

INTRODUCTION

Village Design Statements provide guidance for any development proposals and can 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 qualities that people value in their village and its surroundings. The Statements are produced by the local community for use by planners, developers and local Councils. The Government encourages the use of Village Design Statements (VDS) because they can help applicants make successful planning applications.

Without a VDS, local residents may only hear about proposals for development when the design is finished. Although the Parish Council is asked by the Planning Authority for 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 that local people can do is react or protest. Once a VDS has been prepared, the Planning Authority knows, in advance, the sort of things that are acceptable to local communities.

Buriton has had a Village Design Statement since 1999/2000 (one of the first to be produced in the District) and it was updated as part of the community’s Parish Plan exercise in 2008/9. The Parish Council has been advised by the Planning Authority that it now needs to be kept up to date again.

During the course of 2015 and 2016, as part of Buriton’s “Plan B” project, the guidelines in the Village Design Statement have been revisited again and, where necessary, refreshed, drawing upon things that people have told us so far and best practice in other places.

Well, we are nearly there ... but we need your help one more time.

Now we want you to tell us if we have got things right before anything is sent to the Planning Authority.

In particular, is there anything missing?!

If approved by the Planning Authority, planners will use these guidelines to look after our parish’s special qualities.

Most of the guidelines are still very similar to those which were originally produced by the community in 2000 and re-affirmed in 2008 – but they have been revisited from first principles, using the context of our landscapes to inform layout and design guidelines:

- **our landscapes, including the geology and sources of water, were important in deciding where settlements should be built**
- **some trees may mark ancient field patterns or boundaries – and native hedgerows can provide important ‘paths’ for creatures to follow**
- **some historic routes have become important roads today – whilst others remain as quiet lanes or footpaths**
- **the historic routes led to the first building blocks of our settlements appearing, giving a pattern which later development may follow and also establishing important spaces and views between buildings**
- **individual plots within the larger blocks vary in size and shape – helping to create the unique character of settlements; and**
- **the materials and design details of individual buildings add to the local characteristics and qualities that people appreciate.**

DESIGN GUIDELINES

Landscape setting

LS1: any new development should respect the character of the countryside, be in harmony with landscape features and setting, should take account of all the important biodiversity in the parish and should not be visually detrimental to vistas which are available from many parts of the parish

LS2: the planning policies which apply to the South Downs National Park should be strictly applied throughout the parish

LS3: other designations designed to protect special characteristics in the parish should be strictly observed

LS4: the key sensitivities, landscape management and development considerations and other recommendations identified in the South Downs Integrated Landscape Character Assessment (SDILCA) and in the Landscape Character Assessment for the parish of Buriton should be observed

LS5: land uses which have a suburbanising influence on the character of the landscape are not appropriate within the parish. The sub-division of agricultural land into paddocks for equestrian uses can have harmful effects on the character of the landscape

LS6: low native hedging, trees and shrubs are a feature of the parish and should be preserved – and encouraged in any landscaping for new developments – so as to retain the rural nature of the area. Fencing panels are generally inappropriate

LS7: neither new development nor extensions nor fencing should obstruct existing publicly accessible views into, out of or within settlements or affect views from local rights of way

LS8: potential impacts of development on distant views (eg. large windows or roof-lights which reflect the light, prominent roofs on the skyline, isolated buildings amidst fields) should be avoided and new developments should not intrude on the skyline when seen from key viewpoints

LS9: sunken lanes form important features in the parish, are valuable as wildlife habitats and are historically noteworthy. Any new development should not dominate or adversely affect the character, setting or value of any of these lanes

LS10: virtually all the buildings in Buriton and Weston are hidden from view on approach routes into the settlements and from long distance vantage points. The villages nestle naturally in the landscape and this characteristic should be maintained. This has important implications for the location and design of any new development.

Settlement pattern

SP1: spaces between settlements are vital in preserving the special identity of the local communities – particularly the gaps to the built-up area of Petersfield. Concern about the potential erosion of these important gaps remains high and it is important that the gap between the parish and Petersfield is preserved

SP2: any development must maintain the historic settlement patterns of Buriton, Weston, Nursted and Ditcham, recognising how they relate to the landscape settings

SP3: the traditional form of the settlements should be maintained rather than building any new estates and planning decisions should support conserving the form and rural character of the settlements

SP4: as in other spring-line villages along the bottom of the scarp slope of the downs, flooding can be a major challenge with fields around the edges of the settlements playing important roles as reservoirs and soakaways. Any new development should not exacerbate the risk, frequency, severity or relocation of flooding

SP5: the boundaries of the settlements as defined in the statutory Development Plan should be strictly observed with new development confined to infill plots, redevelopment and conversions maintaining, as far as possible, the existing patterns of density

SP6: in order to retain the existing character of the parish and minimise the impact on biodiversity, the building of houses in existing gardens will not usually be supported

SP7: the entrances to the settlements in the parish are generally very attractive and any new developments should not detract from this character. Any changes on the fringes of the villages should not be obtrusive, but sensitively fitted into the landscape. Mediocre, substandard or inappropriate designs should not be allowed to creep in from the margins of the villages

SP8: new buildings should reflect both the size and scale of existing buildings and their position within the building plot

SP9: new pavements on existing lanes would be inappropriate within the villages – alternative solutions to pedestrian safety should be sought if required.

Open spaces and green corridors

OS1: the open spaces between settlement areas within the parish, and between the parish and Petersfield, should be preserved and protected from inappropriate development

OS2: new development should be excluded from the ‘green fingers’ around The Links, the Clays and the Old Rectory Meadow

OS3: the Links and adjoining fields behind Bones Lane (part of the Buriton Conservation Area) are particularly important open spaces – and the views afforded are important to the character of the Conservation Area

OS4: it is particularly important to retain the open spaces around Buriton village pond, the Recreation Ground and the fields adjoining Greenway Lane and Kiln Lane

OS5: the areas around Buriton village pond, the war memorial and Pond Green should be sensitively maintained including against adverse effects of traffic and parking

OS6: important open spaces between houses should be retained to reflect the character and evolution of the settlement pattern as well as providing for wildlife

OS7: the open spaces between houses in Weston contribute significantly to the local character and new development should avoid them.

OS8: some important trees, hedgerows, copses, ancient woodlands and other wooded areas have been identified in the Landscape Character Assessment map for the parish and trees flanking the lanes, tracks and hanger woodlands have also been identified as being particularly important. These should not be lost or allowed to become isolated and any new planting should use native species

Dark night skies and tranquillity

T1: due regard should be given to the SDNPA's 'dark skies' policies in respect of lighting throughout the parish for both public and private areas so that lighting is kept to the minimum necessary for safety / security whilst preventing light-spill or glow by incorporating fixtures such as downlighters and timing switches

T2: areas of glazing and roof-lights in new developments and in redevelopments or alterations must also include measures to prevent light pollution (such as specially treated glass) because of the critical, 'pinch-point' location of this parish in the South Downs International Dark Skies Reserve

T3: Light pollution from Petersfield already affects the night-time tranquillity of the parish. New development should not exacerbate this problem

T4: Development which is detrimental to the amenity value and tranquillity of public rights of way and other non-motorised routes should not be permitted

T5: the sense of peace and tranquillity in the parish can also be destroyed by noise and air pollution. Very careful consideration should be given to any new uses which may bring harmful effects. In some cases it may be possible to reduce adverse effects to acceptable levels by design and layout considerations.

The public realm

P1: The quality of all publicly owned places and accessible spaces in the parish is vital in retaining the appearance and attractiveness of the area and context-specific design of all features in the public realm is therefore very important including the need for all statutory bodies to minimise the intrusion and visual impact of their installations

P2: Although our roads and lanes have a functional and utilitarian role in providing access, they provide the front door and foreground for our special built and natural environment. Changes and repairs to roads, lanes and footpaths should maintain the rural nature of the parish and avoid urbanisation resulting from installation of inappropriate surfaces, kerbs or street furniture

P3: A low-speed traffic environment is essential for the vitality and safety of the community and the planning system should assist this whenever possible

P4: Developments should not result in roads being widened or straightened or in any access arrangements which damage rural, 'country lane' characteristics and developments should not be of a level or type which would give rise to significant increases in traffic that could damage the rural character of lanes in the parish

P5: Where access routes to new development lie along historic rural roads there may be unacceptable traffic impacts on environmental grounds even though there may not necessarily be a severe impact on standard highways grounds such as safety or capacity

P6: Sunken lanes are a particular feature of the parish, as well as lanes bounded by hedges or verges, and can form delightful and historic 'green tunnel' landscape and ecological features which are very susceptible to damage. The pattern and character of these lanes should not be threatened

P7: In recent years the community has rationalised and reduced signage in the parish to produce a tidier, more attractive and less cluttered appearance which should be maintained. Any new signs, road markings or street furniture should only be introduced when absolutely necessary and following consultation with the Parish Council and if there is to be any further traffic calming it should be in keeping with the character of the measures introduced in recent years

P8: The location, layout and design (including materials) of all new vehicle parking areas, whether private or public, should

- (a) not have any negative impact on the landscape, biodiversity or public realm
- (b) reflect the positive elements of the surrounding environment
- (c) make use of existing buildings and landscape features to shield views of parking areas
- (d) keep signage, lighting and markings to a minimum (if required at all)
- (e) treat entrances and boundaries carefully to minimise their visual impact
- (f) use permeable surfaces to minimise surface water run-off

P9: all cabling and associated equipment for all utilities required for any new developments should be placed underground and a programme to resite overhead wires underground should be explored with electricity and telephone companies encouraged to share their poles

P10: Due to the capacity of water supplies, soakaways and mains drainage in the parish, particular regard should be given to the design and suitability of proposals in new developments and potential effects elsewhere in the parish

P11. There is a substantial network of footpaths and bridleways within the parish which allows access to the countryside.

- a) footpaths and bridleways should be kept open, free from motorised traffic and in good repair
- b) any diversions should be carefully planned with the Parish Council
- c) proposals to close any Public Rights of way should be resisted
- d) opportunities for new footpaths and bridleways should be considered.

Building form and materials

Everyone should pay attention to small details and try to help to retain the character of our villages. Other villages are gradually losing their attractive appearances and their local character because lots of small changes are taking place without adequate attention to detail: landscaping using non-indigenous species, inappropriate roadside kerbing, extra bits of concrete or tarmac for car-parking, stark garden walls, tall panel fencing and other things that remove the ‘soft edges’ of villages. The same changes can also have adverse effects on rainwater run-off (leading to localised flooding) and on biodiversity. Over time, the cumulative effect of these sorts of changes can change the character of a place just as much as any larger development.

B1: Layout and design of new development should contribute to local distinctiveness, achieving exemplary standards of finish and design, using locally distinctive materials where practicable, and making a positive contribution to the overall appearance and character of built development within the parish.

B2: New buildings

- a) should generally be single or two storey (not higher than surrounding buildings) and face onto the road
- b) should be designed to reflect and respect nearby colours, textures, materials, shapes, styles and proportions (including the coursing of malmstone)
- c) should have bespoke designs that have regard to existing buildings in Buriton rather than standard designs more suitable to other places
- d) should follow the principles of sustainable construction and aim to use natural and re-used materials wherever possible
- e) should be designed and constructed so as to discourage criminal and anti-social activity
- f) should include components (such as doors, windows, the height, pitch and ridges of roofs) which have regard to those already present in the vicinity

- g) should be designed with close attention to window styles: vertical window patterns are predominant and dormer windows are not a local feature
- h) should be designed without the use of flat roofs, timber cladding, roof-lights and UPVC components which are not generally appropriate and need to be considered with great care
- i) should maintain existing mature trees, hedges and, where possible, shrub planting. New planting should be of indigenous species
- j) should aim to provide nesting and roosting opportunities for swifts, bats and other wildlife
- k) should incorporate plot boundaries of natural features: low malmstone, weathered brick, or flint walls or hedging rather than timber panel fencing
- l) should include adequate car parking spaces within the curtilage of the site (with permeable surfaces) which should, thereafter, be maintained and kept available for the parking of vehicles
- m) should be designed in a way that avoids road widening and vehicular access arrangements should not be detrimental to the character of the lanes respecting the 'country lane' characteristics: new kerbing or fencing should be discouraged and rural verges and features should be retained
- n) should include a good variety of house sizes. Within any development allowed, affordable housing and small family homes should be given the highest priority. Specialist housing (eg. sheltered housing for the elderly) and starter homes / flats are also felt to be of greater priority than large family homes (3-4 bedrooms and above) so as to maintain the existing diversity of population in the parish

B3: Redevelopments and alterations to existing buildings

- a) should be designed and constructed so as to discourage criminal and anti-social activity
- b) should use original or sympathetic materials, components and styling to match as closely as possible those on the existing building
- c) should reflect the original building's characteristics in proportions of windows to walls and in the design of the roof
- d) the use of flat roofs, timber cladding, roof-lights and UPVC components are not generally appropriate and need to be considered with great care
- e) conservatories should be designed and located with particular care
- f) should aim to maintain existing trees and hedges
- g) should aim to provide nesting and roosting opportunities for swifts, bats and other wildlife
- h) should retain adequate car parking spaces within the curtilage of the site (with permeable surfaces) for aesthetic and road safety reasons. Extra bits of

surfacing for car parking should, however, be resisted as they are amongst the small details that gradually remove the ‘soft edges’ of the villages

- i) should recognise that some parts of the villages have been designed as low-rise development so as to sit within the landscape. Vertical extensions are unlikely to be appropriate
- j) should be designed in a way that avoids road widening and vehicular access arrangements should not be detrimental to the character of the lanes, respecting the ‘country lane’ characteristics: new kerbing or fencing should be discouraged and rural verges and features should be retained

B4: Agricultural developments

- a) any new agricultural buildings should be carefully sited and designed to reduce their apparent mass so as to minimise impact upon the wider landscape. This might be achieved by screening or careful location within the local landform
- b) with the challenges facing the farming community, support should be given to alternative business ideas in the countryside (whether new buildings or conversions) provided that this can be achieved without generating excessive or unsuitable traffic or without causing unacceptable detriment to the landscape, rural lanes, environment and tranquillity
- c) conversions of agricultural and other rural buildings should have regard to all the guidelines in this Design Statement. In some cases the appearance of the building may not change at all, but it will still be important to ensure that any changes on the surrounding land (eg. areas for car parking, equestrian equipment related to changes of use to stables, electricity supply cables, drainage, lighting, noise etc) do not have an unacceptable impact on local character
- d) the sub-division of agricultural land into paddocks for equestrian uses can bring other consequences (such as additional fencing, sheds, shelters and buildings) with harmful effects on the character of the landscape. Any new buildings should be sited to complement existing building groups and be located so as to be seen against strong existing visual features such as hedgerows or woodland. Design should reflect local agricultural buildings and use sympathetic materials. Prefabricated buildings with an essentially domestic or suburban character should not be permitted and any fencing should be in accordance with a plan agreed with the Planning Authority.

B5: Walls and plot boundaries: low boundary walls in brick and flint, brick and malmstone or just brick are common throughout the parish – often with ‘half-round’

cappings. These plot boundaries contribute significantly to the local character. All development should:

- a) retain, repair or improve existing walls and stonework
- b) incorporate low boundaries of natural features (stone, brick, hedges) relating to those used in neighbouring plot boundaries and avoid timber fence panels in visible locations
- c) use native hedging plants rather than exotic conifers.

B6: Particular details: many individual properties have their own unique features such as decorated chimney stacks, ornate window frames and bargeboards, scalloped roof or hanging tiles, crafted thatch features, garnetted stonework, date plaques and estate owners insignias.

- a) property owners should be encouraged to retain and maintain existing detail work
- b) architects should continue the tradition of incorporating interesting and sympathetic details in new developments

B7: Renewable energy features, energy efficiency measures and other environmentally sustainable solutions should always be encouraged when designed sympathetically with the surroundings. For example, rainwater saving devices, solar panels and small domestic wind turbines should be encouraged when they can be incorporated without being intrusive.

B8: Contemporary architecture may be appropriate provided its scale, mass and materials are consistent with its context and siting.