

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

Incorporating Heritage Assessment

Proposed Replacement Dwelling at 1 Highfield
Close, Kingsland, Herefordshire

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revision b



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1. INTRODUCTION

Proposal overview and project brief

This document has been prepared by Owen Hicks Architecture in support of a detailed planning application for the proposed demolition of an existing three bedroom bungalow and the erection of a carefully designed two-storey replacement four bedroom dwelling at 1 Highfield Close, Kingsland, Herefordshire.

Document objectives

This design & access statement will assess the site, its local context, infrastructure and facilities. It will outline the proposal's key features in delivering a high quality scheme as an appropriate and sympathetic response to its place and wider local context.

In drafting this statement, reference has been made to the adopted Kingsland Neighbourhood Development Plan, the adopted Herefordshire Core Strategy 2011-2031, and the National Planning Policy Framework; the government's planning policy direction to local planning authorities in determining planning applications.

This Design & Access Statement should be read alongside the planning application drawings (Owen Hicks Architecture), and Ecological Assessment (Star Ecology).

2. SITE ANALYSIS AND CONTEXT



Figure 1: Aerial photograph showing site location in context.
Source: Google Maps



Figure 2: Highfield Close looking north
 Figure 3: North Road view into Highfield Close
 Source: Google Maps

Site description and location

Kingsland a thriving north Herefordshire village within the Leominster Housing Market Area, and identified as a settlement suitable for proportionate housing growth (policy RA1) within the adopted Herefordshire Council Core Strategy.

The proposal site is within an established residential area of late 20th century development towards the north west end of the village and is currently occupied by a large detached bungalow with the site being wholly domestic in character with maintained lawns, paving and ornamental vegetation.

Kingsland is a predominantly linear settlement, with the main developed areas extending east and west from the central crossroads at the intersection of North Road and Lugg Green Road.

The historic core of the village is centred around the crossroads to the south east of the site, with the majority of the village's historic building stock further east of the crossroads, which is the gravitational centre of the village, containing its public houses, school, shop and garage.

The entire village is covered by a conservation area designation dating from 1975, although the site's immediate surroundings are considered to be of lesser heritage sensitivity than the historic core, further to the south east.

Existing uses

The site has an established existing residential use and the site is occupied by an existing large 3 bedroom bungalow known as 1 Highfield Close. The remainder of the site area is private garden, parking and turning area.

The site is surrounded by existing residential uses to its immediate north, east, south and west, with agricultural land further beyond to the north and south.



Figure 4: Existing Block Plan showing two storey dwellings
Source: Ordnance Survey / OHA

Surrounding Density and Massing

The site is part of a small late 20th century cul-de-sac development known as Highfield Close, which is aligned with North Road, the main highway through the village along which a predominately linear development pattern is evident.

The majority of the built environment along North Road reinforces the linear character, with buildings addressing this main thoroughfare, though dwellings to the north of the site address the cul-de-sac in this area of development in more depth.

Plots in the vicinity of the site are relatively large and take on a suburban, semi-rural character with relatively large gardens and dwellings set back from the road. Dwellings are a varied mix of one and two storey in height, with three existing two storey dwellings present in Highfield Close as well as Highfield House being two storeys in height.

Existing Access and Connectivity

The site is currently served by an existing residential access point linking with Highfield Close (cul-de-sac) at the northern site boundary. The access point currently serves the existing three bedroom dwelling and it is proposed to retain the existing vehicular access point for the purposes of accessing the replacement dwelling, though the internal parking and turning area will be improved.

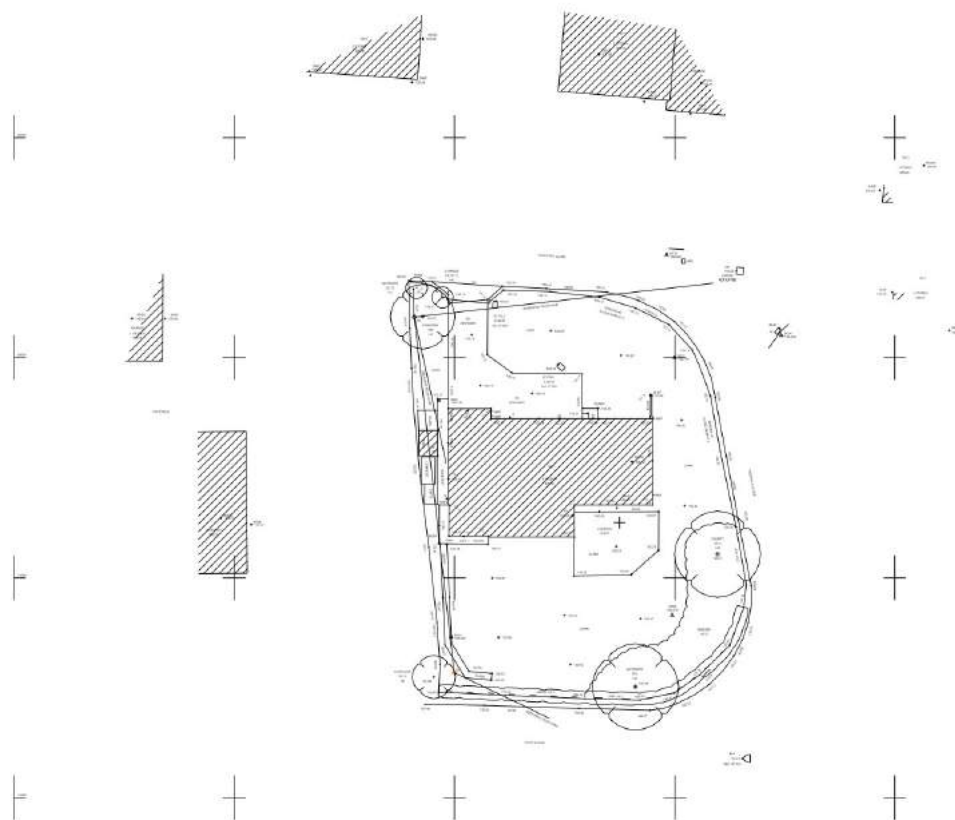


Figure 5: Existing Site Survey Plan
Source: AD Horner / OHA

Topography and Landscape

The surrounding landscape type is principally agricultural farmlands. The site is relatively level with no pronounced gradients or topographic features which would preclude development, as indicated on the accompanying topographic survey.

Existing boundaries are formed with:

North: existing copper beach hedge, timber / wire mesh fence and road verge
East: ornamental pruned conifers, timber / wire mesh fence and road verge
South: existing evergreen hedge and road verge
West: existing timber / wire mesh fence and flower bed border.

There are three existing semi-mature ornamental trees / garden shrubs within the site boundary as indicated on the topographic survey drawing. All existing trees and hedges are to be retained and as can be seen from the accompanying drawings the trees and hedges will be unaffected by the proposed replacement dwelling which will occupy a similar footprint to the existing dwelling.

Ecology and Biodiversity

An ecological survey of the site and the existing bungalow was carried out in May 2017 by Star Ecology. The ecological survey assessed the potential of the site to provide bat roosting and bird nesting habitat, including an inspection for physical evidence of bats and their roosts and bird nesting within the interior of the bungalow and its roof space.

The ecologists report finds that the bungalow does not provide bat roosting potential, and no evidence of nesting birds was found on or within the bungalow to be demolished.

Notwithstanding this, the ecologists report makes a number of recommendations to provide biodiversity enhancement post-development including the installation of one bat box and three bird boxes within the upper walls of the replacement dwelling. The ecologist's recommendations have been fully implemented in the submitted scheme, which will provide a net biodiversity gain over the existing situation.

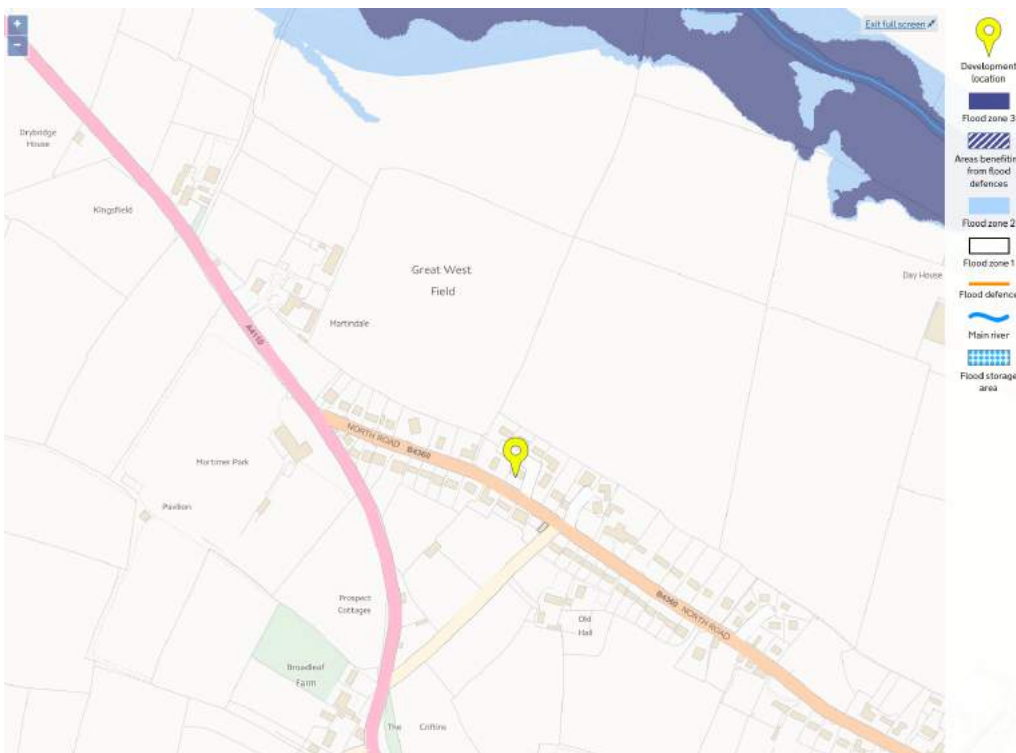


Figure 6: Flood Zone Map
Source: Environment Agency

Flood Risk and Drainage

The site lies entirely in the Environment Agency's Flood Zone 1 (lowest risk of flooding). As the site is less than 1 ha in area, the application is not required to be accompanied by a flood risk assessment.

There is an existing DCWW foul sewer manhole in Highfield Close and the proposed replacement dwelling would make use of the existing mains sewer connection for foul drainage.

It is proposed that surface water will be dealt with via permeable paved driveways surfaces, green roofs and SUDs soak aways filled with attenuation crates to cater for roof run off, with all soakaways to be sized in accordance with percolation tests to be undertaken prior to construction.

The proposed drainage strategy will ensure that the impermeable area on the site will be less than the existing situation and therefore surface water run off is not increased as a result of the development.

3. LINKS AND FACILITIES

Kingsland is identified in the Herefordshire Core Strategy as a main village within the Leominster Housing Market Area, suitable for proportionate residential growth (policy RA1). This designation is partly based on Kingsland's excellent range of existing village facilities as well as its proximity to additional amenities, services, further education and employment opportunities in the nearby market town of Leominster.

Local Facilities

The proposal site is within the existing built up extent of the village and is considered a sustainable location for a replacement dwelling, being a short walking distance from:

- Kingsland Primary School
- Kingsland Nursery School / Playgroup
- Post Office
- Doctor's Surgery
- Two public houses
- Garage
- Village Hall
- Tennis Courts
- Playing Field
- Bowls Club
- Church
- Luctonians Sports Club including rugby, cricket, netball, rounders with men's, women's, boy's and girl's teams as well as an established and popular social / match day hospitality facility.

Services

The site is located within existing late 20th C residential development on North Road. Mains water, electricity, gas, sewerage and telephone infrastructure are all understood to be connected to the existing dwelling on the site.

Pedestrian and Cycle Routes

There are no public rights of way over the site and the site would not impact on any existing rights of way in the vicinity of the site.

Public Transport Connections

Kingsland is served by existing bus services which connect the village daily with the nearby market town of Leominster and Hereford. There is also a daily school bus service to Wigmore High School and the Hereford Colleges.

4. LOCAL BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Built Heritage

A review of the historic England database confirms that there are thirty-six listed buildings within the village of Kingsland, including the grade I listed St Michael's Church and the grade II* listed Kingsland House, within a 1 km radius of the site.

Due to the presence of a significant amount of post-war development surrounding the application site, the topography and surrounding landform and the presence of mature trees, the majority of these heritage assets will not be affected by the proposed development.

The nearest heritage assets to the development site are identified as The Shambles (listed grade II), Malthouse Farmhouse (listed grade II), Sunnybank (listed grade II), Showers Farmhouse (listed grade II), Showers Cottage (listed grade II) and The Arbour and Attached Barn (listed grade II).

The village of Kingsland, (including the application site area) is covered by a conservation area designation dating to 1975, though the conservation area designation acknowledges the lower significance of the postwar development evident along North Road, to the point of recommending that this area of the village should be excluded from the designation.

The proposal is to replace an existing late 20th century bungalow, considered to be of no particular architectural nor historic merit with a bespoke contemporary dwelling which takes inspiration from the materials, colour palate and character of some of the village's historic buildings. The scheme will use high quality natural materials and is considered to make a positive contribution to the architectural diversity of the site's immediate surroundings and the wider village as a whole.

Local New Development

As has been identified in preceding sections of this document, the built environment in the environs of the application site, and more generally to the west of the central crossroads is characterised by a predominance of post war development, largely red brick and render under concrete tiled roofs, with buildings ranging from single to two storey in height.

Small pockets of new infill and backland development closer to the historic core of the village have sought to replicate the vernacular characteristics of some of the village's historic buildings. Due to the physical separation of the site from the historic core of the village, it is not considered that such an approach could be successfully employed on the application site.



Figure 7: Kingsland's Historic Buildings
Source: OHA

5. DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

Use and amount

The existing use of the site is residential. The proposed use of the site is residential. The proposed scheme will replace an existing three bedroom bungalow (footprint 184 sq m) with a new four bedroom dwelling arranged over two floors (footprint 204 sq. m).

Layout and Scale

The layout of the proposed scheme has been carefully considered so as to respond positively to its context. The proposed dwelling occupies a similar footprint and siting to the existing dwelling and is arranged on a predominantly east - west axis so to address North Road and reinforce the linear character of the existing built environment.

The scale of the scheme is considered reflective of the surrounding two storey dwellings on Highfield Close and North Road, with the garage, entrance, utility and main living room areas being single storey flat roof elements, which serves to minimise the perceived massing; the two storey element being limited to a scale reflective of a modest house.

Access and Connectivity

The existing vehicular access point offers good emergent visibility onto Highfield Close and will be retained and re-used for the proposed replacement dwelling. The scheme will provide parking and turning for four cars (2 driveway spaces plus 2 garage spaces) with secure cycle parking sufficient for 5 cycles provided within the garage which is to have internal dimensions of 6m x 6m.



Figure 8: Proposed Block Plan
Source: OHA

Landscaping Strategy

The landscaping strategy proposes the retention of all existing trees and hedgerows which help to create a sense of establishment within this residential setting and provide privacy to the south facing garden. The scheme includes new permeable paving, a new south facing patio area and a new ornamental pond.

The current ornamental pruned conifer hedging to the east boundary will be replaced with a beech hedge to provide an improved wildlife habitat.

New garden planting and lawn areas will be reflective of the existing domestic character of the site and its surroundings.

Drainage Strategy

It is proposed that foul drainage from the development will be connected to the existing DCWW public sewer network and the existing manhole in Highfield Close.

Surface water will be dealt with via 'source control' permeable paved surfaces, green roofs as well as SUDs soakaways to deal with roof run off. The impermeable area of the site will therefore be no greater than the current situation and therefore flood risk from surface water run off will be reduced.



Figure 9: Proposed Site & Landscaping Plan
Source: OHA

Appearance

The scheme's design takes inspiration from the black and white colour palette of the villages' notable historic buildings, but seeks to articulate in a contemporary way so as not to compete with or imitate.

The form of the proposed dwelling is comprised of both single storey and two storey volumes, reflective of the surrounding built environment, which itself is a mix of bungalows and two storey dwellings. Flat roofs (with natural green roof surface) are proposed for the single storey elements to minimise the building's visual impact and perceived mass.

The ground floor walls are to be finished in white through coloured render, with the upper walls in black stained horizontal timber boarding, evocative of the timber weatherboard (in material and colour) evident in many of north Herefordshire's historic agricultural barns, a subtle reference to the site's location which is north west of the historic core of the village.

The pitched roof to the main two storey range of the building addressing North Road will be finished with a dark grey standing seam roof, in contrast to the concrete tiled roofs of many of the surrounding postwar buildings. The colour of the roofing is intended to reference natural slate, which is evident on many of the village's historic buildings, while retaining an understated contemporary aesthetic.



Figure 10: Proposed Replacement Dwelling view from north east
(Highfield Close)
Source: OHA



Figure 11: Proposed Replacement Dwelling view from north west
(Highfield Close)
Source: OHA

Sustainability

The building envelopes will be constructed from PEFC certified and responsibly sourced pre-fabricated timber frame panels from a local supplier, and insulated to achieve thermal performance in excess of Building Regulation requirements.

Natural rather than man-made materials are proposed to reduce embodied CO2 and also achieve an external appearance which will naturally soften and mellow with the passing of time.

Potable water use per dwelling will be limited to 105 litres per occupant per day as a result of water saving measures to include aerated 'low flow' taps and shower heads, and surface water run off will be sustainably managed through a suite of SUDs techniques.

Inclusive Design

All dwellings will be designed so as to accommodate wheelchair and ambulant disabled users with min 750mm clear opening doors, an accessible

ground floor WC and electrical sockets and switches positioned between 450mm and 1200mm from finished floor level, in accordance with The Building Regulations Part M.



Figure 12: Proposed Replacement Dwelling view from south (garden adjacent to North Road)
Source: OHA

6. PRE-APPLICATION CONSULTATION

Herefordshire Council

A pre-application advice request (ref 172288/CE) was submitted to Herefordshire Council in June 2017 enclosing drawings of the emerging scheme. The council's response (dated 26 July 2017) included consultation responses from the council's Historic Buildings Officer, Ecologist and Highways Officer. The main points of the pre-app response were:

- There are no highways issues resulting from the proposal, despite the potential for increased traffic movements resulting from a larger dwelling on the site.
- The demolition of the existing bungalow would not have an adverse impact on the significance of the conservation area.
- The design and scale of the proposal would be considered appropriate for the plot, despite the prevalence of single storey dwellings in the vicinity.
- The retention of the existing trees was supported.
- The application would need to be supported by a bat survey.
- Details of foul drainage would need to be provided.
- A tree survey was requested.

Following the council's pre-application advice, an ecological survey was commissioned and provided to the council for further comment. The council's ecologist confirmed his satisfaction with the bat survey and requested that bat boxes be incorporated into the scheme. The ecological enhancements (bat and bird boxes) can be seen on the submitted elevation drawings.

Further consultation with the project ecologist (Star Ecology) was undertaken regarding the existing trees on the site and the council's preliminary request for a tree survey. The project ecologist confirmed that given the proposed building would be no closer to existing trees than the existing building, and that all trees are proposed to be retained in the scheme, a tree survey should not be necessary in order to determine the application.

Neighbour Consultation

It is understood that the applicants have presented details of the preliminary scheme to their immediate neighbours at Highfield House (the property most directly related to the site). Following the neighbour consultation, the two storey element of the proposed design was shifted further south east, and away from Highfield House so as to reduce the potential impact upon neighbouring properties.

