

KINGSMERE LOCAL CENTRE BICESTER

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

PREPARED BY PEGASUS GROUP
P17-0635 | 26 06 2017





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Design and Access Statement - VERSION 1

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“THE GOVERNMENT ATTACHES GREAT IMPORTANCE TO THE DESIGN OF THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT. GOOD DESIGN IS A KEY ASPECT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, IS INDIVISIBLE FROM GOOD PLANNING, AND SHOULD CONTRIBUTE POSITIVELY TO MAKING PLACES BETTER FOR PEOPLE.” (PARA. 56 & 57, NPPF 2012).

CONTENTS

| | | | |
|------------------|---|----------------------|---|
| PAGE 4 | 1 | PAGE 10 | 2 |
| INTRODUCTION | | ASSESSMENT | |
| PAGE 14 | 3 | PAGE 18 | 4 |
| DESIGN PROPOSALS | | SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS | |

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PURPOSE OF THE STATEMENT

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|-----|---|-----|---|--|
| 1.1 | This Design and Access Statement (DAS) has been prepared by Pegasus Group to accompany the full planning application for the erection of nine residential dwellings above the Kingsmere Local Centre, Bicester. | 1.4 | The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 also states the following requirements: (2) An application for planning permission to which this article applies shall be accompanied by a statement (“a design and access statement”) about: <i>(a) the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the development; and</i> <i>(b) how issues relating to access to the development have been dealt with.</i> (3) A design and access statement shall: <i>(a) explain the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the development;</i> | <i>(b) demonstrate the steps taken to appraise the context of the development and how the design of the development takes that context into account;</i> <i>(c) explain the policy adopted as to access, and how policies relating to access in relevant local development documents have been taken into account;</i> <i>(d) state what, if any, consultation has been undertaken on issues relating to access to the development and what account has been taken of the outcome of any such consultation; and</i> <i>(e) explain how any specific issues which might affect access to the development have been addressed.”</i> |
| 1.2 | This statement has been prepared in accordance with Article 9 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015, which requires certain applications to be accompanied by a DAS. | | | |
| 1.3 | The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) states that a Design and Access Statement is a “concise report that provides a framework for applications to explain how the proposed development is a suitable response to the site and its setting and demonstrate that it can be adequately accessed by prospective users”. | | | |

01 INTRODUCTION

DOCUMENT STRUCTURE

1.5 The DAS is divided into four sections as follows:

Section 1 - Introduction - outlines the purpose of the document;

Section 2 - Assessment - considers the site and its surroundings in terms of the physical, social and planning context as part of Article 8(3)(b) and 8(3)(c) DMPO 2010 (as amended 2013) requirements;

Section 3 - Design Proposals - presentation of the design proposals including uses and amount proposed, access arrangements, layout of the development, scale of buildings, landscaping treatments and appearance, as required within Article 8(3)(a) & (4)(c) DMPO 2010 (as amended 2013);

SECTION 4 - Summary of Proposals - Sets out a summary of the DAS

1.6 This statement should be read in conjunction with the full planning application and its accompanying documents.

CONSULTANTS

1.7 This document has been prepared by Pegasus Group, with contributions from the following consultants who have helped prepare the submission:

Pegasus Group

Planning Statement
Design and Access Statement

High Lane Design

Site Location Plans & supporting plans

SUMMARY OF THE PLANNING APPLICATION

1.8 The proposed development seeks full planning permission for the change of use from office space to form nine residential dwellings above the local centre Kingsmere, Bicester. These changes are considered to be minor alterations to those details previously approved through Reserved Matters Application (15/02103/REM).

1.9 This application provides a new floor plan and updated external elevations to the first floor of the Local Centre to accommodate nine residential flats in place of office space.

THE SITE

- 1.10 Full planning permission is sought for nine residential dwellings to replace office space above the Kingsmere Local Centre, Bicester. These nine dwellings are to be considered in addition to the previously approved 1,685 dwellings at Kingsmere - taking the total number of dwellings to 1,694.
- 1.11 The proposed development has been informed by relevant planning policy, detailed analysis of the site and its local surroundings and through pre-application engagement with Cherwell District Council.
- 1.12 The application site comprises a total area of 0.85 hectares within the wider 116 hectare Kingmere Urban Extension.
- SITE HISTORY
- 1.13 The site has a detailed planning history which is important in setting the scene for this application.
- 1.14 Following promotion by landowners Countryside, the Kingsmere site was included within the Cherwell District Council Non-Statutory Local Plan as a strategic development for up to 1,585 dwellings.
- 1.15 In 2008 planning permission was granted at Kingsmere (Planning Application Reference 06/00967/OUT) for :
- Up to 1,585 dwellings;
 - A health village containing a wide range of health facilities (2.69 ha)
 - A hotel (1 ha)
 - **A Local Centre comprising small scale shops, a community centre and possibly some other facilities such as a pub or restaurant,**
 - 1 Primary School
 - 1 Secondary School
 - Formal and informal areas of open space including a sports pavilion and playing pitches
 - A new by-pass linking to the A41
- 1.16 As part of a reserved matters application, a Design Code has been adopted by the Council for the Kingsmere development in 2008 and provides a guide for the planning and design principles behind the site. This document will be referred to throughout this DAS.
- 1.17 Subsequent to the approval of (06/00967/OUT) a further outline planning application was approved for 100 dwellings (13/00433/OUT) which were considered in addition to the 1,585 previously approved. This increased the total number of dwellings permitted at Kingsmere to 1,685. Again in 2014 a similar outline permission was granted (14/01207/OUT) for a further 46 dwellings taking the total number approved at Kingsmere to 1731.
- 1.18 It is therefore considered that this application for 9 residential dwellings within the Local Centre, should be considered in addition to those previously approved. This would take the total number of dwellings up to 1,740 dwellings.

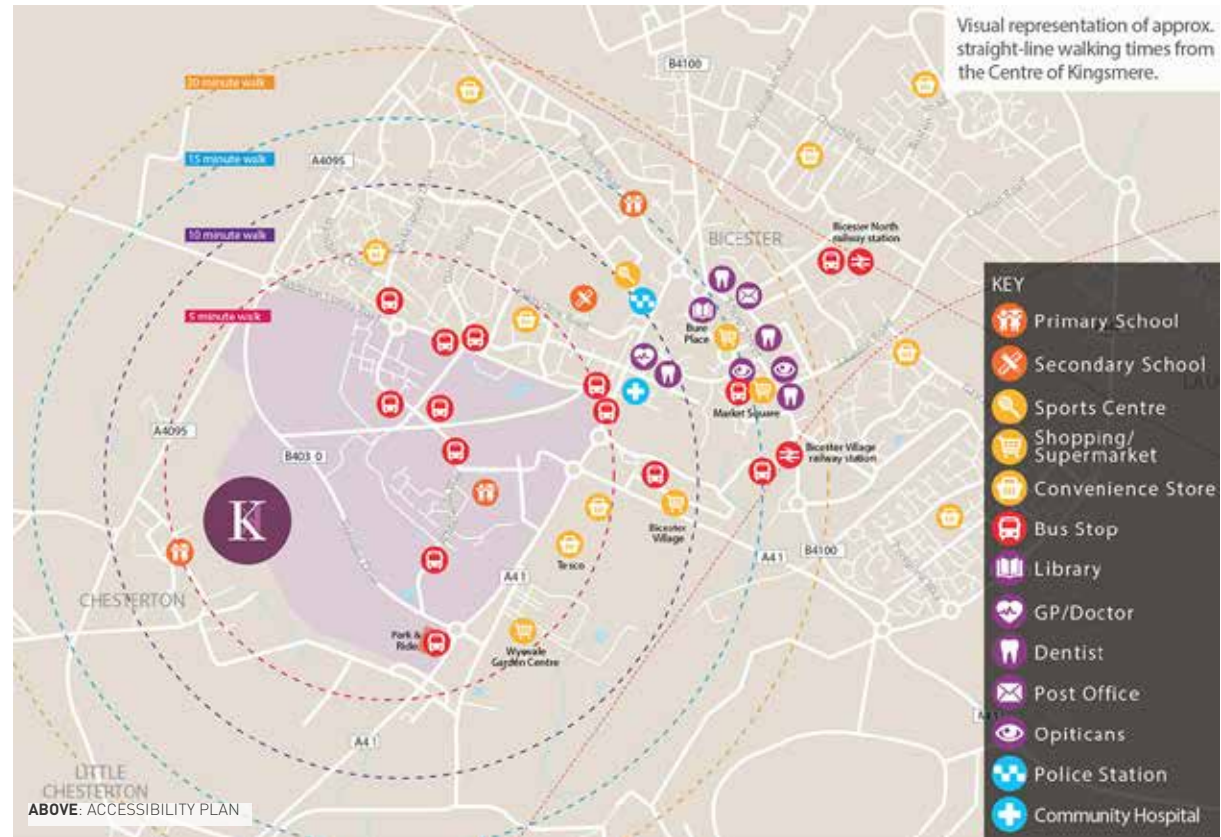
SITE CONTEXT

- 1.19 The site is comprised of an enclosed area of previously undeveloped land which has been prepared for development as part of the wider Kingsmere Local Centre.
- 1.20 The plan opposite highlights the different development parcels across the site highlighting a number of different house builders active in different areas. This plan also highlights the location of the Local Centre shown Blue in the centre of the site with a frontage onto the main road through the site.
- 1.21 The location of the Village Centre is right in the heart of the new village where it can be easily accessed by the vast majority of new residents on foot or by bicycle. Surrounding land uses include a new primary school, a public square, open space and housing.



ACCESSIBILITY

- 1.22 Kingsmere Urban Extension is situated to the south west of Bicester adjoining the urban area. The sites location enables it to make use of the services and facilities provided within Bicester Town Centre and also Bicester Village shopping centre. These areas provide a wide range of convenience retail shops. These wide ranging services and facilities are shown on the plan adjacent.
- 1.23 The Kingsmere Local Centre has planning permission (15/02103/REM) to provide a community Centre (Class D1), a Youth Centre (Class D1), a Nursery (Class D1), A Convenience Store (Class A1 and 4 retail units (Class A1/A2/A3/A4 and /or A5). It is envisaged that these facilities will provide for the every day needs of new residents within the Kingsmere Urban Extension while also contributing to a vibrant village centre.
- 1.24 The plan opposite highlights those facilities which are easily accessible from the site for the new residents.



CYCLE ACCESSIBILITY

- 1.25 The site also benefits from a series of dedicated and shared cycle routes. These routes connect Kingsmere to Bicester Town Centre and the countryside.
- 1.26 These cycle routes enable local residents to have the opportunity to cycle into the town centre and to the train stations where they are able to make connections to the wider area in a sustainable way without the need for using their cars.

TRAIN ACCESSIBILITY

- 1.27 There are two train stations located within Bicester, Bicester village Station 1.1 miles away from the local centre, and Bicester North which is 1.4 miles away from the local centre.
- 1.28 Both stations provide connections to a range of destinations including London Marylebone, Birmingham, Banbury, and Oxford.



PLANNING POLICY

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 3.29 The NPPF was published on the 27th March 2012 and replaces previous national planning guidance set out in Planning Policy Guidance and Planning Policy Statements.
- 3.30 The requirement to ensure good design in new development is set out in section 7 of the NPPF. Planning decisions should aim to ensure that developments;
- Function well and add to the overall character of the area;
 - Establish a strong sense of place;
 - Optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development, create and sustain an appropriate mix of uses and support local facilities and transport networks;
 - Respond to local character and history and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials;
 - Create safe and accessible environments;
 - Are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping.

3.31 Paragraph 61 advises that planning decisions should address the connections between people and places and the integration of new development into the natural, built and historic environment.

3.32 The NPPF also promotes healthy communities (section 8), advising that planning decisions should aim to achieve places which promote:

- Opportunities for meetings between members of the community through mixed-use developments, strong neighbourhood centres and active street frontages;
- Safe and accessible environments with clear and legible pedestrian routes and high quality public spaces.

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

3.33 On 6th March 2014, Nick Boles announced the launch of the new National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) which reinforces and provides additional guidance on the policy requirements of the NPPF.

3.34 The weight to be given to this guidance has now increased given it's now formal status.

Cherwell District Local Plan (1996)

3.35 The Cherwell District Local Plan was adopted in 1996 and had an end date of 2001. Key policies of this plan remain 'Saved' although the Council's Local Plan (Part 1)(2011) replaces the majority of these policies.

2.36 **Policy C28, Layout, Design and Appearance of New Development** seeks sympathetic layout, design and external appearance of new development and encourages the use of traditional building materials.

2.37 **Policy C30, Design Control of new residential Development**, Seeks new housing to be compatible with the appearance, character and scale of existing building in the vicinity.

02 ASSESSMENT

Non-Statutory Local Plan (NSLP) (2004)

2.38 The NSLP was originally prepared as a replacement to the Cherwell District Local Plan (1996), however due to changes in the Planning System the Council decided to stop work on the preparation of the plan.

2.39 Subsequently the plan was approved by the council as an interim policy for development control purposes.

2.40 **Policy 13** of the NSLP allocates the Kingsmere Urban Extension to the South West of Bicester for a mixed use development with more than 1,585 residential units.

Adopted Cherwell Local Plan Part 1, 2011 - 2031

2.41 **Policy SLE4, Improved Transport and Connections:** Seeks to support the implementation of policies and strategies contained within the Local Transport Plan to deliver key connections, supporting a modal shift towards more sustainable locations for housing and employment growth.

2.42 **Policy BSC4 Housing mix:** New residential developments are expected to provide a mix of homes to meet current and expected future requirements in the interests of meeting housing need and creating socially mixed and inclusive communities. The mix of housing developments will be negotiated with the Council to have regard to the most up to date evidence on housing need and market conditions.

2.43 **Policy ESD3 Sustainable construction:** Expects that all new residential development to incorporate sustainable design and construction technology to achieve zero carbon development through a combination of fabric energy efficiency, carbon compliance and allowable solutions in Government policy. The Council will also seek a higher level of water efficiency than required and all non-residential development will be expected to meet at least BREEAM 'Very Good' standard.

2.44 **Policy ESD15 Character of the historic and built environment:** New developments will be expected to complement and enhance the character of its context through sensitive sighting, layout and high quality design.

Cherwell Local Plan 2011 – 2031 (Part 2)

2.45 The Cherwell Local Plan Part 2 has undergone a series of consultation with the most recent being the Issues and Options Consultation in January 2016. This plan will build upon the general development strategy outlines in the Cherwell Local Plan Part 1 and contain detailed planning policies to assist in the implementation of strategic policies and development management processes.

Bicester Masterplan

2.46 Cherwell District Council are preparing The Bicester Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which will provide a vision for the future development of Bicester and guide on what new development will be expected to achieve. The SPD has been subject to public consultation alongside the new Local Plan in 2012 but no further consultations have taken place.

2.47 The SPD details the development of Kingsmere identifying it as one of the strategic sites for the delivery of housing. Beyond the perimeter road, the masterplan seeks to maintain a landscape buffer to nearby Chesterton.

KINGSMERE DESIGN CODE

2.48 The approved Kingsmere Design Code forms an important basis on which future development proposals are to be assessed against. It is important that design proposals are assessed against Scale, Density, Architectural Strategy and contextual relationships to ensure that they will align with the site wide vision.

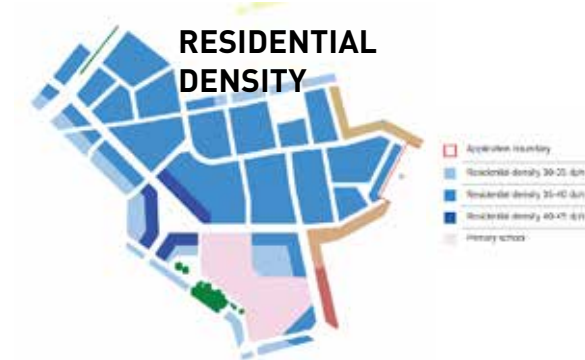
2.49 The Design Code notes that the Local Centre is contained within the 'Urban Village Character Area' and that it will be the social hub for Kingsmere providing an important meeting place, with shops and services alongside community uses and the Primary School. The Design Code goes on to say that:

"The local centre may include a convenience store (200m²-400m² gross) as well as a minimum of two and maximum of six other shops (each up to 150m² gross). This space will be flexible to allow for up to 30% to be used as employment space (either B1 or B2), as well as a community centre (641m² gross with an additional 100m² external area). On the periphery of the local centre is a Primary School. The Community Centre should be located close to this.

Urban Village Character Area

2.50 The Urban Village Character Area provides a series of key characteristics and opportunities which the Local Centre building should meet and fulfil including:

- Public realm is a key focus for the area as well as being a focal point for the entire site.
- High density of buildings within the Urban Village character area particularly surrounding the Village Centre. With residential density between 40 - 45 dph.
- Taller buildings up to 4 storeys will help to define Primary Street.
- Opportunity for contemporary architecture, especially around central space. With buildings employing either vertical or horizontal emphasis.
- Central space to comprise robust urban public realm with prominent trees serving mixed-use buildings (commercial, residential & community centre).
- Central space designed to accommodate a range of functions (including community events) as well as parking and bus stops.



LOCAL CENTRE

2.51 Within the Urban Village Character Area a specific section relates to the Local Centre highlighting the possible uses for the site but noting that it does not preclude the provision of residential development on the first floor of the local centre.

2.52 The design code also sets out key architectural features and materials to be used throughout the Urban Village which seek to use:

- Red or Buff brick or through coloured render. Minimum 75% through coloured render to be used in the local centre. Approximate proportions - red (40%) or buff (10%) brick. Through Coloured render (50%).
- Roof tiles to be Grey Artificial Slate or Bindle Red plain concrete tiles.
- Render coloured to match pale grey stone, or white, magnolia or pastel creams.
- Windows to be Either Sash style or casement on vernacular buildings



ABOVE: EXTRACT FROM KINGSMERE DESIGN CODE, ILLUSTRATIVE LOCAL CENTRE LAYOUT

PROPOSALS

- 4.1 This application seeks full planning permission for nine residential dwellings above the Kingsmere local centre. It is proposed that these dwellings will replace the employment space at first floor level above the Local Centre forming a more appropriate use of the space and one which is both suitable and achievable development.
- 4.2 Countryside have previously sent letters to the Council in pre-application correspondence leading up to the submission of Reserved Matters Application (15/02103/REM). These letters were appended to the planning statement submitted as part of that application and noted that there is little or no demand for offices above shops in this location - with much better employment sites available within Bicester to accommodate such uses.
- 4.3 The provision of residential properties above the local centre is therefore, a suitable use of the space within the Local Centre, delivering housing in a appropriate location increasing the choice of housing in the area.

PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE

- 4.4 In the production of these plans a meeting was held with a planning officer at Cherwell District Council. Through this meeting it was noted that the Design Code forms an important basis for all applications to consider in their design and layout. It is also important for the design of the building to consider the buildings relationship with the adjacent residential development. Finally, through the pre application advice it was noted that the principle of residential development above the local centre is acceptable.

USE AND AMOUNT

- 4.5 The flats have been carefully designed to maximise the space within each flat and maintain a high quality finish and layout. Each flat provides a generous amount of space and are served by two stairwell access points and a lift.
- 4.6 As a result of changing the use of the first floor from office to residential, it has been necessary to update the external elevations and the introduction of new window openings and design. The previous designs would not have been suitable for residential dwellings.

- 4.7 There are nine flats proposed in total which are made up of:

Flat 1 = 98.7 m2
2 Bedrooms

Flat 2 = 79.7 m2
2 Bedrooms

Flat 3 = 100.2 m2
2 Bedrooms

Flat 4 = 112.5 m2
2 Bedrooms

Flat 5 = 81.6 m2
2 Bedrooms

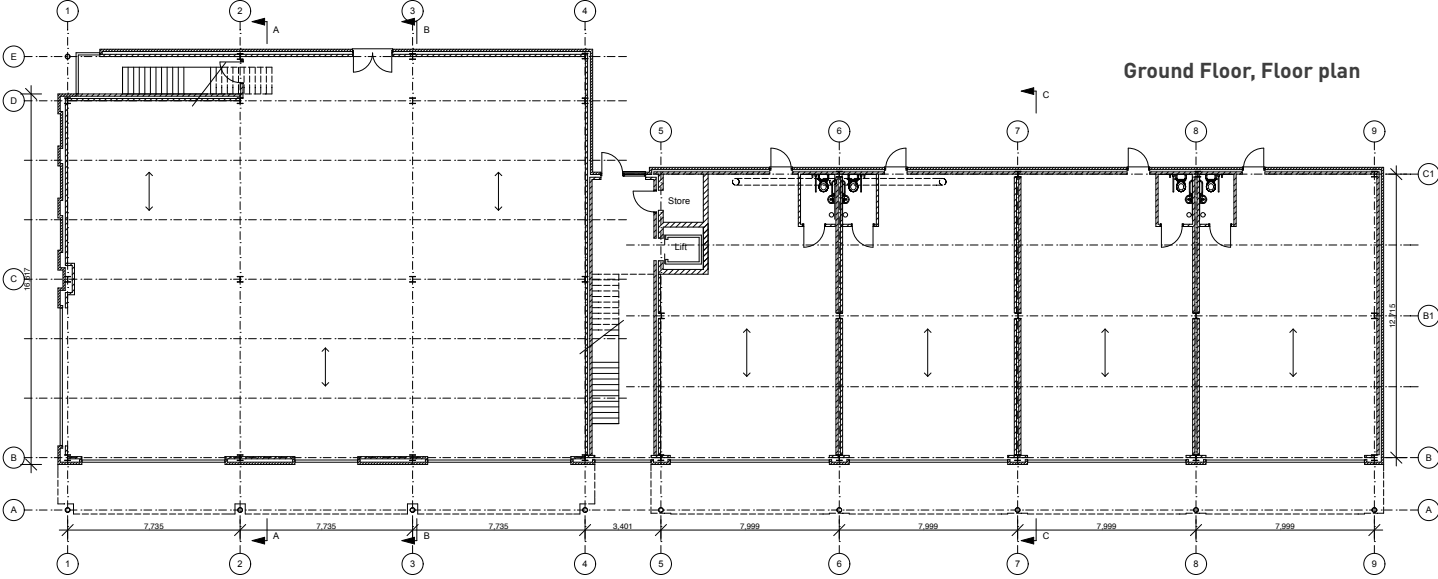
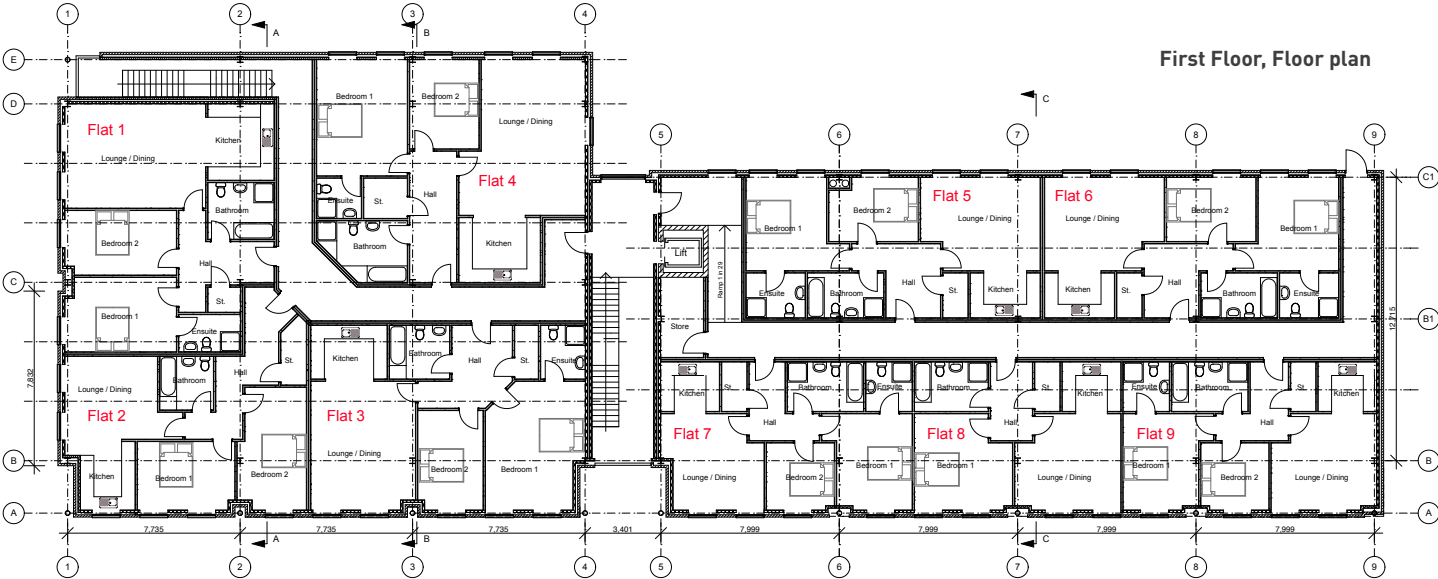
Flat 6 = 82.9 m2
2 Bedrooms

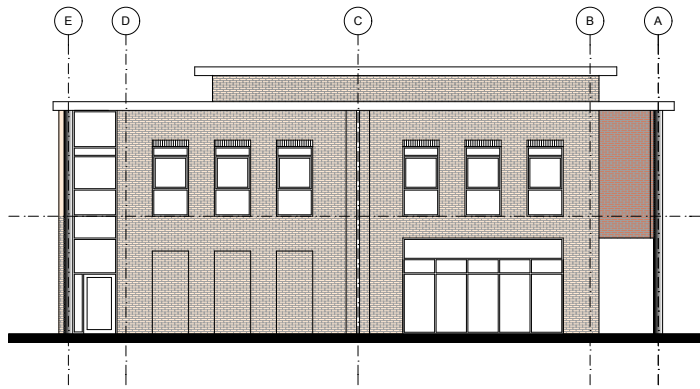
Flat 7 = 72.9 m2
2 Bedrooms

Flat 8 = 61.2 m2
1 Bedroom

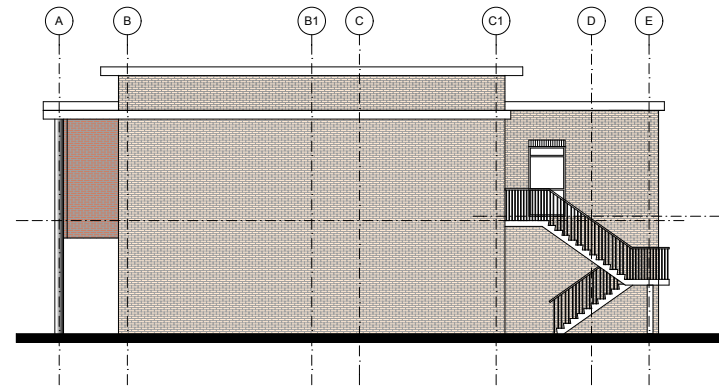
Flat 9 = 74.4 m2
2 Bedrooms

03 DESIGN PROPOSALS

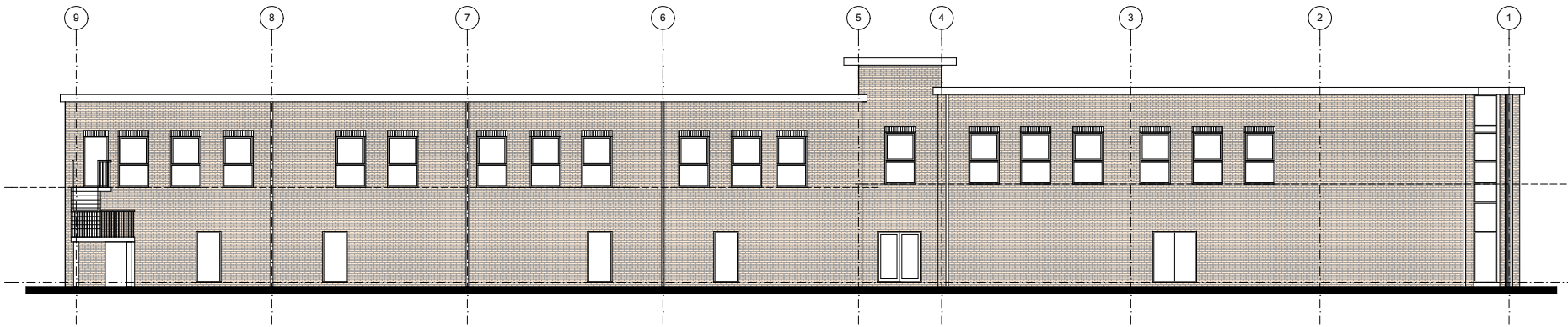




North West Elevation



South East Elevation



North East Elevation

ABOVE: LOCAL CENTRE EXTERNAL ELEVATIONS



South West Elevation



ABOVE: LOCAL CENTRE EXTERNAL ELEVATIONS

DESIGN

- 4.8 The opposite elevations have been designed in accordance with the planning policy background and also with the established design code for the site,
- 4.9 The drawings which have also been submitted as separate documents show how the addition of residential dwellings to the first floor in place of the office spaces has allowed for the creation of an overall more architecturally pleasing design.
- 4.10 There is now regular spacing between sash style windows on the first floor residential dwellings with a mix of materials used to enhance the elevations and make them more interesting.
- 4.11 There is use of Red and Buff facing Brickwork to create a visually interesting facade.

COMPLIANCE WITH DESIGN CODE

- 4.12 When these proposals are assessed against the design code it can be seen that it wholly complies with the design objectives through the use of building materials, and window design.

RESIDENTIAL AMENITY

- 4.13 The local centre is bounded by residential development on all sides and so it is important that these design proposals do not have a detrimental impact on the surrounding built form, particularly so to the proposed dwellings to the north and east of the local centre (Application Ref 16/02482/REM which at the time of writing is still under consideration).
- 4.14 Upon assessment of the Drawing Number 30740 01A, Proposed Site Layout - it is considered that the proposed residential development on the first floor of the Local Centre will have minimal impact upon the proposed residential dwellings to the north and east.
- 4.15 There is a considerable offset between the local centre and the proposed dwellings with distances between the buildings of approx 26 metres at its narrowest point and approx 41 metres at its widest point. When these considerable distances are combined with some structural planting within the local centre car park, as part of Reserved Matters application (15/02103/REM) then the risk of overlooking is considered to be minimal.



ACCESS

- 4.16 There are no alterations proposed to existing overall access arrangements as approved as part of Reserved Matters application 15/02482/REM.
- 4.17 To the rear of the Local centre and as established through Reserved Matters Application 15/02482/REM there are a total of 39 car parking spaces to the rear of the Local Centre and this application does not detract from this total number of space. The application allocates 18 of these spaces for residents of the apartments (2 per flat) which exceeds both the Council's parking standards and those approved within the Kingsmere Design Code.

SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL

- 4.18 The residential units which this application seeks permission for are inherently sustainable being located above a series of retail units and community facilities associated with the local centre. As such day to day needs can be provided for within the local centre.
- 4.19 There are also two bus stops located on the edge of the site which make it a realistic option to easily travel by bus due to the proximity of the bus stops and the frequency of the buses which service them.
- 4.20 As highlighted in section 2 of this statement the site benefits from being located close to the National Cycling network. This network along with traffic-free additional routes provides the opportunity for residents to be able to cycle both in and around Kingsmere but also access Bicester Town Centre without needing to use a car.
- 4.21 It is considered that the application site is located in a highly sustainable location within Kingsmere Local Centre. There are a number of opportunities for new residents to be able to travel by sustainable means which could lead to a modal shift in travel behaviour.



04 SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 5.1 This Design and Access Statement (DAS) is submitted in support of a full planning application for the change of use of office space to the creation of nine residential properties on the first floor level above the Kingsmere Local Centre.
- 5.2 The proposed dwellings have been designed to a high quality which is responsive and sympathetic to the surrounding built form while also enhancing the character of the local centre through improved external elevations.
- 5.3 The site is in a highly sustainable location which is easily accessible by car, foot and by bicycle.
- 5.4 In arriving at the design solution for the site, we have shown how the physical, social and economic context has influenced the design and informed the layout and architectural details of the proposed dwellings which replace the office space within the local centre.
- 5.5 The DAS confirms the applicants commitment to the delivery of a high quality development that is sensitive to the local context and is designed to minimise the use of resources and maximise efficiency.
- 5.6 The proposals aim to make the most efficient use of land that is appropriate to the nature and setting of the site.
- 5.7 The design, massing and layout of the residential dwellings are therefore considered to be acceptable. The development will not result in an adverse impact on the character of the area, nor will it adversely affect the amenities of nearby residents. Accordingly, the development accords with Policy ESD15 of the Cherwell District Local Plan Part 1 (2011) as well as according with the Kingsmere Design Code.

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