

Goodrich & Welsh Bicknor

VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT



Goodrich and Welsh Bicknor is an historic parish lying within the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The parish is both an active working community and, with Goodrich Castle and Symonds Yat East, a major tourist destination.

This Village Design Statement provides both overall design guidelines covering the whole parish and individual design guidelines for building in the parish's different settlements.

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Items in **bold** contain **guidelines**

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INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

Goodrich and Welsh Bicknor is an important and historic parish in the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The Village Design Statement (VDS) has, therefore, been written to be both compatible with Herefordshire Council's planning rules and to respect the objectives of the AONB's Management Plan.

The VDS considers these key themes of the AONB Management Plan, as well as covering building design:

- *The need to conserve the natural beauty of our unique landscape and our historic environment.*
- *The need to engender a thriving local community that has a high quality of life and a healthy economy that supports the existing environment of the area.*
- *The need to promote sustainable tourism, based upon the unique beauty and local distinctiveness of the AONB.*

Consultation found that the local community sees these three themes as highly important, and wishes future development to respect the historic environment and to maintain a socially balanced working community.

SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Consultation has shown that the Community

- Accepts that limited housing development in the parish would, over time, prove beneficial.
- Feels that future development in the parish should maintain the existing age and social mix by building houses in a range of prices and sizes.
- Wants Goodrich and Welsh Bicknor to remain a working parish and not become a retirement village.
- Considers limited commercial development within the parish to be acceptable, if directly accessible from the main roads.

The Layout of Future Housing

- Should maintain the separation of the six settlements within the parish with 'walk-able' links between them.
- Should respect the landscape and the views enjoyed by neighbouring houses and should avoid breaking the skyline.
- Should avoid both large groupings of new houses and strip development along roads.
- Should, wherever possible, be grouped round an open area.
- Should include generous plot sizes for family houses, compared with current minimum Government guidelines, whatever the size of the houses.

The Design of Future Houses

- The parish has developed over many centuries and has 43 listed buildings and structures. Existing buildings exhibit a wide range of architectural styles.
- The difference in nature of the six different areas of the parish has led to separate guidelines being drawn up for each. In all cases new builds should use materials that are compatible with and complement neighbouring houses.
- Traditional house styles, incorporating energy efficiency measures, are preferred. Good and innovative modern design is also acceptable.
- A wide range of building materials and finishes would be acceptable but the building of groups of red brick houses should be avoided. Extreme caution should be exercised when considering red brick for new buildings in the Church, Cruse and Coppet Hill areas.

THE VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT AND HEREFORDSHIRE'S PLANNING SYSTEM

WHAT IS A VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT?

A Village Design Statement (VDS) is a document that describes a village as it is now and provides positive guidance for the location and design of any future developments, based on the views of the community.

Within Goodrich and Welsh Bicknor there are several separated population centres spread across the parish (see map p 9). Nevertheless there is a strong sense of community. The individual characters of these settlements and the links between them have emerged as a key theme in this document. The VDS considers the planning issues for these settlements individually and also considers how they relate and link to each other, to preserve the character of the community.

WHY HAS THE GOODRICH AND WELSH BICKNOR PARISH PRODUCED A VDS?

The VDS process was initiated in May 2008 following a formal meeting of some 54 parishioners with the then Head of Forward Planning of Herefordshire Council, and was triggered by two issues:

1. The knowledge that the planning framework for Herefordshire was to change, driven by the West Midlands Regional Assembly. In future, without a Parish Plan or a VDS backed by the community, there would be no effective local input to the plans for the parish.
2. Concern that the then current planning framework, the Unitary Development Plan (UDP), was leading to a series of developments in a single area of the parish, in a way that could significantly alter its character.

This meeting considered whether producing a Parish Plan or pursuing Conservation Area status would be the appropriate approach but decided unanimously that the appropriate action would be to create a Village Design Statement.

HOW WAS THE VDS PREPARED?

Preparation of the VDS was a two-stage process that took place during 2009.

Initially a small project team was set up and

questionnaires were sent to each household in the parish. Following a series of initial consultation meetings, representatives from the different areas of the parish were appointed and joined the project team, which then numbered twelve.

The findings from the initial consultation meetings were used to develop guidelines and other proposals, which were later presented back to the people of the parish in two consultation exhibitions run on an interactive "Planning for Real" basis. These exhibitions were well attended by some 134 parishioners. Residents were invited to vote on each of the team's proposals, to put forward alternatives and to give additional comments. The team's proposed guidelines received 95% support and, after amendments based on the feedback from the consultation, are incorporated in this report. Analyses covering the outcomes of both consultation series are summarised on pages 25- 26 at the end of this report.

HOW WILL THE VDS FIT IN WITH THE HEREFORDSHIRE PLANNING SYSTEMS?

The Present System

The current planning system, the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) came into force in 2007 and expires in 2010.

Within this plan, new building in 'main villages', of which Goodrich is one, is allowed only within Settlement Boundaries. In our case this means that new building has only been allowed in the 'Church' area and the 'Cruse' area (see the map opposite). The only exceptions to this are for social housing and housing for agricultural workers, where different rules apply. This has led to a concentration of new housing in the Cruse area.

The UDP does give other broad guidelines that the distinctive character and appearance of the locality should be respected and that there should be an imaginative layout of buildings, landscaping and open spaces. In addition, for settlements in the Wye Valley AONB, developments should not adversely affect the overall character of the landscape. The UDP acknowledges that Parish Plans and Village Design Statements will have a role in defining the character of rural settlements.

The Future Planning Framework

With its current UDP due to expire in March 2010, Herefordshire Council is preparing its replacement through the Local Development Framework process (LDF). This culminates in the adoption of Local Development Documents that will then apply until 2026. The VDS will feed directly into one of these, the Market Towns and Rural Areas Plan, which will be developed between 2010 and 2013

The new planning Framework has to take into account the developmental targets put in place by the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy - which calls for 18,500 new homes in Herefordshire by 2026.

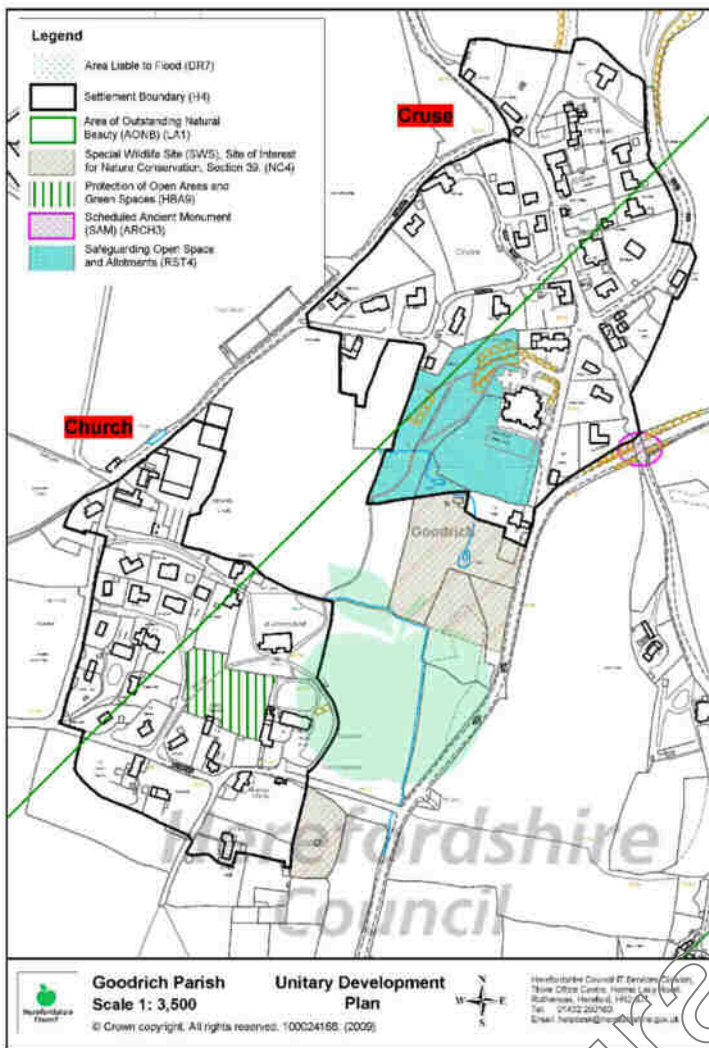
Draft LDF documents (January 2010) put great emphasis on 'sustainability'. This will minimise the impact of development on historic landscapes, particularly in the Wye Valley AONB, as well as looking for a low carbon footprint for any new development. The latter means that travelling distance from employment centres will affect development.

However, the July 2009 Rural Settlement Hierarchy Paper acknowledges that the high level of those working at or from home in rural areas (now 28% of working rural residents in Herefordshire) should be considered when allocating future housing.

Although the existing UDP will expire in 2010, its rules will remain in use on an interim basis. The new planning framework will progressively replace the UDP during the period 2011 to 2013.

Once the VDS has been endorsed as additional planning guidance, it will be taken into consideration by Herefordshire Council when making planning decisions. It will also give a reference to public opinion when Goodrich and Welsh Bicknor Parish Council comments on planning applications and issues.

It should, however, be stressed that a VDS sits outside the statutory planning framework and does not impose a legal obligation on planners to follow its recommendations. For this reason the VDS needs to be compatible with Herefordshire Council's planning framework and be regularly updated, if it is to be useful. It is recommended that the VDS shall be reviewed once the Market Towns and Rural Areas Plan is adopted in 2013.



The Goodrich Settlement Boundary ('Village Envelope'), within which development has been allowed (UDP 2007-2010).

This Settlement Boundary may be revised or removed in the future planning framework.

The mixture of gardens, rough ground, churchyard, semi-natural grassland, scattered trees and walls that characterises the village provides far greater habitat variety than the commercial farmland nearby

George Peterken, The Wye Valley, Collins New Naturalist Library 2008

CHARACTER AND COMMUNITY

Goodrich and Welsh Bicknor is a small parish of some 270 houses lying within the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The parish has a population of just below 600 with an age profile and social mix that is very close to the Herefordshire average. In line with the Herefordshire County averages for rural areas, a high percentage of residents work at or from home or travel to work by car. However, farming diversification has generated new jobs and the parish is a key tourist destination, with Goodrich Castle receiving over 40,000 visitors a year and seasonal employment of over 100 at the Symonds Yat East hotels and activity centres.

There is a clear view within the community that to maintain the character of the parish it should remain a 'working village'. These views were expressed in the questionnaires and consultation (see pages 25-26). These showed acceptance that over time a minor expansion of the housing stock, favouring smaller houses to accommodate young families, would be necessary to maintain a vibrant community.

The character of the parish derives from:

1) Its physical environment, the key items being:

- Local facilities – shop, pubs, school, village hall
- The unspoilt countryside
- The views from individual houses
- Open spaces within the village
- The character of the houses
- The historic buildings around the parish

2) A very active community life. Many long-running well-supported organisations and institutions pull together a lively community, including:

- The School and its PTFA
- St Giles Church
- The Village Hall
- The Cricket Club
- The Coppett Hill Common Trust
- The Tennis Club
- The Ladies Guild
- The Afternoon Club (for the elderly)

As an indication of the vibrancy of the community, these organisations raised several hundreds of thousands of pounds for projects between 2000 and 2009. Examples of these are the Millennium Window in Goodrich Castle, repairs to the Church spire and the re-hanging of the bells, a new Cricket Club pavilion, the major refurbishment of the Village Hall and the establishment of the Moors Meadow recreation area.



CHARACTER AND ARCHITECTURE

THE BACKGROUND TO GOODRICH'S ARCHITECTURE

Goodrich has a rich and varied building stock developed over centuries, a significant proportion of which was constructed in the late 20th century. However, first and overall impressions revolve around the more historic buildings within each of the settlements that make up the village today.

The oldest buildings were built from local timber and stone. The latter was sandstone and quartz conglomerate, some from the parish and some from the Forest of Dean, as seen at the Castle and the Church. Developments in the 19th century introduced red brick, as seen at New Barn House, Goodrich Court Stables and the Village Hall.

A number of timber-framed buildings survive from the 15th to the 17th century. Some of these are apparent such as the Old Court House; others have since been clad with stone or rendered e.g. Whitehall, Holly Cottage and Rocklands Farmhouse.

Welsh slates, used on the roofs, only became available in the second half of the 19th century and were employed progressively on the older houses as the stone tiles or pantiles on the old roofs were replaced.

The older buildings generally display characteristics such as small windows, low eaves, bay windows, small span roofs (shallow buildings) and dormer windows. While many are 'cottage' style houses, there are examples of older detached houses with two full storeys, three storeys and two and three storey terraces.

From the 19th Century, Ye Hostelrie and the Gatehouse of Goodrich Court are examples of Neo-Gothic architecture. Rocklands (Italianate) and Courtfield (Neo-Classical) are from the same period.

The second half of the 20th century has seen the introduction of bungalows, 'dormer bungalows' and most recently some large detached 'executive style' houses.

More recent houses have been built with a variety of types of brick, artificial stone and render.

Several of the village settlements have a significant proportion of post-war and modern houses, most of which have been successfully embedded into the established fabric. Mostly the new houses do not dominate and the overall impression is of a village that has a rich variety of building styles.



Y Crwys



The Coach House



Arch Cottage



CHARACTER AND ARCHITECTURE

THE LISTED BUILDINGS

Goodrich's long and important history has left a heritage of many historic buildings, which give the village its unique character. The listed buildings date from the 11th to the 20th century and reflect changing vernacular styles, materials and fashions.

Bronze age and iron age metal workings provide evidence of prehistoric occupation within the parish but only one relic remains above ground to testify to this: the Queenstone at Huntsham. More recently, the Romans are known to have occupied Huntsham and Welsh Bicknor but there is no remaining evidence of this above ground. Goodrich Castle, the earliest remaining building in the parish, is an important Marcher castle featuring a keep that dates from about 1120. The castle overlooks an important Wye crossing and dominates the surrounding countryside. St Giles Church dates from the 12th century, and Flanesford Priory (now converted into holiday accommodation) was founded in 1349.

The earliest surviving residential building, Whitehall, was built in about 1400. Many other houses remain from the 15th to 17th centuries; some are largely unchanged, such as the Old Court House and New House Farm. Courtfield in Welsh Bicknor is an example of a very old site, where the future Henry V spent his childhood. The current front of the house dates from about 1805, when the Tudor house was demolished, but there still is evidence of older work behind and in the cellars. At Courtfield there is also evidence of occupation from Roman times and the remains of a medieval motte.

In the first half of the 1800s Sir Samuel Meyrick built the mock-medieval Goodrich Court. This was demolished in the 1950s, though his Gatehouse and the Gothic 'makeover' of Ye Hostelrie public house remain. Later in the 1800s came the introduction of red brick in the form of Goodrich Court's stable block (now flats), its walled garden and the Godric Hall Reading Rooms, now the Village Hall.

Of the many historic buildings in the parish, 43 are officially listed buildings or structures. In addition there are 29 listed tombs in the churchyards of St Giles, Goodrich and St Margaret's, Welsh Bicknor.



The Queenstone, Huntsham



Courtfield



Flanesford Priory



New House Farm



Old Court House



Ye Hostelrie



The Gatehouse



Goodrich Court Stables

Listed Buildings and Structures

Geddes;
New House;
Flanesford Priory;
Flanesford Priory Farmhouse;
Barn at Flanesford Priory;
Cider Mill at Flanesford Priory;
Kerne Bridge;
Church of St Giles;
Base of Churchyard Cross;
Y Crwys;
The Old Vicarage;
Goodrich House;
Ye Hostelrie;
The Old Court; Upper Granton;
Whitehall;
The Gatehouse, Goodrich Court;
The Gasworks, Goodrich Court;
The South Lodge, Goodrich Court;
South Lodge Gates and Lodge;
The Stables 1 2, Goodrich Court;
Goodrich Manor;
New Barn House and Outhouse;

Coachman's Cottage, Huntsham;
Huntsham Bridge;
Huntsham Court and Gate Piers;
Huntsham Court Steps and Garden;
Rudges Barn, Huntsham;
The Stalls, Huntsham;
Mainoaks;
Cider Mill, Mainoaks;
Barn, Mainoaks;
Granary, Mainoaks;
Old Forge Bridge;
Rocklands;
K6 Telephone Kiosk, Ye Hostelrie;
Holly Cottage;
Courtfield;
St Mary's Chapel, Courtfield;
The Green, Courtfield;
The Hermitage, Courtfield;
Churchyard Cross, Welsh Bicknor;
St Margaret's Church, Welsh Bicknor.

CHARACTER AND ARCHITECTURE

POST WORLD WAR II DEVELOPMENT

As would be expected, the styles of the buildings in the whole of the parish reflect the times in which they were built.

The post-war development period, when well over 30% of the village's houses were built, has added another layer to the richness of Goodrich's buildings and has resulted in groups of new dwellings within the various settlements. On the whole these have blended in well over time.

A feature of the village is that it is a community of detached properties located around green open spaces and post war development has largely maintained this.

There have been three major post-war developments, each built with a distinctive style:

- The 1950s estate of 40 houses at Dean Swift Close, which is centred round a green central space.
- The 1960s 'Bradstone' development and associated houses in the grounds of Goodrich House.
- The 1980s development in the grounds of The Knapp.

Other post-war developments have been limited to one-off designs, with the three bungalows in Castle Lane being the only exception. Since the mid 1990s there has been an emphasis on the construction of 'executive' properties constructed primarily of red brick.

In line with national government policies, the most recent Herefordshire UDPs have encouraged much higher-density infill development than has been traditional. Such development has been limited to land within the closely defined settlement boundary and the gardens of existing houses.



'Bradstone' in the Church area



Dean Swift Close



Old Forge



Knapp Close



Castle Lane



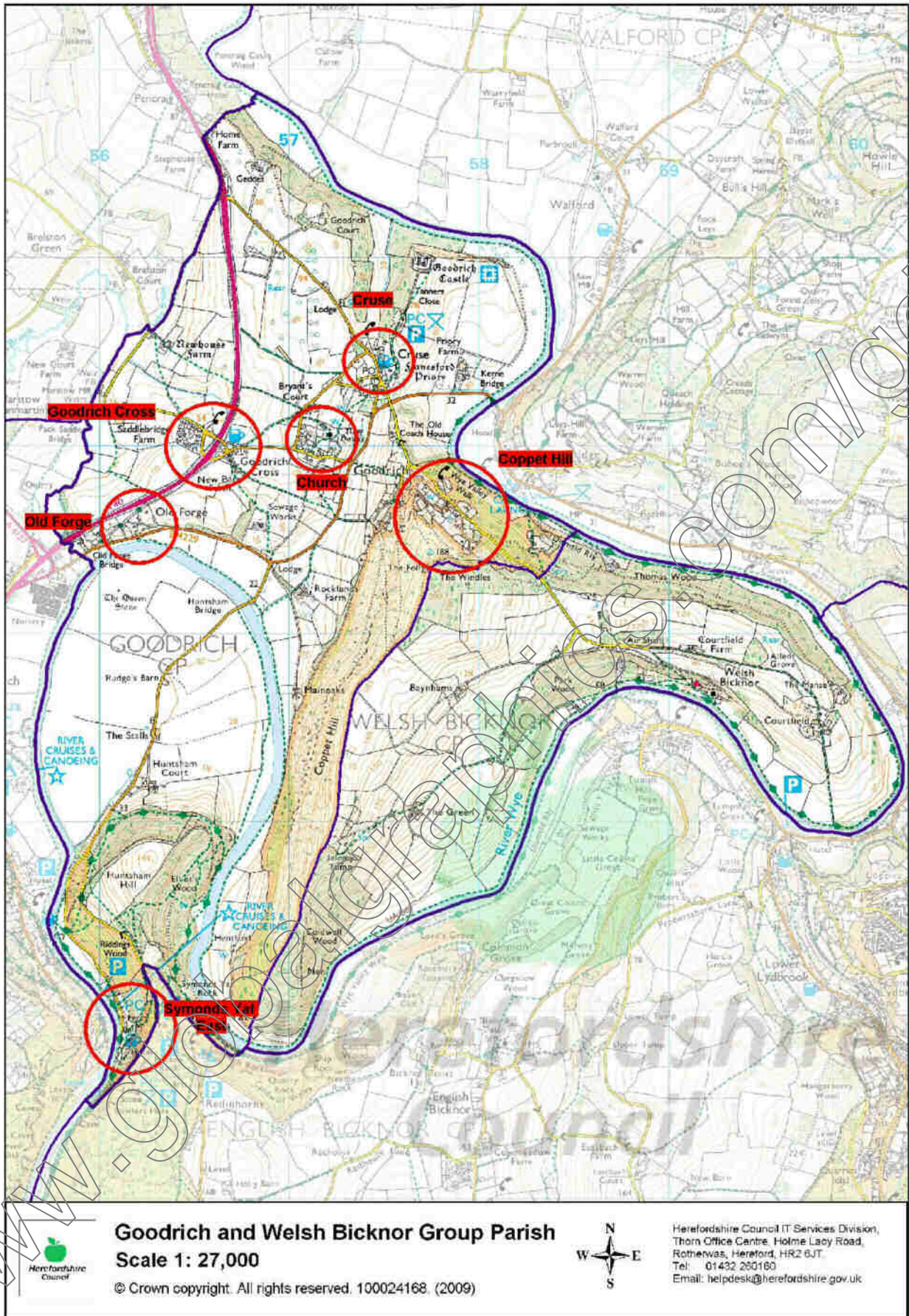
The Baan

COMMENT

Maintaining the village's character will depend on more than the architectural building style of new houses.

Crucial factors will include the siting of the houses both in relation to existing properties and the landscape, the retention of hedgerows and judicious landscaping and planting.

However the true character and vitality of the village itself will be determined by the mix of sizes of the houses that are permitted in any future development.



This Map of the Parish identifies the six main population centres.

A major theme of the Village Design Statement is that any development should maintain the character of the Village by maintaining open fields between the settlements, establishing good pedestrian links between them and avoiding strip development along the roads.

THE VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT GUIDELINES

1) THE MAINTENANCE OF THE DISPERSED NATURE OF THE PARISH

Any future developments should maintain the separation of the parish's dispersed settlements and respect the views enjoyed by the existing houses.

Goodrich and Welsh Bicknor, despite being a small parish of some 270 houses, has six separate population centres with green fields between them. These population centres have evolved separately over time. Houses are either grouped around a central green space or face directly onto the countryside, many enjoying attractive views.

The areas are shown on the map opposite:

Goodrich Cruse, Goodrich Church, Goodrich Cross and Dean Swift Close, Old Forge, Coppet Hill, Symonds Yat East, and a seventh dispersed area includes Welsh Bicknor.

2) THE IMPACT OF DEVELOPMENT ON TOURISM, VIEWS AND LANDSCAPE

It is important from the tourism viewpoint, as well as that of local residents, that future developments maintain the character of the dispersed settlements and the surrounding Wye Valley AONB landscape.

The parish is a popular tourist destination: Goodrich Castle attracts visitors throughout the year and the river at Symonds Yat East is particularly popular in the summer months. It attracts canoeists and fishermen throughout the year. The 96-hectare Coppet Hill Common nature reserve attracts many walkers. Cyclists are brought in by the Peregrine Trail, which terminates at Symonds Yat East. There is also a large Youth Hostel at Welsh Bicknor.

The river Wye runs through or borders the parish for 11 miles. The whole length is totally undeveloped on the Goodrich and Welsh Bicknor side and includes the classic and much-photographed view from Symonds Yat Rock. Any new tourist development in open fields adjoining the river, e.g. car parks or organised tourist facilities, would be detrimental to this unique environment.

It is vital that new building avoids the skyline and has no detrimental impact on the natural features that frame the settlements. Hedges should be preserved within the village, along the roads and in the surrounding farmed countryside. Power lines to any new developments should be underground.

3) THE NATURE OF FUTURE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

New development should be planned to provide the parish with a varied mix of housing types and sizes.

The overall impact of new development should be that the age and social profiles of the community, which are currently close to the averages for Herefordshire, are maintained.

The community feels strongly that:

Much recent infill housing development within the Village Envelope has been suburban in nature, with substantial houses being built on small plot sizes. This has not always achieved the required high standard of design and layout that respects the landscape and the historic character of the area.

Goodrich should remain a small village compared with its neighbours and the village's current social and age mix should be preserved, with future developments including a greater proportion of smaller dwellings.

Houses in any new multiple developments should be limited in number and grouped around an open central area. As a rural village, plot sizes for family houses should be generous. While traditional building styles are preferred, sympathetic modern and eco-friendly design should also be considered.

Materials used for new builds should complement existing houses and vary with the area of the village. Whilst a mix of building materials would be acceptable, the building of groups of red brick houses should be avoided, particularly in the Church, Cruse and Coppet Hill areas.

Small-scale commercial developments would be acceptable, but only if they directly access the main roads and do not introduce traffic onto the minor roads.



"Jolly's" Village Shop



James Cottage and Ye Hostelrie



The Old School and the Moors Meadow



The new C of E Primary School



Doward Place



Holly Cottage



South Lodge



The Square

See also P8: post-war builds in Castle Lane, The Baan and Knapp Close; P7: Ye Hostelrie, and P6: Y Crwys and Arch Cottage.

GOODRICH CRUSE

The Cruse area is considered to be the centre of the village. It lies on the bus route and includes the village's school, shop, village hall, 'Ye Hostelrie' public house and the entrance to the Castle.

There are four listed buildings in the Cruse area and the impressive red brick Village Hall, which was built in 1888 as a reading room. The oldest, Y Crwys, is thought to have been originally a 14th century wayside chapel, and sits comfortably next to the Hostelrie public house. Holly Cottage is close by and, part way up the hill

towards Pencraig, sits Goodrich Court's South Lodge. There has been considerable recent development in this area as large gardens have been developed. There are currently 38 houses in the settlement, with planning permission (at end 2009) granted for eleven more. By the time those outstanding sites with planning permission have been developed, the housing stock will have increased by 40% since 1990.

The school and a number of houses in the area back onto the Moors Meadow, which was leased by the parish from the County Council in 2009 as a recreation and wildlife area. A footpath leading through the meadow links to the Church. Goodrich's only cider orchard is situated between Well Cottage and the Moors Meadow and is a valued landscape resource.

EXISTING DESIGNS AND BUILDING MATERIALS

Past developments have resulted in a range of materials from stone to render and red and yellow brick.

Earlier buildings in the area include Ye Hostelrie in a stone gothic revival style and the Knapp, built in stone.

The building of the Village Hall in red brick has encouraged other developments in brick and new houses with red roofs.

Bungalow developments on Castle Lane, in red brick with slate roofs, demonstrate how the siting of houses can enable them rapidly to fit into the village landscape, and so does the new Castle Visitors centre. A new red brick house at Doward Place demonstrates the landscape risks associated with building on the skyline.



Goodrich Cruse (west side) viewed from Coppet Hill.

GUIDANCE

The entrance to the Castle is located in the Cruse area, so future developments will have a significant impact on the visitors' perception of this important part of the Wye Valley AONB.

Developments need to be sympathetically designed and sited with regard to existing buildings, in view of the wide variance in available building styles and materials.

Wherever possible hedges should be retained and new roadside walls should be constructed in stone, not brick.

Great care should be taken to avoid building on the skyline, with particular regard being given to protecting the views of the Castle from the east.

The Lime Avenue is a significant landscape feature. Any future building to the north would be very prominent owing to the elevation of the land and would inevitably detract from its landscape value.



St Giles Church



The Old Vicarage



Goodrich House



Whitehall



Granton Lodge



Westlands



The Marches

See also P7: The Old Court House, and P6 The Coach House.

GOODRICH CHURCH AREA

The long established Goodrich Church area is a collection of some 28 houses clustered around St Giles Church. The church is complemented by the designated protected area of open space to its south-east and defines the style and charm of the village.

The Church, with its 13th century origins, is a key year round attraction for walkers and tourists. Views of this area are frequently the subject of photographs for calendars, guidebooks etc. It is not always easy to appreciate the charm of this area from two-dimensional maps – a point that would need to be considered when looking at future development proposals.



The Church area viewed from Coppet Hill: the houses are grouped around the Church and open space.

The majority of properties, by virtue of being built in an elevated position above the Church, afford beautiful views both towards and from Coppet Hill. The area is therefore extremely sensitive to further development.

The Church area is linked to the Cruse area by a good footpath across the Moors Meadow, and is on a bus route.

EXISTING DESIGNS AND BUILDING MATERIALS

The majority (64%) of the properties in the Goodrich Church area are more than 100 years old and are constructed of traditional materials such as grey stone with grey slate roofs.

Of the houses in this area, five are listed, including Whitehall, which is the oldest secular building in the village (apart from the Castle), with its origins dating back to the 14th century.

Of the remaining 10 newer houses, 2 are in grey brick, 2 are in red brick and 6 have been built in yellow Bradstone, which is largely sympathetic with the longer established properties. All houses bar one have grey /brown slate roofs.

The character of the settlement is enhanced by two protected open spaces, one at its centre adjoining the Church, and a small Local Nature Reserve.

GUIDANCE

In light of the generally traditional nature of the properties in the Church area, any additional building should be in a sympathetic style and with materials similar of the existing housing stock.

Stone or rendered finishes will complement the existing buildings. Red brick and red roofs should be avoided.

Future building would need to avoid having a negative impact on the landscape and the views enjoyed by existing houses.

The environs of the 5 listed buildings and the Church should also be respected.



New Barn House



The Cross Keys



Midsummer



Goodrich Manor



Dean Swift Close



Dean Swift Close



Narrow roads and large vehicles make walking within the village increasingly difficult.



GOODRICH CROSS

The Goodrich Cross area of the village, with 53 houses, is the largest settlement in Goodrich. The construction of the A40 dual carriageway in 1967 split the settlement, leaving Dean Swift Close on the west and the older houses on the east.

The residential area of Goodrich Cross to the east of the A40 comprises a mixture of old and modern properties. They include Goodrich Manor (a children's residential home), the Cross Keys Inn, the listed New Barn House and the sandstone Red Barn House, originally a separate farm. The remaining houses in this group are mostly modern bungalows.



Goodrich Cross area viewed from Coppet Hill. Dean Swift Close is seen behind and to the left.

The 40-dwelling Dean Swift Close estate has changed very little since it was built in 1955. It sits on the skyline and was extremely dominant in its early years. Many young families live in the Close, and they make significant contributions of pupils at the local schools. Hereford Housing manages 19 of the properties and the houses are situated round a central green area.

Local businesses in the area include the Cross Keys Inn and the Nutshell Caravan Park. A derelict plot of land adjoins the dual carriageway between the slip roads.

Goodrich Cross is on the Ross-on-Wye to Monmouth bus route, but the lack of a good footpath to the school and village shop is a significant issue for residents.

EXISTING DESIGNS AND BUILDING MATERIALS

On the east side of the A40, the older houses are a mixture of old red sandstone, cream brick, red brick and white render with slate roofs – two or three storeys high.

The listed New Barn House, built in the early 1800s, is faced in red brick. The more recent houses are largely bungalows or houses with dormer windows using red brick and render with either slate or dark tile roofs.

On the west of the A40, the Dean Swift Close estate is a relatively large group of houses typical of their time. Built in brick with red roofs on large plots, the bricks and tiles have mellowed over time and are no longer such a conspicuous and obtrusive feature of the landscape.

GUIDANCE

There is scope for contemporary or traditional building styles and there are no firm guidelines on building materials.

Further large groups of properties with a single design are not suitable for this rural location, though small, high density groups such as single person's accommodation, starter homes or old people's homes, may be appropriate.

The proximity of the A40 means that any new development may need screening and the area could be improved by tree planting.

An all weather path is needed to link to the local school and shop. Dean Swift Close would also benefit from an organised children's play area.

HOUSES ON COPPET HILL, WEST SIDE



The Thatch



Rockview



Bearwood



Rock Bank

HOUSES ON COPPET HILL, EAST SIDE



Pool Cottage



Wyeside (being restored - 2009)



Eastside Cottage



Quarry Cottage

COPPET HILL

Coppet Hill (now also commonly spelt Coppett Hill) is a settlement of 52 Houses on the west and east sides of the north end of the hill. Almost 70% of the households existed by 1838 and all but two of the remaining are Victorian.

There have been no new properties built on Coppet Hill for 40 years. In recent decades the only development has involved extensions to existing houses. These are predominantly traditional in design though some modern styles have been incorporated.

The hill is surrounded by the river Wye. Vehicular and pedestrian access is via a no through road with no separate footpath.

All of the branch roads are single-track. There is a network of off-road footpaths that also provide access to the Coppet Hill Common, a Local Nature Reserve managed by the locally owned Coppett Hill Common Trust.

Most of the settlement is considered to be within walking distance of the village shop, school and other amenities.

EXISTING DESIGNS AND BUILDING MATERIALS

There is little variation in the materials used on the two sides of the Hill.

Walling is predominantly either exposed stone or render, though there is also some use of timber.

There is no brick to be seen. Render, and sometimes the stone, is generally painted white or pale shades of yellow. The exceptions are one in pale pink and one in pale grey.

The majority of roofs (85%) are slated and the remainder tiled.



The Settlement is spread on the West (top) and East (bottom) of Coppet Hill

GUIDANCE

There is no one distinctive building style to follow and appropriate modern design would be acceptable. Materials should match the stone, render and timber of the existing houses.

Any new development should reflect the low-density scatter of existing houses and should be respectful of the landscape, which is a key feature within the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

No development is legally allowed on the common itself, so any new building would have to be developed in the grounds of existing properties.

Should any such new development require access over the common, permission and terms for vehicular access would need to be agreed by the shareholders of the Coppett Hill Common Trust.

OLD FORGE

Old Forge is a settlement of 17 houses adjacent to the border with Whitchurch parish. It is linked to Goodrich Cross (with its bus service) by a surfaced footpath of almost 1 km but, unless they have a car, Old Forge residents are effectively isolated from the rest of Goodrich parish. Whitchurch shops and services are closer, but are still over 1 km away. There are small industrial units adjacent to the settlement.

The settlement has a mixture of older and new houses. The recent builds have been in a variety of styles and materials and have included some large brick built bungalows. Most houses are on large plot sizes. Viewed in the landscape, the large white rendered houses stand out.

There is rough grazing land between New Mills Hill and the A40, which in the past has been subject to an unsuccessful planning application.



Old Forge, as viewed from Coppet Hill, lies on the right bank of the Wye



Colgarron House



Colgarron Cottage

EXISTING DESIGNS AND BUILDING MATERIALS

Houses are predominantly rendered with 3 built in brick and 5 in stone. There is no single distinctive style.

Conventional and modern styles have been incorporated in recent buildings. Where brick has been used in modern houses, it has been in dark shades of red.



The Forge

GUIDANCE

There is no one distinctive building style to follow.

The settlement is small but there could be scope for moderate enlargement, although there is no easy access to services on foot.

Contemporary design would be appropriate in any development, but a large group of new buildings in a single style would be detrimental to the landscape.

SYMONDS YAT EAST

Tourism provides an important source of local employment for over one hundred people in the peak summer period. Hotels, bed and breakfast, self-catering accommodation and camping facilities are all provided here.

The hotels and riverside facilities have traditionally catered for a wide variety of visitors. These are of all ages, and they participate in a wide range of out-door and river activities. These are both sporting – canoeing, cycling and rock climbing, and less active – riverside walks and boat trips.

The Peregrine Path Cycle-way was opened in 2007 and leads to Monmouth. Also the Yat Rapids have been restored to provide a more consistent canoeing facility.

The single track access road can get busy in peak times, when congestion and parking are managed by the local business association SYERCA (The Symonds Yat East Riverside Community Association).

Additional parking at these times could be advantageous to businesses within the settlement, along with amended and appropriate traffic management from the business association.

EXISTING DESIGNS AND BUILDING MATERIALS

Part of Symonds Yat East's charm is in the blend of different style buildings that co-exist satisfactorily in the scenic gorge.



Symonds Yat East is remote from the rest of the parish. Its unique location makes it a significant tourist destination (see P22).

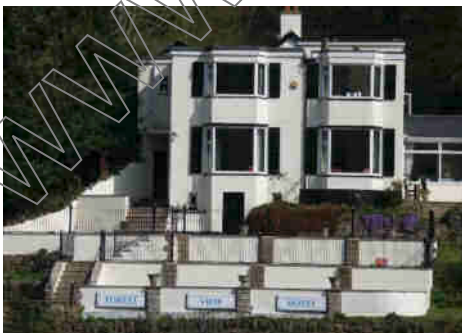
GUIDANCE

In the past different styles have co-existed satisfactorily in both Symonds Yat East and across the river in Symonds Yat West (Whitchurch Parish), so it would be wrong to be prescriptive about building materials or styles.

Any future development would need to be in keeping with the scale of the current buildings. Both traditional and good contemporary design would be equally acceptable.

Future developments should enhance the visitors' experience at Symonds Yat East and provide further appropriate recreational activities.

The ability to provide additional parking at peak times would be advantageous to local businesses and to visitors.



Forest View Hotel



The Chalet



The Royal Lodge Hotel

WELSH BICKNOR AND OTHER OUTLYING AREAS

There are several small groups of houses spread around the parish. For example, 8 dwellings are located close to the Wye, around Rocklands and Huntsham Bridge.

Several listed houses are to be found within these groups, notably Courtfield and The Green in Welsh Bicknor, Huntsham Court, Mainoaks, Rocklands and New House Farm.

Welsh Bicknor is wholly owned by the Courtfield Estate and has been subject to significant depopulation over the past half century. Effectively isolated from the rest of the parish, Welsh Bicknor is approached by a narrow no-through road along the east side of Coppet Hill.

Goodrich Court was demolished in the early 1950s but its listed gate house, gas works and south lodge remain, together with its late-19th century stable block, which has planning permission for conversion into flats.

Almost by definition, none of these areas have easy access to local services.

EXISTING DESIGNS AND BUILDING MATERIALS

The listed and other older houses have been built over several centuries and consequently have no common style. Materials vary from red brick (Goodrich Court Stables) and stone (Rocklands) to stucco (Courtfield).

Most other outlying houses are traditional older buildings built in stone. There are a few modern estate houses in Welsh Bicknor.



St Margaret's Church and the Youth Hostel, Welsh Bicknor.

GUIDANCE

Current and future Herefordshire planning guidelines would not be expected to allow building in these areas unless linked to essential agricultural or forestry workers' employment.

New agricultural dwellings should be located close to existing houses to form small groups of buildings, and be built with materials compatible with those used in the existing houses.

The farms and the landscape around the parish dominate its character. Hedgerows should be retained within the farmland and the impact of new agricultural buildings should be minimised. New building on the skyline should be avoided.



Rocklands



Courtfield; The Millennium Tower



Mainoaks

See also P7 for pictures of Courtfield and Goodrich Court Stables.

TOURISM

Unlike most other Herefordshire villages of a similar size, Goodrich is a major tourist destination. Its castle attracts over 40,000 visitors a year, and the riverside centre at Symonds Yat East is very popular.

There are in excess of 260 bed spaces in hotels, self-catering and bed and breakfast establishments and the Welsh Bicknor Youth Hostel. In addition, there are extensive campsites, both at Symonds Yat and the Youth Hostel.

Tourism generates significant local employment and, in the summer, total employee numbers at Symonds Yat East are over 100. The activities at Symonds Yat East are covered on page 20.

Goodrich is also an important centre for walkers with routes on Coppet Hill and beside the Wye being particularly popular.

The high level of this activity can be shown by the sale of 1750 locally-produced walking guidebooks in 2 ½ years, in addition to the many others that cover the area.



Goodrich Castle and the New Visitors' Centre

COMMENT

While proposing no guidelines on this issue, tourism in the Wye Valley is underpinned by the unspoilt natural beauty of the landscape and the villages within it.

To maintain this, a balance needs to be struck between encouraging access to the area, protecting the environment that visitors come to see and maintaining the character of the villages and the countryside itself.



Traditional and Activity holidays take place side by side at Symonds Yat East.

LANDSCAPE, THE RIVER, HEDGES AND OPEN SPACES

NATURE RESERVES AND OPEN SPACES

Coppet Hill Common

The Common stretches over 96 hectares within the parish. Uniquely for the district, large areas are not wooded and these and the woods are managed to maintain the traditional flora and fauna. The common is owned and managed by local people and is home to several endangered species such as dormice and the pearl-bordered fritillary butterfly. The common is extremely popular with local and visiting walkers.

Open spaces within the built up areas

These are important contributors to the village's character and to the bio-diversity of the area.

Within the village there are the Pool Ellocks Reserve, which is a small orchard managed by the Herefordshire Nature Trust, and the Moors Meadow, a 0.75 hectare site adjacent to the School. The latter has been leased by the parish and is a new and much appreciated recreational site. This is also being managed with nature in mind, with some 300 trees and shrubs being planted and a wildflower meadow established.

The same area features a marshland Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The school has its own wild area and there is a meadow within the area of housing close to the church. The Dean Swift Close estate is grouped around a generous grassed area.

HEDGES

Hedges are found around gardens and along the roadsides as well as between the fields. They are key contributors to both the landscape and the biodiversity of the parish.

Field hedgerows have changed markedly since Dutch elm disease struck and remain at risk as landowners seek permission to grub-out weak ones. The old practice of growing standard trees within the hedgerows has ceased with mechanised hedge cutting, but could be encouraged as a way of restoring the historic landscape.

RIVERS

An eleven-mile stretch of the river Wye and a two-mile stretch of the river Garron run through the parish and along its borders. The rivers border undeveloped open countryside on the Goodrich and Welsh Bicknor side -



The parish is a key location within the Wye Valley AONB, containing the most photographed view in Herefordshire.

from the parish boundary in the north to Symonds Yat East in the south.

The Wye is both a much-valued recreational facility, framed in the impressive entrance to the Wye Gorge, and a wildlife haven. The diverse local species include peregrine falcons, otters and kingfishers.

GUIDANCE

Commercial activity along the Wye should remain restricted to Symonds Yat East and any future development must consider the impact it would have on the environment. Elsewhere, no new tourist development (e.g. car parks or organised tourist facilities) should be allowed in fields adjoining the river.

Strict adherence should be paid to planning rules concerning the removal of hedges in both agricultural and domestic situations. The growing of standard trees in hedgerows should be encouraged.

Planning decisions should reflect and encourage the valuable contributions gardens, walls and open spaces make to biodiversity within the parish.

Existing power and telephone lines should be progressively laid underground wherever possible and connections to new housing should always be by underground cables.

ROADS, PARKING AND FOOTPATHS

ROADS

The Minor Roads

It is appropriate to the character of the village to have narrow roads with hedges and roadside verges that are not manicured. The introduction in 2008 of 30mph speed limits and weight restrictions for key areas of the village has been well received.

However, the well-used narrow road with no pavement, between Goodrich Cross and the Church area, which is also a bus route, is the only way to walk between the two most populated areas of the village. This is not considered safe – particularly for school children (see Footpath Recommendations below).

A single no-through road serves the tourist hotels and riverside leisure facilities at Symonds Yat East. Despite numerous passing places this single-track width road is a major bottleneck on summer weekends. Past Sustrans proposals to use this road and the B4229 as an extension to the cycleway network are considered to be misplaced and dangerous.

The Major Roads

Goodrich is bisected by the A40 and also has the B4229 passing through it. These two roads carry most of the through traffic.

The A40 is the major dual carriageway trunk road taking traffic from South Wales to the M50. Continuous traffic noise can be heard throughout the village and on neighbouring hills well over a mile away.

The B4229 is the designated lorry route to the Forest of Dean and also takes increasing amounts of traffic to the south side of Ross-on-Wye. The road is very narrow for the number and size of trucks using it and at certain pinch points 40 tonne trucks cannot safely pass in opposite directions. One narrow stretch of the road, which has no pavement, is part of a through footpath.

GUIDANCE

Local roads within the village should remain unimproved and un-widened. There is no call for road lighting.

Future plans should continue to keep all through traffic on the A40 and the B4229 and not generate commercial lorry traffic within the village.

The A40 could with advantage have a greater length of low-noise surfacing. Planting of hedges and trees along the A40 (both within this and adjacent parishes) should be encouraged in order to absorb noise. New and existing hedges should be encouraged to grow tall and thick.

The B4229, which is a designated lorry route, should be upgraded or controlled by signage and speed limits, to improve safety. Pedestrians are forced to walk on stretches of the road and cyclist safety is an issue.

The single-track road to Symonds Yat East becomes congested in summer and emergency vehicle access becomes an issue with the increasing level of sporting activities at that location.

PARKING

Parking in all areas of the village presents problems, particularly for the village hall, the shop and the church. There are no car parks except at the school and the castle. Unfortunately there seems to be no scope to alleviate this problem.

GUIDANCE

All new houses and extensions to existing houses must fully provide their own off-road parking.

FOOTPATHS

Excluding the most popular tourist paths on Coppet Hill, Goodrich has an extraordinary 51 kilometres of public footpaths and bridle ways, including a stretch of the Wye Valley Walk. However, whilst many of these provide a valuable resource, others no longer reflect their original usefulness to residents nor have any value to ramblers. They reflect a time when all road links were passable for pedestrians and the A40 dual carriageway had not been built.

Consultation and the Goodrich School Travel Plan have identified the need for an all-weather path to link the Dean Swift/ Goodrich Cross area of the village to the Church and Cruse (School) areas. The higher level of traffic and the increased size of vehicles using the village roads are increasing the level of hazard for pedestrians.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Consideration should be given to upgrading and possibly redirecting the footpath between Goodrich Cross and the Church area, in order to provide a safe intra-village route, to replace having to walk on a narrow and dangerous road (also identified in Goodrich School travel plan).

Other footpaths should be reviewed, with special attention to the unused ones that now terminate on the A40. Alternatively safe crossings over the dual carriageway could be provided. Signage should be improved in the Cruse area to direct walkers to safe routes that avoid the B4229.

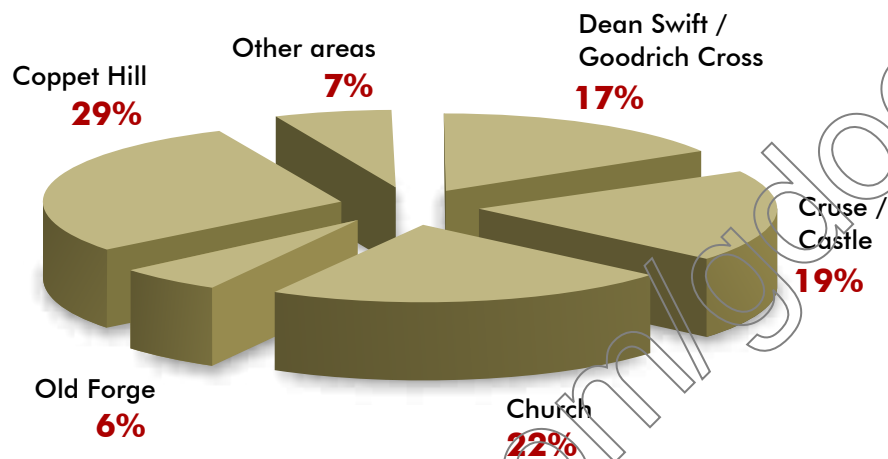
CONSULTATION AND QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

THE FIRST ROUND OF CONSULTATION

In April 2009, a questionnaire was sent to all households asking for views on the future design and shape of the village. 37% of the questionnaires were returned and reflected a good cross-section of the different areas of the village. Three meetings followed, each for different areas of the parish, which attracted a total of 70 people. Volunteers from these meetings joined the project team and brought it up to 12 members.

These meetings covered current parish statistics, the history of the buildings and the questionnaire findings. Additional guidance was sought on key issues.

RETURNS BY AREAS OF THE FIRST QUESTIONNAIRE



Key findings from the questionnaires are given below.

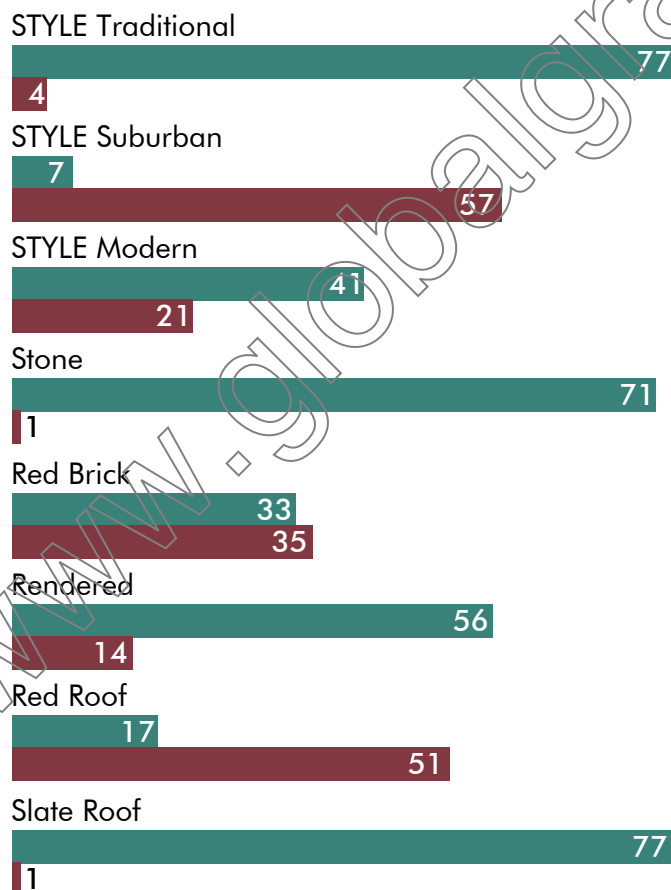
Should there be new housing in Goodrich?



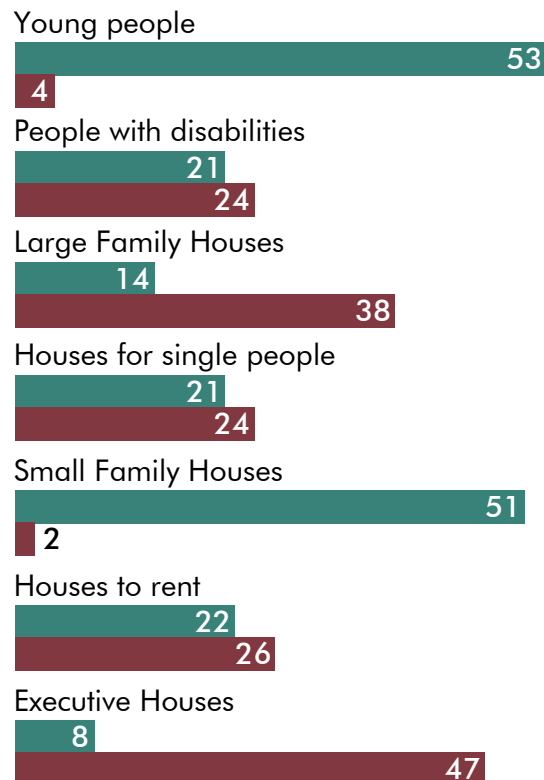
Are you satisfied with the quality and design of recent housing?



What materials should be used?



What types of housing are needed?



THE SECOND ROUND OF CONSULTATION

An interactive exhibition was staged on 21st and 24th November 2009, organised on a "Planning for Real" basis. The two sessions were attended by a total of 134 parishioners.

The displays followed the format of this report and gave draft guidelines on each area, based on the previous public meetings and work done by the Project Team.

The feedback was very satisfactory; 95% found the displays very interesting and a similar percentage overall recorded their agreement with the individual guidelines that were given on each topic.

When asked if they thought the guidelines were pitched at the right level, 82% of attendees said they were "appropriate". The 18% of attendees who disagreed were split equally between "too lax" and "too rigid".

There were a large number of comments 'posted' on all subjects; these were collated and the Guidelines were then adjusted, where appropriate, to reflect these views.

Other issues raised covered two areas where there were changes from the initial consultation

- While the use of red brick had been felt acceptable by 50% in the initial questionnaire, the second round meetings came out with many comments strongly opposing its use.
- The adoption of modern eco-designs for future housing was given a high, but not unanimous, level of approval.

Views expressed in the second consultation regarding the size of new family houses in the village reinforced those expressed in the questionnaires. The houses presently being built are not fully appropriate to the needs of the community. Smaller, more affordable, houses would attract the young families the village needs to maintain its vitality.

Other views expressed indicated a strong demand for an all-weather path to link the Goodrich Cross/Dean Swift area to the school and shop.

The displays and guidelines did not identify locations

where future development would be preferred, choosing instead to identify the principles on which decisions should be made. Some saw this as a weakness, but it is hoped that Herefordshire Forward Planners will work with the parish to identify appropriate locations.

The exhibition gave the Herefordshire Social Housing Team an opportunity to present the results of their October 2009 Local Affordable Housing Needs Survey for the Goodrich Area. This survey identified seven parish households that expect to need affordable accommodation in the next three years.



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Photographs:

By the team, Roz Lowe and Mary Rowberry, and English Heritage.



Kerne Bridge, looking towards Walford.

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