

POLICY ON STONE WALLING AND BOUNDARY TREATMENTS IN BISLEY-WITH-LYPIATT PARISH Issued by Bisley-with-Lypiatt Parish Council.

Date 1 December 2020.

Bisley-with-Lypiatt Village Design Statement November 2010.

‘Bisley-with-Lypiatt Parish lies between Stroud and Cirencester on the Cotswold escarpment. There are three main settlements: the villages of Bisley, Eastcombe and Oakridge. There are also numerous hamlets including Bismore, Lower Nashend, Bournes Green, Waterlane, Tunley, Througham, Stancombe, Catswood and Lypiatt.’

‘The Parish reflects broadly the old road pattern and field boundaries that linked the villages, farms and smaller settlements within the valleys. There is an abundance of footpaths and other rights of way within the Parish, including many footways and cut-throughs from one part of a village to another, a feature which is particularly characteristic of the villages in the Stroud valleys.’

A BRIEF BACKGROUND

Stone walls line the roads, footpaths and gardens and are a key character feature. The stone is quarried within the parish or local to it, which has resulted in a uniformity of the pale colour of the limestone known as ‘inferior Oolite in the Toadsmoor Valley’ whilst the Great Oolite, a stronger limestone lies over it on the plateau. Stone of the north Cotswolds which is golden is not in our local character .

The settlements developed from the late 17c to 19c.

Stone walls bound the fields. The network of narrow tracks or footpaths that run through the settlements similarly have this treatment and gardens of older properties.

With the steep slopes, many of these are retaining walls to keep back the soils, whilst also forming enclosure for stock.

Many garden walls are in good repair, whilst walls in wooded areas have collapsed , but these can take on a sylvan mossy appearance which is attractive and offer habitats. Others, particularly agricultural field and road boundaries are lengthy and hence expensive to restore.

DRIVERS for this policy.

- A number of stone walls are falling into disrepair in the parish and need to be restored as soon as possible before repair is not feasible or they become a danger to the public.
- Grant opportunities are coming forward for which we would like to apply.
- Suburbanisation: Encouragement of garden and agricultural and estate landowners to restore and create more dry stone walls and avoid a suburban appearance coming into our rural parish with inappropriate materials.
- Updating of the Bisley with Lypiatt Village Design Statement 2010 to the Neighbourhood Development Plan.
- The Government White paper: Planning for the Future- its requirement for local Design Codes.
- Recent planning applications have included changes to the boundary treatment and a lack of conditions imposed, has meant that no enforcement has been possible.

REASONS FOR OUR POLICY:-

- To retain the heritage and local character.
- To maintain the dry stone walls which are a key feature of the wider Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- To encourage the continuation of stone walling skills and employment in the area.
- To educate and develop links with schools to bring young people into the trade.

Types of stone walling in the parish.

Dry stone walls are predominant, made up of layered brash –limestone layers that occur naturally, or rough hewn stone quarried locally. Preparatory work involves clearing the top soil and leaf litter and laying a stone foundation onto which two parallel and battered walls are built up, becoming narrow at the top. No mortar is used and the void is filled with small stones.



Retaining wall with stone quoins. Baptist Chapel Manse wall, Eastcombe with narrow layers of brash and flat stone capping.

Ashlar garden walls form the boundary of finer historic houses.

Cappings/copings

Both provide protection from rain driving down and destabilising the wall.

Capping will project beyond the edges of the upper horizontal stones. Coping will rest on them in line with the vertical planes.

Broad stones may be placed either horizontally or vertically set in mortar. There are both in the parish. Occasionally curved concrete will be laid across the top. Concrete slabs have been used but are inappropriate.



Typical and well constructed stone wall showing stepped design and curved wall. Note the fine gate post. One of the best examples of stone walling in Eastcombe, and by Henry Hook's company.



Saddleback stone coping on Baptist Chapel wall, showing stepped design with stone tie. Henry Hook was building c 1860's and also built walls of The Laurels, Rose Cottage and Pretoria Villa.

Gateway piers exist on historic properties. Where possible we welcome reinstatement to their current design, rather than replace with concrete or timber posts.

Gates and ironmongery.

A number of gates in the Arts and Crafts tradition are fine examples of creative and unique gateways. Encouragement of innovative gates is in keeping with our tradition.

Fine gates in the Arts and Crafts style.



Gate considered to be designed and made by Norman Bucknell who was the last of the second generation of Cotswold arts and crafts movement of designer/ makers. The enclosure wall are high with glimpses through to the garden.



Arts and crafts style gate, by W.R.Pankhurst of Oakridge, who believes in keeping alive the arts and crafts tradition. Gate has a rose motif set within stone entrance of unknown date.

Railings



Railings set into a low stone wall, Victorian gateposts and stone wall with vertical stone coping. A rare example, with others in Dr Crouches Road.

GOOD PRACTICE.

Any of the dry stone walling types listed above provide excellent examples for restoration or new build.

Walls should be stepped to follow the gradient of the lanes, streets and footpaths.

Walls built of concrete blockwork should be faced with natural Cotswold stone and tied into the retaining or upstand wall behind it.

Inappropriate boundary treatment:

Concrete- open decorative patterned.

Block – artificial reconstituted stone.

High timber fencing above 1m. Any boundary adjacent to a highway can only be 1m high as permitted development.

You can put in boundaries without planning permission only if

- no part of the site is a listed building or within the curtilage of a listed building.
- no part of the fence, wall, gate or any other boundary involved, forms a boundary with a neighbouring listed building or its curtilage.
- the right to put up or alter fences, walls and gates has not been removed by an article four direction (Bisley itself has an Article 4 Direction) or a planning condition.

If any of these conditions are not met, then you will need to apply for planning permission.

If your development site is in a conservation area you cannot demolish any gate, fence, wall or other means of enclosure with:

- a height of one metre or more if next to a highway (including a public footpath or bridleway), waterway or open space; or
- a height of two metres or more elsewhere.

Please see Planning Portal for updates.

ALTERNATIVE APPROPRIATE BOUNDARY TREATMENTS

Stone walls with hedging planted behind them, provide more privacy by increasing the height of an expensive 1m height stone wall. Within the villages the hedges can be clipped and formal using for example, beech, holly or yew which are local to this parish.



Stone wall with vertical stone capping. Evergreen hedge set behind and clipped to form an enticing view of the villa.

Hedging alone as a boundary in residential areas.

Beech hedging although deciduous maintains dry brown leaves for partial privacy.

Evergreen hedging tends to be slower growing.

Any hedge must be trimmed to maintain sight lines at road junctions.

Fencing

Agricultural stock fencing- post and wire, or half round timber post and rail are used here.



Eastcombe allotments



Stile to Bismore Farm

POLICY CONTEXT

- Current stone walling restoration that has been commenced on parish land under the Parish Council.
- Cotswold AONB Management Plan 2018-2023 and as updated.
- Bisley-with Lypiatt Village Design Statement 2010

- Take good practice guidance from the Princes Trust that supports young people with traditional skills.

POLICY

The Parish Council currently pays to restore walls on its own land and also promotes restoration by welcoming opportunities to work alongside other landowners, including farmers, and estate owners and points them in the direction of grants that become available.

We strongly encourage any landowners to provide walling that this Good Practice covers, subject to its construction and location being in accordance with any legal obligations.