

Eckington Neighbourhood Plan

Eckington Village Design Statement 2015



Submission Copy

December 2016





The Use of Guidance Notes:

- Throughout the document text highlighted as shown below will be used to demonstrate and pass-on the views, opinions and wishes of the residents of Eckington Parish
- These requirements form part of the supportive evidence to the Eckington Neighbourhood Plan

Design Guidance Note:

- The text highlighted on this red background throughout the document is intended to provide planning guidance.

Parishioner's Comments –

The text highlighted on this green background throughout the document is taken from the evidence gathering surveys and interviews undertaken as part of the data produced to support the 2015 Eckington Neighbourhood Plan and the previous village survey undertaken in 2008







Eckington Village Design Statement - 2015

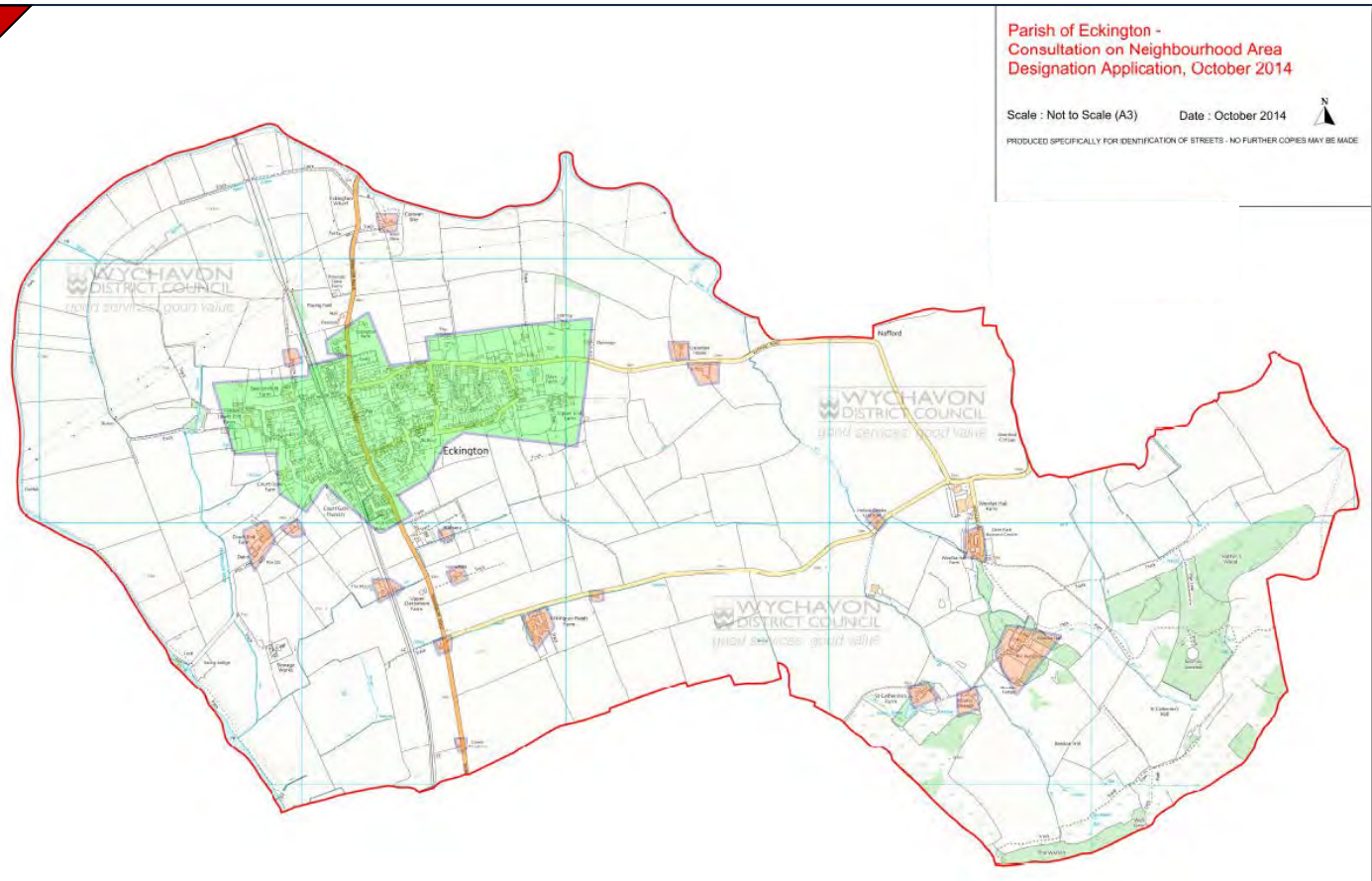
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1. Plan of Eckington Parish

Eckington is located in the District of Wychavon 4kms to the south-west of Pershore, on the B4080 road between Pershore and Tewkesbury. It sits in a loop of the River Avon, with the river to its north and west, and Bredon Hill to the south-east. It is one of a number of historic villages sited on the rich agricultural soils alongside the river.



The village sits in a low lying, gently undulating and open landscape of large fields of arable and pasture, at the junction of the lower foothills of Bredon Hill with the River Avon floodplain. Bredon Hill is a prominent landscape feature, particularly when viewed from the west where it forms a striking backdrop to the village.



This area has been classified as Principal Village Farmlands by the Worcestershire's Landscape Character Assessment, the key characteristics of which are predominantly medium to large scale hedged arable fields and a pattern of nucleated villages where the farmsteads are part of the village fabric and not isolated in the countryside.

Orchards and fields form its setting, and these features are considered important remains of its once wider rural setting and the retention of this undeveloped setting to the conservation area is important to the preservation of its character.

Eckington has more than a thousand years of settlement history. These early origins are readily identifiable in its wealth of surviving historic buildings and its settlement form. The significance of agriculture, and later the railway, to its development is apparent in the clear phases of building that are still present in the village.

Each of these phases of development has left a wealth of historic buildings overlaying an historic settlement form with much evidence of its early origin and roles in history. Despite more recent modern development it retains much of its historic plan and building fabric, which, together with its open spaces, trees, local stone walls, narrow lanes with grass banks and verges, give the village a strong historic character and local identity





2. Introduction



Background and Legal Status

In 2008 the people of Eckington produced a Village Design Statement to supplement their Village Plan. In 2015 the Parish of Eckington embarked on the development of a community lead Neighbourhood Plan to create a framework that would guide the development and conservation of their community through to 2030.

In support of the Neighbourhood Plan it was decided by the plan Steering Group to update the previous Design Statement to provide guidance and insight to planners as to the current needs and requirements of the local residents of the Parish.

The Neighbourhood Plan, when agreed, will have the force of statute law behind it and will form an integral part of the statutory development plan for the region.



Scope and Purpose

A Village Design Statement is a publication produced by village residents that defines the character of their village and its landscape setting. It enables residents, architects, builders and developers to have an overall view of the village in its present form and provides planning guidance for the future, its aim being:

- To provide information regarding the Parish of Eckington to support the development and implementation of the Eckington Neighbourhood Plan
- To manage and guide the processes of change, not to prevent it
- Act as a local information source for planning guidance for Wychavon District Council.
- To provide Eckington residents and developers with guidance for designing alterations and extensions which are acceptable to the community and are in sympathy with the character of the village
- To provide insight into the personality and wishes of the community thereby informing appropriate design of new buildings and identifying sympathetic materials and construction strategies for architects, builders and developers to conserve and enhance the existing infrastructure
- To identify and protect important buildings and open spaces to secure their continued contribution to the valued character and culture of the Parish



The Design Statement is intended to provide informed guidance to local planning authorities and developers



Consultation Process

As part of the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan a small working group was set up to examine and document the existing housing stock in the Parish and identify issues regarding the built environment.

As part of the investigation the group undertook a formal Placecheck survey based on the programme of study proposed by Historic England. This involved groups walking every street in the Parish documenting both the areas of architectural significance and the overall state of the housing stock relative to the environment in which it exists. The Placecheck report is attached to this design statement as Appendix 2.

A wide ranging consultation was also undertaken of the entire parish through a door to door written survey further enforced and informed by public meetings to determine the views and wishes of the residents of the Parish as a whole.

The information gleaned by this process was added to the existing research previously undertaken to create this update of the original Design Plan previously constructed in 2008 by residents of Eckington



Parishioner's Comments

- The Design Statement must help to ensure that any new building in the village fits comfortably with its surroundings and is in keeping with local character and distinctiveness.

Status of the Document

The Eckington Village Design Statement – 2015 will have the support of the residents of Eckington Parish through appropriate consultation and will provide integral technical support to the legal planning framework provided by the Eckington Parish Neighbourhood Plan. It is intended through the policies contained in the Neighbourhood Plan to ensure local involvement in the determination of planning applications.

Compliance

This Design Statement builds on the principles and policies determined within the South Worcestershire Development Plan

Design Guidance Note: -

- The Village Design Statement focuses on both the village of Eckington and its areas beyond its boundaries covered by the Parish
- It is essential for the long term continuity of the rural culture of the village that the green-field areas around the village are not eroded but conserved and protected from any harmful visual impact
- Eckington has a long and rich history and this document seeks to protect and wherever possible enhance the visually important buildings and spaces in the village and surrounding countryside that form its rural community
- Future development should respect the rich and diverse character reflected in Eckington's architecture and open spaces. The best way to ensure the above would be to prohibit large scale housing developments and to focus on more appropriate scale developments of in the region of 5 homes that can reflect the existing character of the built environment
- Design should primarily comply with the existing character in terms of density, rhythm, grain and materials, but if required by the specific design concept it should also be true to the best architectural practices of the present period to complement and enhance the styles of previous generations



3. Historical Context

History of the Settlement

Evidence of pre-historic and Roman finds in and around the present day village suggests a long history of settlement activity in the area. Proximity to the River Avon, a mild climate and a fertile soil were likely reasons for early settlement.

The first documentary evidence of Eckington is in the Saxon period, in a charter of King Edgar of AD972. It records land at Eckington belonging to Pershore Abbey, and the name of Eckington is derived from the Saxon name "Eccyngtune", believed to mean an enclosed settlement of a Saxon chieftain and his family.

By the time of the Domesday survey in 1086 Eckington's lands are recorded in the ownership of the Abbey of Westminster and tenanted by 57 men from five different classes, indicating a large and well established settlement in the area by the beginning of the Norman period of some two to three hundred. This early settlement would most likely have comprised a number of scattered farmsteads of family groups farming independently and probably trading produce



The church is the earliest surviving building in the village today. It dates from the late 12th century and was probably built by Westminster Abbey at the heart of the early medieval village. Although there are no other surviving buildings in the village from such early date, Eckington's Enclosure Plan of 1813 shows a wide linear main street (Church Street) lined with rectangular plots with the church at the centre. The layout apparent at this date suggests Church Street to be a planned element to the village, probably laid out by the Abbey along a pre-existing route between Pershore and Tewkesbury, and possibly originating from around the time of the construction of the church in the 12th century. Existing development at Eckington was likely consolidated as a farming community by Westminster Abbey and worked by tenants of the monastic estate to contribute to support of the Abbey.



The land would have been cultivated in strips in large open areas of arable crops, probably with communal grazing and hay meadows next to the river. There is still evidence of this medieval farming system in the landscape near the village in the very distinctive patterns of "ridge and furrow" that have survived to the present day.

A medieval cross stands at the northern end of Church Street, at the crossroads of its two main through roads. This is believed to have originally stood to the south of the village and was moved to its present position in the 19th century. It may originally have been a wayside cross marking the meeting point of medieval roads.





Key Sites of Special National Interest



Part of the Parish of Eickington is within the **Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty** (AONB) being on the north-west extremity of the conservation area. The AONB is a statutory body created as a result of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. The two key purposes of the Board are to:

- conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the Cotswolds AONB
- increase understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the AONB, ensuring that these complement the conservation and enhancement of the area

Within the Parish of Eickington there are:

- 57 properties that are **Grade II Listed buildings** as having special historical significance. All are catalogued and appended in Appendix 1
- **Church of the Holy Trinity** is Grade II listed structure dating from the 12th century
- A Site of Special Scientific Interest exists on the site of **Eickington Railway Cutting**. The site provides exposures in highly fossiliferous Pleistocene interglacial gravels and sands, belonging to Terrace 3 of the River Avon. It has yielded mammalian remains including hippopotamus. These have been finds of great importance upon which hinges much of the established Pleistocene chronology of the region and therefore of great significance in studies of the British Quaternary Period.



A second SSSI is on the **Bredon Hill** that is composed of sedimentary rocks of Jurassic age. The hill top is Inferior Oolitic Limestone, and the lower slopes Upper, Middle and Lower Lias. Bredon Hill has one of the best assemblages of invertebrates associated with ancient trees in Britain. The violet click beetle, *Limoniscus violaceus*, which is one of the rarest beetles, has been found in two separate sites on the hill, whereas it had previously only been found on a single site in Windsor Great Park.



English Heritage record three additional sites of particular heritage interest in the Parish:

➤ **Eickington Bridge**

> **Ditched Enclosures SE of Eickington Field farm**

> **Ditched enclosures ½ mile North of Woollas Hall**



4. Geographical Context



Landscape Setting

Eckington is one of a number of small villages which encircle Bredon Hill. It lies to the south of Pershore, in the county of Worcestershire, on the B4080, bisected by the main Birmingham to Bristol railway line.

Archaeological finds indicate that Eckington has been an important crossing place of the River Avon far back into antiquity.

Signs of early habitation of Eckington include the Neolithic period, the Iron Age camp on Bredon Hill, a Roman Villa, the Saxons and the Normans. The present settlement consists of an attractive mix of old and new buildings including several farm groups which border the village.

Eckington has beautiful views of the Avon Valley to the north, Bredon Hill to the east and the Malvern Hills to the west.

The River Avon flows around the village, looping from the north-east towards the west. At one stage there was a single crossing point, below Nafford Lock. This was an important route for monks travelling between the Abbeys of Pershore and Tewkesbury. However, the river was bridged in 1440 by a wooden structure, replaced in 1728 by a stone bridge which still stands today.



Parishioners Comments

- 97.9 % of the responding householders gave as one of their top three reasons for them being attracted to Eckington was the quiet rural setting and attractiveness of the village .(Source: 2015 Parish Survey)
- One of the main comments made by villagers when responding to the questionnaire was that they would like to see existing orchards and hedgerows preserved, and where possible, new ones planted to enhance the look of the village. In particular they would like to see the orchard in Hacketts Lane planted with new trees.
- “More attention should be given to verges and efforts made to prevent parking on them “Flowering trees should be planted in grass verges by the road on approaches to village



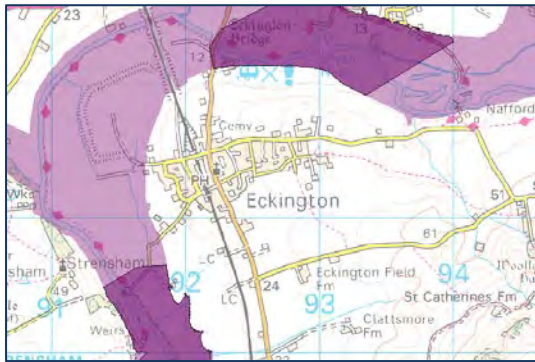
Topography

Eckington owes its existence to the fertile soils on which it stands and this factor more than any enabled residents to make a living from the land.

The topography of the parish can be divided into three main areas:

- At the lowest level are the alluvial soils of the flood plain, mainly used as meadow land
- The central area, between 15 and 60 metres above sea level, contains the more fertile soils plus areas of clay, sand and gravel
- As the land rises in the East towards the summit of Bredon Hill (over 275 m above sea level), the ground is made up of Lias Clay.

It is upon the central terrace that market gardening and arable farming takes place.

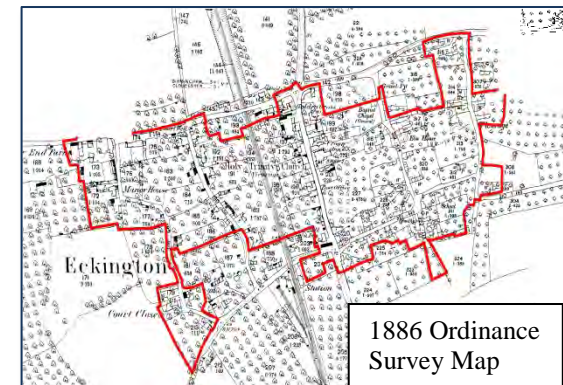
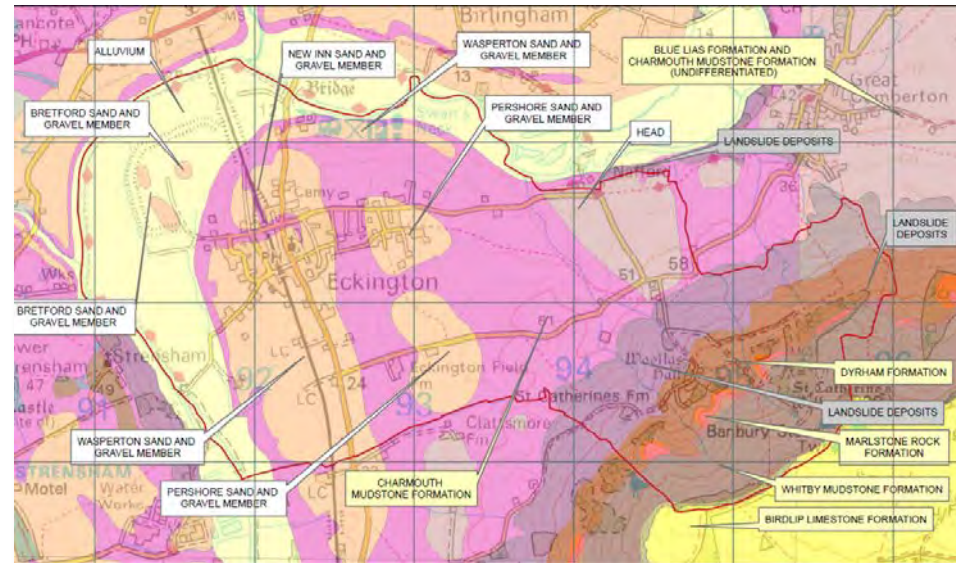


The low lying areas around the River Avon are susceptible to flooding which periodically close the main road heading north out of the village towards Birlingham and Pershore

Farming was always the main occupation – the implementation of the Enclosure Act in 1813 caused a complete transformation of the parish landscape.

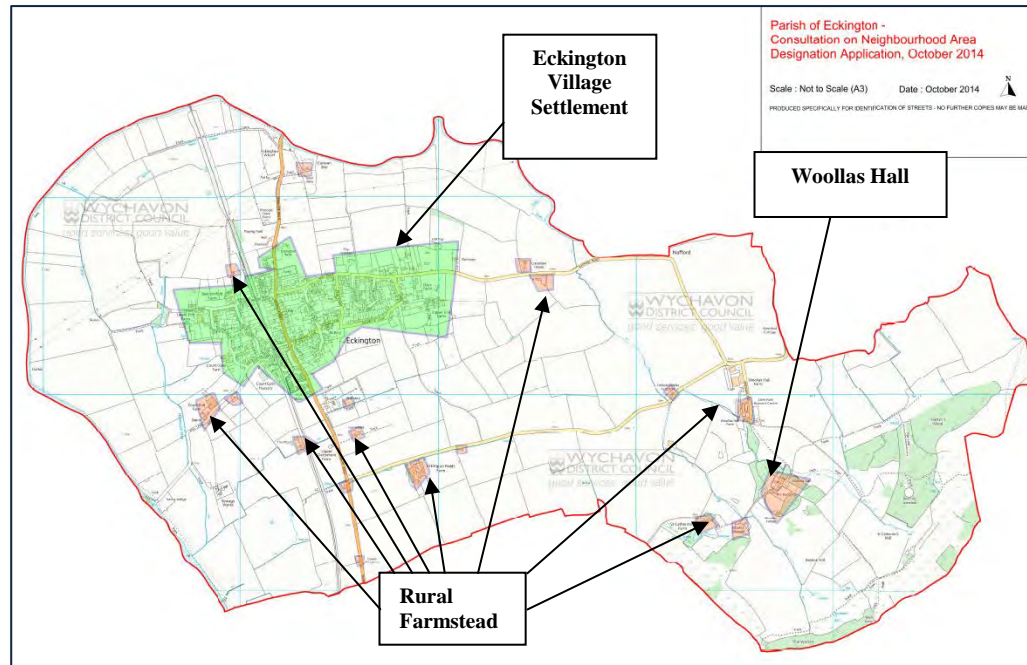
With the Industrial Revolution came a rapid increase in town and city populations and therefore a need for fruit and vegetables to be supplied to these areas.

Many orchards were planted around the central area of the village in the early part of the 18th century although these have now largely been dug up and are now used for growing arable crops or grazing and, progressively, housing development. The railway came to Eckington in 1840 so it was possible to transport produce swiftly to northern industrial cities. The railway station was closed in January 1965





Parish Map of Habitation Areas



Summary of Key Eckington Parish Demographic Data



	Eckington Parish	Census Area E00165113	Census Area E00165114	Census Area E00165115	Census Area E00165116
Population	1,217	322	309	313	273
Average Age	46.3	44.2	49.1	47.9	46.3
Children (0-18)	245				
Working Age (19-64)	649				
Retirement Age (65+)	323				
Number of Households	519	128	138	130	123
Average Household Size	2.3	2.5	2.2	2.4	2.2
Area (Hectares)	876	40	174	645	17
Population Density (People per hectare)	1.4	8.1	1.8	0.5	16.1
Tenure (Percentage owned properties)	82.6%	88.8%	78.3%	90.4%	71.1%
Source: ONS - National Census, 2011					



Church

The Church of the Holy Trinity is a Church of England ministry and is the only religious facility in the village requiring residents of other persuasions to travel to surrounding towns for services.



The churchyard was 'closed' to burials in 1902, since when the Cemetery on Pershore Road has been used.



Parishioners Comments

- 95% of survey responders use the village shops and 72% the village hall (Source: 2015 Parish Survey)

Village Hall

The Village Hall was built in 1928 to serve as a Memorial Hall and has been used constantly up to the present day. Subjected to a number of extensions and refurbishments many village organisations still regularly use the facility. It is an important village asset and is used by numerous clubs, societies and groups from the village and surrounding area. The Hall is also used for village events such as the Eckington Flower Festival and Open Gardens, Shows, jumble sales and coffee mornings.



Shops



The village has a small but well patronised village shop at its centre which is considered an important resource within the village. The village is also served by two hairdressers.

Signage and lighting is discreet and unobtrusive although on-street parking at this centrally located road intersection is limited and does cause hazardous congestion

Design Guidance Note: Village Resources

- Any developments should be capable of being supported by the existing infrastructure
- Any significant new developments must contribute to appropriate and corresponding improvements to the village



5. Village Resources



Recreation

The village has a Recreation Centre and Sports Pavilion at the northern edge of the village. The site is centred on a modern wood construction pavilion, recently rebuilt, used daily by the Under 5's Playgroup along with other village organisations. The centre is home to Eckington Cricket Club, Pershore Cricket Club, Eckington Juniors FC and weekly provides activities for residents and visitors of all ages.



The site also houses the local Scout and Guides Hall used by the village and local troops.

The grassed playing area is extensive, open to all visitors and in winter holds several football pitches that convert to a fine cricket pitch in the summer.



Parishioners Comments

- 52.0% gave as one of their primary reason for being attracted to move to Eckington as being the school and other facilities/services (Source: 2015 Parish Survey)

The Recreation Centre is considered a great asset by the community and is owned by the Parish Council. No further construction is allowed under the existing terms of its agreements.

Schools

Eckington CE First School is over 140 years old and has educated local youngsters to a high standard over eight generations.

Eckington Under Fives was formed in 1987 and is run and managed locally providing activities and learning opportunities for children aged 2½ to school age from Eckington and surrounding villages.

Younger children are catered for in the Babies and Toddlers Group



Whilst generally providing safe play surface for all residents there is a modern well defined adventure play area for young children



Hospitality

Visitors to the village are well catered for by good quality bed & breakfast facilities in private houses and in the local inns and restaurants



Tourism forms an important and growing part of the local economy

Commerce and Employment

Farming and agricultural activities have sustained the village over hundreds of years. Whilst still important to the employment of local people there are also local initiatives taking place providing opportunities for local employment

Eckington Parish hosts over 40 small businesses and 11 working farms

Opportunities exist to sensitively change the use of redundant farm buildings into new and innovative business opportunities as has already been demonstrated at Deer Park and the cookery school



Village trees

In the early 19th century many orchards were planted around the central area of the village. By 1914 there were 21 fruit growers listed in Eckington. Some of the fruit trees remain in gardens and are a feature of the village but other orchards have sadly been built on in recent years. However, the names of The Pippins and Ninesquares were chosen for two small developments there to reflect Eckington's fruit-growing history.



Some notable trees, or groups of trees, have Tree Preservation Orders. A TPO means that any maintenance to a listed tree, or work to be carried out within the area surrounding that tree, must first have the approval of Wychavon District Council. An important tree is the cedar in front of the church as this is a landmark which contributes to the appearance of the main road through the village.



Parishioners Comments

The Villagers suggested added tree planting within the village and several suitable sites were put forward:

- Grass triangle at the end of Jarvis Street
- Recreation Ground by the children's climbing frame (for shade for the Mums and Toddlers)
- Mill Lane, along the brook where the willow trees were felled

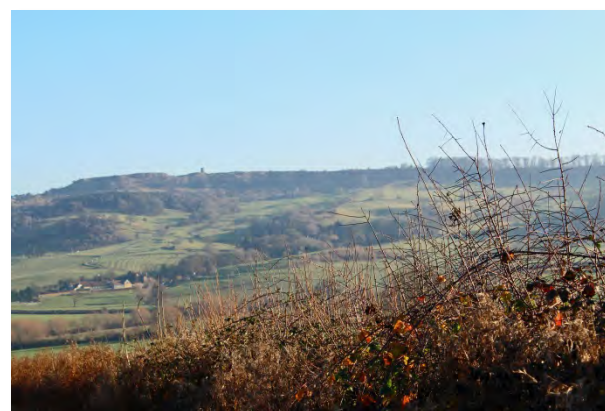


Tree Preservation Orders			Tree Preservation Orders		
No1 2008	Yarningdale Manor Road	Pine & Acer	No1 1990	The Lenches, New Road	Group of Pine
No1 2002	Muscote, New Road	Cedar	No1 1988	Old Loxley Est, Cotheridge Lane	Mulberry
No1 2001	Holy Trinity, Church Street	Cedar	No1 1986	Comberley, Jarvis Street	Oak
No1 1991	Walnut Cottage, New Road	Group of Walnut, purple plum, Laburnum, & Cherry	No1 1992	Woollas Hall (Groups)	Mixed Oak, Ash & Sycamore Mixed Oak, Ash, Sycamore yew & Cedar Mixed Oak, Ash & Sycamore

Open Spaces

There are some important open spaces within the village that should be preserved to maintain the village ambience. The places most valued by villagers (Source: 2008 Village Statement) were:

- Eckington Wharf ...on the river Avon with beautiful scenery and a lovely peaceful picnic site
- The orchards on Hacketts Lane...a lovely place to walk with beautiful views up to Bredon Hill
- Recreation Ground....provides a huge area for village events and for the kids to let off steam;
- River Meadow walks...it gives pleasure to all ages of villagers, campers and fishermen alike
- Nafford Lock field opposite wetlands...an uninterrupted view of river/lock/wetlands
- Churchyard... a tranquil oasis at the centre of Eckington
- Eckington C of E Primary School playing field...children enjoy a healthy and fun start to life
- Field on east side of railway....an important open space



Within the Parish, Eckington Bridge and the public walks that emanate from it could also be included as an open space. Picnic benches and seats as well as a canoe launching point make this area an attractive place for leisure and the starting point for a 5.1 km circular walk round the village, beside the river.

A key element in the character of the village is the wealth of green spaces that have been preserved within the village and on the outskirts, in roadside verges and the creation of an atmosphere of free access to the countryside



Parishioners Comments

- The Villagers feel the important spaces that exist between the groups of buildings at certain points in the village are one of its main assets. These spaces allow views out into open countryside to Bredon Hill, Strensham, the Malvern Hills and across Nafford Lock
- 86% of villagers enjoy walks around the river and village as a major part of their recreation (Source: 2015 Parish survey)



Historical Settlement Pattern

Eckington has a main straight north-south axis with two parallel narrow lanes to each side. Connecting east-west lanes link these north-south routes, forming a broadly rectangular settlement made up of a loose grid of main street and narrow secondary lanes.

This framework of roads and lanes is likely to be medieval, or earlier, in origin and indicates Eckington to have been a sizeable settlement in its current form from early days.

The railway line and main B4080 road run parallel through the village, bisecting it into what is locally known as Upper and Lower End. Other streets such as Boon Street, Jarvis Street and Pass Street also run in the same north/south direction with linking roads at each end, thus forming a 'ladder' pattern of roads.

A minor road leading out of the village to the east goes up to Nafford, Woollas Hall and then around Bredon Hill, linking the small villages.



6. The Village Defined Settlement Area



Eckington has developed around the Church, school, shop and 2 public houses. Developments within the centre of the village are controlled through a designated Conservation area. Development outside of this central area has been, up until recently, on a limited scale on suitable sites identified by the Local Plan.

The photograph taken in 1945 shows how Eckington has seen much encroachment by modern development on former gardens, orchard and farms. The preservation of the spaces that remain in the village is seen as essential to preserving its character and appearance.

Villagers Comments

Based on feedback the areas which people enjoy the most are Pass Street and Jarvis Street on the east side of the village, and Church Street and Boon Street on the west side, due to the unique and varied characteristics of the buildings

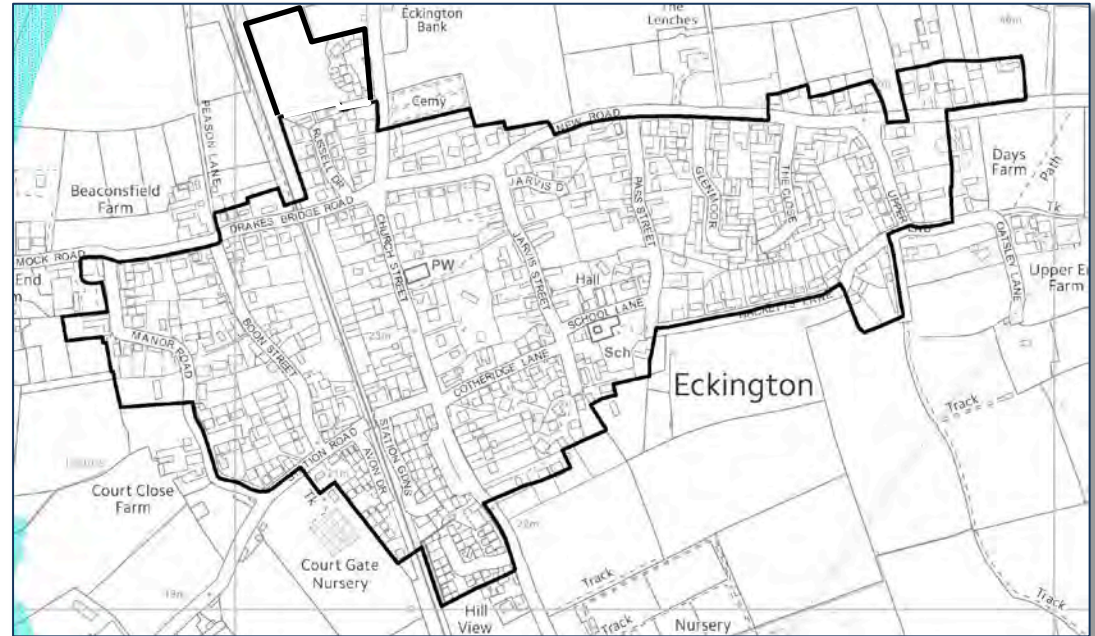


Village Definition

The following map indicates the development boundary of the village that has been set by Wychavon planners and identified in the South Worcestershire Development Plan to differentiate the planning policies applicable within the village envelope as opposed to the areas outside the boundary which are considered as “countryside” and generally regulated by much stricter planning policies and restrictions. Within the boundary there is a presumption in favour of support for infill housing that counts towards the district numbers for regional housing as windfall. Outside the boundary designated as “open countryside” there is a presumption against development unless supported by exceptional policies in the Local or Neighbourhood Plans. Such policies may include affordable housing, rural workers dwellings, re-use of redundant building etc. Normally the boundary is seen as the building boundary and as such should not be extended. Any extension should only be considered if required by directives relating to national planning policy or as a direct result of policies contained within the Neighbourhood or Local Plan or their reviews.

The benefits of prescribing and enforcing the development boundary can be seen as:

- The ‘black line’ being plotted on a plan makes it easy to identify the ‘settlement’ from ‘open countryside’.
- Locally, development boundaries are an understood and accepted planning tool for guiding and controlling developments.
- Ensure a more plan-led and controlled approach to future housing growth, allowing for allocating sites within the village rather than windfalls.
- Protects the countryside from unnecessary development and prevents ribbon development.
- Co-ordinated and consistent approach providing a firm basis for considering planning applications which may prove unacceptable in planning terms.
- Allows for more certainty to developers/land owners with sites/land within the boundary, as long as they adhere to all other plan policies.
- Allows the development of small individual sites which cannot be identified as part of the SWDP allocation



Design Guidance Note: Village Definition

- **The Neighbourhood Plan will agree the Development Boundary with the planning authorities to provide a sound basis for considering and determining future development for the beneficial conservation of the village**
- **All future developments should, except in circumstances directly resulting from national, local or neighbourhood plan policies, be contained within the defined Development Boundary**
- **This is likely to result in a number of small scale, windfall developments within the Development Boundary, which is the preferred option, rather than to create a single larger housing development outside.**



Parishioners Comments

- 89% of householders responding have stated that they would accept future infill development and 86% were in agreement with small development sites in the region of 5 homes/units per site (*Source: 2015 Parish Survey*)
- 68% of survey respondents stated that they are not willing to accept larger sites of up to 20 homes and 94% would not accept development in excess of 20 homes per site (*Source: 2015 Parish Survey*)
- On further consultation 75% of those surveyed on the day stated that they believed that 4-6 homes per site was an optimum for the village to retain its character (*Source: Parish Consultation Day – 16th May 2015*)
- 92% of respondents to the survey have indicated their wish that the villagers should be responsible for identifying suitable sites for any future development (*Source: 2015 Parish Survey*)
- 67% of residents asked on the day believed that small affordable downsize homes were required in the best interests of the village. (*Source: Parish Consultation Day – 16th May 2015*)

Design Guidance Note: General Village Guidance

- Although the existing allocations are adequate to meet Eckington's commitment within the SWDP to fulfil its housing growth targets, it is believed prudent to recognise and provide for opportunities for new development needs in the future. This Design Statement seeks to provide the acceptable framework to meet these needs through infill or immediately adjacent developments in small, incremental additions rather than through the development of large new housing estates
- The existing fabric of the village can be expressed by the densities of developments and how they relate to the public realm. These densities vary in different parts of the settlement. (see Density Map Page 23)
- In recent years new developments have adopted a far higher density than the historical village norm thus constraining the open spaces around each dwelling along with amenity, pedestrian and circulation spaces.
- This design statement seeks to prevent inappropriate higher density land usage in the future.
- The density map offers a greater understanding of each of the areas in question.
- The overall ambience should be one of a historic rural village and not an urban housing estate.
- In addition to adopting appropriate density, the styles and character of dwellings should reflect the built environment in Eckington. As such new development should vary in scale and design in order to continue the long history of variation that represents the character of the village.
- Just as important should be the sensitivity of development on or near the development boundary especially where there are views to and from the AONB that comprises large areas of countryside up to and including Bredon Hill.
- Where there are situations of possible development on or near the village boundaries then care must be taken in designing and landscaping the outward facing aspect of the site and dwellings to recognise the importance of the first impression of the village when viewed from afar.
- Within the village itself, scale and materials should be complimentary to the built context. This does not preclude the use of modern sustainable construction methods and materials, which are encouraged. Such contrasts often enhance the character of older surrounding buildings.
- Adequate off street car parking should be provided along with sufficient circulation space for delivery vans and vehicles thus accommodating modern trends in retailing and delivery methods.
- Adequate tree protection and planting of green spaces must be encouraged. Development proposals should contain enough information to ascertain soft landscaping outcomes.



Overview of Areas of Similar Character and Design

The character of the Easington village is that of an historic rural village comprising a series of houses, cottages, farm and outbuildings set within an earlier framework of plots and roads. The prominence of well-preserved older buildings and the presence of farm buildings, open space, gardens, the village cross, large mature trees, local stone walls and narrow lanes with grass banks and verges, maintain the character of an historic rural village despite encroachment by modern development.

The complex interaction between modern developments and existing heritage building has determined areas of similar character. In spite of the more modern housing development over recent years Easington has retained much of its distinctive character. The whole village shows a wide diversity of buildings reflecting the changing styles over many years.

A significant result of the detailed Placecheck survey undertaken by community members is that a number of broad areas of the village were identified as having similar architectural characteristics and streetscape. These have been categorized as:

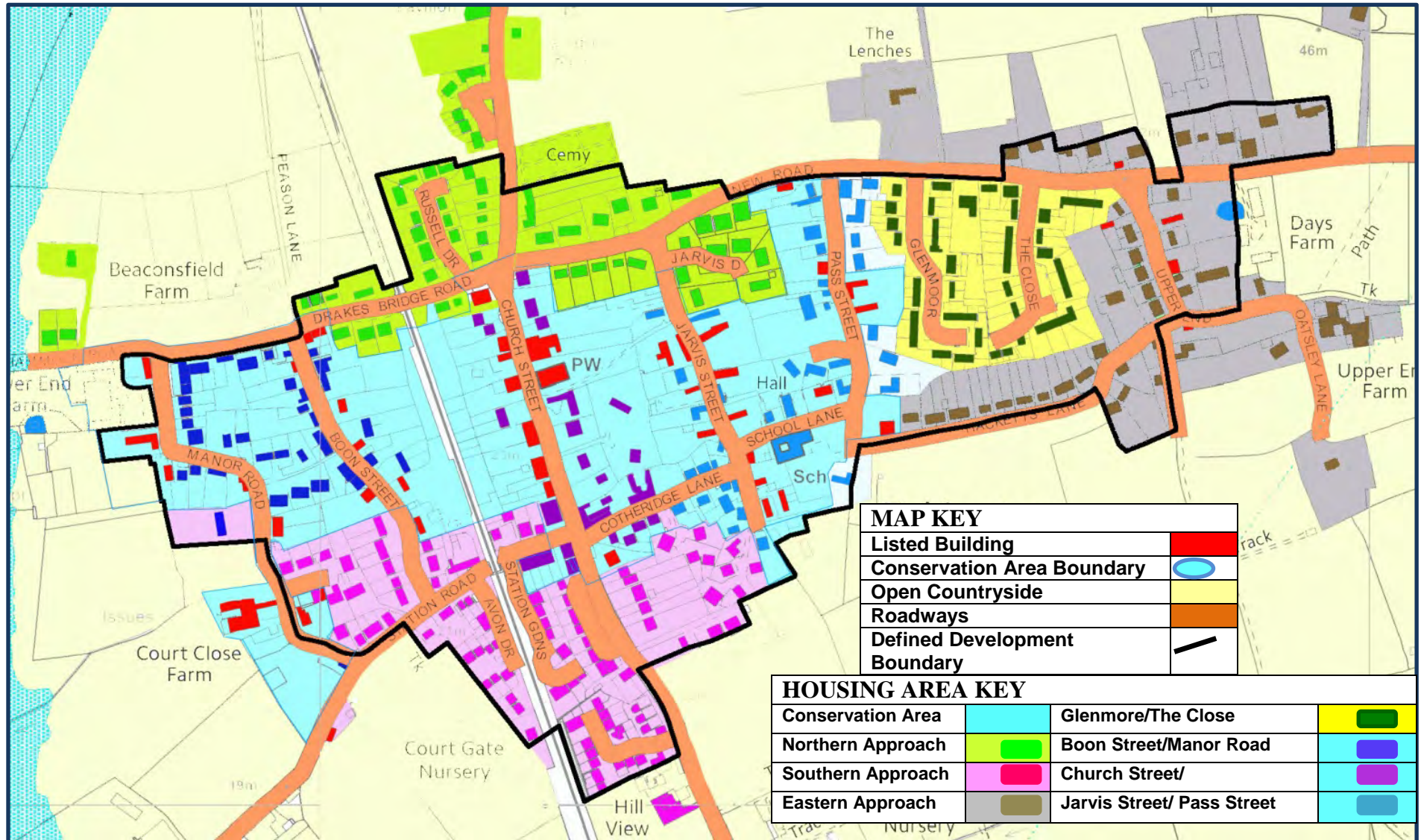
- **The Conservation Area,**
- **Northern Approaches,**
- **Southern Approaches,**
- **Glenmore/The Close**
- **and Eastern Approaches**

Within these broad groupings further areas were examined that presented defined localised features taking particular reference to the spacing and density of homes, the age and architectural features of the constructions and the ambiance of the area as a whole. The particularly individual character of this historical village derives from the variety of building and green spaces that have evolved over a long period where the quality of construction has enabled heritage to be sustained and sensitivity and sympathy for the environment and the neighbourhood into which new construction has taken place has added to the street scene. The map detailed on page 20 illustrates the areas identified

(Reference Placecheck Report Appendix 2)



Map of Individual Characteristic Areas

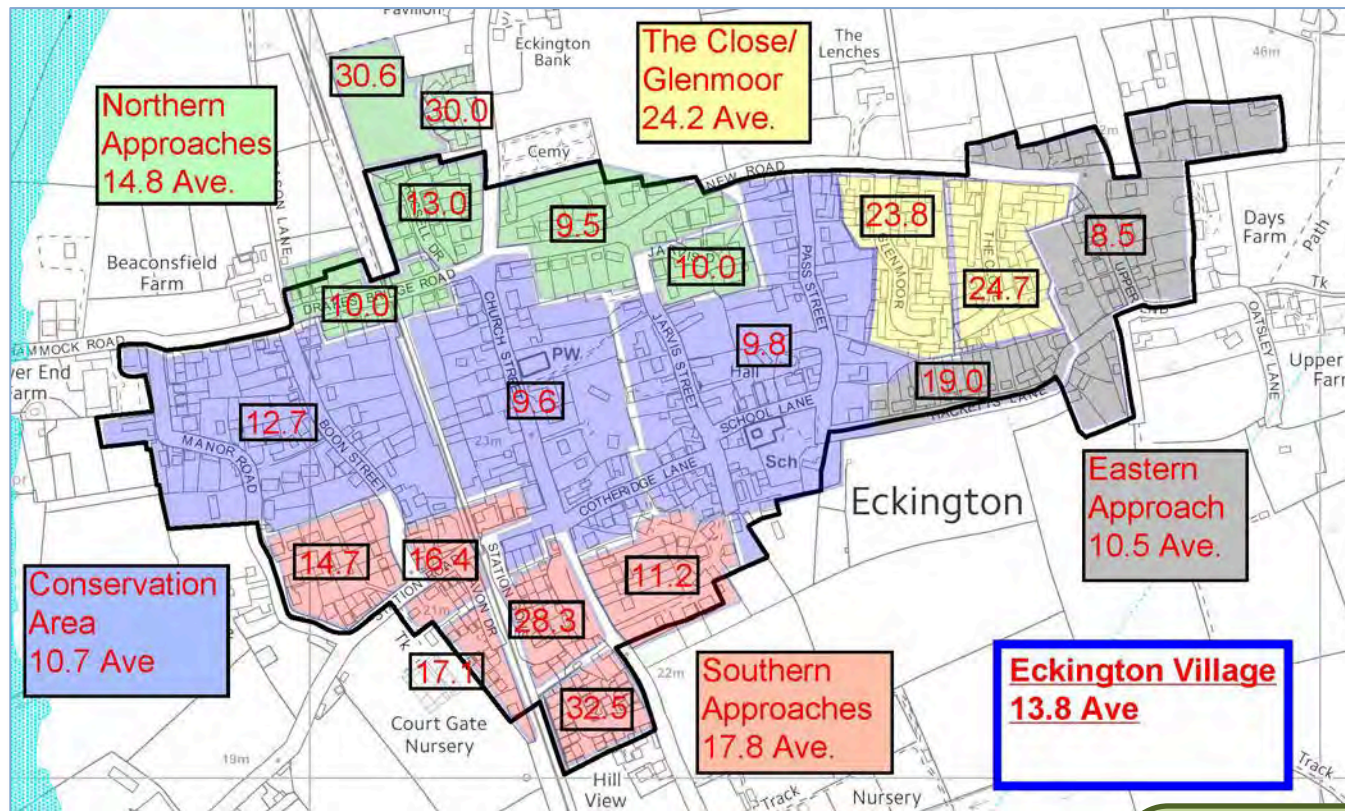




Housing Density

The Placecheck Surveys recognised that the village street scene and layout is significant in maintaining an open personality and is crucial to inviting social interaction and a “friendly atmosphere”. This can best be demonstrated by examining the density of the housing in the various recognised character areas and within these small areas of similar build and grouping. The following graphic indicates the density of housing in each area expressing the number of homes per hectare.

Housing Density (number of homes per Hectare) in Areas of Similar Character and Build



	Hectares	No Homes	Density
Roman 2 (proposed)	0.9	26	30.6
Roman Meadows	0.4	12	30.0
Russell Drive	1.0	13	13.0
Drakes Bridge	1.0	10	10.0
Jarvis Drive	0.6	6	10.0
New Road (green)	1.9	18	9.5
Total Northern Approach	5.8	85	14.8
Hanford Drive	0.8	26	32.5
Station Gdns/Tewks Road	0.6	17	28.3
Avon Drive	0.7	12	17.1
Marlborough Drive	1.5	22	14.7
Ninesquares/Pipins	1.7	19	11.2
Station Road (west)	1.1	18	16.4
Total Southern Approach	6.4	114	17.8
Hacketts Lane	0.9	18	19.0
Upper End/New Road	3.9	33	8.5
Total Eastern Approach	4.8	51	10.5
Boon St/Manor Road (con area)	5.1	65	12.7
Jarvis St/Pass St (con area)	6.4	63	9.8
Church Street	4.7	45	9.6
Total Conservation Area	16.2	173	10.7
The Close	1.7	42	24.7
Glenmoor	1.6	38	23.8
Total Clos/Glenmoor	3.3	80	24.2
Village Total	36.5	503	13.8

From the data it is clear to see how the low density areas in the older Conservation Area have evolved over centuries only more recently being increased through modern infill. The most recent areas of development have however dramatically increased the established housing density potentially creating stress in the sustainable fabric of the existing community.

Parishioners' Comments:

- 94% of parishioners questioned believe that a maximum density of 13-15 homes per hectare should be applied in future (Source: Parish Consultation Day – 16th May 2015)
- 100% said that density was an important factor in maintain the village character (Source: Parish Consultation Day – 16th May 2015)



Places and Features of Special Interest

Villagers feel the heart of Easington is not in one single place. Six particular locations were frequently mentioned in the responses to the Parish Survey.

- Easington Stores, an invaluable village facility used by almost everyone in the village and passing traffic using the B4080.
- The Cross and War Memorial on a small triangle of land at the cross-roads of Pershore Road, Church Street, New Road and Drakesbridge Road .
- The Church of England Primary School opened on September 22nd 1869 and extended several times since.
- Two public houses, The Bell on Church Street and The Anchor in Cotheridge Lane feature heavily in day-to-day life.
- The Village Hall, originally built in 1928 as a Memorial Hall, has been, and is still, used by many village organisation.
- Holy Trinity Church, parts of which date back to the mid-twelfth century.



The special features of Easington that the villagers identified in their survey characterize its particular personality. Its long history, is still evident in the layout of the village, its buildings and the richness of archaeological sites of importance

- The survival of the historic identity of the village, evident in its buildings and layout
- The number and quality of its surviving historic buildings
- The balance of new and heritage buildings in harmony
- The high survival of thatched roofs
- The survival of historic fabric and detailing
- The use of locally quarried stone in buildings, boundary walls and surfaces
- The contribution to the natural rural environment of trees, gardens, open spaces, hedges, grass verges and bank

Parishioners' Comments:

- Villagers feel that the 'true heart' of Easington is not held in one location but in elements of a wider community:
- The War Memorial crossroads (the 'geographical centre' of the village)
- Easington C of E Primary School (the life, soul and future of the village)
- Around the shop / hairdressers / pub (where the village is busiest; people meet and chat)
- Easington Stores (provides information re all village activities and everyone goes there)



Statutory Planning Policy Position of The Conservation Area Appraisal

A conservation area is an area of special architectural or historic interest, usually the historic part of a town or village, where we wish to preserve or enhance its character or appearance. Part of Eckington is a conservation area and under Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 the Planners have a duty to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area. Details of the review of the Conservation Area are set out in the Appraisal document issues by Wychavon planning department dated October 2010

Planning Framework relative to position of the management of the conservation area is:

- South Worcestershire Development Plan – SWDP6; SWDP24; Eckington Conservation Area Appraisal 2010; Wychavon Residential Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document 2010
- Policy ENV12 of the Wychavon District Local Plan (June 2006) which is intended to ensure that development preserves or enhances the character or appearance of conservation areas.
- National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practices Guide

The broad policies seek to ensure that the **conservation area** is preserved by:

Refusing permission for:

- the demolition of any domestic dwelling, commercial or agricultural building or structure if its loss would damage its character or appearance
- the extension or alteration of a domestic dwelling, commercial or agricultural building where the change would damage its character or appearance
- development which would be harmful to its setting or character or appearance
- development which would adversely affect or result in the loss of historic plots, layouts and street pattern, important views, open spaces, trees or tree cover or boundary features within the conservation area
- signage which would be harmful to the character or appearance of the conservation area

and requiring new development to:

- respect its context in design, including scale, form, proportion and detailing
- use materials in accordance with those traditionally used in that particular part of the conservation area, and maintain a similar mix
- be located on their sites in a similar way to the general pattern of building in that part of the conservation area
- Boundary walls, railings and hedges should be incorporated in the development in a similar way to those already in existence in that part of the conservation area, and these should use similar materials and detailing, or species, and
- Signs to respect the character of the buildings and quality of the historic environment in their siting, size, materials and design.

The Conservation Area of Eckington and more importantly the building within it are subject to these protections.



The Conservation Area

The majority of early buildings in the village today are timber framed cottages and houses, dating from the 16th and 17th centuries.

These are numerous and are scattered along all of its principal streets, indicating that the layout of its historic core was probably well established by this time, and that Eckington was already a substantial settlement by this date.

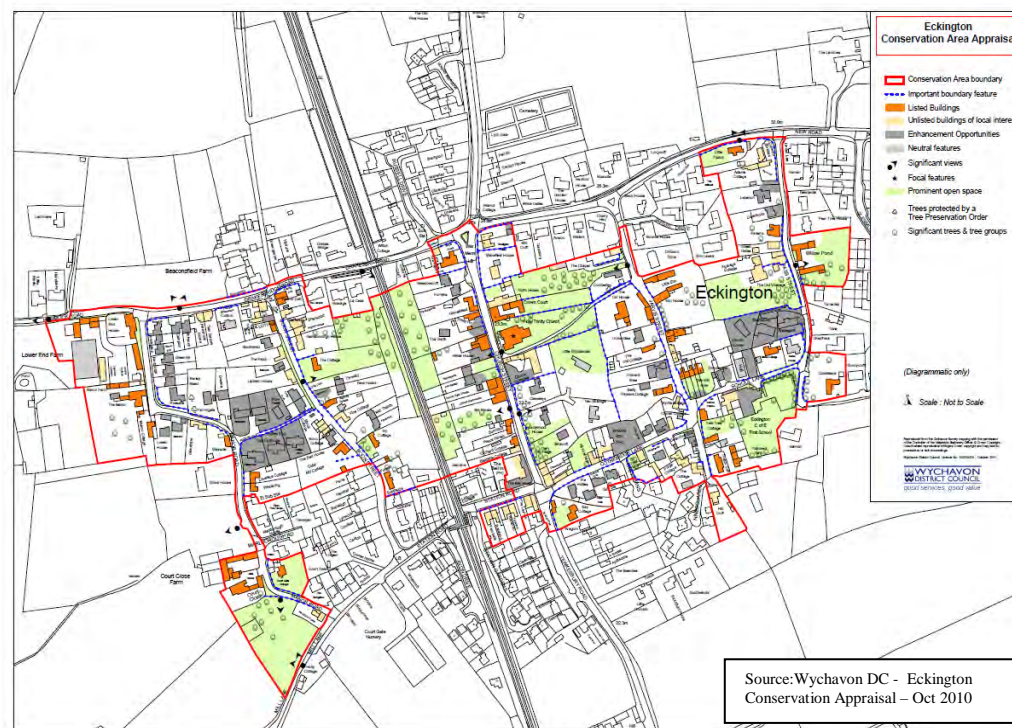
Church Street appears in a document in 1542, Pass Street in 1582, Boon Street in the 16th century and Jarvis Street in 1601.

The map indicates by red line Eckington's conservation area

Statistics

Approximate area	16.2 Hectares
Number of Homes	173
Density of housing	10.7 homes per hectare
Character	

The character of the Eckington Conservation Area is that of an historic rural village comprising a series of houses, cottages, farm and outbuildings set within an earlier framework of plots and roads. The prominence of older buildings and the presence of farm buildings, open space, gardens, the village cross, large mature trees, local stone walls and narrow lanes with grass banks and verges, maintain the character of an historic rural village despite the recent encroachment of modern development.



7. Individual Settlement Areas





The distinctive character of the Conservation Area is derived from the wide range of inter-related historical and architectural elements. These include the evolved design and mixture of historic buildings, street patterns, building lines/scale and plot layouts, the relationship between buildings and spaces. The mix of uses of land and buildings, as well as a variety of other features such as vistas, landmarks, open spaces, vegetation, hard landscaping, street furniture and night-time appearance enforce the clearly identifiable personality of the village. It is the combination of all these qualities which contribute to the distinctive character and appearance of Eckington's Conservation area.



Within this conservation area the Placecheck survey highlighted three areas of individual character:

- Church Street
- Boon Street and Manor Road
- Jarvis Street and Pass Street

Design Guidance Note – Conservation Area:

- The trees, green space and ancient orchards in this area should be respected and enhanced where possible
- To maintain the integrity and heritage this core area of the village should resist the proliferation of inappropriate signage or lighting and visual obstructions such as overhead cables and TV dishes or street furniture
- Layout, design and materials of any additional constructions need to be sympathetic to and in keeping with the surrounding built environment.
- The restoration of buildings in poor repair, such as dilapidated barns, should be actively encouraged and if appropriate, suitable change of use considered.
- The street scene within the conservation zone is of paramount importance. Front extensions should not be permitted where they detract from the character of the property itself or neighbouring properties or with the surrounding street scene.
- Infilling and back development should be resisted where as a result the open character of the surrounding would be lost. Tandem development should be resisted in these areas.
- Traditional building materials and designs should be employed wherever possible to maintain the aspect of building period. External satellite dishes should be unobtrusive and where possible not visible from the street.
- External satellite dishes should be unobtrusive and where possible not visible from the street.
- Reduction of overhead utility services and environmental clutter must be given priority.
- Removal or alteration to chimneys in the area must be resisted.
- Skylights other than traditional dormers should not alter the appearance of the existing roofline.
- It is important that rainwater goods reflect the colour, shape and form of the original.
- The areas of historic cottages and premises should be retained and conserved with reference to the Eckington Conservation Area Appraisal issued by Wychavon Council (October 2010)



+ Church Street Area

Approximate area	4.7 Hectares
Number of Homes	45
Density of housing	9.6 homes per hectare
Character	

This is the planned medieval street running through the heart of the village, with the church near its centre. Here rectilinear plots, characteristic of a medieval plan, are still well-defined, particularly on the west side of the street. Historic buildings are sited to the front of their plots tight against the back of the pavements with open space at the rear.



This tight grain and distinctive relationship of building to plot and building to road is a characteristic feature of a medieval settlement plan, and is a key element of the character and special interest of this part of the conservation area. There are still examples of farm buildings and other ancillary buildings behind frontage buildings. These stretch from the main building, mostly with their roofs set at right angles to the frontage buildings and often defining a side boundary. These buildings are of special interest in defining the character of the conservation area.

Buildings date from the 12th century through to the present day, using a variety of building materials. 18th to 19th century buildings are frequent, illustrating the development and status of the street in this period. Some of these overlay earlier buildings, with their earlier origins often identifiable in side and rear elevations. Many of the buildings are listed, reflecting the architectural and historic interest of this area.



The natural environment, with the churchyard, gardens, mature trees and hedges, is a feature of the area, providing green settings to buildings. In addition the gardens are important features as the open space characteristically found frontage buildings in a medieval planned settlement.

As the main thoroughfare through the village this is a trafficked road with pavements and road markings, although the lack of street lighting and the prominence of trees, gardens and hedges help to maintain a village character.

Design Guidance Note – Church Street Area:

- This main thoroughfare of the village should resist the proliferation of inappropriate signage or lighting and visual obstructions such as overhead cables and TV dishes or street furniture
- Layout design and materials need to be sympathetic to the immediate surrounding built environment
- The trees and ancient orchards in this area should be respected and enhanced where possible



Boon Street/ Manor Road Area

Approximate area	5.1 Hectares
Number of Homes	65
Density of housing	12.7 homes per hectare
Character	



Boon Street is a quietly winding road, offering a developing vista. Buildings hug the roadway tightly with little or no space between them along its western edge. Opposite there are buildings set back from the road, providing a more open spacious character.



This is the area of the village to the west of Church Street, where the two parallel lanes of Manor Road and Boon Street form a rough grid with Drakesbridge Road, Pudding Alley and Station Road. Here buildings dating from the 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th and 20th centuries line the narrow lanes.

Manor Road is also a typical winding country lane with a high number of heritage houses and cottages, with farms on the western periphery overlooking wide vistas to the Malvern Hills. Some are sited immediately onto the lane sides, while others are set back behind gardens and yards, with no overall settlement pattern prevailing.



Historic buildings are timber frame or brick, characteristic of the traditional use of materials in the locality at their date of construction. Most of the older buildings are listed, reflecting the architectural and historic interest of this area.



The narrow lanes, farms, old houses and cottages, grass verges, hedges, gardens, remnant orchard/field in Manor Road, occasional trees and absence of road markings contribute much to the rural village character of this area.



This area has seen much new housing development on former orchards and gardens. These have introduced modern building designs that have not preserved the character of the conservation area. Despite this the low density nature of these small modern developments set well back from the road behind green areas manages to preserve a spacious and relaxed feeling to the area.

The open aspect views to and from the south-east towards Bredon Hill and west towards the Malverns from this area are special features and should be protected for the future



Design Guidance Note – Boon Street/Manor Road:

- The views over the open countryside from the periphery of this area are of particular importance and should be protected
- On street parking is a significant detractor from the character of the area and any new builds, conversions, extensions and commercial buildings must provide adequate off-street parking for residents and visitors.



Jarvis Street/Pass Street Areas

Approximate area	6.4 Hectares
Number of Homes	63
Density of housing	9.8 homes per hectare
Character	



This is the area of the village to the east of Church Street, where the two parallel lanes of Jarvis Street and Pass Street form a grid with New Road, Cotheridge Lane and School Lane. Here buildings from the 17th, 19th and 20th centuries line the narrow lanes.

Both Pass Street and Jarvis Street are similar in nature, with the older buildings situated tight against the road. In many cases the buildings are set at right angles to the street with the gardens running along the roadside. This unusual feature not only lends character to the area but provides 'active' open spaces and settings for the buildings. Walling is also a feature of this area and occasional development of buildings, interspersed with barns, lends a rural context to these groupings. These are mainly a mix of houses, cottages and farm buildings. Some are sited immediately onto the lane sides, while others are set back behind gardens and yards, with no overall settlement pattern prevailing. Buildings are timber frame, brick, and stone or faced in roughcast, characteristic of the traditional use of materials in the locality at their date of construction. Most of the older buildings are listed, reflecting the architectural and



historic interest of this area.



This area shares many of the characteristics of that to the west of Church Street. Narrow lanes lined with farm buildings, old houses and cottages, grass verges and hedges, gardens, orchard, numerous trees and absence of road markings contribute much to its rural village character. There are still several large gardens, the large open space of the school playing field and numerous trees. The historic integrity of this area has been less affected by modern development, so that it retains more of its historic village layout and character.

New housing developments

on former orchards and gardens have introduced modern building designs, materials and development layouts that have not preserved the character of the conservation area. Generous plots are vulnerable to further development pressure.



Design Guidance Note – Jarvis Street/Pass Street

- On street parking is a significant detractor from the character of this area and any new builds or extensions must provide adequate off street parking for residents and visitors.
- The area around the school is highly congested by vehicles and parking and traffic flow must be a major consideration in any development plans
- A master plan should be undertaken in order to consider the whole area around the school and Village Hall.



Northern Approaches

Approximate area	5.8 Hectares
Number of Homes	85
Density of housing	14.8 homes per hectare
Character	



The area constitutes the houses on both sides of the main B4080 Pershore Road entering the village from the northerly direction from Eckington Bridge, Birlingham, Pershore and finishing at the Memorial Cross. Properties on Pershore Road, Drakesbridge Road, Pershore Road, and the westerly part of New Road are included in this area as is the more recent development at Roman Meadow.



Predominantly a mixture of newer houses and bungalows dating from the post-war years through to the current time the area is low density housing which is well spaced with open field on its northerly exposure and the Conservation Area to the south.

An increase in demand for affordable housing has led to a small development of 12 units on Pershore Road, outside the permitted development line of the village. This new modern style built estate of Roman Meadow has introduced an element of higher density housing to the area but still manages to portray an open perspective being set well back from the road. These units are an attractive mix of flats, houses and bungalows which have been given a rural feel in the design of the layout and road access, by avoiding urban linear road structure. Housing across

the whole plot is brick with tiled roofs and is mostly set back from the roads behind green space gardens.



Design Guidance Note – Northern Approach

- This area is on the northern boundary of the village and further expansion should be within the development boundary
- Further development in this area should respect the boundaries of the village and should be sensitive to views out of and towards the village as it represents a main arrival route into the village



Southern Approaches

Approximate area	6.4 Hectares
Number of Homes	114
Density of housing	17.8 homes per hectare
Character	



The area represents a somewhat similar character to the Northern Approach having the houses on both sides of the main B4080 Tewkesbury Road entering the village from the southerly direction. The area does however span the railway line more obviously than the northern approach with a relatively high proportion of homes being to the west of the train line. The current housing sites sit on the southern limit of the settlement. Properties on Tewkesbury Road, Hanford Drive, Station Road, Station Gardens, Pippins, Ninesquares, Avon Drive, and the southern end of Boon Street and Manor Road are included in this area.



Station Road has been severed by the railway line and varies in character from one side to the other. To the west the development is outside the Conservation area and is relatively new, Avon Drive being the most recent build. On the eastern side of the rail a row of early terraced houses is now backed onto by a new development of bungalows built on the site of the old station appropriately named Station Gardens.



The housing stock in the area is mostly brick built with tiled roofs and dates from the 1960's through to the present day. It has been exposed to the majority of the newer developments in the village over the past 10 years significantly increasing the housing density in the area.

The most recent addition to this area is the Hanford Drive estate. This is a high density development of town houses (32.5 homes per hectare) representing nearly 3 times greater than the average housing density for the village as a whole. Its introduction of a large number of people from outside the village coupled with its seclusion on the southern extreme has caused issues of absorption and sustainability. With very limited off-road parking facilities in a densely populated area parking and access is a constant problem.



Design Guidance Note – Southern Approach

- This area is on the southern boundary of the village and further expansion should be within the development boundary
- Any proposed new development should be restricted to developments where the housing density is more appropriate to the village norm
- Hanford Drive represents a prime example of over intensive development where there has been little respect for the densities, grain and architecture of the rest of the village. It is repetitive and lacks variety. This type of development should be resisted.



Conversely the relatively new development at The Pippins and Ninesquares, where the housing density was more appropriate to the village setting (11.2 Homes per hectare), have been easily absorbed and have fitted in with the surrounding areas very quickly.



Glenmoor/The Close

Approximate area	3.3 Hectares
Number of Homes	80
Density of housing	24.2 homes per hectare
Character	

Eckington is a substantial and well-consolidated settlement which has resulted in not only the infilling of many areas but also the development of a number of estate-type residential areas of various sizes.

In the 1950's The Close was built with a mix of local authority housing including semis, terraces and bungalows. In the late 1960's the Wychavon Council provided further housing at Glenmoor.



Although the densest area of housing in the village prior to Hanford Drive the sensitive use of green space and creative layout design has managed to retain an openness and variably pleasant street scene.

This area is now partly privately owned and partly housing association which forms a compact unit of development but offers limited scope for future expansion



Design Guidance Note – Glenmoor/The Close Area

- Extensions to existing properties should use designs that complement surrounding buildings and streetscapes
- Shared green spaces as well as clear areas to the front of properties should be maintained.
- The density exceeds that of the surrounding areas of the village and any further increase of density should be resisted



Eastern Approaches Area

Approximate area	4.8 Hectares
Number of Homes	51
Density of housing	10.5 homes per hectare
Character	



This grouping constitutes the properties creating the boundary around the eastern extremity of the settlement area. The area extends along the eastern end of New Road onto Nafford Road, Upper End leading to Oatsley Lane, and Stoney Furlong and back along Hacketts Lane.

Upper End is not dissimilar to Pass Street and Jarvis Street in character having a mixture of heritage properties with more modern infill properties albeit on a wider street scape.



Hacketts Lane was originally a Local Authority grouping that now faces across the southern aspect of the village giving excellent views over the Bredon Hill

The remaining properties on the north side of New Road/Nafford Road are on the edge of the boundary and back on to open land. The views over open countryside and the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty are of particular importance to the essential character of the village



Design Guidance Note – Eastern Approach Area

- This area is on the eastern boundary of the village and further expansion should be within the development boundary
- Extensions to existing properties should use designs that complement the main dwelling as well as surrounding buildings and streetscapes
- Current densities should be reflected.
- Development opportunities in this area would generally impinge on the boundaries of the village therefore views both from and to the village are of utmost importance especially those to and from the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.



Woollas Hall

Woollas Hall is Grade II Listed complex that stands high up on the northern slope of Bredon Hill. As it stands today, its history goes back most certainly to the 1200's and quite possibly beyond. The current stone-built house was erected by John Hanford in 1611 and represents a secondary habitation within the Parish having now, within the boundaries of the Hall and its adjacent lands, been separated into a total of 14 residences.

The complex is a significant element of the **Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty**. Views from here over the Village towards The Malvern Hills are exceptional and enforce the need to consider the impact that any developments in the village may have on the views from The Bredon Hill.



Privately owned there is no opportunity for further development at this site.



Part of Woollas Hall Farm has been developed into Deer Park Hall Business Centre which is a small complex offering office space and catering facilities.



Construction Materials

• Heritage Cottages

The progressive growth of the village can readily be seen in the highly variable styles and types of construction materials used in the building of the houses. The earliest dating from the 16th and 17th Century are the timber framed cottages which were probably all originally thatched, although slate roofs, handmade clay tiles and modern manufactured tiles can all be found.

All of the timber framed cottages reflect the materials most readily available and economic at the time they were built. The basic frame has timber uprights supporting a simple pitched roof with cross beams which both stabilise the frame and create an upper room. The frame would originally have been infilled with “wattle and daub” which can still be seen on many houses, although over time brick infilling and render has often replaced it.



These cottages would frequently have been built on a parcel of land large enough to sustain a family although this has changed in recent times and they have become occupied principally for their picturesque qualities and the surplus land, much of which has subsequently been sold off for individual homes to be built.

This latter process of infill development had no overall plan and was carried out generally to create residences for individual owners, reflecting individual styles and wishes. This has resulted in what is by today's standards quite a spacious village.



A characteristic of “black and whites” is that their windows are generally small with their size and shape dictated by the space into which they are built and also the need to keep the loss of warmth to a minimum. Such windows of necessity could not originally be opened. Doors were kept to a minimum and made to suit the available space. Most porches are later additions. All of these cottages have now been significantly improved with chimneys and more modern heating and sanitation.



Design Guidance Note – Heritage Cottages

- Heritage cottages within the village should be governed by Historic England guidance on improvement, refurbishment and extensions
- Within the Conservation Area Article 4 Direction should be sought where there is a specific threat to the character of the area as a whole
- Timber doors, frames and windows should be used as these are essential to preserve the historic core of the village
- White paint should be used externally to maintain the cultural design synergy amongst the heritage housing stock



- **Boundaries**

A key feature of the character of the village is the varied treatment of boundaries. The village has a generally open presentation where boundaries are not typically used as enclosures but contribute to an expansive feel. The boundary walls to the cottages were frequently built from locally sourced dressed and coursed Cotswold stone rubble walls, brick walls, natural hedges and occasional iron railings.



There is little use of wooden fences used as boundaries apart from in the newest estates and use of such artificial barriers should be avoided as they are not in keeping with the rest of the village. In all but the newest developments unbounded properties are well set back from the road behind green space, usually gardens providing an open plan street view promoting easy access.



The type of boundary often relates to the date of buildings. Older buildings are mostly bounded by stone walls, while many 19th century buildings have brick walls. With very few exceptions boundaries are low, permitting views of buildings and gardens. The retention of old stone walls and use of new stone walls in some more modern developments helps to integrate new development into its historic context. The use of the same local Cotswold stone for many walls throughout the village is a unifying thread amongst buildings of various ages and styles and is a characteristic feature of the village.



The main road and some of the feeder roads have conventional pavements whilst the original lanes still have grass verges. The recent developments have conventional modern kerbs and pavements.

As a result the village benefits from many individually designed homes, most including garages and parking for cars, and with generous gardens so that the houses sit comfortably in the space around them. The Village has seen recent contemporary designs introduced through the diversification of redundant farm buildings.

Design Guidance Note – Boundary Treatment

- **Open plan frontages allowing adequate setback from the road should be retained.**
- **Where there are hedges, these should be retained as far as practicable. Planting of hedges of indigenous species should be encouraged.**
- **Conifers and particularly Leyland cypress are not suitable for boundary treatment and should be discouraged.**
- **Where new walls are constructed their size, materials and design should accord with the surrounding built environment.**
- **Where boundaries constitute an important part of the attractiveness of the street scene it is important to try to maintain these boundaries wherever possible.**
- **High level wood fencing should be discouraged as it significantly degrades the street scene**



• Roofs and Chimneys

The extraordinary wide range and age of architectural styles prevalent in the village has resulted in a varied collection of roofing profiles and materials being used. In the older buildings craft materials such as thatch reed, handmade clay tiled roofs or hand cut slate tiles are used requiring highly specialised craftsmanship should repair or replacement be needed. It is essential that roofing materials are replaced with like material to preserve the skyline and the heritage of the buildings



The more recent developments can readily be identified by the uniformity of the house designs which are generally built in brick and have tiled roofs. Different types of manufactured tiles can be identified by their different colours.

• Doors and Windows

Doors and windows are an important element in determining the appearance and character of a building and its setting. With the exception of listed buildings, generally changes to windows and doors are not controlled by planning legislation. However, it is essential that, wherever it is located, the style of the host dwelling and its setting are respected.



Many properties have had modern replacement double glazed windows and doors installed which change the character of the properties. As the range of window styles has increased to include 'leaded lights', coloured glazing and many other replicating features it is now possible to replace existing windows with similar styles without losing the massive advantages of enhanced energy conservation.



However, within the Conservation Area, where even a minor alteration can affect the appearance and balance of the property and the street scene, it is crucial that consideration is given to ensure that the materials and design of windows and doors not only accord with the age and architectural type of the property but also complement the street scene of the area that surrounds them.



An 'Article 4 Direction' can be issued by the local planning authority to control a specific threat where permitted development (planning consent not required) is likely to take place that could damage the character of a particular area.



8. Rural Environment

Surrounding countryside

In and around the village the most obvious features are gardens, orchard, numerous large mature trees, and the grass banks. The historic core of Eckington has seen much of its immediate rural hinterland developed and many of its gardens and orchards infilled with new housing. The banks, verges, trees and remaining gardens and orchard are notable features in the old village core, and their retention is essential to the preservation of the character of the central area.



Less apparent, but just as important, are private gardens behind the street frontages. These remain largely undeveloped and continue in use as gardens. While their full extent may not always be entirely publicly visible, the lack of interruption by buildings and presence of planting contributes to an impression of openness appreciated from glimpses over boundaries and between buildings. Many of these green spaces are also important to the setting of historic buildings.



The countryside around the Parish is some of the most striking in the Midlands with views from the Bredon Hill over Eckington village being most memorable. Woodland is sparsely distributed across this landscape but a well wooded impression is provided by frequent hedgerow trees, parkland and surviving traditional orchards. Fields on the floodplains are divided by ditches fringed by willow pollards and alders. Pasture and stock rearing predominate on the floodplain and on steeper slopes of Bredon Hill, with a mixture of livestock rearing, arable and market gardening taking place provide a patchwork of a typical English countryside.

Footpaths and Country Lanes

There are a number of open and well-trodden footpaths around the Parish that are easily accessed and regularly used by residents and visitors alike. These footpaths are seen as an important element of recreation for the residents and a conduit for the attraction of visitors to the area significantly boosting the local economy through tourism.



The village provides adequate parking for visitors at the starting points of important walks such as Eckington Bridge. The circular walk from Eckington Wharf following the winding path of the River Avon around in a bow passing back through the village returning to the Wharf is particularly well walked and enjoyed.





The pathway from Woollas Hall up to the top of the Bredon Hill offers excellent views of the surrounding countryside that have been enjoyed for hundreds of years largely unchanged. The footpaths can all be accessed readily from the village and are maintained in good order offering an irreplaceable asset to village life

Highways and Infrastructure

- **Approaches to the village**

The approaches to the village are along open country lanes through farmland thinly interspersed with farm buildings with wide vistas. The primary north to south road through the village is a major thoroughfare and carries intermittent mixed traffic including cars and large lorries. All three approaches progress along lanes from open countryside into widely spaced newer properties on both sides of the road into the central areas of older ancient properties.

The side roads then introduce a traveller to more of the heritage of the village in the quieter and more relaxed side lanes. This progression creates and maintains an atmosphere of a well maintained but longstanding village. It is essential that this dressing of certainly the central conservation zone in this manner is maintained and any expansion along the feeder roads by the proliferation of modern housing estates is not allowed to damage this historical established legacy.



Design Guidance Note – Rural Environments

- The ability to walk to and from the village is an important asset. Therefore diversion or extinguishment of public rights of way should be discouraged.
- Hedgerows are an important asset for biodiversity and should be protected. At present there does not appear to be any policy to prevent the wholesale removal of hedgerows.
- The road approaches to the village should be protected from progressive sprawl of modern housing estates
- Any developments on the approaches to the village should be sensitive to the policies governing both rural and village settlement values.
- Smaller developments reflecting a more organic settlement pattern should be encouraged.



9. Design Guidance



Consolidated Design Guidance

For clarity the following is a consolidation of the various planning design issues previously outlined that reflect the views of the Parishioners that they believe should be brought to the attention of the planning officers.



Design Guidance Note: (Reference - page 8)

- **Scope** - The Village Design Statement focuses on both the village of Eckington and the areas beyond its boundaries covered by the Parish
- **Green Areas** - It is essential for the long term continuity of the rural culture of the village that the green-field areas around the village are not eroded but conserved and protected from any harmful visual impact
- **Conserve** - Eckington has a long and rich history and this document seeks to protect and wherever possible enhance the visually important buildings and spaces in the village and surrounding countryside that form its rural community
- **Diversity** - Future development should respect the rich and diverse character reflected in Eckington's architecture and open spaces. The best way to ensure the above would be to prohibit large scale housing developments and to focus on more appropriate scale developments of in the region of 5 homes that can reflect the existing character of the built environment
- **Compatibility** - Design should primarily comply with the existing character in terms of density, rhythm, grain and materials, but if required by the specific design concept it should also be true to the best architectural practices of the present period to complement and enhance the styles of previous generations



Design Guidance Note: Village Resources (Reference - page 14)

- **Sustainability** - Any future developments should be capable being supported by the existing infrastructure
- **Contribution** - Significant new developments must contribute to appropriate and corresponding improvements to the village resource base



Design Guidance Note: Village Definition (Reference - page 19)

- **Development Boundary** - The Neighbourhood Plan will agree the Development Boundary with the planning authorities to provide a sound basis for considering and determining future development for the beneficial conservation of the village
- **Containment** – All future developments should, except in circumstances directly resulting from national, local or neighbourhood plan policies, be contained within the defined Development Boundary
- **Scale** - This is likely to result in a number of small scale, windfall developments within the Development Boundary, which is the preferred option, rather than to create a single larger housing development outside.



Design Guidance Note: General Village Guidance (Reference - page 20)

- **Design Strategy** - Although the existing allocations are adequate to meet Eckington's commitment within the SWDP to fulfil its housing growth targets, it is believed prudent to recognise and provide for opportunities for new development needs in the future. This Design Statement seeks to provide the acceptable framework to meet these needs through infill or immediately adjacent developments in small, incremental additions rather than through the development of large new housing estates
- **Housing Density** - The existing fabric of the village can be expressed by the densities of developments and how they relate to the public realm. These densities vary in different parts of the settlement. (see Density Map Page 21)
- **Recent Density** - In recent years new developments have adopted a far higher density than the historical village norm thus reducing the open spaces around each dwelling along with amenity, pedestrian and circulation spaces.
- **Space Preservation** - The density map offers a greater understanding of each of the areas in question. This design statement seeks to prevent inappropriate higher density land usage in the future and preservation of the all-important green open spaces
- **Ambiance** - The overall ambience should be one of a historic rural village and not an urban housing estate.

Parishioners Comments

- 89% of responding households have stated that they would accept future infill development and 86% were in agreement with small development sites in the region of 5 homes per site (*Source: 2015 Parish Survey*)
- 68% of responders have stated that they are not willing to accept larger sites of up to 20 homes and 94% would not accept development in excess of 20 homes per site (*Source: 2015 Parish Survey*)
- On further consultation 75% of those surveyed on the day stated that they believed that 4-6 homes per site was an optimum for the village (*Source: Parish Consultation Day – 16th May 2015*)
- 92% have indicated their wish that the villagers should be responsible for identifying suitable sites for any future development(*Source: 2015 Parish Survey*)
- 67% of residents asked on the day believed that small affordable downsize homes were required in the best interests of the village. (*Source: Parish Consultation Day – 16th May 2015*)



- **Character** - In addition to adopting appropriate density, the styles and character of dwellings should reflect the built environment in Easington. As such new development should vary in scale and design in order to continue the long history of variation that represents the character of the village.
- **Boundary Sensitivity** - Just as important should be the sensitivity of development on or near the village boundaries especially where there are views to and from the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty that comprises large areas of countryside up to and including Bredon Hill.
- **Approach Visual Impact** - Where there are situations of possible development on or near the village boundaries then care must be taken in designing and landscaping the outward facing aspect of the site and dwellings to recognise the importance of the first impression of the village when viewed from afar.
- **Design Variability** - Within the village itself, scale and materials should be complimentary to the built context. This does not preclude the use of modern sustainable construction methods and materials, which are encouraged. Such contrasts often enhance the character of older surrounding buildings.
- **Off Street Parking** - Adequate off street car parking should be provided along with sufficient circulation space for delivery vans and vehicles thus reflecting modern trends in retailing and delivery methods.
- **Landscape Design** - Adequate tree protection and planting of green spaces must be encouraged. Development proposals should contain enough information to ascertain soft landscaping outcomes.
- **Fit-for-Purpose** - All new properties should be designed to Lifetime Homes Standard (July 2010) to reflect the needs of the Parish's ageing population

Parishioners' Comments:

- 94% of parishioners questioned believe that a maximum density of 13-15 homes per hectare should be applied in future (*Source: Parish Consultation Day – 16th May 2015*)
- 100% said that density was an important factor in maintain the village character(*Source: Parish Consultation Day – 16th May 2015*)



Design Guidance Note: Conservation Area (Reference - page 27)

- **Appropriate Respect** - The trees, green space and ancient orchards in this area should be respected and enhanced where possible
- **Streetscape** - To maintain the integrity and heritage this core area of the village should resist the proliferation of inappropriate signage or lighting and visual obstructions such as overhead cables and TV dishes or street furniture
- **Empathy** - Layout, design and materials of any additional constructions need to be sympathetic to and in keeping with the surrounding built environment.
- **Conservation** - The restoration of buildings in poor repair, such as dilapidated barns, should be actively encouraged and if appropriate, suitable change of use considered.
- **Street Scene** - The street scene within the conservation zone is of paramount importance. Front extensions should not be permitted where they detract from the character of the property itself, or with neighbouring properties or with the surrounding street scene.
- **Overcrowding** - Infilling and back development should be resisted where as a result the open character of the surrounding would be lost. Tandem development should be resisted in these areas.
- **Sensitivity** - Traditional building materials and designs should be employed wherever possible to maintain the aspect of building period. External satellite dishes should be unobtrusive and where possible not visible from the street
- **Clutter** - Reduction of overhead utility services and environmental clutter must be given priority.
- **Roofline** - Skylights other than traditional dormers should not alter the appearance of the existing roofline. Removal or alteration to chimneys in the area must be resisted
- **Originality** - It is important that rainwater goods reflect the colour, shape and form of the original.
- **Compliance** - The areas of historic cottages and premises should be retained and conserved with reference to the Easington Conservation Area Appraisal issued by Wychavon Council (October 2010)



Design Guidance Note: Individual Characteristic Areas

➤ **Church Street Area** (Reference - page 28)

- **Street Scene** - This main thoroughfare of the village should resist the proliferation of inappropriate signage or lighting and visual obstructions such as overhead cables and TV dishes or street furniture
- **Empathy** - Layout design and materials need to be sympathetic to the immediate surrounding built environment
- **Respect** - The trees and ancient orchards in this area should be respected and enhanced where possible

➤ **Boon Street/Manor Road** (Reference - page 29)

- **View Preservation** - The views over the open countryside from the periphery of this area are of particular importance and should be protected
- **Parking** - On street parking is a significant detractor from the character of the area and any new builds, conversions, extensions and commercial buildings must provide adequate off-street parking for residents and visitors.

➤ **Jarvis Street/Pass Street** (Reference - page 30)

- **Parking Restriction** - On street parking is a significant detractor from the character of this area and any new builds or extensions must provide adequate off street parking for residents and visitors.
- **Congestion** - The area around the school is highly congested by vehicles and parking and traffic flow must be a major consideration in any development plans
- **Vision** - A master plan should be undertaken in order to consider the whole area around the school and Village Hall.

➤ **Northern Approach** (Reference - page 31)

- **Sprawl Containment** - This area is on the northern boundary of the village and further expansion should be within the development boundary



- **Views** - Further development in this area should respect the boundaries of the village and should be sensitive to views out of and towards the village as it represents a main arrival route into the village

➤ **Southern Approach** (Reference - page 32)

- **Sprawl Containment** - This area is on the southern boundary of the village and further expansion should be within the development boundary
- **Density Reduction** - Any proposed new development should be restricted to developments where the housing density is more appropriate to the village norm
- **Inappropriate Building** - Hanford Drive represents a prime example of over intensive development where there has been little respect for the densities, grain and architecture of the rest of the village. It is repetitive and lacks variety. This type of development should be resisted.

➤ **Glenmoor and The Close Area** (Reference - page 33)

- **Extensions** - Extensions to existing properties should use designs that complement surrounding buildings and streetscapes
- **Green Space** - Shared green spaces as well as clear areas to the front of properties should be maintained.
- **Reduce Density** - The density exceeds that of the rest of the village and any increase of density should be resisted

➤ **Eastern Approach Area** (Reference - page 34)

- **Sprawl Containment** - This area is on the eastern boundary of the village and further expansion should be within the development boundary
- **Annexation** - Extensions to existing properties should use designs that complement the main dwelling as well as surrounding buildings and streetscapes
- **Density** - Current densities should be reflected.
- **Preservation of Vistas** - Development opportunities in this area would generally impinge on the boundaries of the village therefore views both from and to the village are of utmost importance especially those to and from the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. These views are of particular importance and should be protected



Design Guidance Note: Heritage Cottages (Reference - page 36)

- **Heritage** - Heritage cottages within the village should be governed by Historic England guidance on improvement, refurbishment and extensions
- **Protection** - Within the Conservation Area Article 4 Direction should be sought where there is a threat to the character of the area as a whole
- **Materials** - Timber doors, frames and windows should be used as these are essential to preserve the historic core of the village
- **Preservation** - White paint should be used externally to maintain the cultural design synergy amongst the heritage housing stock



Design Guidance Note: Boundaries (Reference - page 37)

- **Green Space** - Open plan frontages allowing adequate setback from the road should be retained.
- **Natural Materials**- Where there are hedges, these should be retained as far as practicable. Planting of hedges of indigenous species should be encouraged.
- **Low Boundaries** - Conifers and particularly Leyland cypress are not suitable for boundary treatment and should be discouraged.
- **Sympathy** - Where new walls are constructed their size, materials and design should accord with the surrounding built environment.
- **Street Scene** - Boundaries constitute an important part of the attractiveness of the street scene it is important to try to maintain these boundaries wherever possible
- **Barrier Construction** - High level wood fencing should be discouraged as it significantly degrades the street scene



Design Guidance Note: Rural Environments (Reference - page 40)

- **Footpaths** - The ability to walk to and from the village is an important asset. Therefore diversion or extinguishment of public rights of way, where it would adversely affect the use and appearance of the countryside, should be discouraged.
- **Hedgerows** - Hedgerows are an important asset for biodiversity and should be protected. At present there does not appear to be any policy to prevent the wholesale removal of hedgerows.
- **Culture** - The main road approaches to the village should be protected from progressive sprawl of modern housing estates
- **Rural Values** - Any developments on the approaches to the village should be sensitive to the policies governing both rural and village settlement values.
- **Appropriate Development** – Larger developments, greater than 10 homes, should be resisted Smaller developments reflecting a more organic settlement pattern should be encouraged as being more appropriate



10. Future Development



Protection of residents values

In spite of the uncharacteristic housing development over the most recent years, Eckington has managed to retain much of its distinctive character. The whole village shows a wide diversity of buildings reflecting the changing styles over hundreds of years.

Eckington is a lively and sustainable village, with most villagers engaging with all of the facilities and activities they have available. Overwhelmingly the housing layout, the varied character of the properties and the open access style has resulted in the development of a healthy, friendly and cohesive community with a strong social ethos.

Possibly a victim of its own success, the village is beginning to feel the pressure of becoming an attractive target location resulting in recent relative rapid expansion putting pressure on the very fabric of the village that has created its attractiveness.

Valuable resources notably the shop, the school and the village hall are all experiencing issues of access and/or capacity. This needs to be addressed through sensitive and integrated planning in the future to protect those valuable assets from over-exposure.

An important feature throughout the history of the village of Eckington is the successful integration of the buildings. A village needs to develop and change in order to remain a vibrant community but it needs to develop in a way that maintains the village feeling and also the diversity of architectural styles that exist in the village. This document describes the physical character of the village as it is now, through the eyes and experience of local people. The village is much more than a collection of individual buildings, spaces, streets and trees – **it is a community.**

Parishioners' Comments

- 99% of villagers feel safe in their homes or walking about at all time during the day and 91% reported feeling safe walking after dark (*Source: 2015 Parish survey*)
- When asked what was the primary thing they liked about living in Eckington 79.8% responded that it was the community spirit and friendliness of the village and 45.6% that it was the fact that it was a small, peaceful place to live. (*Source: 2015 Parish survey*)





The Neighbourhood Planning exercise has received a massive vote of support from the Parishioners with over 66% of households taking an active part in the questionnaire ensuring their voices were heard and determining their views and values. The village is a dynamic community that understands the need for new and younger people to come into the village to maintain its energy and sustaining the schools and youth development. Growth however must be gentle and sustainable as it has been in the past.

Residents come to the village and, to an extraordinary extent, stay. The housing stock must therefore respect this and enable residents the flexibility to both trade up and down when their circumstances demand. This fluid movement, if acknowledged and catered for, will free up homes for healthy movement to happen and newcomers to bring a new dynamic to the village. These values must be protected and creative planning is the core to respecting this demand. Parishioner's views have been the basis in the preparation of this Statement giving it a very local feel for the features of the village which are familiar and cherished aspects of local character and regional diversity which need to be interpreted for the future.

Parishioners' Comments

- **58% of householders have lived in the village for more than 15 years with nearly half having been more than 20 years** *(Source: 2015 Parish survey)*
- **93% of respondents believe that they will probably stay in the village long term** *(Source: 2015 Parish Survey)*
- **Of those few who felt that they would probably need to move away from the village 86% gave age related reasons for doing so – Downsizing to smaller property 62% -Move closer to services 10% - Better care for elderly 14%** *(Source: 2015 Parish survey)*

Parishioners' Comments

- “Design should avoid ‘monotony’ by using interesting layouts, variation of size/style, different colours of materials and generous landscaping”
- “Prefer grass verges and low local-stone walls setting ‘boundaries’ between each new property”
- “Don’t want large and ultra-modern (e.g. Pippins/Nine Squares); should try to copy ‘old-style’ buildings”
- “Ideal to have a development scheme consisting of small cottage/bungalow-type buildings which would not dominate the approach to the village from Pershore but which would complement the existing Recreation Centre, Pershore Road and Russell Drive, with a footpath or road connecting through Russell Drive”
- “A mix of styles for the new houses that looks in keeping with the existing village and less like a ‘new-build estate”
- “Incorporate gables on houses”
- “New development schemes should encompass several different designs on plots of differing sizes”
- “Mixed property types arranged in a ‘non-linear’ layout”
- “Should be variety of building materials/size of plots/design/layout/size of buildings”
- “Include a good proportion of affordable housing (ignore ‘not in my back yard’ syndrome)”
- “Too many large properties being built on single plots”



Statement Review Period

The Statement is an enduring document that should be updated and reviewed at regular intervals to maintain its integrity and compliance with emerging planning regulations. It is proposed therefore that the Eckington Parish Council call for a review panel to sit **every 5 years** from the date of adoption of the Design Statement to undertake a formal examination and present a report to the Parish Council and Wychavon Planning Authorities.



Acknowledgements

Grateful thanks are extended to the Wychavon Planning Authority and their staff for their assistance and support in the preparation of this Design Statement.

This assessment could not have been completed without the full support and active involvement of the Parishioners of Eckington who have enthusiastically contributed at all levels when called on to do so.

Finally, the team of volunteers who have undertaken the work. This document builds on the detailed work contained in the previous Design Statement produced by the villagers in 2008 and their significant contribution must not pass unrecognised. The task of surveying, researching, evaluating and preparing this latest Statement however has been undertaken by a small team of professionals and laypeople from the village who have given their time and professional advice to ensure that the Statement truly reflects the reality of the moment and wishes and aspirations of the parishioners that it represents. They were:

Richard Bateman
Tim Jeynes
Jon Smith

George Glaze
Philip King
Pierre du Toit






John Holder
John Powles
Peter Townley



Eckington Neighbourhood Plan

Appendix 1






Grade II Listed Buildings

Building	History	Photograph
Historical Monument		
Eckington Bridge Persore Road	This monument is scheduled under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 as amended as it appears to the Secretary of State to be of national importance C.1728. 6 arched stone bays with cut waters and triangular recesses. Stepped coped parapet	
The Cross Church Street	Mediaeval. A hexagonal shaft on a small graduated base. Restored and given a Maltese cross-head in 1897.	
Holy Trinity Church Street	C.12 church with C.15 tower; additions of the 1830s; restoration and enlargements of 1887. Squared sandstone, with rubble stone to the nave and chancel, tile roofs. North aisle of brick with slate roof. Aisled nave with lower and narrower chancel, south-west tower and north-east organ chamber. The Perpendicular 3-stage tower has set-back buttresses in the lower 2 stages, and an embattled parapet. In the lower stage is a blocked chamfered south doorway and 3-light west window. The second stage has a west clock-face and small south window, and in the upper stage are 2-light bell openings.	  








Area 1 Manor Road/Boon Street		
Cider Mill Cottage (Strathaven) Boon Street	C.17 timber frame and brick cottage with stone plinth. Thatched roof with eyebrow dormers. Casements.	
Ivy Cottage Boon Street	C.17 timber framed cottage with painted brick noggin, Thatched roof with eyebrow dormer. Casements.	
Furwell Cottage Boon Street	C.17. Timber framed cottage with plastered infilling, Thatched roof with eyebrow dormers. Modern windows with leaded lights. Timber frame porch.	
Anchor Cottage Boon Street	Late C.16. Timber frame with whitened brick nogging. 2-storeys, Modern casements, End stack. Machine tile roof with gabled ends. Modern addition at rear.	
The Cottage Boon Street	C.17 timber frame and whitened brick nogging. 2-storeys, C18 roof and 1st floor Sashes. Modern porch. Slate roof with gabled ends.	



<p>Glenville Cottage Boon Street</p>	<p>C.17 timber framed cottage largely refaced in brick, Thatched roof with eyebrow dormers. Modern casements, Gable end on to road.</p>	
<p>Mollie Cottage (Philmar) Boon Street</p>	<p>C.17 timber frame and whitened brick nogging. 1-storey and attic. Modern casements and door. 2 gabled dormers. Machine tile roof with gabled ends. Stone plinth.</p>	
<p>Holly Cottage Mill Lane</p>	<p>C.17. Small timber frame cottage with whitened brick nogging. Machine tile roof with gable ends. Modern brick porch</p>	
<p>Court Gate Cottage Manor Road</p>	<p>C.16 timber framed cottage with cruck construction. Plaster infilling and brick on ground floor. Thatched roof with eyebrow dormers. Modern porch.</p>	
<p>Court Close Farm Manor Road</p>	<p>Late C.18. Red brick. 2-storeys. 3 windows (center blocked). 12 pane sashes, flush boxing. Centre door with ogee arch. Brick dentil eaves and string courses. Tile roof. Wing at rear has 2 splayed bays.</p>	



Westering Cottage Manor Road	Formerly Manor Road Cottages. C.17/18 timber frame cottage range with whitened brick nogging. Thatched roof with eyebrow dormers. Modern casements. Modern extension	
Lovelace Cottage Manor Road	Formerly Manor Road Cottages. C.17/18 timber frame cottage range with whitened brick nogging. Thatched roof with eyebrow dormers. Modern casements. Modern extension	
Wayside Cottage Manor Road	C.17 timber framed cottage with white brick nogging. Thatched roof with eyebrow dormers. Stone plinth. Modern casements	
The Manor Manor Road	Mid C.18 brick house with long and short stone quoins. 2-storeys. Sash windows with moulded stone architraves with cambered heads, keystones and bull nosed sills. Doric doorcase with fluted ashlar pilasters and segmental pediment. C19 overhanging slate roof added. Stone plinth, Curved bow window on side elevation.	
Manor Cottage Manor Road	C.17/18 timber frame with C19 gable end and bargeboards. Whitened brick nogging. brick flogging. Gabled dormer, Casements. Tile roof.	



Lower End House Manor Road	C.16/17. Timber framed and roughcast with whitened brick nogging. Projecting gable end of cross wing has overhang on east side. Gabled dormer. Tile roof.	
Piecing Cottage (Anchor Cottage listing) Drakesbridge Road	Late C.16. Timber frame with whitened brick nogging. 2-storeys, Modern casements, End stack. Machine tile roof with gabled ends. Modern addition at rear.	
Area 2 – Church Street		
The Old Post Office Church Street	Timber framed house with C19 slate brick infilling and sash windows. Formerly an inn. All the listed buildings in Village Street (West Side) form a group	
Homestead (The Farmhouse) Church Street	C.17 and C.18. Roughcast. Projecting gabled wing on left. 2-storeys. Casements. 2 gabled dormers. Flush panelled door. Machine tile roof. Modern chimneys	
The Crown Inn Church Street	C.18. Roughcast. 2-storeys. 3 windows. Mullion transom casements on 1st floor, sash and multipane bowed window on ground. Centre flush panelled door, rectangular fanlight and hood, Old tile roof with gable ends. Carriage entrance on left. Group value	



Trinity House Church Street	Early C.19. Red brick. 2-storeys. Slate roof with gable end on to road with 16-pane sashes, molded cases, stucco lintels. Group value.	
The White House (Church View) Church Street	C.18 and early C.19. Stucco. 2-storeys. 4 windows, sashes with glazing bars, panelled door, fanlight. Left hand return wall has old casements, bay window and 2 gabled dormers. Hipped tile roof. Group value.	
Sunnycot Church Street	C.17/18 timber framed cottage range with brick nogging. Tile roof. Casements. Modern dormers and chimneys. Projecting gable on right.	
Peace Haven Church Street	C.17/18 timber framed cottage range with brick nogging. Tile roof. Casements. Modern dormers and chimneys. Projecting gable on right.	
Church Gate House Church Street	Early C.19. Red brick. 2-storeys. 3 widely spaced sashes with stucco lintels. Shop on left. Centre door with open pediment and arched fanlight with radial bars. Brick dentil eaves. Slate roof. Group value.	








Ilex House Church Street	Early C.19. Red brick. 2-storeys. 2 windows. Sashes, glazing bars, stucco lintels. Door on left hand return with moulded architrave and lattice work porch, rectangular fanlight. Group value.	
Orchard Cottage Church Street	C.17/18. timber framed cottage with white brick nogging. 2 modern dormers. Modern casements. Machine tile roof with gabled ends.	
Bay Cottage Church Street	Early C.19. Stucco, 2-storeys. 2 windows. Casements with horizontal glazing bars. Centre door. Slate roof with gabled ends. At rear is C17 timber frame with thatch roof.	
Area 3 – Jarvis Street/Pass Street		
Thatch Cottage (Cottage in Days Farmyard) Jarvis Street	C.17 timber frame cottage with modern brick nogging and extension. Thatched roof with eyebrow dormers. Casements. Weatherboard at rear. Used as farmyard building. Group value.	
The Thatched Barn (Barn at Days Farm) Jarvis Street	C.17 timber frame, brick nogging and boarded panels. Thatched roof with half hipped end. Group value.	



Yew Tree Cottage Jarvis Street	C.17 timber framed cottage with thatched roof, plaster and painted brick. Modern casements. Stone gable end on to road.	
The Old School House Jarvis Street	Late C.18. Roughcast, 2-storeys. 3 widely spaced windows. Horizontal sliding sashes. Glazed door at centre with modern open porch. Slate roof with gable ends. Group value.	
Betty Panters Cottage Jarvis Street	C.17 timber frame cottage with whitened brick nogging and thatched roof with eyebrow dormers. Modern casements. Modern lean-tos at front.	
The Old Cottage (Cottage Occupied by Brown) Jarvis Street	Late C.17. Roughcast, 2-storeys. 2 windows. Casements with glazing bars. Centre door. Machine tile roof with gabled ends with large stone stack. Group value.	
2 Jarvis Street	C.17 Roughcast, ground floor and stone foundation. Ledged doors and modern casements. Tile roof with gable end on to road	





1-3 Jarvis Street	C.17 timber frame range of cottages with close set studding on ground floor and stone foundation. Ledged doors and modern casements. Tile roof with gable end on to road.	
Elm House Jarvis Street	C.17 stone built house faced in brick on garden front with 2-storeys and 6 sash windows. Sundial over central door dated 1728. Tile roof with 3 dormers. At the back are 3 gables with original leaded lights. 6 panelled door.	
The Old House Jarvis Street	C.17 timber framed house with gabled cross wing and exposed timber framing. Main part refaced in brick, 3-light casements. Tile roof.	
The Old House Barn Jarvis Street	C.17 barn. Timber frame and modern brick. Tile roof. Including adjoining long range of thatched outbuildings. Group value.	
Silk Mill Row School Lane	C.17 range of timber frame cottages with stone gable end. Brick nogging. Thatch roof with 4 eyebrow dormers. Casements	






Glebe Cottage School Lane	C.17 timber frame cottage. Whitened brick nogging. Modern lead light casements. 3 gabled dormers. Modern doors. Tile roof with gabled ends	
Quietways Pass Street	C.17 timber framed cottage with thatched roof with 3 eyebrow dormers, 1-storey and attic. Casements. Restored and extended.	
Parishes Cottage (The Cottage) Pass Street	C.17 timber framed cottage with brick infill panels and stone plinth. Eaves heightened later, now with low-pitched concrete tile roof with gabled ends. Two storeys. Three window range. Circa early C19 three and two-light casements. Panelled door to left of centre with flat hood. Brick end chimney stacks.	
Willow Pond Pass Street	C.17. Timber framed and whitened brick cottage. Tile-roof. 3 gabled dormers. Casements. Later brick wing projecting on left. Stone plinth.	
Willow Pond Barn Pass Street	C.17. Timber framed barn. Tile-roof. Stone plinth.	








Little Thatch New Road	Formerly Green Bank. Small C.17 timber framed and whitened brick cottage with thatched roof with eyebrow dormers 1-storey and attic, Casements.	
Beehive Cottage New Road	Small C.17 timber frame cottage, Thatched roof with eyebrow dormer. Modern casements. External brick chimney with oven.	



Area 4 – Upper End/Woollas Hall

The Cottage (Mr Roberts Cottage) Upper End	C.17 cottage. Timber frame and plaster. Thatched roof with half hipped gable ends. Casements. Roughcast gable end. Stone stack.	
Rose Cottage Upper End	C.17 timber framed cottage with whitened brick nogging. Tile roof with gabled ends. 2 gabled dormers. Casements. Bay on ground floor with tile roof. Modern additions at rear.	
Arden Cottage (Orchard Cottage) Upper End	C.17 cottage. Timber frame and whitened brick nogging, Thatch roof with 3 modern eyebrow dormers. Modern casements, Thatched porch.	



The Croft Upper End	C.17 timber frame faced in C19 brick. Casements with segmental heads. Thatched roof with 3 eyebrow dormers. Gable end with exposed timbers possibly a cruck. Chimney on end and stone chimney at centre	
Woollas Hall	1611. Ashlar. Irregular mansion of 3-storeys. The front has a large gabled cross wing and 3 narrower bays with gables over the attic lights. 2-storey porch wing projects with round-headed entrance, keystone and imposts and is flanked by stopped strap pilasters supporting moulded cornice inscribed "Memorare Novissima". Above this is a mullioned 5-light window and above again a mullioned and transomed 10-light oriel window. The parapet of the porch like all the gables is surmounted by finials, The cross wing has a bay window tiered over 3-storeys. 12-light windows light the Hall. On the south is a drawing room added in early C18. The house contains a screened hall with gallery, panelling and enriched fireplaces. The mansion is divided into various freeholds.	 
The Bungalow (Rear Outbuildings) Woollas Hall	C.17 stone. Irregular single storey building with several irregularly disposed stone mullioned windows with labels	
The Malt House (Brew House) Woollas Hall	1611. Contemporary brewhouse adjoining Woollas Hall on south. Stone.	



<p>Church House (The Stables) Woollas Hall</p>	<p>Early C.17. Ashlar. Single storey plus attics. 2 mullioned and transomed 6-light windows. Stone 4-centred arched doorway. 3 gabled dormers with finials. Unlighted single storey wings.</p>	
<p>Woollas Hall Farm Woollas Hall</p>	<p>Late C.18 stone built farmhouse with 2-storeys and attics and basement. 3 sash windows. Long and short flush stone quoins. Stone slate roof with small hipped dormers</p>	

December 2016



Eckington Neighbourhood Plan

Appendix 2

Placecheck Survey Report

Background

In 2014 at the request of the Eckington Parish Council the parish community embarked on a programme to create a Neighbourhood Plan. Its purpose was to obtain the wishes and aspirations of the population and produce an evidence based document that would assist the Wychavon District Planners in the future development of their Parish. As part of this process it was necessary to undertake an assessment of the housing stock in the Parish and analyse the environment and status of its condition.

Methodology

In order to produce an evidential report it was decided to follow the survey protocols contained in the Placecheck programme created by English Heritage. A small working party of informed villagers undertook to manage the process of the survey. It was decided that there were three areas identified by the Conservation Area Assessment and it was decided that these should be used within the village as it was acknowledged that they did appear to have similar and distinct characteristics in each. A fourth area was also considered to cover those peripheral areas of the Parish not covered by the Conservation zone. All each survey areas was designed to be efficiently covered in half day walk rounds.

It was therefore decide to undertake four separate surveys with some of the volunteers attending all four surveys and new volunteers being introduced on each to give both continuity and fresh input to the process. The four surveys were undertaken within a two week period and the resulting discussions were minuted to form an audit trail. The group then deliberated on the four surveys and determined issues of commonality for the Parish as a whole. This report included the extracts from the four surveys where brief comments were noted not in any priority order. The conclusions are those matters that were considered to be influential in compiling The Neighbourhood Plan and will be included as auditable evidence towards the preparation of it.

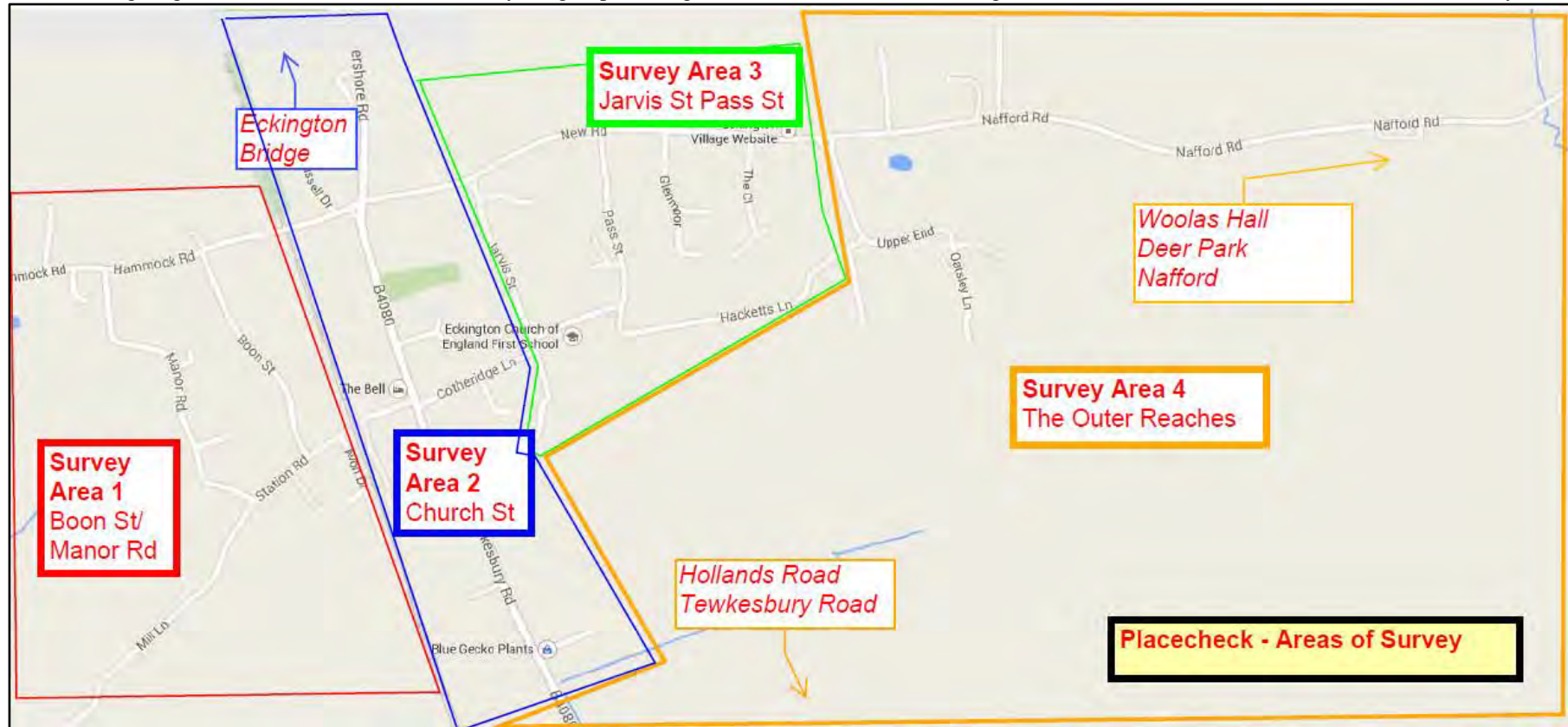
Participants

Peter Townley (Co-ordinator)	George Glaze	John Smith
John Powles	Phillip King	Colin Chapman
John Holder	Ian Pickford	Pierre du Toit



Scope

The following diagram indicates the areas identified by the group as being of individual character and designated as the extent of each of the four individual surveys.





Matters of Note

1. Survey 1 Meeting

Held on:

16th December 2014

Matters of Note (not in any order of priority)

- 1.1. There was full agreement that the area surveyed had a particularly “rural” perspective that was felt core to the culture and ambiance of the village and should be protected
- 1.2. It was noted that although the area selected had a common character the style of architecture was highly diverse and covered many hundreds of years of history
- 1.3. Despite the variation in construction styles all buildings were fitted into space available at the time and created a variety that was both pleasing and synergistic
- 1.4. Housing density was consistently of a rural nature and a common feature was noted as being the creation and feeling of space even on the newer constructs
- 1.5. There was clear evidence of “defensible boundaries” in all areas albeit without the use of high fencing or borders creating barriers to entry. Where apparent boundary markers were constructed of natural and sympathetic materials such as stone or hedging and this contributed greatly to the feeling of space and accessibility.
- 1.6. On street car parking was demonstrably problematic particularly in Boon Street where the issue had developed into a serious issue with large vehicles, particularly emergency vehicles had found it impossible to access sites without serious delay as a result
- 1.7. It was noted that the major parking problems emanated from the older building that had no provision for on site parking with no alternative areas being available in the area
- 1.8. Serious concern was noted with regard to the railway bridge in Drakesbridge Road as if any serious damaged were to occur to the bridge that required it to be taken out of service then over a quarter of the villagers would effectively be cut-off from any road services to and from their homes until full repairs had been effected
- 1.9. This bridge was also noted as being incapable of accepting two cars passing at the same time and any weight restriction was unknown
- 1.10. It was considered that the rural nature of the district was a major attraction with many stunning views and aspects surrounding the area. It was therefore surprising how few points of access were available for individuals to access the countryside with Mill Lane being the only point of access for the whole area
- 1.11. It was clear that the area was a particularly “friendly” area with a strong community feel. It was felt that the open access from the properties was a significant part of this characteristic as people could walk and talk to each other without crossing hard barriers to access.
- 1.12. Where new builds had been introduced in each area it was apparent that these had been in small developments with a high level of individuality and sympathy in the design
- 1.13. Even where larger sites have been developed such as Avon Drive the creation of space in the design layout has led to the area being easily personalised and absorbed
- 1.14. Virtually all new properties had been set far back from the road offering adequate on site parking and enhancing the open nature of free space in the area
- 1.15. It was apparent that there was no street litter on the pavements
- 1.16. Pavements around the area were considered poor with many truncating with no drop down kerbs. This is a problem for elderly or disabled people to manage.
- 1.17. The corner of Boon Street and Drakesbridge Road is particularly hazardous with narrow and truncated pavements delivering into parked cars.



- 1.18. The rural aspect of the village was heavily tarnished by the extensive overhead electric and telephone cables strung across the streets. It was not known if these could be buried underground
- 1.19. It was felt that street furniture and seating could be used to enhance the community interaction and to act as informal barriers to obstructing the roadway
- 1.20. Some concern was voiced however regarding the potential for street furniture to provide a focus for younger people to congregate and cause nuisance

Building Materials

- 1.21. The housing stock has been built over many hundreds of years offering a wide range of architectural styles. This wide age variation was key to the flexibility of house design but all were characterised by the use of high quality materials in the construction and sympathetic designs being adopted matching small construction units to the locality of any infill

Any Other Business

- 1.22. Discussion was had regarding the possibility in a rapidly aging village as to whether a specific survey should be commissioned to look specifically at safe access for mobility challenged individuals around the streets of the village

2. Survey 2 Meeting

Held on:

20th December 2014

Matters of Note (not in any order of priority)

- 1.1. Eckington Bridge continues to be a major cause of disruption through flooding which has a significant impact on the lives of all of the villagers
- 1.2. The footway between the village and the Recreation Centre that is in constant use by children was seen as inadequate and at certain points such as Pike House potentially dangerous through its narrowness and proximity to the busy road.
- 1.3. The footway between Roman Meadows and the Cross was also of concern as the narrowness and fast sloping of the dropped curbs was seen as hazardous to wheelchair and buggy users
- 1.4. Street ironwork in the pavement had also become hazardous and raise above the pavement surface.
- 1.5. It was noted that the piece of land immediately behind the Cemetery had been suggested as potential development. This lies outside the existing building line and would extend the village boundary significantly and change the rural character of the approach to the village from the north fronting three new housing estates in the same area
- 1.6. Roman Meadows was seen as a small pleasant new development having large areas of green spaces in front of the houses and long unbroken vistas to the west behind them. This low density unit had quickly blended into the village profile and contributed to the community particularly as it had been based on affordable housing principles
- 1.7. It is clear that the area between the Cross and the Village Shops was the “heart” of the village and was populated by a wide range of architecture dating from the 12th Century to the present day. The Church at the centre with its imposing Cedar tree in its grounds is the epicentre of the village.
- 1.8. This short stretch of property contains a rich and concentrated variety of house styles and design demonstrating quality architecture over many centuries.
- 1.9. The areas on, and behind, both sides of the road are within the conservation areas and include many properties that are Grade II listed buildings.



- 1.10. Many of the houses, particularly on the west side of Church Street front directly onto the road significantly restricting the footways in places
- 1.11. Double yellow lines on the roadway effectively stop parking in the main street pushing visitor parking onto the already pressured side streets
- 1.12. The approaches to the village centre from both north and south directions are characterised by houses being set well back from the street maintaining an aspect of space in what can easily be recognised as a rural community. This was generally felt to be needed to be maintained.
- 1.13. Hanford Drive was considered as worthy of significant inspection as it was the first expansive housing estate of dense housing stock to come to the village for many years.
- 1.14. The housing is densely packed and provide only very short frontages to the road creating the feeling of compaction and sameness not found elsewhere in the village.
- 1.15. Clearly parking is a major problem with on road parking taking up all of the available frontage and reportedly spilling out onto the main road which is unlit
- 1.16. The housing stock is of a formatted box design leaving little room for individuality to be developed.
- 1.17. External boundaries are marked by high fencing to the rear and sides of properties with little if any differentiation of boundaries in the small front areas.
- 1.18. By comparison the relatively new sites of the Pippins and Ninesquares have maintained the openness of the site with much green space and open perspectives
- 1.19. This has been achieved by restricting the number of properties to no more than five houses on each site and designing modern properties that have low density footprints and quality materials. This has led to a rapid personalisation of the properties quickly blending in to a village of varied and individual homes
- 1.20. There is a major issue with parking around the hub of the Bell, the shops and the more densely populated areas around Station Road. This will constrain any potential development of the existing or future commercial activities
- 1.21. This part of the village maintains its open aspect by using the significant gardens to provide the green space needed to support the rural community feel. These may provide possible areas for future development but only if the core character of the existing community can be preserved in doing so

3. Survey 3 Meeting

Held on:

23rd December 2014

Matters of Note (not in any order of priority)

- 1.1. The area walked again presented a different individuality to previous walks but all agreed that it contained a highly diverse range of property types, density and age of architectural styles
- 1.2. The area was characterised in two distinct areas. The Pass Street, Jarvis Street School Lane area being heavily populated by much older and detached “heritage” properties whereas Hackett’s Lane, Glenmoor and The Close area largely consisted of more modern brick-built units
- 1.3. The core part of Jarvis Street, Pass Street and School Lane lie in the Conservation Area
- 1.4. Despite the variation in housing styles it was apparent that there was common feature of an awareness of open spaces even in the densely populated areas such as The Close
- 1.5. The southerly views from the most southerly edge of Jarvis Street towards the Bredon Hill were remarkable albeit slightly hidden



- 1.6. The new build of the three thatched cottages at 1-3 Jarvis Street were considered excellent examples of how new developments could be entertained in the village which not only fitted in with the heritage feel of the village but also added to the scenic views
- 1.7. The collection of modern and Grade II listed buildings in the surrounding area around the junction of Jarvis Street Cotheridge Lane and School Lane clearly exemplified the wide variety of age and architectural style that typified the survey area as a whole.
- 1.8. School Lane at the point of the School and the Village Hall was clearly identified as a “pinch-point” where traffic/parking issues were both unavoidable given the current lack of any level of traffic restriction and indeed represented a real hazard to the users of the facilities and the surrounding residents
- 1.9. The restricted vision on the road for traffic travelling from School Lane into Hacketts Lane was considered restrictive and unsuitable for any significant traffic increases
- 1.10. Potential land at the rear of the school could be utilised to increase or move the play area and provide additional onsite parking facilities
- 1.11. The housing style in Hacketts lane was typified by red-brick “modern” homes which still managed to demonstrate individuality and variation in presentation.
- 1.12. The views to the South of Hacketts Lane were a strongly attractive feature as they elevated across open countryside to the Bredon Hill. The hedge line however tended to obscure this view from walkers but could be enjoyed from the slightly elevated position of the householders.
- 1.13. The newer houses at the top end of New Road represented the “approach” to the village from the East and although lacking individuality in design never-the-less were set well back from the road behind their gardens and engendered a feeling of open space
- 1.14. The Close, whilst being a sizable modern brick built estate (around 35 homes) with restricted architectural value, still provided a significant amount of amenity space and open aspects that resulted in a pleasant environment albeit in a densely housed area. This master planning of the estate was considered as being good and sympathetic to the village style and clearly superior to the more recent design layout seen in Hanson Drive estate.
- 1.15. Glenmoor was also seen similarly to The Close with adequate parking built into the estate to avoid the on-road parking issues experienced elsewhere and significant open space areas to avoid the appearance of a cramped environment.
- 1.16. The views to the North of New Road towards the Malvern Hills were seen as exceptional and worthy of protection
- 1.17. Pass Street again indicated a good mixture of heritage buildings of a wide age range and design mingled with modern houses all demonstrating a level of design individuality.
- 1.18. Jarvis Street contains a high concentration of older properties rich in architectural heritage mostly built close to the road with newer properties set well back giving no overall prevailing settlement patterns. Never the less providing a strong community feel and village lane aspect.
- 1.19. The closeness of many properties to the road has created an on-road parking issue particularly where the lane narrows and constricts traffic movement
- 1.20. The land behind the Chapel was seen as a haven at the centre of the village and whilst notified as an ancient orchard was not used for any activities.
- 1.21. Jarvis Drive was also identified as a good example of how modern construction design could be introduced into the heart of the village using sympathetic design and layout to enhance and indeed improve the variety of the architectural heritage
- 1.22. After the survey the considered opinion was of an area that typified a vibrant yet peaceful village community that has evolved over many hundreds of years but has managed to retain its culture and village aspect through applying a sympathetic attitude towards new buildings whilst adequately protecting the old.



- 1.23. Despite modern pressures, mostly surrounding on street parking issues, the village has managed to retain its character and open environment

4. Survey 4 Meeting

Held on:

30th December 2014

Matters of Note (not in any order of priority)

- 1.1. The fourth survey noted that the areas seen were again significantly different in character to the previous ones
- 1.2. Note was made of a number of sites on the periphery of the village that could provide potential infill or barn conversion types of development. These were noted.
- 1.3. The easterly views from both Oatsley Lane and Stoney Furlong towards Bredon Hill were recorded as being amongst the most striking seen in the village
- 1.4. Like other parts of the village the properties were a mixture of older heritage type buildings with newer homes
- 1.5. The layout of Upper End induced a feeling of open space with plenty of green areas
- 1.6. The exit from the village along Nafford Road is thinly populated by housing that is set well back from the road behind high hedges. There are fine views across to Bredon Hill but these are generally hidden from the road by these hedges
- 1.7. There is extensive building works being carried out at Crensham House within their boundary which was indefinite in nature.
- 1.8. Further out at Nafford Farm the conversion of the old farmhouse premises is underway offering both living and small commercial opportunities
- 1.9. Woollas Hall offers no possibility for further development. The views from the Bredon Hill of the village are significant and offer a defined vision of a rural community that should be despoiled by inappropriate development
- 1.10. The development of Deer Park into attractive commercial light units indicates the possibility, with careful and sympathetic design, of location such units within the periphery of the Parish should they be required without a major detraction from the rural surroundings

5. Conclusions and Key Points of Reference to the Planning Process

5.1. What do we like about this place?

- 5.1.1. **Rural Feel** – The village has a truly rural feel to it that was core to the culture and ambiance of the village and the wellbeing of its community. At many vantage points around all four edges to the village easy access to countryside accompanied by unspoilt views across vistas of significant interest and beauty made the village a special place to live in
- 5.1.2. **Special Nature** – The special nature of the village has been recognised by the designation of a Conservation Area to the central area of the village where the majority of the heritage properties exist
- 5.1.3. **Surrounding Countryside** – The parish has within its boundaries and is surrounded by areas of unspoilt and notable open farmland and countryside



- 5.1.4. **Heart of the Village** – The heart of the village appears to be the street between the Cross and the shopping area. The 12th Century Church and the imposing cedar tree providing a central backdrop to the area
- 5.1.5. **Rich Heritage** – The village has 57 Grade II listed building within the Parish together with a number of sites of scientific interest and natural beauty protected to recognise the importance of the village to the national interest. The history of the area as a settlement and its properties is recorded through archaeological findings going back over thousands of years. The village has a settlement history of over 2000 years with very many properties dating back to the 17th and 18th centuries still intact and lived in.
- 5.1.6. **Variety of properties** - The village has a wealth of heritage and more modern properties that are sensitively intermixed to provide a dynamic and vibrant community
- 5.1.7. **Space** – The historic “ladder” layout of the village has largely been maintained and with appropriate planning in the past has led to a perception of space and openness that engenders friendly and open interaction of the community
- 5.1.8. **Resources** – The village has a significant level of resources to support the current level of population but any significant increase in population would test its sustainability
- 5.1.9. **Uncluttered Street Scene** – The lack of street lighting and oppressive street signage and advertising hoardings makes for a rural aspect to the streetscape
- 5.1.10. **Diversity** – The diversity of the design of the housing stock and its variable ages creates a pleasant and mature street scene
- 5.1.11. **Character** – The village can be clearly differentiated by areas of characteristic similarity in both buildings and ambiance. This must be recognised when new builds are being considered to ensure these areas maintain their personality
- 5.1.12. **Build Quality** – It is clear from the inspection of the housing stock that despite the variation in age of housing locally sourced good quality materials and design are a constant factor in the longevity and good condition of the housing stock
- 5.1.13. **Individuality** – The housing regardless of age have all been capable of receiving a high level of personalisation without detracting from the cohesion of the street-scape
- 5.1.14. **Housing Density** – With the exception of the newest developments it is notable that the density of housing was in keeping with a rural community and presented a spacious and relaxed atmosphere where all ages of housing exists side-by-side in harmony
- 5.1.15. **Boundary Markers** – There is a common feature of open planning using green/garden space to set houses back from roads creating an appearance of space. There is little evidence of high fencing or inappropriate wooden slatted fencing outside of the new estates
- 5.1.16. **Boundary Materials** – Where boundary markers are used they largely low level and use a wide range of natural materials such as stone that assists the blending of these into the streetscape
- 5.1.17. **Approaches** – The approaches from all three directions are characterised by more modern houses set well back from the road providing a pleasant spacious scene identifying the village as a rural community and setting the entry to the history-laden centre of the village
- 5.1.18. **Amiable Environment** – The street scene struck the surveyors as offering a particularly pleasant, friendly and safe environment with a strong community feeling
- 5.1.19. **Quiet** – There was a noticeable hush to the village and despite there being a lot of residents and visitors walking about the streets exhibited a peaceful and quiet nature and relaxed atmosphere



- 5.1.20. **Views** – All four boundaries to the village offer imposing views across open land to such national landmarks as the Bredon Hill, Malvern Hills, the River Severn and the Vale of Evesham. All of these are accessible for walking and leisure activities. The views from the high point of Woollas Hall over the village are truly stunning
- 5.1.21. **Special Value Status** – Contained within the Parish are numerous site of architectural, archaeological or scientific interest protected by Heritage statute

5.2. What do we dislike about this place?

- 5.2.1. **Parking** – On-street parking is clearly a growing problem on the streets and approaching critical in certain roads
- 5.2.2. **Traffic** - The main street through the village is prone to both heavy lorries and speeding cars creating potential hazards to residents
- 5.2.3. **Unsuitable developments** – The recent introduction of relatively high density housing estates comprising of inappropriately designed townhouse type housing with little green space or parking has led to potential isolation from the community as a whole and slow absorption
- 5.2.4. **Parking Constraints** – Double yellow lines down both sides of the main street force visitors onto side road parking increasing the issues of on-street parking
- 5.2.5. **School Drop-off** - The road congestion and lack of safe drop-off points close to the school create a real and significant hazard to this crucial area of neighbourhood activity
- 5.2.6. **Flooding** – Eckington Bridge, the main entrance to the village, floods regularly completely cutting off the main approach throwing traffic onto secondary country roads which are inappropriate to carry the heavy traffic
- 5.2.7. **Footpaths** – A number of footways in the village are in poor condition and at points present a potential hazard to children and people with reduced mobility
- 5.2.8. **Drakesbridge Road Bridge** - This represents a major strategic issue as being the only access point for 1/3rd of the villagers. If closed, for any reason, their needs to be a contingency to enable access across the rail line

5.3. What Needs to Happen?

The Parish have entered into the creation of the Eckington Neighbourhood Plan - 2015. The findings resulting from the Placecheck survey will be fed directly into the evidence gathering phase of the programme. The process will then assess the issues highlighted by the survey alongside the other elements of data being collected to produce a cohesive and community supported solution to the issues raised and take account of the inherent values identified that require protection as a community.

Many thanks to those volunteers that took time and gave their expertise to produce this document.