

Planning Application for An 82 Apartment Extra Care Home and up to 14 Market Dwellings at Parcel R, Kingsmere, Bicester

Planning Statement for Preferred Homes Ltd and Countryside Properties
(Bicester) Ltd

1 November 2023
Our Ref: SRS/21-00973



Contents

1 INTRODUCTION 3
2 THE APPLICANT 5
3 SITE, SURROUNDINGS AND PLANNING HISTORY 6
4 SUMMARY OF ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION 7
5 REVIEW OF PLANNING POLICY 9
6 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT 13
7 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS..... 17
8 KEY BENEFITS OF THE PROPOSAL..... 25
9 CONCLUSIONS..... 26

Appendices

Appendix 1 Pre-Application Response November 2021

Appendix 2 Pre-Application Response March 2022

Appendix 3 Pre-Application Response July/August 2022



Quality Assurance

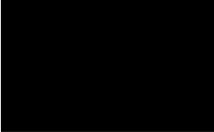
This report has been prepared within the quality system operated at Rapleys LLP according to British Standard ISO 9001:2015.

We confirm that the undersigned is an appropriately qualified and experienced Chartered Planner experienced in the commercial property sector.

Created by: Sarah R Smith (BA (Hons) MRTPI
Consultant

Signature: 
[SarahRSmith \(Nov 3, 2023 14:20 GMT\)](#)

Checked by: Jason Lowes BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI
Jason.Lowes@rapleys.com

Signature: 

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This planning statement has been prepared by Rapleys LLP on behalf of Preferred Homes Ltd (hereafter, PHL) and Countryside Properties (Bicester) Ltd (hereafter, Countryside), in respect of a development proposal for an 82 apartment affordable extra care home and up to 14 market residential dwellings at Parcel R within the Kingsmere Phase 2 development at Bicester (herein, the Site or Parcel R).
- 1.2 The wider development area is currently being developed for the provision of residential dwellings and associated uses, including a new primary school, under various reserved matters consents granted subsequent to the original outline 13/00847/OUT granted on 30 May 2017. A S106 Agreement is attached to the outline permission.
- 1.3 Notwithstanding the outline permission referenced above which permits the principle of a 60-bed extra care facility on Parcel R, the new proposals (herein, the Proposed Development) for Parcel R necessitate a new planning application rather than a reserved matters submission, due to the number of extra care dwellings exceeding those previously considered at the outline stage as well as the introduction of the up to 14 Class C3 market residential dwellings. Correspondingly, there will also be a need for a variation to the Phase 2 outline S106 Agreement, or in the alternative a new Agreement. This Planning Statement makes no further reference to potential S106 requirements – it is considered it would be premature to do this at this stage, not least because discussions will be undertaken in this regard through the Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) process that the determination of this application will be subject to.
- 1.4 The application is hybrid in nature and seeks –
- In FULL, the construction of an 82 apartment affordable extra care home (C2 use class) with associated open space/green infrastructure, landscaping, car/cycle parking, service infrastructure (drainage, highways, lighting), engineering operations, creation of new vehicular access and re-instatement of existing access to footpath, and in OUTLINE, the construction of up to 14 residential (C3 use class) dwellings with associated landscaping, service infrastructure (highways, drainage, lighting).*
- 1.5 In respect of the outline element of the application, only approval of the access is sought with all other matters reserved for subsequent consideration.
- 1.6 The application red line boundary incorporates both the outline and full elements of the application (0.9269ha), including the bell mouth to the new access road off the main spine road of the wider Phase 2 development (total site area 0.931 ha) and the existing bell-mouth access into Parcel R (total site area 0.935ha). For the avoidance of doubt, the existing in situ bell-mouth is to be removed and re-instated as part of the footpath – details are included within the application for this.
- 1.7 It should also be noted that there are two existing pedestrian links from the greenway into the Site which were approved under 17/02469/REM and 19/0020/NMA. The eastern most of these will be removed and re-instated as landscaping and a new link will be created further east into the proposed bistro terrace of the extra care element of the Parcel R Site – this will be formalised/regularised as part of a separate Non Material Amendment application to 17/02469/REM to be submitted by ToR & Co on behalf of Countryside Properties (Bicester) Ltd, alongside a similar S73 submission in respect of 13/00847/OUT to regularise that permission in light of the *Hillside Parks Ltd v Snowdonia National Park Authority (2022)* judgement.

STRUCTURE OF STATEMENT

- 1.8 The Planning Statement addresses the key considerations relevant to the Proposed Development and covers the following matters:
- Detail of the Applicants (Chapter 2),
 - Details of the site, its surroundings and related planning history (Chapter 3),
 - Details of the pre-application engagement (Chapter 4),
 - A review of the Development Plan and other policy-related matters (Chapter 5),
 - A description of the Proposed Development (Chapter 6),
 - Analysis of the main planning considerations (Chapter 7),
 - A review of the planning benefits arising from the Proposed Development (Chapter 8), and
 - Concluding remarks (Chapter 9).

CONTENTS OF THE PLANNING APPLICATION

1.9 This Planning Statement should be read in conjunction with the following supporting documentation submitted as part of this application:

- Site location plan,
- A suite of application drawings, including layout plans, landscaping details, floor plans, roof plans, elevations and cross sections,
- Design and Access Statement and a Design Code for the C3 residential dwelling element,
- Flood Risk and Drainage Strategy,
- Transport Assessment,
- Extra Care Travel Plan
- C3 Residential Dwellings Travel Plan,
- Preliminary Ecological Assessment,
- BREAM Progress Report,
- Preliminary Risk Assessment – Ground Conditions,
- Energy/Sustainability Statement,
- An Overheating Report,
- Lighting Assessment,
- Ventilation Strategy Report.

2 THE APPLICANT

PREFERRED HOMES LTD (PHL)

- 2.1 Preferred Homes Limited (PHL), supported by Ashbourne Capital Partners, is a registered provider of social housing approved by the Regulator of Social Housing to develop, own and manage new Extra Care social housing for affordable rent. PHL's objective is to deliver, own and manage sustainable affordable Extra Care apartment schemes to provide more social housing suitable for the elderly to meet local needs.
- 2.2 The Extra Care market in the UK is significantly undersupplied, which the acknowledged demographic trend of an ageing population continues to enforce. The critical need for more affordable rented accommodation for the elderly is a clear social and planning priority. PHL's extra care schemes are intended to meet local authority strategic housing requirements, and weekly affordable rents and eligible service charges will be underpinned by nominations agreements with local authorities prior to the commencement of construction.
- 2.3 In this context, PHL have been set up to provide and manage quality, well-run schemes for independent living for the many tenants currently on local authority waiting lists. It is intended that PHL developments will be fully integrated into the local community, aiming to enhance the neighbourhood within which they are being proposed, through both active and passive engagement. PHL are therefore more than just a developer of Extra Care homes, they are a long-term stakeholder and will have ongoing responsibility for the development into the future.
- 2.4 Planning permission has been granted for similar scale and principled PHL schemes in Telford, Leeds (both currently under construction) and Hucknall.
- 2.5 It is important to emphasise, in the context of this Bicester site, that the site purchase and its delivery is being guided by Homes England (HE) grant value for money and maximisation of affordable housing delivery requirements, sitting alongside the specific Adult Commissioning needs/demand requirements in Cherwell District). There has also been ongoing discussion with Frances Evans, affordable housing officer at Cherwell.

COUNTRYSIDE PROPERTIES

- 2.6 Countryside Properties (Bicester) Ltd is a subsidiary of Countryside Properties (UK) Ltd, now part of the Vistry Group which also includes housing brands Bovis Homes, Linden Homes and Countryside Partnerships. The combined business incorporates over 40 years' experience of collaborative working with partners in both the public and private sectors. In partnership with housing associations, public bodies, landowners and institutional private rental operators, Countryside Partnerships delivers multiple tenures, including affordable homes, build to rent homes and homes for private sale. The company maintains a strong focus on place-making, designing places people love to create long-term sustainable communities across the UK, including some of the country's most complex regeneration and master planned sites. The Group has been awarded the 5 Star Rating by the Home Builders Federation following the latest home building industry's Customer Satisfaction Survey.
- 2.7 Located adjacent to Bicester Village, Kingsmere is a new village development providing imaginatively designed new homes from leading housebuilders Ashberry Homes, Barratt Homes, Bellway Homes, CALA Homes, David Wilson Homes as well as Linden Homes & Bovis Homes, part of the Vistry Group. As part of the creation of this sustainable new community, a wide range of new facilities and amenities are being/have been provided including two new primary schools and a secondary school, a village centre with shops, community centre/youth centre, with a sports village and a retail park.
- 2.8 Kingsmere is located just 3 miles from junction 9 of the M40 and 12 miles from Oxford. Bicester Village and Bicester North railway stations are both walkable from the development, offering trains to Oxford in 11 minutes and London Marylebone in 46 minutes. Countryside Properties (Bicester) Ltd has been responsible for the delivery of Kingsmere, providing much of the infrastructure to serve it/serviced parcels.

3 SITE, SURROUNDINGS AND PLANNING HISTORY

SITE

- 3.1 The Site has been cleared of its previous agricultural land use and is currently being used as a compound as part of the Phase 2 permission. There are temporary containers, mounds of earth, fencing and landscape gardeners' equipment on the Site.

SURROUNDINGS

- 3.2 The Site lies in the centre of Kingsmere Phase 2, approximately 1.5km from the town centre. Together with Phase 1, Phase 2 forms part of an urban extension to the town.
- 3.3 The Site is located on the northern edge of the central square, and to the south of a greenway connecting from Vendee Drive through to Kingsmere Phase 1. The central square comprises a multi-functional park with a LEAP serving the Phase 2 residents, with a primary school on its eastern side. Residential development lies to the north of the greenway and to the west of the Site.
- 3.4 Kingsmere Phase 1 contains a local centre providing the whole development with retail and commercial facilities to serve their day-to-day needs. This local centre is approximately 1km from the Site and is readily accessible by both pedestrian and cycle modes.

PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.5 The first phase of Kingsmere was identified in the Non-Statutory Cherwell Local Plan 2011 (2004) under policy H13 for circa 1,585 dwellings, local centre, sports village, employment floorspace and landscaping. Outline planning consent was subsequently granted to Countryside (06/00967/OUT) in June 2008.
- 3.6 To the north-west of Phase 1 lies Phase 2, the latter allocated in the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 Part 1 (July 2015 and December 2016) for 726 dwellings and associated services and facilities. The Site (Parcel R) forms part of this Phase 2 allocation.
- 3.7 Outline planning permission was granted on 30 May 2017 under 13/00847/OUT for the Phase 2 development consisting of residential development within use Class C3, extra care facility (C2), primary school, retail, formal and informal public open space, play facilities, sports pitches, allotments and associated infrastructure including landscaping, highways, footpaths/cycleways, drainage utilities and parking and associated works.
- 3.8 The outline permission itself was for 709 dwellings. The S106 Agreement attached to the outline secures the reservation of a site for extra care in Parcel R located immediately north of the central open space providing for up to 60 beds.
- 3.9 According to CDC, the reserved matters consents for Phase 2 total 649 dwellings which leaves 60 to be delivered by the extra care facility in accordance with the aforementioned S106 Agreement.
- 3.10 The approved design code and S106 Agreement identifies that should extra care (or retirement dwellings) ultimately not come forward on the Site, then the use will revert back to the usual C3 residential development.
- 3.11 In accordance with paragraph 10.2 of the S106 Agreement accompanying the planning permission, an Extra Care Marketing Strategy was submitted and deemed approved by CDC. The Strategy notes that the precise size and type of extra care facility will be determined by the market.
- 3.12 Countryside has delivered virtually all of the strategic infrastructure, including the primary streets/spine road and strategic open space/landscaping/biodiversity enhancement. The relevant infrastructure reserved matters to Parcel R (subject of this 2023 application) is the 'landscape scheme for the south of Parcel I' (ref: 17/02469/REM), as amended through non-material amendment. This is the landscaping that has been provided to the north of Parcel R. To the east is the 'central square' which was approved though reserved matters permission 18/00624/REM.
- 3.13 Parcel R is the last plot of land within Phase 2 to come forward/commence and be developed.

4 SUMMARY OF ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

PRE-APPLICATION ENGAGEMENT

- 4.1 There has been considerable pre-application engagement over a number of months in relation to the Proposed Development.
- 4.2 A pre-application submission was made in early November 2021, followed by a Teams Meeting with Linda Griffiths (planning officer), Frances Evans (affordable housing officer) and an officer from Oxfordshire County Highways on 30 November and a written response (**Appendix 1**). The submission consisted of -
- A planning statement,
 - Draft scheme plans, elevations,
 - A design rationale/massing document.
- 4.3 The purpose of the pre-application engagement was to review and (as far as possible) agree the following matters with officers –
- The proposed development in terms of its principle and layout – extra care and market dwellings,
 - The proposed development in terms of its scale, siting and massing, particularly the extra care,
 - The proposed development in terms of its adherence to/reflection of the established Design Code for the Site/location,
 - The scope of the technical work to support the application, and
 - The principle of a hybrid application.
- 4.4 Whilst the principle of the development was generally accepted, and the provision of affordable extra care welcomed, concerns were raised in respect of -
- the layout and number of market dwellings and the lack of a sense of place for this element of the scheme,
 - height/massing/car parking/servicing of the extra care and how this relates to the Design Code,
 - principle of hybrid application,
 - the need for greater prominence of the café/bistro given the intention for it to be available to the public as well as residents.
- 4.5 A further submission was made in February 2022 responding to the earlier comments and concerns. A second meeting was held with Linda Griffiths on 14 March 2022, followed by receipt of another written response (**Appendix 2**). Concerns were again raised in relation to -
- Bulk and height of extra care and lack of broken frontage and set back along the greenway,
 - Use of a mansard roof which is not a typical feature of the wider development,
 - Relationship to adjacent residential dwellings,
 - Poor relationship between the car parking and adjacent residential dwellings,
 - Over development of the whole site and need for reduction in number of residential dwellings to achieve a more appropriate design/layout for the extra care,
 - Lack of a sense of place relating to the residential dwellings.
- 4.6 Further informal correspondence was exchanged with Andy Bateson and Linda Griffiths during July/August 2022 (**Appendix 3**) in respect of a revised, T-shaped extra care building, with the following comments and principles established –
- The T-shaped building addresses the concerns re the greenway,
 - Improved frontage set back provides better privacy for ground floor apartments,
 - Improved relationship of bistro with the square and greenway,
 - Improvements in relation to the car park provide better natural surveillance,
 - Narrow fronted, wide gable span detached dwellings are not acceptable, nor is a three storey design and further thought overall is still required to the residential element of the scheme as the street scene remains dominated by car parking and minimal landscaping,

- Whilst a single full application is still preferred, if it is to be a hybrid then the indicative layout for the residential element must be agreed as part of that submission/permission.

OTHER CONSULTATION

4.7 There has been no other formal consultation in respect of this application or its process. This is principally due to the fact that the wider Phase 2 development is still under construction and occupation by new residents in the immediate vicinity of the Site is limited.

5 REVIEW OF PLANNING POLICY

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK (NPPF) JULY 2021

5.1 Relevant Central Government Policy is contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in July 2021.

General

5.2 The NPPF confirms that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. In achieving sustainable development, three objectives are identified which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways. These objectives are:

- An economic objective,
- A social objective, and
- An environmental objective.

5.3 So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, paragraph 11 advises that Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. In decision taking this means:

- Approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date Development Plan without delay, or
- Where there are no relevant Development Plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out of date, granting permission unless there are, in effect, strong reasons for not doing so.

Decision-making

5.4 It is confirmed, in paragraph 39, that early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Further, paragraph 40 confirms that local authorities have a key role to play in encouraging parties to take maximum advantage at the pre-application stage. Accordingly, the more issues that can be resolved at pre-application stage, the greater the benefits.

5.5 Paragraph 47 confirms that planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. It also confirms that decisions should be made as quickly as possible.

Delivering a sufficient supply of homes

5.6 The importance of ensuring that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed is stressed in paragraph 60, as well as addressing the needs of groups with specific housing requirements. It is also identified, at paragraph 65, that purpose-built accommodation for the elderly does not need to provide affordable housing.

Building a strong, competitive economy

5.7 Paragraph 81 confirms that planning decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Further it confirms that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity.

5.8 Though principally a housing scheme, economic spin offs will occur both directly and indirectly through the provision of employment, particularly within the extra care element of the proposal, in accordance with these NPPF principles.

Promoting healthy and safe communities

5.9 The NPPF confirms that planning decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe spaces and it is identified at paragraph 92 that:

- Social interaction should be encouraged,
- Development should be safe and accessible, and
- Healthy lifestyles should be enabled and supported.

Promoting sustainable transport

5.10 Paragraph 104 confirms that transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals, and in paragraph 105 it is also confirmed that significant development should be focussed on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need for travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes.

NATIONAL PLANNING PRACTICE GUIDANCE

- 5.11 Planning practice guidance on “**Housing for older and disabled people**” was published in June 2019. This confirms that the need to provide housing for older people is critical, and that an understanding of how the ageing population affects housing needs to be considered from the early stages of plan-making through to decision-taking.
- 5.12 The guidance confirms that accessible and adaptable housing enables people to live more independently, whilst also saving on health and social costs in the future. It also promotes inclusive design to recognise and accommodate the differences in the way people use the built environment, and that good design can help create buildings and places that are for everyone.

THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

- 5.13 The Development Plan for the Site consists of the Adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1) (adopted July 2015) and the saved policies of the Adopted Cherwell Local Plan 1996 (November 1996).
- 5.14 The Site forms part of the South-West Bicester Phase 2 Strategic Housing Site.

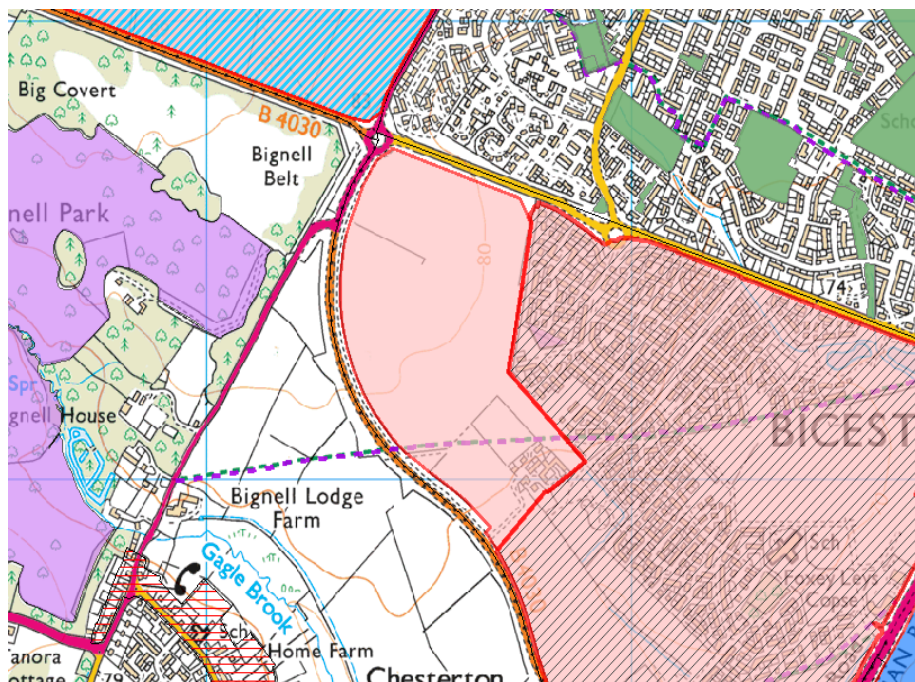


FIGURE 1 – POLICIES MAP EXTRACT

- 5.15 The following key policies are noted as being of relevance to the Proposed Development -
- 5.16 **Policy Bicester 3: South-West Bicester Phase 2** - The site is covered by this Policy allocation which provides for the delivery of 726 homes with associated services, facilities and other infrastructure. In terms of housing, the allocation provides for the following:
- Number of homes– Approximately 726,
 - Dwelling mix – to be informed by Policy BSC4: Housing mix,
 - Affordable Housing – 30%,
 - The provision of extra care housing and the opportunity for community self-build affordable housing.
- 5.17 **Policy PDS 1** (Presumption in favour of sustainable development) - confirms that when considering development proposals the Council will take a proactive approach to reflect the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Planning applications that accord with the policies of the Local Plan will be approved without delay unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.18 **Policy BSC 4** (Housing Mix) - requires new residential development to provide a mix of homes that meet current and expected future requirements in the interests of meeting housing need and creating socially mixed and inclusive communities. Opportunities for the provision of extra care, specialist housing for older and / or disabled people and those with mental health needs and other supported housing for those with specific living needs will be encouraged in suitable locations close to services and facilities. Mix is to be negotiated having regard to the most up to date needs evidence.

- 5.19 **Policy BSC11** (Outdoor Recreation) – requires developments to contribute to open space including its management and maintenance. The amount, type and form will be determined with regard to the nature of the development.
- 5.20 **Policy ESD3** (Sustainable Construction) – development is expected to incorporate sustainable construction methods to achieve zero carbon, including high levels of water efficiency, maximising solar gain, resource efficiency.
- 5.21 **Policy ESD4** (Decentralised Energy Systems) – requires developments to provide a feasibility assessment into district heating or combined heat and power.
- 5.22 **Policy ESD5** (Renewable Energy) – requires the submission of a feasibility assessment for using renewable energy for each development.

EMERGING POLICIES

- 5.23 The Council presented a review of the adopted Plan’s policies to its Executive in January 2021. This concluded that the majority of the Plan’s policies were generally up to date, including the requirement of 1,142 dwellings per annum which is the default starting position for the five year supply.
- 5.24 The Council published the Local Plan Review Options Consultation Paper (29 September 2021 – 10 November 2021). The timetable for preparing the Cherwell Local Plan Review 2040 was affected by the timetable for the preparation of the Oxfordshire Plan which was to provide the strategic context for planning in Oxfordshire. However, in August 2022, it was confirmed that work on the Oxfordshire Plan would cease.
- 5.25 A draft local plan for consultation was presented to the CDC Executive in January 2023 which resolved that consultation be deferred until a later date to allow officers to consider the comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 5.26 Subsequent to this consideration by Officers, the draft plan was presented to Overview and Scrutiny Committee in August 2023 and by the Executive on 4 September 2023. It is due to be consulted on shortly. The anticipated programme for progressing the draft plan is
- Regulation 18 consultation – Autumn 2023
 - Regulation 19 consultation – Summer 2024
 - Submission to Secretary of State – Winter 2024/25

EVIDENCE BASE

- 5.27 The following evidence base documents are also considered relevant to the proposal.
- Draft Oxfordshire Market Position Statement – Extra Care Housing Supplement 2021-2023**
- 5.28 The estimated need for extra care housing in Oxfordshire is based on the LIN assessment of need (Extra Care Housing – What is it in 2015?, Factsheet, Housing LIN, November 2015) for people aged 75 – although schemes accept residents aged over 55, 75 is generally the threshold age for entry. In 2021, the estimated population 75+ is 64,762, rising to 77,464 in 2026 and 85,502 in 2031. This equates to an extra care need of 1,937 units in 2026 and 2,138 units in 2031.
- 5.29 OCC prefer a higher proportion of 1 bed units for affordable rent as 2 bed units have proved more difficult to let.
- Housing Land Supply Statement February 2023**
- 5.30 This Supply Statement advises that as the adopted Local Plan is based on the 2014 SHMA and the most recent Housing and Economic Needs Assessment of 2022 indicates a housing need that is materially different to the 2014 SHMA, for the purposes of calculating the five-year housing supply, then the Standard Method is the most appropriate.
- 5.31 Excluding the Partial Review area, the housing supply position is 5.4 years for the 2022-27 period. The Partial Review area relates to the agreed portion of the Oxford City unmet need -within this area the land supply is 0.2 years (a shortfall of 2,272 dwellings).
- 5.32 Oxford City Council published its own paper on its housing need in March 2023, which indicated an unmet need of circa 865 dwellings/annum.
- Housing Delivery Test**
- 5.33 The Districts Housing Delivery Test result, as published in January 2021 (2020 measurement) is 153% and therefore a 5% buffer should be applied.

SUMMARY

- 5.34 The NPPF confirms that the local authority should apply the presumption in favour of sustainable development, and only refuse planning permission where there are strong grounds to do so. Taking into account the foregoing policy considerations, the Proposed Development is in full accordance with the Development Plan and the NPPF.

6 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

THE EXTRA CARE HOME

6.1 This part of the application is submitted in Full, with the description of development as provided in paragraph 1.4 of this Statement.

The Building

6.2 The building is proposed to be part 3-storeys and part 4-storeys in height, with the taller element focussed on the southern boundary of the Site fronting the existing main distributor road and central square (open space/park). The building provides a sense of enclosure along this road/street. The 3-storey element sits at right angles to the taller building forming a t-shape, with the gable end facing the greenway which runs along the northern boundary of the Site.

6.3 The building will accommodate –

- 82 Extra Care apartments, 68 of which will be one-bedroom (2 persons) units and 14 of which will be two-bedroomed (3 persons) units, all exceeding relevant space standards – 54sqm and 68sqm respectively,
- Lounge and dining space, kitchen, multi-purpose flexible room and other communal space, guest overnight accommodation, a bistro, a cycle and scooter parking store for residents,
- Staff amenity/showers/changing rooms and ancillary support space,
- A total of 7,739sqm of floorspace (external).

6.4 The scheme follows the HAPPI principles and Housing Local Improvement Network (LIN) guidance – Design Principles for Extra Care Housing, June 2020 (as well as the latest Building Regulations), which are at the heart of the proposal, as is MHCLG's National Design Guidance. Such principles and criteria emphasise space and flexibility/daylight in the home, and shared spaces/balconies and outdoor spaces/adaptability and 'care-ready' design/positive use of circulation space/shared facilities and 'hubs'/plants, trees and the natural environment/energy efficiency and sustainable design/storage for belongings and bicycles/external hard shared surfaces and 'home zones'. Further information on this is provided within the Design and Access Statement.

6.5 A mix of one and two bed apartments are provided with those on the ground floor having a seamless transition to the outdoor space with privacy afforded through low walls and planting around the 'terrace'. Internally, there are easy to use controls and sensors which monitor indoor heating and cooling. Flexible space is provided that can adapt to residents changing care needs.

Communal Facilities

6.6 The building contains a range of communal facilities that are managed and operated as an integral part of the care concept to encourage social interaction between residents themselves and with the wider community. Key to this interaction is the bistro, with other communal facilities being a large lounge/day room for activities that may include for example, bingo, parties, yoga/dance classes; a laundry; quiet rooms that can be used for example, for mobile hairdressers/therapy; a buggy/cycle/scooter store; ground-floor toilets; a main reception space and lifts to all floors/corridors accessing the private apartments.

6.7 The bistro is located at the corner of the building allowing seamless direct access out onto the landscaped patio/terrace enabling the whole space to appear and be used as a single entity. It creates a focal active community hub.

6.8 External communal facilities include the ground level gardens, the bistro patio and the car park.

6.9 Residents' visitors would have access to both the internal and external facilities, including use of the visitors overnight guest suite. The general public will have access to the main reception space, the bistro and patio area, the ground-floor toilets and potentially access to the various activities that may take place within the lounge/day/quiet rooms. General public access to the ground level gardens will be available but on a more controlled basis in an attempt to avoid the potential for vandalism and a threatening environment for residents of the extra care accommodation.

Layout, Massing and Design

6.10 There have been a number of layout iterations to arrive at the optimum arising out of the pre-application discussions in order to reflect the key approved Design Code parameters. The submitted layout with the t-shape design where the gable end of the stem of the 't' is 3-storeys and fronts the greenway to the north and the 4-storey element is set back the required 3m along the central square to achieve improved privacy for the ground floor apartments, reflects the pre-application proposals of 19 July which were confirmed as being acceptable in principle in correspondence dated 21 July 2023 (paragraph 4.6 of this Statement refers).

- 6.11 The mass of the central square frontage is broken up through the clever use of materials – natural limestone broken up with red brick. The eastern end of the building along this frontage performs the purpose of marker building where the use of natural limestone dominates – this is also the communal heart of the building which is surrounded by a hard and soft landscaped space that links the greenway to the north-east and the central square park to the south-east.
- 6.12 The orientation of the building now enable the majority of the apartments to overlook some form of green space.
- 6.13 The building has a flat roof to the central square frontage, but has a pitch through the use of mansard design on the ‘t’ stem. Whilst not typical of the roof design within Kingsmere, it enables the building to accord with the height principles of the Code along the greenway whilst still accommodating the required level of accommodation. The building heights correspond to the Design Code, with the 4-storey wing at 12.5m and the 3-storey wing at 9.5m.
- 6.14 The building reflects the mass of the school to the south of the central square and now sits comfortably within its overall context, whilst remaining a focal point for the Core Character Area.

Access and Parking

- 6.15 Located towards the western end of Parcel R, a dedicated new access route into the Site (terminating in a cul-de-sac) forms a simple priority junction with the existing Bishops Road. Carriageway width is 5.5m with 2m footways either side. The right-hand side footway extends beyond the head of the cul-de-sac, to create pedestrian/cycle link to the greenway running along the northern Site boundary.
- 6.16 The car park spurs off the access road to the east at two points either side of a treed and landscaped ‘island’, creating the ability for in/out movements. The design of the access and car park enables an 11.6m refuse vehicle/fire tender to manoeuvre around the car park. An ambulance and delivery bay is also provided.
- 6.17 Some 28 car parking spaces, 10% of which are for disabled use, and 25% for electric vehicle charging. It is anticipated the car park will largely be used by staff and visitors, bearing in mind the majority of residents are expected to be of a demographic where car ownership is generally lower than average.
- 6.18 Cycle parking is provided for residents, staff and visitors, both within a covered and secured area adjacent to the car park and a unsecured area within the bistro patio area. Provision for residents buggy/scooter parking is made within the ground floor of the building itself.
- 6.19 Pedestrian links are provided (i) along the access road through the Site from Bishops Road to link with the existing spur off the greenway, and (ii) again linking via a new spur to be created at the eastern end of the greenway from the bistro terrace area.

Amenity Space/Landscaping

- 6.20 External and private and communal amenity space is provided, comprising –
- The landscaped patio/terrace outside the bistro with planting areas incorporating Suds, trees and native planting mixes, tables and chairs and cycle parking opportunities,
 - The ornamental and sensory courtyard garden with a circular walk, edible and medicinal herbs and flowers for sensory benefit, source of food for pollinators and some flowering trees for seasonal interest,
 - Private ‘patios’ to a number of the ground floor apartments that are delineated by railings and low level planting as per the Code, and
 - An ‘allotment’ type area consisting of raised beds for the residents to have their own gardening opportunity.
- 6.21 From an ecological perspective, bird and bat boxes are to be incorporated into the building fabric, along with native species planting, suds provision and varied grassland planting within the garden areas.
- 6.22 External lighting around the extra care element of the Site is designed and sited so as to balance –
- Residents health and well-being when enjoying the gardens and
 - General site operational safety requirements, and not to be –
 - overbearing to the apartments or other residents in the wider vicinity of the development, or to wildlife using the Site and greenway.

Drainage

- 6.23 The drainage scheme to serve the extra care is to be taken from the drainage connections provided and approved as part of the wider Kingsmere Phase 2. Adoptable and foul drainage is provided within the Site access road with spur connections off to both the C3 dwellings and to the extra care.
- 6.24 Permeable paving is to be used within the car park connecting to a geo-cellular storage tank of some 182 sqm volume underneath the car park to control the release of water to the existing pipe network outside of the Site boundaries.
- 6.25 Suds or bioretention areas are also incorporated into the patio/terrace design outside the bistro and could be incorporated within the garden area.
- 6.26 Foul drainage from the extra care is to be via gravity into the pipe network within the access road.

Sustainability and Services

- 6.27 Consideration of sustainability and the prevention of environmental damage has been inherent to the design process. The proposal recognises the opportunities that are available for sustainable design and energy efficiency through the implementation of renewable technologies and identifies that air source heat pumps and the use of photovoltaics on the roofs are achievable and will be incorporated into the construction of the development.
- 6.28 Water efficient appliances are also to be used.
- 6.29 The air source heat pumps (ASHP) are proposed to be located off the car park behind the electricity substation and covered cycle shelter, rather than on the roof of the building. This is because the number required to service the extra care building (six) and the potential for noise emissions necessitate them being enclosed – the enclosure would be prominent in some views if on the roof, but can be more readily concealed on the ground with the aid of wooden cladding on the northern/western/eastern facades and landscaping. Access for maintenance purposes would be from the southern side of the enclosure (which is by the use of removable louvred panels – the louvred panels also act as the air intake for the pumps). The proposed design and specification of the enclosure and attenuator will potentially reduce the cumulative noise levels of the ASHP by 20dbA.
- 6.30 The substation is a standard specification and is positioned so as to achieve the required accessibility for maintenance and also adequate ventilation/circulation space around the structure.

C3 MARKET DWELLINGS

- 6.31 This part of the application is submitted in outline, allowing the provision of up to 14 dwellings. Design principles will be in accordance with the approved Design Code, supplemented by a more bespoke code, specifically for this part of the development, the details of which are to be found in the Appendix to the Design and Access Statement

Buildings

- 6.32 The dwellings will be a mix of 2, 3, and 4 terraced, semi-detached and detached dwellings/maisonettes depending on market requirements at the time of a reserved matters submission.
- 6.33 Building heights will be a mix of 2 – 2.5 storeys as allowed for in the approved Design Code, with 3-storey dwellings provided on the plots fronting the central square. This reflects the 3-storey Barratt dwelling that has been constructed immediately to the west of Parcel R and provides a stepped/graduated streetscape from the 4 storey extra care building.
- 6.34 The required back-to-back distances with the Barratt dwellings to the west of the Site can be achieved.
- 6.35 Materials will be a mix of red brick and where appropriate fronting the central square, quality reconstituted stone/limestone, in accordance with the Code proportions, with clay tiles for roofs. The dwellings fronting the central square will be set behind black railings.

Access/Parking

- 6.36 Access to the dwellings is via the new dedicated access off Bishops Road that also serves the extra care development. Garaging and/or parking courts for residents and visitors together with electric vehicle charging facilities are to be provided as appropriate in accordance with OCC standards and the Design Code.
- 6.37 Provision for secure covered cycle parking and refuse storage will be made in accordance with required standards as part of any reserved matters detail.
- 6.38 A pedestrian/cycle link will extend from the head of the cul-de-sac to link with the greenway to the north.

Amenity space/landscaping

6.39 Front gardens, boundary treatments and landscaping will reflect the requirements of the Design Code.

Drainage

6.40 Connection points for foul and surface water drainage to serve the dwellings are to be made available within the Site access road.

Sustainability

6.41 Sustainability principles and features as referenced in the original outline planning permission and approved Design Code will be applied to these dwellings.

7 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

7.1 From the foregoing commentary, the planning considerations below are considered to be particularly relevant to this proposal:

- The principle of development,
- The proposed C2 use class,
- Housing Need and Affordable Housing,
- Response to Design Code
- Transport and parking considerations,
- Environmental considerations, including ecology, energy, sustainability.

PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

7.2 The principle of development of the Site is already established, as part of the strategic housing development allocation Policy Bicester 3 in the adopted Local Plan – paragraph 5.11 of this Planning Statement refers.

7.3 The Site has an outline planning permission for the principle of a 60-bed extra care home (13/00847/OUT), although it should be noted that the size of that scheme was purely speculative and not based on the requirements of any specific operator. It was anticipated that a policy compliant 30% of the extra care provision would be affordable.

7.4 The extra care home proposals, subject of this current application, are in accordance with the principles of this allocation and outline permission and will support its delivery overall. The extra care proposals are 100% affordable and represents a significant benefit in terms of addressing existing needs for this type of accommodation. The increase from 60 to 82 apartments is a reflection of

(i) the level of existing need for affordable extra care accommodation within Cherwell specifically and Oxfordshire generally and is supported by the Cherwell Housing Officer, where according to the Housing LIN report, demand within Cherwell is estimated to be a net demand of 125 extra care units by 2027, 265 units by 2031 and 440 units by 2035, and

(ii) the market and economies of scale required which indicate a minimum provision of 72 apartments to make such a development viable.

7.5 Furthermore, the business model for the affordable extra care requires a site of circa 0.6ha (1.5 acres) with the emphasis on compact design and quality and utilisation of internal space rather than external site size. Parcel R is 0.9269ha in total (excluding the bell-mouths), consequently, there was surplus land available for other development – C3 dwellings were considered the most appropriate.

7.6 The extra care proposals also represent a community facility, with the potential to deliver intergenerational integration.

7.7 The provision of Class C3 housing on part of the Site is in accordance with the surrounding housing delivery context. Indeed, the S106 Agreement and approved Design Code attached to the wider outline planning permission specifically supports the principle that should the extra care not come forward on the Site, then the Site can be developed for C3 housing.

7.8 There is nothing within the historic documentation or indeed in the adopted Local Plan policy which prevents provision of both extra care and an element of C3 dwellings co-existing on this Site (Parcel R).

C2 USE CLASS

7.9 There is a degree of ambiguity over the correct classification of extra care facilities in terms of the Use Classes Order. This has been the subject of complex case law and planning appeals, which have provided further clarification on the matter – for example, *Rectory Homes Limited v Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government* [2020] EWHC 2098 (Admin) 31 July 2020. URL: <http://www.bailii.org/ew/cases/EWHC/Admin/2020/2098.html> and *Appeal Decision (APP/U1105/W/17/3177340)* 22 January 2018, *The Knowle, Station Road, Sidmouth, EX10 8HL*. URL: <https://acp.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/ViewDocument.aspx?fileid=25250325>.

7.10 Fundamentally, the distinction of extra care facilities as Use Class C2 (as opposed to C3) is not simply just the provision of care, but rather the degree of care provided to residents and those residents being in need of such care. Consequently, it is important to clarify the characteristics and features of the PHL proposals that distinguish it as a scheme falling within Use Class C2. This is set out below.

On-site Care and Minimum Provision

7.11 At any one time, there will be a variety of care needs amongst residents, some requiring more, others much less, and this will also be reflected throughout the lifetime of an individual resident. Minimum care provision relates to the 'extra' in 'extra-care' which is generally recognised to be access to care services that can (i) respond quickly to residents changing need, (ii) provide unplanned care as and when required, in addition to planned care, and (iii) provide an emergency response by ensuring 24 hour cover.

7.12 In this regard, care providers/cover will be in the building at all times as follows –

- 7am-10am – 6 / 7 care workers,
- 10am-3pm – 3 care workers,
- 3pm-11pm 6 / 7 care workers,
- Overnight – 1 / 2 care workers,
- A manager/cleaner/caretaker during the day, and
- A manager during the night.

Tenure and Eligibility

7.13 The apartments are not available for sale on the open market, and will only be available for affordable rent, underpinned by a nomination agreement with the local authority (which can be secured by condition). Applying eligibility criteria and undertaking an initial assessment of care needs with regular reviews and monitoring will maintain this approach.

7.14 Such eligibility criteria principally arise from two sources –

- The Homes England grant which is part funding the provision of this affordable extra care proposal, whereby residents – must be over 55 and must be on the Council housing waiting/nomination list and accord with the appropriate housing allocation policy, and
- Oxfordshire County Council's extra care advice/guidance requiring residents to be 55+, on the nomination list and within the housing allocation policy. The Council's website defines 'extra care' as –
 - A modern, purpose-built, comfortable home (one or two bedroomed flats),with
 - On-site emergency response 24 hours a day, seven days a week,
 - Access to on-site communal facilities,
 - Generally for people aged 55 or over, but who still want to remain independent.

7.15 Whilst open to those of 55+, the PHL experience is that the majority of tenants are actually 70+.

7.16 In addition, the S106 to the outline planning permission for Phase 2, defines extra care as -

'dwellings situated in a single location in the Development designed for people aged 55 years and over (or for people below the age of 55 years who are not able to live independently without assistance) comprising individual one and two bedroom flats with communal facilities and additional facilities for the provision of care services providing independent living for people with care needs and 'Extra Care Unit' shall be construed accordingly.'

7.17 In summary, therefore, bearing in mind the preceding paragraphs, the extra care provision within the application falls within the Use Class C2 and should be determined according to this principle.

HOUSING NEED AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

7.18 Information currently published by CDC (February 2023) indicate there is a 5.4 years supply of housing. Notwithstanding this, the Site (and its planning history) represents a significant opportunity to deliver more new housing, of a desirable type and size in a highly sustainable and accessible location.

7.19 Adopted policy for affordable housing provision as part of a development proposal is 30%. The original outline permission for 726 dwellings (excluding any extra care) provided for the full 30% (219 dwellings). The subsequent reserved matters approvals for the various residential parcels total 649 dwellings with the full complement of 30% being affordable (195 dwellings). The hybrid application with the 82 extra

care apartments and the potential 14 C3 dwellings create a policy need for 29 affordable units within Parcel R – in actual fact, with the 82 extra care apartments being affordable, circa 85% affordable is achieved within Parcel R.

- 7.20 The hybrid application therefore provides for a level of affordable housing that exceeds the 30% policy level and represents a considerable improvement on the original affordable requirements for this Site (and Kingsmere Phase 2 as a whole).
- 7.21 The Market Position Statement for Extra Care Housing produced by OCC for the period up to 2026 includes the Site's forecast delivery of 60 units from the outline permission. Furthermore, Cherwell has an increasingly ageing population (ages 60+ by 28%, 70+ by 43%, 75+ by 23% all by 2035) reflecting the UK generally, and therefore the additional 22 extra care apartment provision afforded by this application will contribute to the shortfall in extra care provision.

RESPONSE TO THE APPROVED KINGSMERE PHASE 2 DESIGN CODE

- 7.22 It is understood that the construction and completion of Phase 2 so far has been in accordance with the approved Design Code required as part of the original outline permission. Whilst this Planning Statement supports a new planning application and is not strictly bound by that Code, the Code remains a material consideration and consequently, the evolution of the proposals for the Site, subject of this hybrid application, has had regard to the principles set out in the approved Code. The Site is within the Core Character Area where the Code indicates the location of primary and secondary frontages and the position of marker buildings. As a corner plot in the Core Character Area the two public realm-facing boundaries are of particular importance – the greenway to the north and the central square to the south.

Extra Care

- 7.23 Within the original outline permission, some 0.9269ha of land were set aside for the provision of a speculative 60-bed extra care home. The current demands of the market for affordable extra care provision have shaped the scale, design and massing of the building presented within the planning application, necessitating a smaller site than consented in this instance. The emphasis is on a more compact design and on quality and utilisation of internal space rather than external site size. As a result, the extra care site area is 0.6089ha (1.5 acres) with the remainder of the Site accommodating C3 dwellings.
- 7.24 The Code sets out the maximum height parameters of 14.5m with 3-4 storey buildings along the primary frontage with the central square. The greenway to the north should have a 'broken frontage' with buildings of a maximum height of 11m, 20% of which can be 3-storey, the remainder being 2-2.5 storeys.
- 7.25 To achieve this the extra care building is in a 't'-shape form with the central square primary frontage at circa 12.5m (4-storeys) and the stem of the 't' (secondary frontage) at 9.5m (3-storeys) with its gable end fronting onto the greenway. The reduction in built form directly fronting onto the greenway and the inclusion of the extra care gardens, whilst opening up the views as you travel along the greenway also helps to 'frame' the extra care building within its wider context. Consequently, the minimum 3m set back to the building line from the greenway is readily achieved. Pedestrian/cycle access points from the greenway into the Site at its western end, along the development access road, and also into the extra care bistro terrace, provide direct connectivity through to the central square and heart of the community, without compromising the safety of all residents within Proposed Development.
- 7.26 The building line along the central square frontage is consistent and set back allowing the creation of some private amenity space to the ground floor apartments, mimicking the appearance of gardens as per the C3 dwellings that frame the other sides of the central square and park. The private space is set back the required 3m from the edge of the footway and framed by black railings with planting behind affording those residents with some degree of privacy.
- 7.27 The principle of the domestic (C3 dwellings) ridge and tile roof is reflected on the 't' wing of the extra care, helping to visually tie the two parts of the land parcel together. Furthermore, the potential for overlooking of the proposed C3 dwellings and the perception of a potentially overbearing extra care building within the Site is similarly reduced, not only by the 't' shape design, but also through the location of the landscaped car park directly off the internal road separating the two uses.
- 7.28 The mass of the building is broken up with the use of different materials and colours that accord with the Design Code, whilst the principle of a marker building is created at the eastern-most end of the 't' through the use of limestone. This also is the location of the bistro and other communal rooms and facilities within the extra care building.
- 7.29 The Design Code anticipated the inclusion of a small retail unit along this central square frontage. The day-to-day needs of Phase 2 residents are properly catered for within the local centre provided within

Kingsmere Phase 1 which is easily accessible on foot, by cycle or by bus. The 'community' function that would have been potentially performed by the retail unit is instead provided for by the bistro/café of the extra care which is purposefully available to the other residents within the Kingsmere Phase 2 development. The bistro could also readily provide ancillary basic staples such as bread, milk, cakes and sweets for sale to both extra care residents and the wider resident population. The ability of the bistro to spill out into the surrounding landscaped terrace further creates the opportunity for social and intergenerational interaction and integration, bearing in mind the potential attraction for parents and children to call into the bistro at school drop-off and pick-up times.

- 7.30 Views into the Site along the access road are softened by the landscaping provided as part of the extra care car parking, which also helps delineate the extra care element from the C3 dwellings, and helps frame the northern end of the road where it forms a cul-de-sac. Tree planting continues along the length of the footway connecting to the greenway.
- 7.31 The access road and associated footways into the Site accord with the dimensions and surfacing materials required by both OCC and the Design Code. Cycle parking both covered and uncovered similarly reflect the required principles in design and provision.

C3 Housing

- 7.32 With the smaller extra care footplate requirement than originally envisaged, the most appropriate use for the remainder of the Site (Parcel R) is C3 within the context of the wider allocation and outline permission. The two uses combined represent the most efficient and sustainable use of the Site, maximising the use of the available land without compromising the overall design and aesthetic of the wider development masterplan or its associated Design Code.
- 7.33 The C3 dwellings will be developed to the west of the access road serving the application Site.
- 7.34 Given that this element of the application is in outline, it is considered important to provide CDC with some comfort in terms of the design principles for the ultimate development of the C3 dwellings which will come forward through subsequent reserved matters submissions. In this regard, broadly speaking the approved Design Code principles are to be adhered to, together with some further coding which is specifically required for this element of the Proposed Development in terms of its relationship to the adjacent extra care home and to the surrounding residential development which has been delivered through reserved matters, and also with the central square and the greenway.
- 7.35 Of particular importance in this regard, is the need for the south-east edge of Parcel R (frontage with the central square) to read as a coherent street-scene. The Code provides that this frontage can include terraces, that the building line and roof line should be regular. Given the fact that either side of this frontage is the 4-storey extra care and a 3-storey Barratt house, the dwellings here must be 3 -storey to accord with the Code. Further into the Site, the remainder of the dwellings can be generally 2 or 2.5-storey. The dwellings that would potentially located at the northern end of the cul-de-sac, at 2-2.5 storeys would reflect the other C3 dwelling heights along the greenway and also provide a sensible stepped approach from the taller 3-storey extra care building to the east. The principle of the stepped approach further assists in visually relating the two parts of the land parcel.
- 7.36 Up to 14 dwellings are proposed, resulting in a density of circa 42dph, in line with the parameters of the approved Code for Parcel R. The detail of the Code is set out in Appendix 2 (Parcel R Design Code) to the Design and Access Statement, with the key principles being –
- Maximum 2m frontages to the central square,
 - Minimum 1m frontages elsewhere within the Site, with low level stone and brick walls together with landscaping features,
 - Provision of a pedestrian link that feeds into the wider network
 - Vehicle and cycle parking in accordance with OCC standards, including EV provision,
 - Where garages are provided, the set back is minimum 6m,
 - Central square plot frontage to be black railings with low level planting.
- 7.37 Two illustrative layout examples are provided within the Parcel R Design Code, demonstrating how the Code principles can be applied.

Summary

- 7.38 The proposal demonstrates an integrated approach to design that has ensured the scheme as a whole responds positively to its context, not least in terms of its height, scale, arrangement and facades, all of which are in keeping with the surrounding area.

- 7.39 Regard has also been given to how external amenity space, landscaping, access (via various modes) and parking can all be integrated within the individual elements of the Proposed Development as well as the whole and with the wider Kingsmere development.
- 7.40 The proposal aims to provide a secure residential environment which is legible, safe, attractive and convenient, while all at the same time facilitating and encouraging healthy lifestyles for its residents.
- 7.41 The proposal should therefore be considered to be in compliance with the relevant criteria of Policy ESD15 and other design-related national planning policy including section 12 of the NPPF, the National Design Guide, the HAPPI principles and Housing Local Improvement Network (LIN) guidance more generally and the approved Design Code for Kingsmere.

TRANSPORT AND PARKING CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.42 The scheme provides a new vehicular access to the Site off Bishops Road. In the same manner, pedestrian and cycle access will be achieved via this entrance to create a safe and shared 'gateway' into the Site.
- 7.43 In addition, the application realises further opportunities to link into local and strategic walking routes - most notably the greenway to the north (with the principle of two links being created/retained as required by the Design Code) - in order to enable both the scheme's residents and employees to have safe, convenient and appropriately lit routes to wider walking and cycling networks provided as part of the Kingsmere development (for example Middleton Stoney Road). This, coupled with the proximity of the Site to bus stops within the central square which link to the local centre amenities provided within Kingsmere Phase 1, demonstrate that the site is accessible, such that the proposal is in accordance with Policy SLE4.
- 7.44 The access arrangements into and within the Site have been tracked for both a fire tender and Council refuse vehicle. This demonstrates that there is sufficient space to enable such vehicles to enter and exit the Site in a forward gear.
- 7.45 The Transport Statement also provides a full and reasoned justification for the parking levels (both vehicular and cycle) provided at the Site, with particular focus on the extra care, with the requested evidence in respect of staff/visitor/resident parking requirements and operational hours. Parking levels can be kept to a minimum without causing informal parking on-street.
- 7.46 Travel Plans have been provided for both the extra care and the C3 dwellings, both following and linking into the requirements, policies and proposals included within the Kingsmere site wide Framework Travel Plan - all aimed at encouraging residents to reduce reliance on the private car and use sustainable modes of transport.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

- 7.47 Current adopted planning policy, whilst requiring a general principle of biodiversity net gain, does not require a specific percentage net gain. This creates a conflict with emerging policy and with the Environment Act 2021 which requires a 10% BNG on all new sites/planning applications, although it should be noted that the need for inclusion within planning applications of the statutory BNG requirement has now postponed until January 2024.
- 7.48 The application Site is part of a specifically comprehensively planned and designed development, a new urban extension to Bicester, which included the provision of significant open space, landscaping, green infrastructure, ecological enhancement, mitigation and biodiversity net gain. Planning permission for all of this has been granted and construction is well advanced (indeed all but one of the open space and landscaped areas have now been laid out in accordance with the approved reserved matters). The hybrid application does not alter or affect such provision in any way.
- 7.49 At the time of the original Phase 2 application and its subsequent permission, the Site was cultivated until 2018, and therefore classed as arable land during the phase 1 habitat surveys with no trees, hedgerows or semi-natural habitats. The plant communities that were recorded at that time were typical of high-nutrient, regularly disturbed fields and were considered to be of negligible ecological value. The Site is located away from any of the margins of the fields that made up the Phase 2 development. This is notable as it is generally the margins of arable fields where any botanical diversity in arable fields tends to be found (principally due to the fact that effects of the use of chemicals tends to be less noticeable). Low value habitats were therefore ones that were present at the time of the outline application/permission.

- 7.50 The Site has been used as a site compound for the Phase 2 welfare offices and infrastructure and landscaping contractors since September 2019 and continues so to do today.
- 7.51 The Survey carried out in May/June 2023 confirms the baseline state of the site as being used as a compound and identifies areas of neutral grassland and plants indicative of its suboptimal condition that have succeeded in part from colonising vegetation around the edges of the hardstanding that dominates the Site. Some of the vegetation is also attributed to the spillage of seedlings and top soil from the surrounding construction operations. There was no recorded presence of badgers, dormouse, water vole, otter, brown hare, harvest mouse, reptiles or amphibians and no signs of nesting birds.
- 7.52 The approved Landscape and Environmental Management Plan for Kingsmere included the following –
- The establishment of areas of calcareous lowland grassland,
 - The sowing of pond edge mixes around SUDS features,
 - The planting of urban trees,
 - Other structural landscape planting and
 - The use of flowering lawn mixes.
- 7.53 The now separate application and development of Parcel R does not have any greater ecological impact than it did prior to the Phase 2 permission being granted. In this context the biodiversity offsetting/gain in accordance with adopted planning policy has already been accounted for.
- 7.54 However, the development of the Site does present some opportunities to deliver ecological enhancements as part of its green infrastructure and landscape provision. This is achieved through –
- The incorporation of some species-rich other neutral grassland around the edges of the amenity grassland of the gardens of the extra care apartments,
 - Incorporation of low level hedgerow planting and new tree planting which will help provide enhanced commuting corridors for bats, birds and other wildlife, particularly with the extra care gardens adjacent to the greenway to the north,
 - Incorporation of insect attracting plants, provision of bird feeders in the gardens and around the whole Site,
 - Provision of bat and bird boxes on the extra care building and C3 dwellings, and
 - Provision of hedgehog gaps within boundary treatments to promote habitat connectivity within the Site and with the wider development area.
- 7.55 The incorporation of soft landscaping and measures identified above assist in creating a green visual link between the Site, the greenway and the central park, thereby resulting in new ecologically permeable corridors which are integrated and linked by the biodiversity features provided.
- 7.56 When taken together, the above measures demonstrate an approach to biodiversity that is compliant with Local Plan Policy ESD10 and the NPPF.
- Drainage**
- 7.57 The Site lies wholly within flood zone 1. The Site area is under the threshold for a flood risk assessment, and the existing outline permission and Phase 2 allocation satisfies the sequential test.
- 7.58 The overarching drainage parameters were set as part of the Phase 2 outline permission and the approved Design Code and the Proposed Development accords with these principles – Parcel R is restricted to a discharge rate of 3.5l/s for the 1 in 10 year flood event. The extra care element of the Proposed Development has been designed to utilise 2.0l/s with the remainder of the capacity for the C3 dwellings. Further detail is provided in the Drainage Design Strategy and in section 6 of this Planning Statement.
- 7.59 Run off is managed at source, through the use of permeable paving within the car park and bioretention areas within the patio/terrace, held in pipes and underground storage in order to then release the water into the pipe network at the required discharge rate to further storage and treatment components.
- 7.60 The drainage strategy for the Proposed Development is in accordance with the sustainable drainage principles of the NPPF, NPPG and other local guidance such as the OCC ‘Local Standards and Guidance for Surface Water Drainage on Major Development in Oxfordshire’ and policy ED3 of the adopted development plan.

Energy and Sustainability

- 7.61 Policies ESD1-5 of the development plan require consideration of sustainable construction and seek to achieve development in excess of the Building Regulations Part L 2021 and that is water efficient. In accordance with adopted policies ED3, ED4, ED5 consideration has been given to sustainable energy provision. Condition 31 of the outline permission 13/00847/OUT requires a 19% carbon reduction over the 2013 Part L Building Regulations and a potable water consumption of 110 litres per person per day in accordance with Part G of the aforementioned Regulations.
- 7.62 In the first instance, sustainable design and construction technology is being applied to achieve reductions in carbon through a combination of fabric energy efficiency, carbon compliance to achieve at least BREEM 'very good' for the extra care. Similar principles of fabric energy efficiency, carbon compliance will be applied to the C3 dwellings.
- 7.63 The Energy and Sustainability Statement demonstrates that the provision of district heating and combined heat and power systems are not feasible, practicable or viable for the Proposed Development given its small size (96 dwelling units) and limited available space within the Site. Kingsmere as a whole does not include such systems. A minimum requirement of 4,000 hours of running time per year is required to ensure viability, compared to maximum expected need of circa 2,117 hours for the combined extra care and C3 dwellings.
- 7.64 The use of renewable technologies has similarly been explored for the Proposed Development, considering options including bio fuel boilers, wind turbines, ground source heat pumps, solar water heating, air source heat pumps and photovoltaics. The outcome of this indicates that the most appropriate technologies for the extra care element of the Proposed Development are the use of air source heat pumps and photovoltaics.
- 7.65 Air-source heat pumps (ASHP) provide typical efficiencies of 70-95% over conventional boiler systems and can be mounted on roofs, walls or the ground. In this instance, six pumps are required to serve the extra care.
- 7.66 As a result of the number of pumps required and the potential noise emissions from them, the challenge faced by the design team was where to locate them that would be visually acceptable, did not restrict the airflow required around them and how to mitigate any noise. An acoustic enclosure and attenuator is required, the chosen option with acoustically treated louvres and a top mounted attenuator is one that is being employed on another of the PHL schemes that has already received planning permission. The resulting size and scale of this means that a roof mounted solution was visually and aesthetically unacceptable particularly when viewed from the greenway and extra care car park. The ASHP enclosure is therefore to be ground mounted adjacent to the electricity substation to the north of the car park, where it could be more appropriately assimilated into the Site and screened by the proposed landscaping.
- 7.67 The attenuation enclosure is designed to achieve a reduction in potential cumulative noise levels in the order of 20dBA. Anticipated noise levels at the nearest sensitive receptors ranging from 12.5m distant to 27.5m distant are 41dB and 30 dB respectively, and is considered to be acceptable in terms of a residential noise environment.
- 7.68 It is expected that further discussions will be necessary with the Environmental Health Officer and Planning Officer in relation to this aspect of the Proposed Development. The development ethos and USP of both PHL and their funders is centred around creating environmental social governance and achieving their net zero carbon and BREEM 'excellent' commitments through exemplar design and development. Considerable amounts of money is being focussed on decarbonising their extra care buildings to achieve this ethos, which in turn ensures that the environmental and sustainable development policies and requirements of the adopted local plan and building regulations are complied with. This is set against the backdrop of a site that has been planned and received planning permission as part of the comprehensive whole of Kingsmere and subject to a Design Code dating back to 2017 when the implications of alternative sources of heating of domestic/commercial buildings were less well known/appreciated. A balance therefore has to be achieved between the competing interests of design and achieving compliance with sustainable energy requirements.
- 7.69 Photovoltaic modules convert sunlight directly to electricity and consist of a thin piece of semiconductor material (silicon) that can be incorporated onto roofs. A 55kWp array is proposed for the roof of the extra care building.
- 7.70 The baseline energy and carbon levels taking into account regulated energy demands are some 264,862kWh/annum and 37.64 tonnes CO₂/annum for the extra care and 15,541kWh/annum and 4.82 tonnes/CO₂/annum for the C3 dwellings. The incorporation of the above technologies as well as efficient LED lights within the extra care, result in a reduction to 255,773KWh/annum and 36.51 tonnes CO₂/annum. Some 14,973KWh/annum and 4.63 tonnes CO₂/annum reduction is achievable for the C3

dwellings even assuming no air source heat pump and photovoltaics. The above assumptions achieve a total energy saving of circa 3.43% from the base in Part L 2021, and a 3.02% reduction in carbon emissions for the Proposed Development. Furthermore, an energy saving of 29.4% over the base of Part L 2013 is achieved for the Proposed Development, considerably better than the 19% required under condition 31 of the original outline permission.

- 7.71 In respect of the C3 residential element of the Proposed Development, the sustainability and energy commitments will reflect those of the original outline planning permission and approved Design Code and Sustainability Statement. For the avoidance of doubt this does not involve the specific use of air source heat pumps or photovoltaics.
- 7.72 Water efficiency measures across the Proposed Development (both extra care and C3 dwellings) include the use of low flow taps, dual flush toilet with reduced flush volumes fitted as standard thus ensuring compliance with the 110 litres /person/day requirements, adding to the energy efficiency of the buildings.
- 7.73 High standards/rates of energy efficiency are therefore anticipated to ensure that household water and fuel bills and service charges, for both market and affordable dwelling residents are reasonable and affordable.
- 7.74 In summary, the proposal recognises the opportunities that are available for sustainable design and the implementation of renewable energy, including -
- Maximising solar gain through site layout and building design to assist with daylight and thermal efficiency, together with the provision of photovoltaics on the roof of the extra care buildings,
 - Promoting the use of natural and mechanical ventilation and systems that minimise potential impact on air quality within both the extra care and C3 dwelling elements of the Proposed Development,
 - Promoting water conservation using rainwater harvesting/ grey-water systems and low water use appliances within both the extra care building and the C3 dwellings,
 - Promoting the use of sustainable and quality construction materials for both elements of the Proposed Development,
 - Using air source heat pumps to heat and cool the extra care building,
 - Use of BREEAM and SAP assessment methods where appropriate,
 - Promoting the implementation of a sustainable travel plan (e.g. safe pedestrian access and movement, provision of onsite cycle facilities and accessibility to public transport), and
 - Incorporating features which enable the extra care building to be flexible in its use and layout with scope for future enhancement to extend the useful life of the building.
- 7.75 Taking all of the above into account, the Proposed Development is considered to be in accordance with Policies ESSD 1-5, Building Regulations Part L(2021) and condition 31 of the outline permission.

8 KEY BENEFITS OF THE PROPOSAL

- 8.1 The application proposals offer a number of significant social, economic and environmental benefits as required under the NPPF.
- 8.2 **Social benefits** include –
- Boosting the supply of housing generally,
 - Boosting the supply of specialist housing in particular, in the form of extra care,
 - Boosting the supply of affordable housing,
 - Providing opportunity for intergenerational community creation,
 - Providing opportunity for older people to continue to live independently, but with the knowledge there is on-site support if required,
 - Providing a community facility in the form of the bistro/café which is open to the residents of the wider Kingsmere development.
- 8.3 The local authority's evidence base indicates a need for older person housing, and the proposal will provide this in a high-quality facility which comfortably exceeds Government standards. The accommodation within the extra care development will be for affordable rent, and as such will be allocated to those in the greatest housing need, not least those on local authority waiting lists.
- 8.4 The forced segregation brought on by the Covid-19 pandemic has also stressed the importance of integrated living more than ever. In this context, PHL are particularly interested in supporting the momentum that has emerged for intergenerational care and therefore as part of their schemes, intend to promote intergeneration activities such as time capsules and learning about different generations. As such, the location of the site close to a local school present the ideal opportunity to promote and realise this intention, which has been shown, through recent pilot studies, to benefit both old and young alike.
- 8.5 **Economic benefits** include –
- Providing construction employment and indirect employment in supply industries,
 - Providing employment opportunities within the extra care home itself,
 - Delivering investment through construction,
 - Generating new Council Tax receipts.
- 8.6 The proposal will bring forward the equivalent of at least 15 permanent jobs on the Site. Further, the jobs created will be diverse in terms of full time and part time positions, and the level of skills required, from nurses through to cleaning and catering positions. Given the type of work offered, the majority of staff for the extra care will be drawn from the immediate local area.
- 8.7 In addition to this, the Proposed Development will create addition indirect benefits, including during construction and afterwards to suppliers and local businesses. As such, the proposal will bring substantial economic benefits to its immediate surroundings, and the local area more widely.
- 8.8 **Environmental benefits** include –
- Limited loss of ecological interests, given the Site is presently a construction compound for the development of the wider Kingsmere Phase 2,
 - Provision of SUDs, net additional native tree/hedge planting and other native landscaping,
 - Being situated in a highly sustainable location with good access to bus stops and links (already operational as part of Phase 2) around the central square,
 - Being adjacent to existing footpath and cycle links (specifically the greenway bordering the Site to the north) which provide easy access to the community /local centre facilities of Kingsmere Phase 1.
- 8.9 The sustainability credentials of the development have been reviewed in sections 5 and 6 of this statement. Further, the proposal will complete the Kingsmere Phase 2 development through the delivery of modern, high quality extra, sustainably-constructed and energy efficient care home and additional C2 dwellings which bring considerable environmental benefits to the surrounding area, both in terms of visual and residential amenity. Further to this, the Site's highly sustainable location and the local employment that the extra care home brings will maximise environmental benefit.

9 CONCLUSIONS

- 9.1 The principle of the development for extra care accommodation and C3 dwellings on Parcel R has been established through the adopted local policy framework and the outline planning permission.
- 9.2 The Proposed Development has been carefully considered, having gone through several rounds of pre-application discussions and revision, and to make sure that it will meet the requirements and aspirations of not only the NPPF, but also local adopted policy and the principles established through the outline permission and approved Design Code.
- 9.3 The proposal will make a valuable contribution towards meeting housing needs generally within CDC, and specifically specialist housing for vulnerable groups and providing much needed affordable accommodation within this specialist sector. It also delivers an essential community function with the provision of a publicly accessible bistro/café providing a focal community space that allows intergenerational contact and social interaction with the wider Kingsmere residents.
- 9.4 From a review of the principal planning considerations arising from the proposal it is clear that there are no issues which would prevent planning permission from being granted. Rather, and in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development, it demonstrates that planning permission should be granted at the earliest opportunity.
- 9.5 In this context, also, the proposal will evidently bring substantial benefits with reference to the NPPF objectives, and as such the proposals are clearly sustainable development. This further tells in favour of planning permission being granted without delay.

Pre-Application Response November 2021



Planning and Development

David Peckford, Assistant Director – Planning and Development



Cherwell

DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

Sarah Smith
Rapleys
126 Colmore Row
Birmingham
B3 3AP

Bodicote House
Bodicote
Banbury
Oxfordshire
OX15 4AA

www.cherwell.gov.uk

Please ask for: **Linda Griffiths**

Direct Dial: **01295 227998**

Email: **linda.griffiths@cherwell-dc.gov.uk**

Your Ref: **21/03645/PREAPP**

30th November 2021

Dear Sir/ Madam,

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

Application No.: 21/03645/PREAPP

Applicant's Name: Preferred Homes Limited and Countryside Properties

Proposal: Pre-Application Enquiry - Erection of a 80 bed Extra Care home with associated open space, landscaping, and car/cycle parking; and the provision of 16 new residential dwellings

Location: Phase 2 SW Bicester Kingsmere Parcel R East Of
Ludlow Road
Bicester

Parish(es): Bicester

Further to your above mentioned pre-application enquiry and our Teams Meeting of 30th November 2021, I write with the Council's response. Your enquiry seeks advice in respect of the erection of an 80 bed Extra Care Home with associated open space, landscaping and car parking and the erection of an additional 16 new residential dwellings on parcel R adjacent to the central square on the Phase 2 Kingsmere development at Bicester.

The pre-application enquiry is accompanied by an illustrative site layout plan, Planning Statement and indicative scheme document.

Principle of Development

The site forms part of a larger allocated site in the adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 ('CLP 2015') under Policy Bicester 3: South West Bicester Phase 2. Policy Bicester 3 relates to a residential development of approximately 726 new homes with associated infrastructure and facilities, including the provision of extra care housing. The application proposal is located at the centre of the site occupying a prominent position around the main central square and close to the primary school.

The section 106 Agreement attached to the outline consent seeks to secure the reservation of a site for extra care on a 0.885ha site for up to 60 beds and the Market Position Statement for Extra Care Housing produced by Oxfordshire County Council already includes this site within its forecast of delivery of 60 extra care units up to 2026.

The Council's 2020 Annual Monitoring Report demonstrates that the District has a 4.7-year housing land supply for the period 2021-2026. The proposal would contribute towards the Council's 5-year housing land supply. The proposal is consistent in terms of Policy Bicester 3 and providing new homes.

The site is within a sustainable location, is part of an existing strategic new development and has outline consent for 60 extra care residential units on the site. The principle of the development proposed therefore is considered to be acceptable in terms of the extra care and additional residential dwellings. As discussed at the meeting however, the original outline consent for this development envisaged that a small retail unit might also be provided in conjunction with this development, if this is not to be provided, evidence and justification for not bringing this element forward as part of the development proposals will be required to be submitted with any subsequent planning application.

Quantum of Development and Uses

Policy Bicester 3 envisages that approximately 726 dwellings will be delivered, of which some will be Extra Care. The outline consent which excluded Whitelands Farm, permitted up to 709 new dwellings. The site was divided into parcels which have subsequently been sold to individual house builders who are now all on site. A number of dwellings are now occupied. The last parcel to be brought forward is Parcel R which is the subject of this pre-application submission. The reserved matters consents for Phase 2 total 649 dwellings, leaving 60 to be delivered by the Extra Care facility in accordance with the section 106 Agreement.

The pre-app proposals set out that this scheme will include 80 extra care dwellings made up of 69 1-bed units and 11 2-bed units, all of which are to be affordable rented accommodation for people aged 55+ with care needs on the main part of this retained site. The erection of an additional 16 market dwellings by another developer (yet to be finalised) on the remainder of the site is proposed to be brought forward independently of the extra care units. In terms of the increased number of extra care units proposed, Cherwell has an increasingly ageing population and therefore the additional extra care units proposed will contribute towards meeting the shortfall in extra care provision.

Layout, Design, Open Space and Landscaping

Policy Bicester 3 of the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2032 sets out a number of site specific design and place shaping principles relating to the development of the site. One of these is that the development should comply with Policy ESD15. Policy ESD15 advises that design standards for new development, whether housing or commercial development are equally important, and seeks to provide a framework for considering the quality of the built environment, to ensure that we achieve locally distinctive design which reflects and respects the urban or rural landscape within which it sits. This policy also advises that the design of all new developments will need to be informed by an analysis of the context, together with an explanation and justification of the design principles that have informed the design rationale which should be demonstrated within a design and access statement. The submission does not include a design and access statement but is accompanied by a planning statement and development massing document which seeks to demonstrate how the proposals have had regard to the approved Phase 2 Kingsmere Design Code 2018.

Discussion at the meeting was primarily focussed on the proposed extra care development, so I will comment in the first instance on the extra care proposals. I note that the development proposals have largely been designed with the approved design code in mind, and this is welcomed, and that additional units are proposed in order to achieve a viable development on the site in respect of the extra care development.

Whilst this development proposal will come forward as a new application independent of the original outline consent due to the increased number of extra care units and the additional 16 dwellings, the design code remains a material consideration. The design code divides the development into different character areas, this site being within the Core Character Area. The urban development principles on page 21 at figure 3.3 indicates the primary and secondary frontages and position of marker buildings. This development is located in a prime position on the central square with a marker building suggested at the north-eastern corner of the square. Building heights are also higher fronting this main square, with dwellings up to 3 or 4 storey and a maximum height of 14.5m, but this is only to the primary frontage, the

remainder of the development is only 2-2.5 storey. It should be noted that this site also abuts the greenway along its northern boundary, and this is identified as a 'broken frontage' within the code with lower building heights and a more informal, looser knit development form.

As discussed at our meeting, I do have concerns regarding the scale and massing of this building having regard to the adjacent and surrounding development and its relationship with the adjacent greenway which is one of the key pedestrian/recreation routes through the Kingsmere development. Whilst I recognise that the building does not exceed 14.5m in height and has sought to introduce a variation in the overall heights, the fact remains that this is a large single, flat roofed building which is quite different in its scale and appearance with the surrounding development which are dwellings of more traditional design under pitched roofs and therefore lower eaves than the proposed development. The building proposed here is 4 storey for the main part with some 3 storey elements to either side. Whilst I do not consider that the design of this building should necessarily mimic those already constructed and under construction within Kingsmere, it is vital that this building sits comfortably with its surroundings and does not dominate or appear at odds with it. Unfortunately, I consider that the scale of building proposed would be at odds with the remainder of the development. Further, no cross sections have been included with the submission to explain and clarify the visual impact of this scheme in relation to the approved development. This was discussed at the meeting and further consideration was to be given to this. It is also vital that this development does not stand apart from the remainder of the development in terms of its tenure, and it must therefore be designed to integrate with the remainder of the residential offering both in terms of its design and connectivity, creating a development that is wholly inclusive.

Further consideration must be given to the proximity of the frontage with the main square and the privacy of residents here and the distinction between the public and private realm. The small patio areas indicated to the main square are likely to have little amenity benefit as a consequence of their proximity immediately abutting the pavement and therefore lack of privacy and are therefore unlikely to be fully utilised. Further consideration must be given to this.

In terms of materials, it should be noted that the approved design code requires the use of natural stone around this main central square, although the code does recognise that the extra care building may not necessarily be constructed wholly in stone. To help break up the impact of the building, it may be more appropriate to use natural limestone for whole sections of the building rather than just at a lower level. The code also requires the landmark buildings to be in natural stone, so I would suggest that the corner element of the building between the square and greenway should also be constructed wholly in natural stone. The use of a light red multi brick could then be used in conjunction with the natural stone.

At our meeting we also discussed the overall height of the building proposed in relation to the surrounding residential development and that further consideration should be given to stepping the building height down further at the western end and along the greenway to better integrate with the more domestic scale relating to those dwellings and the proposed additional units. It is also considered, as discussed that the building is too close to the greenway and should be stepped back to provide privacy for residents along this edge and also to reduce the visual impact of the development in respect of the greenway. The code which envisages a looser urban form along this route and lower buildings seeks front gardens to be a minimum of 3m along here. The building set back from the greenway should reflect this as a minimum, particularly as these frontages will be private areas, unlike front gardens which are not expected to be private.

The provision of a café with the extra care facility which would also be open to the general public and residents of Kingsmere is welcomed. However, as discussed, this needs to be given greater presence to the square. Currently it is shielded by an area of planting, the main entrance into the extra care building and the proposed servicing bay. If this is to also serve as a public facility, it must be clear through the design enticing people in rather than feeling that they are entering into a private area. The design code also identifies this corner as a marker building, but currently there is little to distinguish this from the remainder of the building.

As discussed, the currently stark and open car park and expanse of hard surface which would serve the extra care units is poor in its appearance and visual impact upon the street scene and development generally. This car park would also be clearly visible to the adjacent greenway, despite the indicative planting at the end and is not acceptable as shown. Further, servicing of the development and refuse collection for the development is not clear. At the meeting you stated that refuse collection and servicing could be taken from this car park, but as advised, sufficient room would need to be provided to enable this to occur, including a turning area so that delivery vehicles could enter and leave in a forward direction. I note that only 3 disabled spaces are shown, is this sufficient for a development of this nature? The car park also does not relate well to the proposed residential units.

As discussed, in order to address the points above, it may be necessary to include additional land within the extra care scheme, which is currently shown for additional residential dwellings.

In terms of the proposed additional 16 residential units, we discussed the indicative layout at our meeting and concern was expressed about the need to provide a sense of place and appropriate public and private realms, thereby providing an appropriate living environment for its future occupiers. Design is not only about the physical appearance of a development, but how it works, functions and fits together thereby ensuring a quality of life for those that live there. As discussed, I do not consider that the residential development proposals have been particularly well thought out having regard to the remainder of the Kingsmere residential parcels, the adjacent greenway and the extra care development itself.

The illustrative layout relating to the residential dwellings has not been properly considered and provides a line of semi-detached and short terraces with parking between, lined up along an open road, which ends in an open cul-de-sac adjacent to the greenway. No sense of place is created, and the development would not relate to or pay any regard to the adjoining approved development or the proposed extra care development. As discussed, the character of the Kingsmere development, other than along the primary and secondary routes uses shared surfaces. This is not reflected in the submission. The design code also envisages a small green space at the end of this development to link in with the greenway. This has not been addressed. The expanse of the hard surfaced cul-de-sac and vista down this street from the greenway is poor and is not considered to be acceptable. Neither is the vista created down this street from the main square considered to be acceptable.

Whilst the principle of additional dwellings on any surplus land not required for the extra care development is considered to be generally acceptable, the layout indicated would not be acceptable.

The Council's Residential Development Guide SPD 2018 is also relevant in terms of the consideration of this development and the advice therein.

The proposal has also been assessed by Tim Screen (Landscape Officer) who advises that the landscape masterplan should show a street scene unified by hedges on frontages and a layout that accommodates 2m-wide verges with street trees. As above, concern is also raised in respect of the open expanse of hard surface created by the proposed car park, the visual impact of which should be mitigated with tree and shrub planting.

He further advises that tree planting should be appropriate in terms of 'right tree, right place' and therefore recommends consideration of the advice in TDAGs tree species selection for green infrastructure. Any subsequent submission will also need to consider the requirements of OCC in respect of trees within the highway, or overhanging the public highway. He also suggests that consideration might be given to greening the frontage with climbers, hedges and specimen shrubs and protecting the privacy of residents.

Whilst I note that it is your intention to submit a hybrid application with the extra care proposals as a full detailed application and the additional dwellings as an outline, I would strongly advise, that having regard to the comments above, and to ensure that the development of this site is considered comprehensively, not piecemeal, that a single full detailed application is submitted for the whole development. This would ensure that the extra care development could be delivered appropriately and that proper consideration could be given to the number of additional dwellings that might be appropriate for the remainder of the site.

Highways

As discussed at our meeting, the extra care scheme would not require the usual parking requirements for standard affordable housing. It is noted that currently 34 spaces are indicated, but Will raised concerns that this could lead to informal parking which may not be acceptable and as a consequence he requested more information to demonstrate how the number of spaces proposed had been derived. There must not be an assumption that residents will not own a car/drive.

In terms of delivery, refuse collection and emergency vehicles, the layout and the proposed car park will need to be tracked to ensure that vehicles can safely access egress the road and car park in a forward direction.

Whilst Will Madgwick attended the meeting and gave brief comments on the proposals in terms of highways, I have not received a formal written consultation response at the time of writing from OCC, but I will forward under separate cover once received.

Affordable Housing

As you are aware, Strategic Housing have been involved in previous discussions on this site and have given further comments in respect of this submission.

It is noted that Preferred Homes rather than Countryside is leading on this application who have worked from the outset to design and extra care scheme using best practice and will be the landlord responsible for letting, managing and commissioning care services to support residents of the development.

In terms of allocations and nominations, the Strategic Housing Team would expect to be able to nominate suitable housing register applicants to the affordable extra care units in line with the current Allocation Scheme and enter into a nominations agreement to ensure that Oxfordshire County Council, extra care provider/landlord and CDC Allocations Team are able to support those vulnerable clients whose needs will be met by the extra care housing. These arrangements would need to be secured in a Section 106 and separate Nominations Agreement.

In terms of accessibility, space standards and design, whilst the proposals set out that the extra care will meet the necessary space standards, any future application will need to make clear what tenure the proposed additional 16 dwellings will be and if affordable housing they will need to meet the current minimum internal space standards and 50% of the rented units will need to meet Building Regulations Part M4 (2) Category 2: accessible housing standards. The extra care housing will need to meet all accessibility standards for wheelchair users in line with best practice for extra care schemes.

Flood Risk and Drainage

Whilst this is to be submitted as a new application, rather than a reserved matter to the outline, it is expected that the development will accord with the approved drainage strategy for the Kingsmere development.

To date I have not received any comments from Oxfordshire County Council as Lead Flood Authority, but I will forward under separate cover once received.

Sustainable Construction

Policies ESD1-5 of the Cherwell Local Plan 2015 require the consideration of sustainable construction matters through the submission of planning applications and seek to achieve a development in excess of Part L of the Building Regulations and also development which is water efficient.

Policy ESD3 sets out the Council's approach to implementing the first step of energy hierarchy in Policy ESD2, specifically its encouragement for the use of sustainable design and construction. Policy ESD 3 states: (i) all new residential development will be expected 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 line with Government policy and (ii) that all new non-residential development will be expected to meet at least BREEAM 'very good'. Any application should be accompanied by an Energy Statement which outlines how the proposal will meet the criteria set out in the policy.

Policy ESD4 requires that any development of 100 dwellings or more to include a feasibility study for the provision of District Heating and Combined Heat and Power. Where this is demonstrated to be viable it should be provided on site. I note that this particular scheme relates to 96 units, however, it is part of the larger Kingsmere Policy Bicester 3 allocation and is therefore a relevant consideration. Details will need to be included with the application.

All affordable housing units, together with any market housing must deliver high standards/rates of energy efficiency to ensure household fuel and water bills and service charges are affordable to residents. Any future application should therefore include specifications for energy efficient housing.

An application submission must also include a feasibility assessment for the potential of on-site renewable energy in accordance with Policy ESD5. This will be required as part of the development.

As discussed, measures should also be included to encourage the uptake of low emission transport including the provision of Electric Vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure. As a consequence, we would seek the provision of EV charging points for each of the new dwellings as well as a number of EV charging points to serve the Extra Care facility.

This would allow for the future uptake of EVs by all residents to maximise opportunities for sustainable transport in accordance with Government guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.

The consideration of the above is becoming more pertinent having regard to climate change, Government law, policy and targets, guidance within the National Planning Policy Framework and Cherwell District Council's Climate Change Emergency Declaration.

Health and Well-Being

Health and well-being is high on both the Government's and Council's agenda, particularly in the light of the recent pandemic and the impact it has had on the population, emphasising the need for access to good quality public open space as well as the benefit of private outdoor space. It is therefore suggested that a Health Impact Assessment should be carried out in connection with any subsequent planning application on this site. A Health Impact Assessment is a tool used to identify the health impacts of a development and how best to prevent ill-health, promote good health and reduce health inequalities. Whilst HIAs are currently not a legal or policy requirement of the planning system, they are recognised as good practice in the Planning Practice Guidance. An Oxfordshire Health Impact Toolkit has been approved for use across Oxfordshire.

Planning Obligations

As part of the overall Kingsmere Phase 2 development, a linking agreement will be required in respect of this development proposal.

A number of contributions, such as the provision of affordable housing on site in relation to the proposed new dwellings may be required. In terms of the provision of open space and children's play space, this has already been provided in conjunction with the Phase 2 Kingsmere development and the main central square is in close proximity to the development. Accordingly, additional public open space/play space provision is not required, and the future maintenance of this open space is to be carried out by a management company, therefore no additional maintenance costs will be payable to CDC in respect of open space and play provision.

In terms of the additional units, it is likely that additional sec 106 contributions may be required in connection with indoor and outdoor sport and community facilities. The Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group have also requested financial contributions in respect of this development.

Further detail and information in respect of the planning obligations will emerge with any subsequent planning application submission, including any contributions relating to transport and education.

Conclusion

Overall, whilst the principle of the development proposed is acceptable and supported by the Local Plan, having regard to the comments above, I do not consider that it would be acceptable to come forward in the form currently shown. Further I am also of the view for the reasons explained above, that the standard residential element should also be a detailed proposal submitted as a comprehensive application with the extra care proposals rather than as an outline element.

The above mentioned advice is given without prejudice to the determination of any subsequent application submitted to and determined by the Local Planning Authority.

Yours faithfully,

Linda Griffiths
Principal Planning Officer

Agreed By: Andy Bateson, Team Leader – Major Development

Pre-Application Response March 2022



Planning and Development

David Peckford, Assistant Director – Planning and Development



Cherwell

DISTRICT COUNCIL
NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

Sarah Smith
Rapleys
126 Colmore Row
Birmingham
B3 3AP

Bodicote House
Bodicote
Banbury
Oxfordshire
OX15 4AA

www.cherwell.gov.uk

Please ask for: **Linda Griffiths**

Direct Dial: **01295 227998**

Email: **linda.griffiths@cherwell-dc.gov.uk**

Your Ref: **22/00371/PREAPP**

18th March 2022

Dear Sir/ Madam

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

Application No.: 22/00371/PREAPP

Applicant's Name: Preferred Homes Limited & Countryside Properties

Proposal: Pre-Application Enquiry - Erection of a 80 bed Extra Care home with associated open space, landscaping, and car/cycle parking; and the provision of 16 new residential dwellings (follow up to 21/03645/PREAPP)

Location: Phase 2 SW Bicester Kingsmere Parcel R East Of
Ludlow Road
Bicester

Parish(es): Bicester

Further to your above-mentioned pre-application enquiry and our Teams Meeting on 14th March 2022, I write with the Council's response. Your application seeks advice on the erection of an 80-bed Extra Care Complex with associated facilities, private amenity space, car parking and bistro/café and the erection of 16 market dwellings adjacent on land Parcel R of Phase 2 of the new Kingsmere development. The site is located within the central core, opposite the primary school and central area of open space. This submission follows an earlier pre-application submission for the same proposal (21/03645/PREAPP) refers.

The pre-application enquiry is accompanied by a site layout plan, tracking plans, landscape strategy plan and 'massing development document' dated January 2022. The accompanying letter advises that this scheme has sought to address the concerns raised in respect of the earlier pre-application submission. As a general comment, the plans submitted do not appear to have been drawn to the scale indicated.

Principle of Development

As previously advised, the site forms part of the wider Kingsmere Phase 2 strategic development site, which was granted outline consent in May 2017 (13/00847/OUT) refers. This central site of 0.885ha was reserved through the Section 106 Agreement attached to that permission for Extra Care Housing. The Market Position Statement for Extra Care Housing produced by Oxfordshire County Council already includes this site within its forecast of delivery of 60 extra care units up to 2026. This proposal, which seeks to provide 80 extra care units would deliver the extra care units envisaged accordingly.

In Cherwell, a five-year housing land supply does not presently exist. The Council's latest Annual Monitoring Report, (AMR 2021), prepared in accordance with the NPPF guidance identifies only a 3.8-year housing land supply for the period 2021-2026 and a 3.5-year housing land supply for the period 2022-2027 (commencing on 1 April 2022). As the Council cannot demonstrate a five-year housing land supply, in accordance with the NPPF, any assessment of the residential proposals will need to apply the 'tilted balance'. The 'tilted balance' states that planning permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies in the adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 and the NPPF taken as a whole.

As previously advised, the site is within a sustainable location, is part of a strategic new development and has outline consent for 60 extra care residential units on the site. The principle of the extra care development is therefore in accordance with Policy Bicester 3 and the subsequent outline planning consent. In terms of the additional market residential dwellings proposed, again, these may be acceptable in principle, provided that those additional units would not prejudice the delivery of the extra care units and would result in an appropriate form of development in respect of the extra care housing and the additional units when taken as a whole.

As previously discussed, the original outline consent for this development envisaged that a small retail unit might also be provided in conjunction with this development. The submission fails to evidence or provide any justification for not bringing that element forward as part of the development proposals. This would be required to be included with any subsequent planning application.

Quantum of Development and Land Uses

As previously discussed, the outline consent permits up to 709 dwellings to be constructed on the Phase 2 Kingsmere development, including an extra care facility of 60 units. This proposal seeks 80 extra care units plus an additional 16 open market houses. This is in excess of the number of dwelling units permitted through the outline consent and through the initial Policy Bicester 3 strategic allocation.

The previous pre-app proposals set out that the scheme would include 80 extra care dwellings made up of 69 x 1-bed units and 11 x 2-bed units, all of which are to be affordable rented accommodation for people aged 55+ on the main part of this retained site, together with 16 open market dwellings of various sizes on the remainder (to be delivered by another developer). I cannot see that this has fundamentally changed through this most recent submission. In terms of the additional units, both extra care and market dwellings, as advised above, these are likely to be acceptable in principle, provided the proposals work together as a scheme and are acceptable in layout and design terms, relate and respond appropriately to the existing Kingsmere development, accord with the approved Phase 2 Design Code and do not result in an unacceptable overdevelopment of the site. These matters are discussed in more detail below.

Layout, Design, Open Space and Landscaping

As previously set out, Policy Bicester 3 of the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 sets out a number of site specific design and place shaping principles relating to the development of the site as a whole, such as compliance with Policy ESD15 'The character of the built and historic environment', which seeks to ensure that new development is locally distinctive and reflects and respects its urban or rural context and advises that the design rationale should be demonstrated within a Design and Access Statement. The submission does not include a design and access statement but is accompanied by a development massing document which seeks to demonstrate how the proposals have had regard to the approved Phase 2 Design Code 2018 and relates to the adjacent approved development. As previously discussed, whilst the submission will be a new application outside the original outline because of the additional units, the approved design code will remain a material consideration.

Discussion at our meeting was primarily focussed on the proposed extra care development, so I will comment in the first instance on the extra care proposals. As previously stated, it is noted that you have sought to design the scheme with the approved design code in mind, and this is welcomed, although it should be noted that compliance with a design code does not necessarily mean that a scheme is acceptable when considering its design and layout in more detail. I understand from our discussions that the additional market units are proposed as you consider this land to be surplus to your requirements rather than to ensure the extra care development is viable.

As previously discussed, whilst this development proposal, as a consequence of the increased number of units and market dwellings, will come forward as a new application independent of the original outline consent, the approved Phase 2 Design code remains a material consideration. This site is within the Core Character Area and the urban development principles are discussed on page 21 at figure 3.3 which indicates the primary and secondary frontages and position of marker buildings. As previously discussed, whilst building heights may be 3 to 4 storey and have a maximum height of 14.5m, this only relates to the primary frontage and the remainder of the development indicates 2-2.5 storey only. It should also be noted that these are maximum height indications and relate only to the primary frontage and development which immediately fronts the central square. The submission, which is 3 and 4 storeys only, does not accord with the design code in this respect. Furthermore, the northern boundary to the greenway is identified within the code as a 'broken frontage' with lower building heights and a more informal, looser knit form of development. This is not reflected in the submission which essentially proposes a single 3 and 4 storey block very close to the greenway boundary.

As discussed, whilst I recognise that the revised submission has sought to reduce the height of the building at its north western end, by introducing a mansard roof, the overall bulk here remains an issue. Further, mansard roofs are not a feature of either Kingsmere nor North Oxfordshire and is therefore not appropriate in design terms. Further consideration must therefore be given to the design of the building and ways of reducing the height and bulk of the building along the greenway. It is considered that the relationship of the extra care building and the adjacent residential dwellings indicated remains of concern in terms of design, scale, bulk and massing.

As previously advised and discussed, whilst I recognise that the building proposed does not exceed the maximum height of 14.5m given in the design code, the fact remains that this is a significant, large scale flat roofed building which will stand at odds with the remainder of the whole of the Kingsmere development which reflects more traditional vernacular with pitched roofs, narrower gable spans and therefore lower eaves than the proposed development. It should be noted at 3.5.12 of the design code on page 35 that it advises that the design of the extra care unit must be in keeping with both the character area within which it is located and the surrounding residential properties.

I note that you have sought to reduce the height of the building to the northern boundary, however, as discussed at our meeting, I remain concerned about the scale and massing of this building having regard to the adjacent and surrounding development and its relationship with the greenway which is one of the key pedestrian/recreation routes through the Kingsmere development.

Whilst I recognise that you have sought to reduce the height of the building to its northern elevation, the building remains essentially a 4 storey block with some slightly lower 3 storey elements to either side. As previously discussed, whilst due to the nature of the extra care use proposed, I am content with a more modern building, it remains vital that it sits comfortably with its surrounding and does not dominate to the extent that it is detrimental to the overall character and appearance of the street scene and the Kingsmere development as a whole. Unfortunately, I do not consider that this issue has been successfully addressed by the amended scheme which remains very similar to the original. Whilst you have now provided some cross-sections, I am of the view that these do clearly demonstrate the significant difference in scale and bulk between the approved development and this. Further consideration must be given to breaking up the bulk and overall scale and height of the building, particularly in relation to the greenway and southern end adjacent to existing development.

As previously advised, it is also essential that this development does not stand apart from the remainder of the development in terms of tenure, and it must therefore be designed to integrate with the remainder of the residential offering in terms of design, connectivity and creating a development that is wholly inclusive. I am not clear how this has been addressed through the revised submission.

In terms of the frontage of the extra care building to the main square, I note that you state that the building has been set back further and railings installed, however, the set back remains minimal and is not considered sufficient to overcome the privacy and amenity issues previously raised.

In terms of materials to be used for the construction of the development, the previous comments made in my letter of 30th November 2022 remain relevant.

In terms of the set back to the greenway, I note that you have sought to address this by setting the building a little further back to provide an area 3m in depth of private amenity space outside the proposed units. It should be noted that the 3m set-back in the design code is a minimum, not a maximum and that as a consequence of providing access and parking, dwellings themselves along the greenway frontage are set back considerably more than 3m from the greenway boundary. The proposed minimal set back will therefore result in a building that sits forward of all the remainder of the built development along this route. This is not acceptable for such a significant expanse of building which will dominate this section of the greenway and further thought must be given here. Furthermore, these are north facing areas which will be completely overshadowed by the building itself resulting in no natural sunlight to these very small areas, creating small, oppressive areas of little amenity value. Neither does the proposed scheme consider the planting along the greenway which is likely to cause further shading to both the garden areas and the internal spaces, resulting in a poor living environment and pressure in the future to remove any trees or landscaping within the greenway. The minimal depth will also result in areas with little privacy and potential disturbance to residents by users of the pedestrian links along the greenway.

Turning to the provision of the café bistro which will also serve the residents of Kingsmere generally, we have previously discussed how this needs to be given greater presence to the main square. Whilst I note you have tried to open this area up from the adjacent greenway, it still requires greater presence as a facility with more outside seating space to the front to create a sociable space that is open and welcoming to all. This element requires further consideration.

In terms of car parking provision to serve the extra care development. Whilst you have introduced some landscaping, this remains a rather stark open area of car parking which does not relate well to the extra care facility and is not very well overlooked by its residents leaving it prone to abuse by others and vandalism, resulting in a potentially anti-social space. Furthermore, much of the proposed planting appears to be in the rear gardens of the market dwellings which would not be appropriate. The relationship of this car park and the proposed market dwellings and the street scene created remains poor. The car park also looks tight, parking space must be a minimum of 2.5 x 5m with 6m between opposing bays.

In terms of refuse collection, servicing and access for emergency vehicles, the on-street loading bay is not acceptable as it will impinge on the safe passage of other vehicles and may result in a danger to pedestrians using the rear car park. This loading bay also appears to be very inconvenient for serving the facility which has all the community facilities at the opposite end. We discussed this matter at our meeting and whilst you advised that any servicing would take place externally, I remain of the view that as designed it is unlikely to work well in practice and requires further thought. Proper and convenient servicing and refuse collection for the extra care facility must be provided accordingly. The ambulance parking bay at the front of the building appears tight (when scaled from the plans as submitted) and may inhibit proper access into the building when in use as shown. Many of the comments made previously in my letter of 30th November 2021 remain relevant to this revised scheme.

Having regard to previous discussions and the comments above, I remain of the view that in order to successfully address all the issues raised in respect of the proposed extra care facility, it may be necessary to include some of the additional land currently shown for additional market housing for the extra care scheme and we discussed this matter at length, including the possibility of providing a small number of units in a smaller detached block which would enable part of the building to be reduced in height but still allow the 80 units required to be delivered.

The submission has been assessed by the Council's Landscape Officer who advises that an illustrated landscape masterplan would be required although the structural landscaping suggested around the car parking is promising, but he would prefer to see more street trees and landscaped front gardens with boundary hedges. Subsequent details to include hard and soft landscaping, aftercare procedures and tree pit details would also be required in any subsequent application. These comments must be read in conjunction with those above relating to the car park facility.

Turning to the proposed additional 16 residential open market dwellings. The comments made previously in my letter of 30th November 2021 remain valid and do not appear to have been addressed by this follow up application which appears little changed.

As previously advised, whilst the erection of any additional dwellings on the surplus land not required in respect of the extra care proposals may be acceptable in principle, the layout shown remains unacceptable. The street also lacks any meaningful landscaping and street trees. This is not in accordance with the design code or the character of Kingsmere as a whole.

As previously discussed, any subsequent planning application submission must also include a detailed layout and design for the proposed additional dwellings to ensure that a successful place can be delivered which also relates well to the extra care facility, is integrated with it and is not just an afterthought relating to the land which you consider to be surplus to requirements. These dwellings must also be designed to integrate and reflect the remainder of the Kingsmere development. A row of narrow fronted pairs of units fronting a street and open car park opposite does not create a 'sense of place'. As previously discussed, the layout shown is not in accordance with the approved design code and must also pay better regard to the green route and the linked area of open space along it which leads into this land parcel. I also remain of the opinion that this scheme must be developed and designed holistically and not piecemeal as appears to be the case here.

As previously advised, the Council's Residential Development Design Guide SPD 2018 is also relevant in terms of the consideration and design of this proposal.

Highways

Following the comments given in respect of the previous submission (21/03645/PREAPP), the proposals have been re-assessed by OCC as highway authority. The comments are given below.

In terms of cycle and car parking, an accumulation of parking has been provided to justify the parking numbers, but more information is required, including staff numbers and travel data to understand the level required. As previously advised, the low level of parking is welcomed, but we want to ensure informal parking on-street does not occur. It does not appear that there are enough EV bays. Policy EV18 of the Oxfordshire Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy states that 25% of unallocated parking needs to be for electric vehicles. Previous comments on car parking for the residential properties still stand.

Some cycle parking is shown on the submitted plans, but again, it is not clear if this will be sufficient for staff, residents or visitors. Further information is required on staff numbers, with a low level of parking being provided, it is crucial that an adequate provision of high level cycle parking (covered conveniently located, secure etc) is provided across the site.

It must be demonstrated how the site will be integrated with the surrounding development and wider town through walking and cycling. This includes connecting with key routes within the Bicester LCWIP that benefit the site (for example Middleton Stoney Road) and the public rights of way network (for example 129/36/10). Contributions will be sought towards the maintenance of these connections; it is expected that wayfinding measures will be dealt with via a S278 agreement.

A preference for accessing the site by car should be avoided and instead equal consideration given to all modes when planning the site access. All walking and cycling infrastructure provided must be in line with LTN 1/20, this includes segregated spaces for people walking and cycling.

The Oxfordshire Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy EV18: to 'meet or exceed the following standards...where parking is to be provided, planning permission will only be granted for developments if provision is made for EV charging points for each residential unit with an unallocated space; and non-allocated spaces are provided at least 25% (with a minimum of 2) having electric charging points installed' should be incorporated within the development.

In terms of a travel plan, a site wide Framework Travel Plan will need to be updated and resubmitted to include details of the proposed development. The Residential Travel Plan will need to be updated to include details of the 16 new residential dwellings.

The proposed Extra Care Facility triggers the requirement for a Travel Plan and an associated Monitoring Fee, in line with Oxfordshire County Council thresholds.

The scooter parking is welcomed, but secure and convenient cycle parking for the residential dwellings and Extra care, including visitor parking, shower changing facilities for staff and EV charging spaces are also required.

In terms of the detailed design, it does not appear that comments have been addressed since the previous pre-app response on the following points:

- Driveways should be splayed to ensure cars can turn in without over running full height kerbs;
- If the developer would be looking for these roads to be adopted, they are not to an adoptable standard currently;
- Shared surfaces should be 6m in width;
- Footways should be 2m wide and either side of the carriageway;
- Northern access appears to be potentially narrowed to a single lane; however, I do not believe the visibility will be good enough for this;
- OCC require a swept path analysis for an 11.6m length refuse vehicle for all manoeuvres in forward gear passing an oncoming or parked family car throughout the layout. The swept path does not indicate how an oncoming or parked car and evidence will be required if this layout is to be adopted. The carriageway will also require widening on the bends;
- The refuge bay must not encroach into the carriageway.

Having regard to the comments above, I must advise you that any future application proposal would require further revision to address the concerns raised.

Affordable Housing

The 80 proposed Extra Care dwellings are described as all affordable rented units, so would appear policy compliant. Any subsequent application would need to demonstrate policy compliance. Strategic Housing have been involved in previous discussions and the comments made previously remain relevant.

Following our meeting, at the time of writing this response I am still awaiting written comments from the Strategic Housing Officer. I shall forward under separate cover on receipt.

Flood Risk and Drainage

I note that no drainage information has been submitted with the pre-application documentation, but it is important that this is considered and designed into the scheme and layout at the outset.

Having regard to the Sustainable Drainage (SuDS) Policy which came into force in April 2015, sustainable drainage systems to manage run-off must be used. As well as dealing with surface water runoff, they are required to provide water quality, biodiversity and amenity benefits in line with National Guidance. As a consequence, all full and outline planning applications for major development, such as this proposal, must be submitted with a Surface Water Management Strategy. A site-specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) will be required if the site exceeds 1 hectare.

The Non-statutory Technical Standards for sustainable drainage systems were produced to provide initial principles to ensure developments provide SuDS in line with the NPPF and NPPG. Oxfordshire County Council have published '*Local Standards and Guidance for Surface Water Drainage on Major Development in Oxfordshire*' to assist developers in the design of all surface water systems and sets out the standards applied in assessing all surface water drainage proposals to ensure they are in line with National legislation and guidance, as well as local requirements.

In line with the above guidance, surface water management must be considered from the beginning of the development planning process and throughout - influencing site layout and design. The proposed drainage solution should not be limited by the proposed site layout and design.

Wherever possible, runoff must be managed at source (close to where it falls) with residual flows then conveyed downstream to further storage or treatment components, where required. The proposed drainage should mimic the existing drainage features on the site to be retained and they should be utilised and enhanced wherever possible.

Sustainable Construction

I note that your accompanying statement dated 4th February 2022 advises that this will be addressed through any subsequent planning application. It is important however that this is considered and integrated throughout the design and evolution of the scheme and not just tagged on as an afterthought. The comments raised previously in my letter of 30th November 2021 remain relevant to this submission.

Ecology

As this is a new stand alone application, consideration must be given to biodiversity net gain. The District Council are currently looking to achieve a 10% net gain in biodiversity across all new developments. Any subsequent planning application must include an ecological assessment accordingly.

Health and Well-Being

I note that your accompanying statement dated 4th February 2022 advises that this will be addressed through any subsequent planning application. It is important that this is considered throughout the evolution of the scheme. The comments raised previously in my letter of 30th November 2021 remain relevant to this submission.

Planning Obligations

Extra Care housing is self-contained housing, primarily for older people, that offers care and support on site. It is different to a care home because people have their own front door and facilities, and also own their own tenancy but benefitting from access to communal facilities. It is therefore considered to be a Use Class C3 Use and therefore the usual rules apply to the consideration of appropriate and necessary Section 106 infrastructure and contributions to those units as well as the proposed 16 additional dwellings.

Comments given previously still apply here. Further advice and guidance in respect of planning obligations can be found in the Council's adopted Planning Obligations SPD 2018.

Conclusion

Overall, whilst the principle of the development proposed is considered to be acceptable and supported by the Development Plan, having regard to the comments above, I remain of the opinion that it remains unacceptable in the form shown and should an application be subsequently submitted for this scheme, it is likely that it would require further amendment as discussed. Whilst it is accepted that the District cannot currently demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply, it is considered that the issues in terms of design and layout as stated above remain fundamental to the success of any application and as currently submitted would be contrary to Policy ESD15 of the adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 and the approved Phase 2 Kingsmere Design Code.

As previously advised, and for the reasons stated above, I also remain of the view, that, as this is only a small development on less than 1 hectare and because the two proposals are very closely related that a single full detailed application must be submitted for the whole to ensure that the amount of development proposed can be successfully delivered. It is not appropriate for this proposal to come forward as a hybrid application.

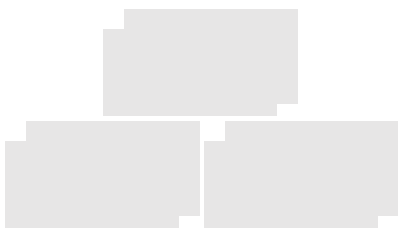
The above-mentioned advice is given without prejudice to the determination of any subsequent application submitted to and determined by the Local Planning Authority.

Yours faithfully,

Linda Griffiths

Agreed By: Andy Bateson, Team Leader – Major Development

Pre-Application Response July/August 2022



Appendix 3 – Pre-App Response July/August/September 2023

From: Linda Griffiths <Linda.Griffiths@cherwell-dc.gov.uk>

Date: 28 September 2022 at 17:53:08 BST

To: Robert Clarke <Robert.Clarke@rapleys.com>

Subject: RE: Bicester - Parcel R, Kingsmere

Good Evening Robert

Thank you for your email dated 21st September and the attached layout plan. As promised, my brief comments on the further revised plan are as follows:

- It is not clear what the revisions are, particularly in relation to the Extra Care Facility with the exception of a sub station and amended red line, and therefore my previous comments given on 21st July 2022 remain relevant here.
- In terms of the additional market dwellings, the layout here remains of concern. The three fronting the main square which are narrow fronted with wide gable spans do not appear to relate well to the adjacent detached wide fronted unit. I think we talked about maybe two similar wide fronted semi-detached units here which then turned the corner.
- I note that the majority of market dwellings are now 3 storey which is not in accordance with the design code and full details must be provided to understand their potential relationship with the dwellings to the rear and the remainder of the development
- The street scene remains dominated by the car park and significant parking within the open cul de sac at the end which is unlikely to be considered acceptable. The vista into this street from the square is dominated by car parking and minimal landscaping
- The maisonettes remain inappropriate in terms of their typology and relationship with adjacent development/greenway and cul-de-sac. Which way do these properties front? This area requires further consideration, the cul de sac must be successfully terminated by an appropriately designed building and/or landscaped area leading into the greenway. This will also aid legibility and accessibility through the development.
- The series of narrow fronted, wide gable spans which dominate the street scene remain inappropriate.
- The dwellings might be better if they were positioned to follow the curve of the road rather than a rigid line as shown
- It is not clear how the public footpath and route into the greenway will be successfully achieved here in accordance with the aspirations of the design code. This has been discussed previously. The footpath from the greenway also appears to enter onto a private drive area.
- The scheme will need to be tracked for refuse and emergency vehicles.
- Section 106 contributions are likely to be required in respect of both the additional Extra Care and market dwellings.

The above mentioned advice is given without prejudice to the determination of any subsequent application by the Local Planning Authority.

I trust the comments are helpful to you.

Kind Regards

Linda

Linda Griffiths BA (Hons) MRTPI
Principal Planning Officer (Major Developments)

Communities Directorate

Cherwell District Council

Direct Tel: 01295 227998

Email: linda.griffiths@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Web: www.cherwell.gov.uk

Find us on Facebook www.facebook.com/cherwelldistrictcouncil

Follow us on Twitter @Cherwellcouncil

You will appreciate that the above views are those of Council Officers and though given in good faith, cannot prejudice any decision which the Council, as the Local Planning Authority, may make.

From: Robert Clarke <Robert.Clarke@rapleys.com>

Sent: 21 September 2022 13:06

To: Linda Griffiths <Linda.Griffiths@Cherwell-DC.gov.uk>

Cc: Richard Frank <richard@preferredhomes.co.uk>; Stephen Sorrell - Preferred Homes <stephen@preferredhomes.co.uk>; Steve Price <Steve.Price@cpplc.com>; Sarah R Smith (Planning) <sarah.r.smith@rapleys.com>; David Hagan <david.hagan@rapleys.com>; Zarina Ali <Zarina.Ali@rapleys.com>

Subject: Bicester - Parcel R, Kingsmere

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the Council. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Linda,

Many thanks for taking my call yesterday morning.

As advised, please find - attached - the latest (draft) layout for the site.

Whilst you should note that the applicant's team is still reviewing/refining the scheme, I will be grateful to receive - at this stage - your feedback on the layout and the residential element, in particular (following receipt of your earlier comments on 21 July).

In these terms, it will be appreciated - as discussed - if your views can be forthcoming over the coming days, as Preferred Homes and Countryside are keen to progress to application stage as soon as possible. If it assists, I shall be pleased to arrange a Teams call to receive your comments which, it is trusted, will be supportive of the emerging layout (following changes made in response to your previous feedback).

I shall look forward to hearing from you.

Rgds

Robert

Robert Clarke

BA (Hons) DipTP MSc MRTPI

Senior Partner

From: Linda Griffiths <Linda.Griffiths@cherwell-dc.gov.uk>

Date: 21 July 2022 at 12:20:51 BST

To: Robert Clarke <Robert.Clarke@rapleys.com>

Cc: Andy Bateson <Andy.Bateson@cherwell-dc.gov.uk>

Subject: RE: Bicester - Parcel R, Kingsmere

Good Morning Robert

Thank you for a useful meeting and discussion on Tuesday of this week in respect of your latest proposals for Parcel R at Kingsmere. I thought it might be useful to set out our points of discussion. The comments given relate to the layout plans submitted only as no further details were available at this time.

- We were pleased to note the changes that had been made to the Extra Care Scheme and consider that these are a positive move and in principle are considered acceptable, subject to the consideration of the following:
- The new T-shape now, subject to design and elevational details appears to successfully address the greenway
- No revised elevations were provided, so we were unable to advise whether the previous concerns raised in terms of scale, bulk, design and relationship with the existing Kingsmere development had been addressed/are now acceptable.
- The frontage set back of the extra care building is improved and now provides better privacy for those residents at ground floor level
- It is considered that the proposed bistro as shown now relates better to the adjacent square and greenway
- There is a need to consider boundary enclosures, both along the greenway and the main street and new access road. It was understood in previous submissions that metal railings would be provided to the main frontage which would be acceptable. I would also suggest that this might be appropriate to the Greenway as close boarded fencing would not be appropriate here. It is not clear how the boundaries to the car park and side street are to be defined and this requires further clarification. Again, close boarded fencing to the public domain would not be acceptable. Doors opening as shown onto a public footpath as appears to be shown would not be acceptable.
- The car park, which still appears to be quite open does now relate far better to the extra care building itself and has some natural surveillance and ownership in respect of the extra care building which is much improved from that previously and subject to landscaping/boundary details and tracking/highway comments is now likely to be acceptable in principle as shown
- The red/blue line needs to be confirmed as does the in/out arrangement for the car park
- OCC highways have previously given quite comprehensive and detailed advice about what would be required from a highways point of view. As discussed at our meeting, it was not clear from the latest submission that these had been addressed. Tracking plans will also need to be provided to show that the car park works and that refuse lorries/emergency vehicles can access the development to the required standards. I would advise that the previous comments given by OCC are considered further prior to finalising the scheme.
- Whilst as previously advised, the provision of additional market dwellings is acceptable in principle, as discussed at the meeting, there are still a number of significant concerns regarding the surplus land and how this might be developed successfully. It is not clear currently exactly how much surplus land might be available once the requirements of OCC have been met in terms of the access road, pavements, provision of services and landscaping. As discussed, it would appear from the submission that all these requirements cannot be provided within the space indicated and this needs further thought and consideration.
- The residential element indicates significant areas of on-street parking or parking within open parking courts, particularly at the northern end which, as discussed at our meeting is not acceptable.
- The relationship of the maisonette buildings with the existing development is not acceptable
- As discussed, the house typologies shown are not acceptable. Narrow fronted, wide gable span detached dwellings are not acceptable in design terms and also result in a gappy frontage and so if proposed must be provided within a terrace, but the wide gable should not be visible to the public domain, for example the two narrow fronted detached units to the main street should be replaced by an appropriate wide fronted dwelling unit fronting the main street but which also successfully turns the corner. The residential element on the surplus land requires further thought and consideration.

- We also discussed what form the application should be submitted. It is still maintained that a single full application for the whole site is the preferred option to avoid a piecemeal development and to ensure an appropriate scheme can be achieved for the whole site, however, if a hybrid application is submitted, we must be certain that the surplus land can be successfully delivered within an appropriate scheme. An acceptable indicative layout must therefore be agreed as part of the hybrid submission.
- We also discussed the possibility of a reduced timescale for the submission of reserved matters and implementation of the residential element as a consequence of the small site area and the impact of construction on residents of the extra care scheme.

The above mentioned advice is given without prejudice to the final determination of any subsequent application by the Local Planning Authority.

Kind Regards

Linda

Linda Griffiths BA (Hons) MRTPI
Principal Planning Officer (Major Developments)

Communities Directorate

Cherwell District Council

Direct Tel: 01295 227998

Email: linda.griffiths@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Web: www.cherwell.gov.uk

Find us on Facebook www.facebook.com/cherwelldistrictcouncil

Follow us on Twitter @Cherwellcouncil

You will appreciate that the above views are those of Council Officers and though given in good faith, cannot prejudice any decision which the Council, as the Local Planning Authority, may make.

From: Robert Clarke <Robert.Clarke@rapleys.com>

Sent: 18 July 2022 11:04

To: Linda Griffiths <Linda.Griffiths@Cherwell-DC.gov.uk>; Andy Bateson <Andy.Bateson@cherwell-dc.gov.uk>

Cc: Frances Evans <Frances.Evans@cherwell-dc.gov.uk>; Stephen Sorrell - Preferred Homes <stephen@preferredhomes.co.uk>; Richard Frank <richard@preferredhomes.co.uk>; Steve Price <Steve.Price@cpplc.com>; Ellen Timmins <ellen.timmins@cpplc.com>; Sarah R Smith (Planning) <sarah.r.smith@rapleys.com>

Subject: RE: Bicester - Parcel R, Kingsmere

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the Council. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Linda/Andy,

Please find attached - in readiness for tomorrow's Teams meeting - revised plans for the site. They introduce some modest revisions to the residential element which demonstrates, in outline form, that the proposal is able to deliver 14 dwellings within standards, whilst respecting key frontages and design requirements.

I shall look forward to seeing you, over the screen, tomorrow.

Rgds

Robert

Robert Clarke

BA (Hons) DipTP MSc MRTPI

Senior Partner

