

Kingsclere Village Design Statement



Introduction



West Clere Scarp

What is a Village Design Statement?

Village Design Statements are intended to provide guidance for any proposals for development and to influence the way the planning system works locally. They provide a way of ensuring that any new developments are designed and located in a way that reflects local characteristics and the qualities that people value in their village and its surroundings. The statements are produced by the local community for use by planners, developers, the local Councils, local householders, businesses and farmers

The VDS can influence the policies in the review leading to the next version of the local plan.

As things stand at present, local residents may only hear about proposals for development when the design is finished. Although the Parish Council is asked by the Borough for its views on planning applications, it may not get the opportunity to offer as much positive input as it would like - particularly on the design of new development: 'how it looks'. Often all the local people can do is react or protest. Once a Village Design Statement has been prepared, the Borough knows, in advance, the sort of things that are acceptable to local communities

Why Produce one for Kingsclere?

The aim of the Design Statement is to ensure that any future development and change in the parish is based on an understanding of the area's past and present. It draws attention to what is special about the buildings, open spaces and settings and helps to protect local character from unsympathetic development.

The Statement therefore aims to raise awareness about what is special about Kingsclere and its surrounding area and it gives local residents a say in the future of their village by producing guidance on respecting these qualities.

How has it been produced?

This statement has been produced by Kingsclere residents with the full support of Kingsclere Parish Council and Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council. It is the result of public consultation involving the whole parish at all stages, including a number of public meetings, workshops and an exhibition.

- **a questionnaire**
- **projects undertaken by the primary school**
- **opportunities for all households to comment on a draft version**
- **consultation with Borough Council planning officers**

The community response provided a wide range of helpful ideas and comments. These are reflected in the Statement.



How will it work?

This Design Statement describes the parish of Kingsclere as it is today and highlights the qualities that residents value. It is intended to be a practical tool capable of influencing decisions affecting design and development in the parish and should assist the Parish and Borough Councils in considering planning applications.

The Village Design Statement is in line with the Draft Local Plan for Basingstoke and Deane and is generally in line with its policies and proposals. Should the Draft Local Plan, when finalised, contain changes that affect Kingsclere, there may be a need to consider updating the Design Statement. In the meantime people applying for planning permission in the parish will need to show that they have taken into account the guidance it contains when drawing up their proposals

This Village Design Statement was adopted as supplementary planning Guidance by Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council on 18 July 2002.

Who is it for?

Change is not only brought about by new buildings, but also by smaller day-to-day alterations to homes and gardens, open spaces, paths, walls, fences and hedges, which can affect the look and feel of a whole village.

This Design Statement provides guidance for anyone considering development in the area. It will be as valuable to individual householders wishing to build extensions as it will be to planners, developers and architects considering new buildings. It provides a source of ideas for designers to work with local building styles which have helped to make Kingsclere distinctive.

In summary, it is intended for:

- **local householders, businesses and farmers**
- **statutory bodies and providers of services and utilities**
- **local councils**
- **developers and builders**
- **architects, designers, planners and engineers**

A copy has been provided for every household in the parish

What does it cover?

This Design Statement contains sections on:

- **the historical and landscape setting of the parish**
- **the pattern of settlement**
- **open spaces within and between settlements**
- **the form and style of buildings**
- **other important features**
- **business in Kingsclere**
- **transport and communication issues.**

Each section concludes with a number of 'Design guidelines' for future development. Taken together with the accompanying text, these guidelines provide details of the qualities which local people hold dear. It is hoped that all development is designed and located in such a way as to reflect local characteristics and to respect local values.

For those wishing to read further, a bibliography is attached as Appendix A.

We have also included a section headed **Policy and Action** which contains items which arose during the study but which are strictly outside the terms of reference of a VDS. Nonetheless they are important issues in need of consideration.

History and Landscape Setting



The parish of Kingsclere lies roughly equidistant between Basingstoke and Newbury on the North Hampshire border and covers about 5 square miles of attractive countryside.

Archaeological evidence shows that the parish has always been a popular place to settle and finds from Stone Age times onwards are recorded in the Treasures of Hampshire.

Kingsclere village is a spring line settlement running along the northern slope of a chalk and clay ridge running south east/north west. The outlying settlement of Great Knowl/Frith Common lies on top of the ridge north of the main settlement and a considerable community has grown up around the racing stables at Park House on the anticline between the Clere Scarp and the village. There are a number of small farm settlements on the London Clay plain stretching northwards from the village.

Kingsclere developed as a significant community in Saxon times and over the centuries grew slowly as a small market township serving its rural hinterland. An important factor in the present settlement pattern was that local agriculture predominantly used the open fields system until the mid 19th century when Kingsclere was one of the last Hampshire villages to be enclosed.

Kingsclere qualifies as a town under the Action for Market Towns initiative (population over 2000) but the residents regard it as a village

A large part of the parish lies within the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The dominant feature of the landscape is the Clere Scarp which is the product of erosion of the east-west chalk anticline exposing the hard middle chalk layer to form the dramatic scarp face.

Cannon Heath to the south of the scarp is part of the open dip slope and is downland farmland with evidence of occupation since Neolithic times. The racing industry has existed here for well over a century and the gallops, together with sheep and grain farming, dominate the landscape.

The late enclosure of the valley floor together with the establishment of the racing stables in the late 19th century give a distinctive flavour to the land between the Scarp and the village featuring parliamentary hedges and the main gallops and other training facilities.

The original Kingsclere settlement grew up along the banks of the Gaily Brook which has carved a narrow valley through the chalk and clay ridge which marks the transition to the London Clay plain to the north. The settlement is almost invisible from the Scarp as it developed along the northern slope of the ridge. Despite growth since 1950 the settlement is compact and well contained within its natural boundaries within the ridge line to the south of the built area, inside the A339 Kingsclere Bypass to the north

and by the public open spaces of the Fieldgate Centre and Long Meadow Open Space to the west. See Constraints Map.

Any future development should respect these natural limits. Any development approaching the southern ridge will impact on the AONB. Consideration should be given to extending the AONB to the southern boundary of the village in order to provide greater protection.

To the north of the settlement is a gently undulating land form draining north eastwards to the River Enborne and predominantly consists of heavy London Clay with localised areas of Bagshot Beds (sand). There is a complex and diverse pattern of small to medium mixed farmland and woodland.

The north east of the parish is dominated by the Golf Course at Sandford Springs and by the ancient woodland running from Knowl Hill through Frith Common. The area has a distinctive wooded and enclosed/semi-enclosed character.

The Golf Course has been sensitively managed and the many woodland copses separating the greens and fairways give a flavour of formal, managed parkland to the landscape.

There are many attractive views looking into the settlement, looking outwards and from the scarp and local rights of way.



The views are very much appreciated by those who live locally and by the increasing number of visitors who are attracted to the area by its charm and beauty. See map.

The AONB and the growing number of designated walks, cycle ways and bridle ways make the countryside within the parish an important resource for informal, quiet recreation.

Any planning proposals for the area should respect the quality of the landscape so that this function can continue.

The landscape quality is threatened by ribbon commercial development on corridor of the A339. The principal pressure is from New Greenham Park just across the Hampshire border in West Berkshire but there are numerous other small proposed developments ..

Care will need to be taken to

minimise the suburbanising influence such as standardised accesses, foot ways, kerbs, lighting and building forms. Any such features should not adversely affect the special character of the local landscape.

The Borough Landscape Assessment

The Landscape Strategy identifies four landscape character areas adjoining the Kingsclere policy boundary. These are:

- **Hannington Down**
- **The Clere Scarp**
- **Wolverton**
- **Ecchinswell**

For each of these areas, significant issues of countryside management were identified and these key issues are summarised at Appendix B.

Trees and shrubs which are indigenous to the area are listed at Appendix C.

Design Guidelines

- **Any new development should respect the character of the countryside as described in the Borough Rural Landscape Assessment.**
- **Any future development should respect the character and natural limits of the village**
- **Any planning proposals for the area should respect the quality of the landscape so that the function as a resource for informal, quiet recreation can continue.**
- **Other designations designed to protect special characteristics in the parish should be observed.**
- **Land uses which have a sub-urbanising effect on the landscape are not appropriate.**
- **Neither new developments nor extensions should detrimentally affect existing publicly accessible views into or out of the settlement or harm views from local rights of way.**
- **Potential impacts of development on distant views (eg prominent roofs on the skyline, isolated buildings within fields, large windows which reflect the light) should be avoided.**
- **When developing outside the settlement policy boundary, care must be taken to minimise the effect on the landscape of suburbanising influences such as standardised accesses, foot ways, kerbs, lighting and building forms.**

Settlement Pattern



The original settlement at Kingsclere was formed around the old Saxon East (George) and South (Swan) Streets. The houses adjoining these streets and further up and down the Gaily Brook are a rich heritage of listed buildings and form the Conservation Area.

The main settlement is roughly spear-shaped, with a broad base in the west tapering up to the valley to its highest point in the east. This land form has influenced development and created a community which is hidden on all approaches except from the west.

The angles of the original cross shaped formation of main roads have been filled and expanded to the present village boundary. The principal roads are the A339 from west to east, which forms the Kingsclere bypass, and the B3051 which follows the route of the old Whitchurch, Kingsclere and Aldermaston turnpike and which is increasingly used by commuters and cross-country travellers.

The settlement is bounded by:

- the housing line below the ridge from Kite Hill, through Dell Hill to Bishop's Hill
- the south side of the water meadows between the village and the Kingsclere Bypass
- the public open space formed by the former Long Meadow and the Fieldgate Sports Centre to the West.

See Constraints Map

The settlement at Knowl Hill/Frith Common is small and relatively scattered. The lack of

safe pedestrian access to the village suggests that only minimum development should be permitted here.

There has been a significant growth of commercial and residential building at the racing stables at Park House. Only related and necessary further development should be permitted because of the impact on the AONB.

Several former agricultural sites: Frobury, Cottismore, Coldridge have metamorphosed into commercial developments extending beyond the reuse of redundant rural buildings. Much of this has occurred through the use of individual, incremental planning applications, and there is a danger that the essential character of the countryside will be changed by the piecemeal development of industrial/business units in what were essentially green field sites with few farm buildings.

If development is to be permitted at these locations the impact on the landscape must be minimised and should reflect the guidance contained within the Borough's Countryside Design Summary.

Design Guidelines

- Any development under the Exceptions Policy for social housing which falls outside the settlement boundary must be carefully sited to minimise its impact on the landscape and setting.
- Development in the outlying settlements should be integrated into the shape and form of the settlements on an incremental basis respecting the organic and accumulative nature of the settlement patterns.
- Future development, however, minor, should not adversely affect the natural boundaries of the settlement, defined in the Constraints Map, which help to establish the character of Kingsclere.
- Because of the lack of safe pedestrian access to the village, only minimum development should be permitted at Knowl Hill/Frith Common
- Development relating to racing stables should not adversely affect the character of the landscape

Open Spaces



Two different types of open space are significant: open countryside between settlements; and important open spaces within the village.

Open countryside between settlements

This is essential in preserving the special identity of local communities. There is concern felt within the community about the vulnerability of the remaining open countryside between Kingsclere and Headley. This is particularly caused by attempts to develop the Cottesmore Farm site in Kingsclere and the Catts Farm site on the Headley boundary.

It is equally important to sustain the spaces between the village and other settlements in the parish as well as that separating Kingsclere from other surrounding parishes.

Open spaces within the settlement

Kingsclere is fortunate to have within its boundaries a number of open spaces that are an important asset for its inhabitants. They provide areas for sports, recreation and leisure pursuits and are well used but apart from this they have other very important functions.

These green areas, which in the main are bordered by mature hedging, including some ancient hedgerows, are dispersed fairly evenly throughout the village. They form an interesting pattern and contrast between the diversity of buildings and break up the concentrated housing development with pleasing effect. There is also a network of footpaths which links these special areas.

Gaily Brook, which flows through the village via the Lake towards the Water Meadows, provides areas rich in fauna and wild life. Kingsclere has many fine specimen trees some of which are subject to tree preservation orders.

St Mary's Churchyard, Crown Green and the Square provide a spacious heart to the village

The Dell Recreation Ground is a well established 'village green' and gives fine views of the village and over the surrounding countryside in almost all directions.

The Holding Field and Primary School Grounds together form a green 'lung', particularly for estates developed since the Second World War. Both are well used for sporting activities and have a variety of mixed hedging and mature trees.

The Fieldgate Centre is an important social centre with a large green space used for many sports activities. Together with Long Meadow it forms part of the western boundary of the village.

Other areas, public and private, form breaks between built areas enhancing the spatial atmosphere of the village. These include St Mary's Churchyard, Sandford Close Meadow, Kingsclere House Garden, the grounds of Brooklyn House, the Lake and Cedar Drive with the walk beside the brook.

All the open spaces within Kingsclere form a patchwork effect that pleasingly separates the developed areas and creates a feeling of spaciousness much appreciated by its inhabitants.

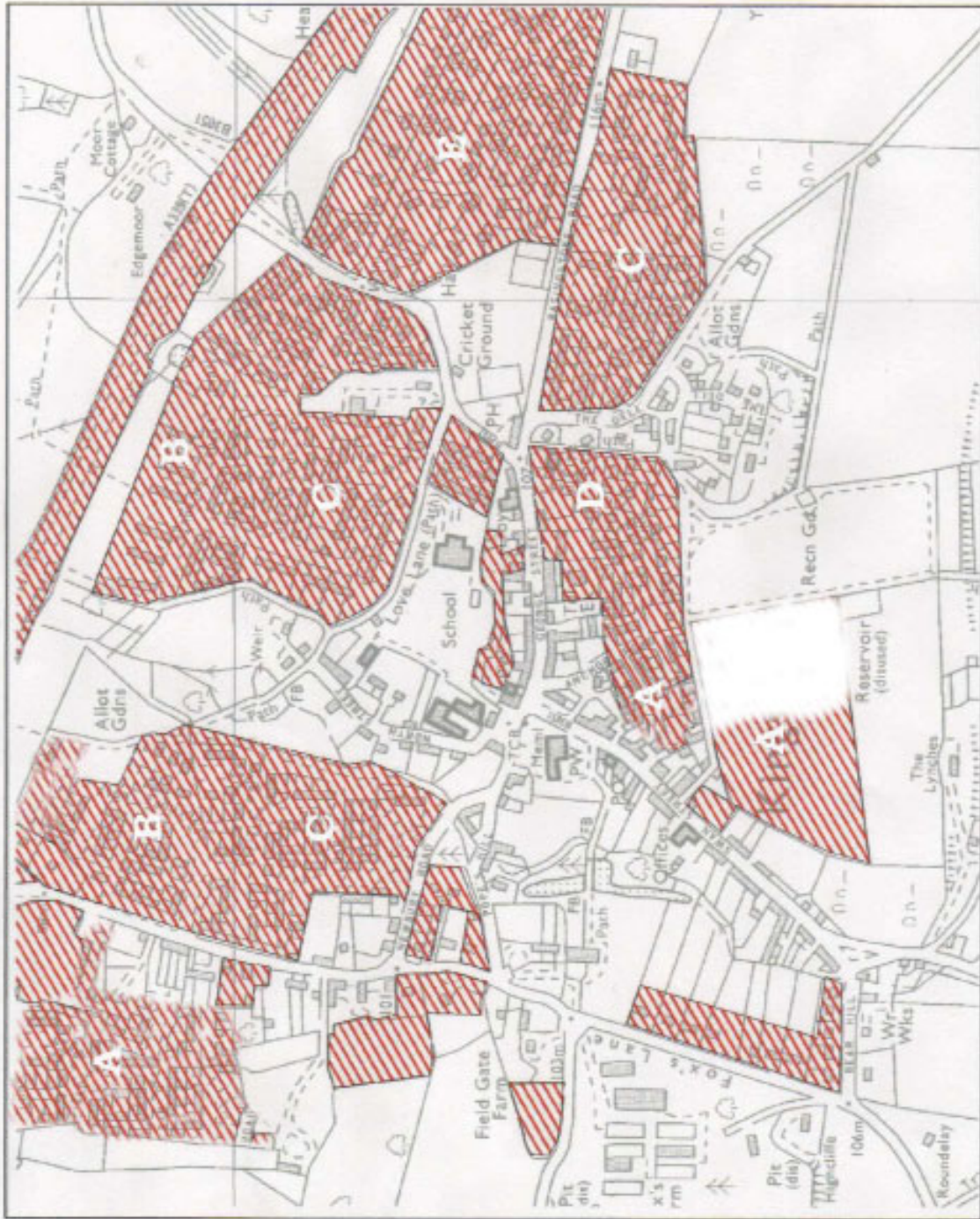
See Constraints Map

The Bypass

A narrow strip of land runs to the south of the A339 creating a buffer separating the traffic from the settlement. A mix of formal and natural landscaping helps to reduce traffic impact and this land was defined as a buffer in the 1981 local plan. It should continue to be so protected.

Design guidelines

- **Spaces between settlements are vital in preserving the special identity of the local communities - especially the open countryside along the A339 to Headley.**
- **Existing recreational, sporting and other open spaces including the buffer zone between the A339 and the village should be protected in their present form.**
- **Important open spaces between houses should be retained to reflect the character and evolution of the settlement pattern.**



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 Modern development

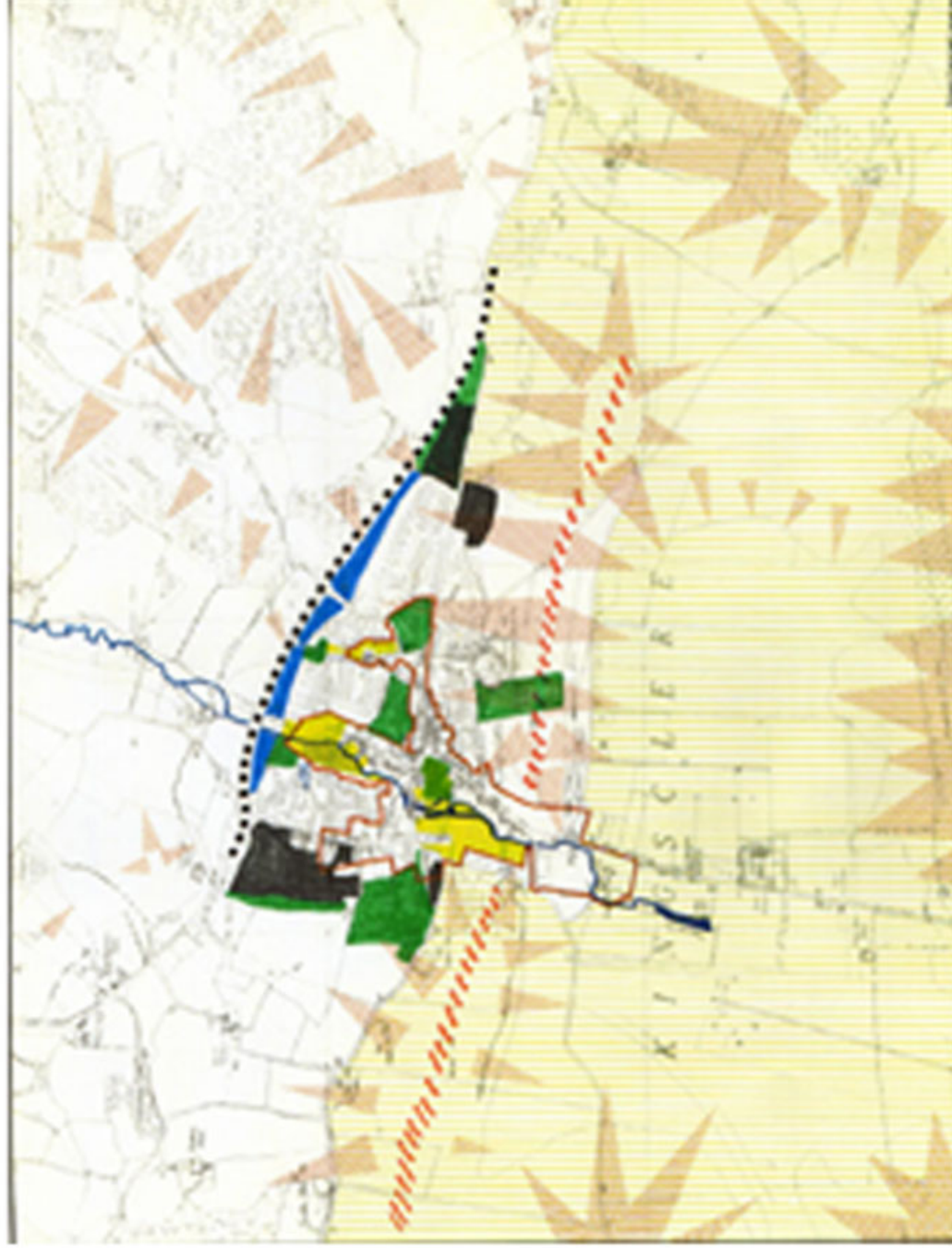
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MAP D MODERN DEVELOPMENT



CONSTRAINTS MAP

Building Form and Materials



A major feature of the older part of the village, which lends it its essential character, is the uneven sweep of clay-tiled roofs set with high square chimney stacks. Buildings of different age, shape and height are joined to form articulated terraces with uneven but continuous roof-lines. In harmony with the clay tiles, the predominant building material is brick, mainly red, but with the occasional variation of either blue-grey, as in Phoenix House, or in chequered or banded patterns as in houses throughout the Conservation Area.

The colouring of bricks which is such a feature of the Conservation Area reflects variations in both the original pug (chalk and clay produces a grey brick) and in manufacture, where the hotter part of the kiln produced a blue-grey brick.

Many of the roofs are half-hipped and some gable ends are tile hung. In several buildings, Falcons, the Old Forge and the Swan Hotel for example, the structural beams are exposed. In others the brickwork is entirely or partly lime-mortar rendered or painted. Overall the effect is varied and harmonious with the roofs providing a unifying link.

Beyond the centre of the village, there has been progressive development and gradual infilling over the last five centuries. In the Conservation Area this infilling in general is in harmonious relationship with the many listed buildings.

In the 18th and 19th centuries building was either of individual dwellings, such as Brooklyn House in North St and Goldfinch Cottage in Newbury Rd, or groups of related buildings such as the former Drake's Brewery group of buildings in Pope's Hill. Although each was built in the style of its time, generally both the scale and the materials used have helped them to blend readily with the original village buildings.

There is very occasional use of weather boarding on vernacular buildings and flint was used as a Victorian wall surfacing to the Church, Chapel and School. The flint used was imported quarried flint and there are only minor instances of its use in vernacular buildings. Both it and weather boarding should be used sparingly or not at all, especially within and adjacent to the Conservation Area. When considering development within the Conservation Area or wherever else is appropriate, reference should be made to the Development Control Design Guide.

As a former small market town, Kingsclere expanded rapidly after the Second World War with rapid growth of both public and private housing. For the most part, the post-war additions are either single or two storeyed and appropriate in scale.

Many are also fortunate in the size of their plots relative to the size of the dwellings themselves. The gardens, verges and open spaces between contribute to the rural village atmosphere of solidly built

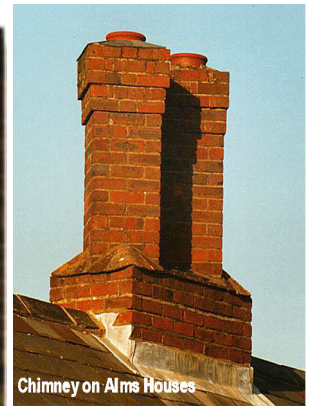
cottages in mature gardens with well-grown trees and other vegetation.

Smaller developments off the spine of older roads, such as those at Wellman's Meadow, Keep's Mead, Hook Road and Poveys Mead, work particularly well and, now that their planting has matured, are sympathetic to the rural setting having softened into the landscape.

Some other developments in the village, however, point to lessons for future developers and planners.

Flat-roofed blocks typical of the 1960s and 1970s, for example, now appear unsympathetic to a village setting. Similarly, buildings of the scale of Rose Hodson Court and the main block fronting Fielden Court are unduly dominant both because of the colour and finish of the brick used but more particularly because of their size in relation to that of the plots in which they are set. As major features on two of the approaches to the heart of the village (and with one set in the conservation area) they are uncharacteristic additions.

Similarly, some of the private estates built in the 1960s, and subsequently, take insufficient account of the village character of Kingsclere and have introduced an overcrowded, suburban note particularly where there is a lack of open communal space and where insufficient room has been allowed for off-street parking of residents' vehicles.



Particular Details

Many individual properties have their own unique and interesting features such as chimney stacks, windows, hanging tiles, cat slides and decorative brickwork. These provide pleasing visual diversity. There are, however, examples of recent buildings where completely inappropriate 'period' or 'vernacular taken from other regions' features have been tacked on, merely to differentiate individual buildings, one from another.

See Development Over Time Map

Design Guidance

New buildings and development

- Should reflect both the size and scale of existing buildings and their position within the building plot.
- Should generally be single or two storey and the roof line should not be higher than that of surrounding buildings.
- continue the tradition of incorporating interesting and sympathetic details in new development.
- developers and planners should resist the introduction of alien vernacular detail merely as decoration.

- Should include components (such as doors, windows, height, pitch and ridges of roofs) which have regard to those already present in the locality.
- Should maintain existing mature trees, hedges and, where possible, shrub planting. New planting adjacent to open country and public spaces should be of indigenous species.
- Should incorporate plot boundaries of natural features (weathered brick and hedging rather than timber fencing).
- Should include a good variety of house sizes and should supply local demand for low cost, affordable and social needs housing.
- Any new agricultural buildings should be carefully sited and designed to reduce their apparent mass so as to minimise impact upon the wider landscape.
- continue the tradition of incorporating interesting and sympathetic details in new development.
- developers and planners should resist the introduction of alien vernacular detail merely as decoration.

Redevelopment and alterations to existing buildings

- Ridge lines should not be raised above those generally found in the immediate locality .
- Should use original or sympathetic materials, components and styling to match as closely as possible those on the existing building.
- Should reflect the original building's characteristics in proportions of windows to walls and in the design of the roof.
- Conservatories, loft extensions and roof lights should be constructed in appropriate materials and reflect the design of the building to which they are attached.
- Should aim to maintain existing trees and hedges.
- Conversions of agricultural buildings should have regard to all the guidelines in the Design Guidance for New Buildings
- Property owners should be encouraged to retain and maintain existing detail work on buildings and boundary features
- Existing original small features such as the wall mounted post-boxes should be retained.

Other Features



There are a number of special features in Kingsclere which do not fit neatly in other categories. These features are summarised here with appropriate Design Guidelines.

Walls and Plot Boundaries

Walls are not a major feature of plot boundaries but where they exist they reflect in material and design the buildings in their immediate vicinity. Tall close boarded fencing presents an intimidating aspect especially adjacent to footpaths. Residents of 1960s open-fronted properties frequently desire to enclose their frontages and where this is permitted it should be done with sensitivity to the effect on adjacent properties;

- **existing walls should be repaired and retained.**
- **boundaries on frontages and adjacent to footways or public open spaces should respect the character of the area**
- **appropriate native hedging plants should be used rather than exotic conifers or other uncharacteristic plants.**
- **close boarded fencing adjacent to footpaths should be avoided.**
- **hedges should be planted in such a way that, when mature, the entire hedge is contained within the curtilage of the property rather than overlapping onto neighbouring**

Trees and Hedgerows

Trees and hedges are an important part not just of the settlement but also in parts of the rest of the parish.

There are a number of individual trees, groups of trees, hedgerows and wooded areas which are visually important and which contribute significantly to the local character and environment.

- **visually significant trees, hedgerows and wooded areas in public spaces should be cared for, conserved and, in due course, suitably replaced.**
- **where visually significant trees or hedgerows are on private land, owners should be encouraged to care for them appropriately.**
- **the removal of hedgerows should be resisted.**
- **new planting should use native species**

Country Lanes

The comparatively few country lanes in the parish date back in some cases at least to their use as Saxon *herepaths* (warrior roads appearing on Saxon charters) and are important to the character and enjoyment of the landscape.

These are narrow and winding and edged with grass banks topped by field hedges which limit visibility for car drivers. They are enjoyed by walkers and cyclists.

Those to the south west of the village are particularly at risk from 'rat-running' by Heavy Goods Vehicles and by commuter car drivers trying to avoid the A339. This problem is likely to be exacerbated by the developments at New Greenham Park.

- **if new development takes place, particular care should be taken to ensure that it is not at a level or of a type which would give rise to significant increases in traffic and damage the rural character of the lanes**

9,11 and 13 George St



Footpaths and Bridle ways

Kingsclere is rich in footpaths and bridle ways and is lucky to have an energetic group of volunteers to undertake maintenance work. The footpaths and bridle ways are an asset which is well used by visitors who are encouraged by a well produced footpath guide.

- **Any development proposed should avoid the closure of Rights of Way and take any opportunity to create new footpaths to link with other footpaths and spaces in the vicinity**

Highway Signs

In recent years the quantity of signs in the parish has increased appreciably and residents feel that the quality has decreased. They present an untidy, cluttered appearance. The regulations about the attachment of signs against listed buildings frequently mean that the sign is attached to a post in front of the building with a correspondingly greater adverse visual impact. When redundant signs are removed, the posts are frequently left in place

Light Pollution

Safety and security considerations frame the need for adequate lighting, both on individual properties and on public roads. However, light pollution problem is becoming an increasing problem. On individual properties, the undue glare from security lights can spoil the tranquil atmosphere of a rural community and can have safety implications.

The original street lighting specification for the Conservation Area required a specific type of lamp which gave a softer lighting to the area. As time has progressed these have gradually been replaced by ordinary lamps.

- **In any new development external lighting on individual properties should be limited to the minimum required for security and working purposes and should minimise pollution from glow and spillage**
- **In any new development floodlighting installations for sports and other purposes should minimise pollution from flow and spillage and times of use should be controlled**

Overhead Lines and Other Utilities

Overhead lines are unsightly and in many places seriously degrade the skyline, with a proliferation of crossing lines attributable to different services.

People find the new overhead lines intrusive, particularly in the outlying parts of the Conservation Area. Although some action has been taken to replace some lighting columns in the Conservation Area many people also find the modern lighting equipment attached to buildings or mounted on columns unsympathetic and introducing unnecessary street clutter

Retail and Commercial Activities



Background

Kingsclere has always been a retail and trading centre serving its small agricultural hinterland. While there has been a decline in retail and other businesses serving the local community this has reversed in recent years and it has been amply demonstrated that well-run retail businesses which offer value and understand the importance of niche marketing can thrive.

Kingsclere's centuries old market has disappeared and now only survives as a monthly indoor market at the Village Club. Kingsclere qualifies as a market town under the Action for Market Towns initiative (over 2000 population) even though residents prefer to call it a village.

The traditional principal industry of farming has changed drastically and the move out of livestock husbandry and the mechanisation of arable farming has reduced the numbers working in agriculture to a minimum.

Retailing and Catering

Many of the former shops have been converted to private dwellings but those that remain are generally thriving although sometimes now being used as

offices. A thriving retail centre will tend to attract other retailers and it is important to retain the existing stock of commercial properties in the village centre. Measures can be taken to assist retailers by, for example, promoting the village.

Funding and assistance in activities of this nature are available from the Countryside Agency through the Action for Market Towns initiative.

There is also a need to address the parking problem in the village centre. Short stay parking is abused largely because it is difficult to police.

- **development proposals to reduce the stock of retail premises in the village should be resisted**

Shop Fascias and Window Displays

Kingsclere is fortunate in having a variety of shops and facilities which attract many visitors from other villages which are less well provided for. In the main, the shops and small businesses favour restrained fascia boards and window displays which are appropriate to the village setting.

- **shop fronts should adhere to the Borough Development and Control Design Guide 1 (Shopfronts and Advertisements)**
- **there should be discussion with shop owners and managers to establish whether a more discreet presentation could be achieved.**
- **vandalism and petty crime remain a problem and as far as possible should be designed out of the retail and commercial area in any future development**

Hotels, Pubs and Catering

The different types of catering establishment provide a wide range of services for residents and visitors to the village. They also create employment in the community.

There is a shortage of beds for visitors and tourists in the village although this will be redressed by conversion of the George and Horn Inn to an hotel. There is also an extant planning permission for a small hotel adjacent to the Kingsclere Filling Station on the A339.

The Design Guidelines applicable to Retailing apply equally to this sector.



Agriculture

Changes in agriculture mean that there are now many redundant buildings on local farms. In some cases buildings may be unsuited for conversion because of their original purpose, eg: a dutch barn, or be in such a poor state that demolition is the only option.

This leaves a considerable stock suitable for other uses .

Industrial/commercial or other employment uses that 'fit the building and site' should be considered first for redundant farm buildings. In exceptional circumstances (eg where the buildings are Listed) it may be appropriate that mixed or residential uses are considered, where it has been proven that employment uses alone are not feasible. It is important that these buildings are clearly identified in order that they can be taken into account in the Local Plan .

A particular issue for many young people starting out on a craft oriented career is both to afford workshop facilities and living accommodation. In converting redundant farm buildings, the possibility to live 'over the shop' should be considered.

The major need in Kingsclere is for affordable housing not additional employment opportunities.

In one case, a small business which located to redundant buildings at the end of a narrow lane has expanded to the point where deliveries are made by HGV causing difficulties to other residents. Planning conditions should be worded to avoid such situations.

Major land users in Kingsclere are the Racing Stables and the Golf course, both of whom have a significant impact on the landscape and are major employers. There are other 'alternative users' such as a country sports centre and a garden centre. These create employment but also have an impact on the community.

Other Small Business

Apart from residents of Kingsclere Business Park there are a wide range of small businesses operating in Kingsclere either from home or from rented premises. They range from sole traders to small companies.

Many of these businesses are servicing the local community and these include the full range of building trades and other services such as peripatetic hairdressing and window cleaning.

Other business have a wider market either nationally or internationally but may still be operating out of the home premises.

For a variety of reasons such businesses may remain invisible to the local community and their development needs unrecognised.

Tourism

Although Kingsclere has never been considered as a tourist attraction it attracts a wide variety of visitors who are chiefly drawn to the beautiful countryside and especially the AONB and the West Clere Scarp with Watership Down as a key attraction..

Kingsclere not only has attractive countryside with well maintained footpaths and bridle ways but has many quality tourist attractions within easy range; it lends itself well to the sensitive development of tourism.



Transport and Communications

Transport

Kingsclere lies at the cross roads of the A339 between Basingstoke and Newbury and the B3051 from Aldermaston to Whitchurch.

Although it is scheduled to be de-trunked, the A339 is an increasingly busy traffic artery and traffic levels have been unaffected by the construction of the Newbury By-pass and attempts to direct north - south traffic via the A34 and the A303/M3. The A339 also attracts a considerable traffic load from the east of Thatcham via Crookham Common and from New Greenham Park. These traffic levels are expected to increase in the immediate future.

Figures provided by the Highways Agency show that there has been a steady increase in traffic movement on the A339 since 1999 with the opening of the Newbury Bypass having no apparent effect on traffic levels.

There is also a growing use of the B3051 both as a commuter route and as an alternative to other east - west routes.

These increasing traffic loads are impacting on the village especially at peak commuter times. Recent traffic surveys identified over 700 vehicle movements an hour at peak times through the village centre.

Kingsclere has limited access to public transport with an hourly bus service to and from Newbury and Basingstoke throughout the day. This service is subsidised and under-utilised for much of the day. There are some minor additional services such as the Thursday Newbury



market service. At both Newbury and Basingstoke there is reasonable access to the railway stations from the buses, although the unreliability of the bus services, and especially the delays which buses experience in exiting the village at peak times, makes cross - connections problematic.

Dial a Ride operates a once-a-week service for disabled people and the Care Scheme runs a hospital transport service. Privately run taxi and mini bus services also operate but can be expensive because there is no local taxi firm and all journeys are charged on a 'to and from' basis. Some alternative transport schemes have been experimented with but have invariably foundered because of cost and because they were too inflexible for the needs of residents.

The private car will continue to be the transport of choice for residents and for many homes that means multi-ownership

This presents continuing problems in parts of the village especially where the garage counts as a parking space but is not used as such or has even been converted into other accommodation.

- **conversion of garages into living accommodation should be resisted unless adequate alternative parking space exists within the curtilage.**

Communications

There is a cable link along the A339 with hubs in Newbury and Basingstoke. At present there is not broadband link in the village itself except via BT. The availability of broadband is important to modern businesses and this is important to many small entrepreneurs. The development of wireless broadband could eliminate the need for land links and Kingsclere is well placed for this.

The contents of this section do not form part of the Supplementary Planning Guidance but contain problems and issues which were identified by the Village Design Group during their researches. They are included here for further consideration by the Parish Council

Policy and Action

A large number of items were identified during the project which did not come strictly within the immediate terms of a Village Design Statement. Bearing in mind the possible development of a Vital Villages Local Plan for Kingsclere they are set out below under the headings by which they were identified.

They are offered for consideration for future action by the Parish Council

Landscape Setting

- the AONB should be extended to the southern strategic boundary of the village.
- other designations designed to protect special characteristics in the parish should be strictly observed.
- activities should be controlled to minimise the impact of problems identified as key issues in the B & D Landscape Assessment
- the Dell is a unique area and measures to protect it such as incorporating it into the Conservation Area should be considered.
- the Holding Field at present only holds its public open space status because it is outside the policy boundary and consideration should be given to registering it as a village green

- The contents of this section do not form part of the Supplementary Planning Guidance but contain problems and issues which were identified by the Village Design Group during their researches. They are included here for further consideration by the Parish Council
- children's play areas. The three areas located in recent housing developments do not meet existing needs and developers have occasionally avoided the requirement to provide them. They are a buffer between developments

Business and Tourism

- an up-to-date record of local businesses should be maintained.
- Kingsclere should be actively promoted as a high grade tourist destination.

Retail and Catering

- membership of Action for Market Towns should be actively pursued, and maximum use made of their funds and services
- there should be consultation with retailers on the most effective measures for maintaining the viability of their businesses

- proposals to reduce the stock of retail premises in the village should be resisted
- landscaping the somewhat featureless grassed area outside the flats at 24 to 30 George St should be considered, both to soften the area with planting and possibly to provide additional parking spaces
- the continuance of the Post Office should be ensured, not least to protect banking facilities in the village.

Country Lanes

- the use of these lanes should be closely monitored and, if necessary, access limitations placed upon them.
- the Highway Authority should ensure the preservation of the character of the lanes
- in maintenance and repair, the Highway Authority should avoid urbanisation of appearance resulting from the installation of concrete kerbs, street lights and other inappropriate elements
- Repair and maintenance or new development should not result in lanes being widened or straightened

Lighting

- consideration should be given to burying overhead lines in parts of the Conservation Area where this has not already been done - North St and the south part of Swan St
- consideration should be given to replacing the modern lighting equipment in the Conservation Area by equipment more sympathetic

Transport and Communications

- active measures should be taken to manage the impact of traffic on the roads through the village
- traffic levels both through the village and along the A339 should continue to be monitored
- improved traffic safety on the A339 should be actively promoted
- the greater use of public transport should be actively promoted
- parking is in part a problem because a number of residences in the Conservation Area lack parking spaces within their curtilages.
- effective parking management systems (eg disk parking and residents only parking) should be considered
- the availability of wireless broadband (ADSL) should be actively promoted

Agriculture

- a register of potentially redundant rural buildings should be created in order that they can be considered within the Local Plan
- the need for 'start-up' facilities which could include living accommodation should be considered in the Local Plan
- discussions should be held with local landowners and farmers to determine how best to support them in the future



