 74. Generally parking is provided on plot or in secure communal parking areas with visitor spaces will generally use shared public on street parking.
- 4.22. Provision is made for covered and secured cycle parking within all garages. Those properties without garages provide a garden cycle store in the form of a lockable timber shed. Apartments will have dedicated cycle stores and bin stores.
- 4.23. Bovis have submitted a Parking and Refuse Strategy Plan as part of this application and this highlights the compliance with regards local parking and refuse requirements.
- 4.24. The allocation of the various types of parking treatment has been done in correspondence to the street scene and property type. Parking courtyards are placed off the streets with the entrance clearly demarcated whilst the vehicular image is obscured by the built form. All elements of parking are under natural surveillance from an adjacent property which helps to deter crime as well as provide a more cohesive and legible layout.

### Landscaping

- 4.25. A Local Area of Play (LAP) is provided in the central identity of the layout which is defined by the Secondary Street, Side Street and four sides of the built form. All aspects of this area is naturally surveyed by properties and is landscaped to allow for recreation as required. This designated area is designed to be within walking distance from the surrounding development, hence its central identity and as to why the site exemplifies permeable movement within. This location has been amended and the LAP redesigned from that presented at pre-app to address comments from Tim Screens. Further details are submitted with this submission.





## 5. Relevant Planning Policies

- 5.1. This section provides a summary of national and local planning policy relevant to the consideration of the proposal.

### National Planning Policy Framework

- 5.2. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) outlines national policy guidance and the foreword explains that the purpose of planning is to help achieve sustainable development and that it should go ahead without delay.
- 5.3. The key principle of the NPPF as set out in paragraph 14 of the document is a presumption in favour of sustainable development and Local Planning Authorities (LPA) are directed to approve development proposals that accord with the development plan, or where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date.
- 5.4. A series of 12 'Core Planning Principles' are set out at paragraph 17 which require that planning proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver homes, business and industrial units, infrastructure and local places that the country needs. The most specifically relevant Core principles to the application land are listed as under, these will be explored in the following sub-sections;
- 4 - Promoting sustainable transport
  - 6 - Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes
  - 7 - Requiring good design
  - 8 - Promoting healthy communities
  - 10 - Meeting the challenge of climate change and flooding
  - 11 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

### 4 - Promoting Sustainable Transport

- 5.5. Sustainable transport is addressed in favour of transport modes to grant the public body a choice as to their means of travel. The Government recognises that different local policies and infrastructure networks are required in different communities to maximise sustainable transport. There is encouragement to present solutions which support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and congestion.
- 5.6. Paragraph 35 states *Plans should protect and exploit opportunities for the use of sustainable transport modes for the movement of goods or people. Therefore, developments should be located and designed where practical to;*
- *Accommodate the efficient delivery of goods and supplies*
  - *Give priority of pedestrian and cycle movements, and have access to high quality public transport facilities*

- *Create safe and secure layouts which minimise conflicts between traffic and cyclists or pedestrians, avoiding street clutter and where appropriate establishing home zones*
- *Incorporate facilities for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles, and*
- *Consider the needs of people with disabilities by all modes of transport.*

5.7. The proposal recognises and supports the implementation of a strategy to help integrate the application land in order to help future residents have a choice as to their means of travel. The footpaths provided within the layout are well connected to the Primary Streets to improve pedestrian permeability to this transport amenity.

## **6 - Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes**

5.8. Paragraph 47 states *Local Planning Authorities should use their evidence base to ensure that their Local Plan meets the full needs for market and affordable housing in the housing market area, as far as is consistent with the policies...identifying key sites which are critical to the delivery of the housing strategy over the plan period.* And to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years' worth of housing against their housing requirements.

5.9. Paragraph 49 details that Housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up-to-date if the Local Planning Authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites.

5.10. Paragraph 50 explains that to deliver a *wide choice of high quality homes, opportunities for home ownership and create sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities, local planning authorities should;*

- Plan for a mix of housing
- Identify size, type, tenure and range that is reflective of local demand
- Set policies for meeting affordable housing need, on or off site or a financial contribution

5.11. The reserved matters development plan details an accommodation schedule as presented earlier in this statement, which entails a mixture of housing in terms of size, type, tenure and range that is reflective of the local demand. There will also be an affordable housing provision of 67 units on site.

## **7 - Requiring Good Design**

5.12. Paragraph 56 outlines the need for good design is a key aspect of sustainable development. It is indivisible from good planning and contributes to the betterment of place making for the public body. The proposed elevations for the residential dwellings show an appearance that is in keeping with the local aesthetic and materiality of Bicester and Kingsmere Design Codes whilst also using high quality materials and rationalised design principles to generate quality architecture.

- 5.13. Paragraph 66 demonstrates that applicants will be expected to work closely with those directly affected by their proposals to evolve designs that take account of the views of the community. The layout underwent detailed evolution through a lengthy consultation process. The development layout, scale, massing, footprint, street scape and appearance have evolved based on the comments and considerations from this consultation with the community, authorities, organisations and professionals.

#### **8 - Promoting Healthy Communities**

- 5.14. Promoting healthy communities is a prime consideration of a major development as it helps shape the existing urban / rural built environment in both the social and economic context. Paragraph 69 of the NPPF outlines that *The planning system can play an important role in facilitating social interaction and creating healthy, inclusive communities. Local planning authorities should create a shared vision with communities of the residential environment and facilities they wish to see...should aim to achieve places which promote;*

- *Opportunities for meetings between members of the community who might not otherwise come into contact with each other, including through mixed-use developments, strong neighbourhood centres and active street frontages which bring together those who work, live and play in the vicinity*
- *Safety and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion; and*
- *Safe and accessible developments, containing clear and legible pedestrian routes, and high quality public space, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas.*

- 5.15. The proposed development creates open spaces and designated play areas to grant members of the public the opportunity to meet with each other. The implementation of active frontages throughout the development helps promote the engagement of neighbours through their individual activity. This also improves natural surveillance and becomes a deterrent for crime and disorder, and aids to the legibility of the street scene.

#### **10 - Meeting the challenge of climate change and flooding**

- 5.16. Paragraph 100 details the *inappropriate development risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk, but where development is necessary, making it safe without increasing flood risk elsewhere.* Planning application sites should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by means of protecting valued landscape, geological conservation interests and soils, biodiversity, air, water or noise pollution.

#### **11 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment**

- 5.17. Paragraph 109 encourages the contribution and enhancement of the natural and local environment by;
- Protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, geological conservation interests and soils
  - Recognising the wider benefits of ecosystem services

- Minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible, contributing to the Government's commitment to half the overall decline in biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures
  - Preventing both new and existing development from contributing to or being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of soil, air, water, or noise pollution or land instability; and
  - Remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.
- 5.18. The proposal seeks to incorporate landscaped areas throughout the development to maintain a strong presence of green infrastructure. The hedgerows and boundary aspects will be maintained and encouraged as stated earlier in the document to further biodiversity and net gains in wildlife and habitat.

### **Development Plan Policy - Adopted Cherwell Local Plan**

- 5.19. The Cherwell Local Plan is prepared by Cherwell District Council under the provisions of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning & Compensation Act, 1991. The plan covers the period up to 2001 although there have been saved policies that are carried forward and still considered to be applicable.
- 5.20. The functions of the Plan are;
- To develop the policy and general proposals of the approved Oxfordshire Structure Plan and to relate them to precise areas of land
  - To provide a detailed basis for development control throughout the District
  - To provide a detailed basis for co-ordinating the development and other use of land in the District; and
  - To bring local and detailed planning issues before the public.
- 5.21. The identified Saved Policies that are applicable to the development are noted as follows and will be explained to better demonstrate how the proposal meets each policy;

H18	New dwellings in the countryside
C2	Protected species
C5	Creation of new habitats
C7	Harm to the topography and character of the landscape
C28	Layout, design and external appearance of new development
C30	Design of new residential development
R12	Public open space provision
ENV12	Contaminated Land
TR1	Transportation Funding

**H18 - New dwellings in the countryside**

- 5.22. *Planning permission will only be granted for the construction of new dwellings beyond the built-up limits of settlements other than those identified under Policy H1 when -*
- (i) *It is essential for agriculture or other existing undertakings, or*
  - (ii) *The proposal meets the criteria set out in Policy H6; and*
  - (iii) *The proposal would not conflict with other policies in this plan*
- 5.23. Policy H6 details that new dwellings beyond the built-up limits of settlements can be considered acceptable for small-scale housing to help meet a specific and identified local housing need. The site assessment concluded that the development of the Kingsmere as a whole site is to proceed.

**C2 - Protected Species & C5 - Creation of new Habitats**

- 5.24. *Development which would adversely affect any species protected by Schedule 1, Schedule 5 and Schedule 8 of the 1981 wildlife and countryside act, and by the E.C. Habitats Directive 1992 will not normally be permitted.*
- 5.25. The developer has submitted and liaised with chartered ecologists to ensure that any loss of habitat or damage to wildlife, including protected species is mitigated within best practice. The implementation of local nature reserves have the benefit of providing recreational and educational potential as well as playing a protective role in enhancing biodiversity and habitat.

**C7 - Harm to the topography and character of the landscape**

- 5.26. *Development will not normally be permitted if it would cause demonstrable harm to the topography and character of the landscape.*
- 5.27. The proposed application land is of a reasonable gradient, the layout of the development will not require any mass excavations in order to erect the new residential dwellings. The topography will be otherwise unchanged aside from the depressions of two attenuation basins as deemed suitable to mitigate flood and increase wildlife. The proposal also maintains much of the existing established planting around the perimeter of the site and bolsters it with new additional planting. Layout provides a setback in the built-form from the boundaries to further aid the proposals setting and improving the impact on the character of the area. Therefore the proposed site is largely visually contained.

**C28 - Layout, design and external appearance of new development**

- 5.28. *Control will be exercised over all new development, including conversions and extensions, to ensure that the standards of layout, design and external appearance, including the choice of external-finish materials, are sympathetic to the character of the urban or rural context of that development. In sensitive areas such as conservation areas, the area of outstanding natural*



*beauty and areas of high landscape value, development will be required to be of a high standards and the use of traditional local building materials will normally be required.*

- 5.29. The material setting of the character area varies between brickwork and render as the dominant facing material. The historic core is primarily stone with a slate or concrete type tile roof with some exceptions of thatched variants. There is a presence of large glazed timber and UPVC fenestration in the area including skylights and dormers.
- 5.30. The proposed design for the scheme strongly relates to the existing settlement of Kingsmere by way of layout, scale, amount, massing and appearance. A thorough assessment of the context of the site and surroundings has shaped the initial thought processes with regards to the impact on physical, social and economic context.
- 5.31. This then informed the next phase of consultation by seeking local community involvement in informing the design. Understanding the local communities' requirements and the way the design can be shaped to become a part of the community. Together with collating the input from the right professionals to identify further how the scheme should evolve.
- 5.32. Evaluating these constraints and opportunities instructs the thought processes by highlighting conflicts and ensuring a full understanding of the site. Guided by this information the design has evolved through a number of sketch evolutions to present an attractive, inclusive and well-designed scheme that fully understands the unique nature of the site.
- 5.33. The design demonstrates a welcoming of both opportunities and constraints of a range of tenures and requirements. Applying a high standard of design that goes beyond current standards to future proof dwellings. This fundamentally ensures the design is highly sustainable and creatively provides much needed homes and amenity that will enhance and improve Kingsmere as a place to live for all existing and future occupants.

### **C30 - Design of new residential development**

- 5.34. Design control will be exercised to ensure:
- (i) *That new housing development is compatible with the appearance, character, layout, scale and density of existing dwellings in the vicinity;*
  - (ii) *That any proposal to extend an existing dwelling (in cases where planning permission is required) is compatible with the scale of the existing dwelling. Its curtilage and the character of the street scene;*
  - (iii) *That new housing development or any proposal for the extension (in cases where planning permission is required) or conversion of an existing dwelling provides standards of amenity and privacy acceptable to the local planning authority.*
- 5.35. The design of the proposal aims to achieve environmental enhancement through new development by respecting and continuing the architectural language and built form of The Avenue Character Area. The layout provides a strong series of aspects of natural surveillance over the streetscapes and open areas of recreation to assist in designing out crime.

- 5.36. The appearance responds to the site and surrounding through understanding of the immediate site and then the wider surroundings of Kingsmere, Bicester. Understanding how the settlement has evolved over time and the vernacular that defines Bicester's Character. Using the classic phrase 'the devil is in the detail' the design utilizes many key details and forms in shaping the appearance. Particularly materials, fenestration, scale, massing, boundary treatments, and locally replicated detailing.

#### **R12 - Public open space provision**

- 5.37. *The District Council will normally require in connection with all new housing developments the minimum provision of 2.43ha (6acres) of public open space per 1,000 population.*
- 5.38. The application site includes a series of open spaces and recreational areas to help promote a sense of play. The site increases 207 dwellings to the area, likely 600+ persons. The amenity space proposed within the application is as under;
- (i) Amenity open space: 0.48Ha
  - (ii) Children's play space: 100m<sup>2</sup>

## 6. Conclusion

- 6.1. The assessment has verified that the Applicant, Bovis Homes, has demonstrated the adherence to the Cherwell District Council Policies and Kingsmere Design Codes of the Urban Village character area for parcel KME. Given the performance of their neighbouring developments this is considered a positive next chapter to the Kingsmere built environment.
- 6.2. The proposal has undergone numerous discussions of varying grades and depths to further evolve the scheme and to ensure it is an extensively well considered scheme. This evolution has been reflected within the design iterations and the changes made. The proposal represents a strong piece of residential urban design with an adherence to the code, and relates to the surroundings in manners of the immediate context and wider context.
- 6.3. The materials and architectural language of the proposal is well considered and demonstrates modern materials to create engaging and active street design. The legibility of the scheme as a result of the landmark buildings is exemplary through the use of serial vision and vista stops. The provision of a central nodal identity further adds to the layout's legibility and provides a strong core for architectural character and diversity in the urban grain.
- 6.4. It is the view of this report that the proposal in its current form when assessed against the local policies and design code is presentable for planning submission. The design has been developed with the Cherwell District Council and has undergone numerous iterations to achieve this standard which would provide a strong and well integrated development for Kingsmere.