

EASTCOMBE CONSERVATION AREA: LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL APPRAISAL.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- APPRAISAL OF THE CONSERVATION AREA, ITS HISTORIC CHARACTER.
- PRESERVATION OF ITS RURAL SETTING AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF ITS CHARACTER.
- PROTECTION OF ITS VIEWS AND VISTAS.
- PROVISION OF DESIGN CODE WITH ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS DISTINCTIVE TO EASTCOMBE/COTSWOLDS.
- ISSUES, MITIGATION, PRESERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT.

ASPIRATIONS

- INCREASE PROTECTION FROM HOUSING ON ITS FRINGE.
- CONTINUE THE TRADITION OF ORCHARDS AND GARDEN FRUIT TREES.
- IMPROVE PARKING AND ACCESS FOR VEHICLES.
- DRAFT POLICIES TO BE CONSULTED UPON BY RESIDENTS.

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PART I: INTRODUCTION

This appraisal of the **CONSERVATION AREA No 38-EASTCOMBE** was carried out over a period of nine months, taking in autumn 2020 and completing by early May 2021 for further public engagement on the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

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Issued to the Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group.

It was adopted on

Placed on the Bisley-with-Lypiatt and the Neighbourhood Development Plan websites on.....

Publication date.....

1.1 NATURE AND PURPOSE OF A LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL APPRAISAL.

- **To appraise the Conservation Area, its special qualities, its component parts and its boundaries.**
- To become a Supplementary Planning Document- a material consideration in addressing planning applications.
- To underpin the Design Code of the embryonic Government White paper: Planning for the Future August 2020.
- To preserve and enhance the Conservation Area and protect the landscape setting that is integral to its special character.
- To consider aspirations.
- To consider existing Parish Council policies within the Bisley with Lypiatt Village Design Statement November 2010 and make proposals to update them within the ongoing Neighbourhood Development Plan. It was previously based on the policies of the Local Plan 2005 which have now been replaced by the Local Plan 2015, now under review, *'entirely, and now provides a positive planning policy framework for the District for the period up to 2031:* to cross check with the most recent Stroud District Council policies.
- To be a document as an Appendix/Annexe to the proposed Neighbourhood Development plan, Vision 2030, now in progress for discussion with residents.
- To provide further detailed information in appendices of this document.

1.2 DRIVERS FOR THIS APPRAISAL.

The area is highly sensitive to any change, and in particular need of preservation, with Government requirements for housing numbers to be increased and proposed major restructuring of the planning system in The Government White Paper: Planning for the Future August 2020.

There is also pressure by others, to live in a unique area with incredible views, requesting new dwellings as infill within gardens. Any proposal for new building or extensions could cause harm and any planning application should note that preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the locality takes precedence over the need for housing. Ref Planning Inspector Fort View Appeal. **APPENDIX 1 NATIONAL AND LOCAL PLANNING POLICIES.**

Although there is a resident population whose families have historically lived here many years, there has been an influx of retired people who have made their home here. They have been drawn to be with family or by its location as a stepping off point to reach the south west, north to Wales and the Midlands. The demographic range is well covered. The recent Housing Needs Survey Gloucestershire Rural Community Council shows evidence and indicators of age and requirements.

1.3 WHAT IS A CONSERVATION AREA? Background.

The legal definition of a Conservation Area is set out in Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (herein after called 'The Act' as being:-

'an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.'

Conservation Areas are primarily concerned with the built environment. They are not appropriate as a means of protecting landscape features except where they form an integral part of the historic built environment.'

Introduction to Conservation Area Statement- Conservation Area Bisley-no 6.

See also **APPENDIX No. I NATIONAL AND LOCAL PLANNING POLICY.**

BACKGROUND TO DESIGNATION.

Bisley-with-Lypiatt Parish Council undertook a **Parish Plan 2006-** *'a central government initiative, developed by the Countryside Agency, to consult people and involve them in the process of decision-making in their parish.'*

'This booklet results from the joint efforts of Bisley-with-Lypiatt and Miserden residents who have worked together, supported by the Parish Councils, to make a 'Parish Plan'. It is a snapshot taken in 2005 and illustrates opinions on current issues as well as showing the different weight given to concerns across the area. It will be updated from time to time as is necessary, and will be followed very soon by the next stage of consultation, the 'Village Design Statement', which will focus more on the built environment and will ask for parishioners' views on what their area looks like and how they think it should develop or change in the future.' Parish Plan 2006.

This covers all aspects including Landscape and Environment.

'Bisley Conservation Area (No. 6), issued by Stroud District Council, was first designated in November 1975 and was subsequently reviewed in 1997, at which time a number of amendments were made to the Conservation Area boundary. The original boundary and the 1997 amendments are both illustrated in Map 1' of the most recent Conservation Area Statement- Conservation Area Bisley-no 6. Adopted June 2007. Bisley itself was divided into two Sub Areas, the core of the village and the outer more open and leafy areas on the outskirts.

Eastcombe lies within the parish of Bisley- with- Lypiatt and currently enjoys protection under the Bisley Village Design Statement November 2010. This identifies Eastcombe's Conservation Area location and quotes its special qualities. It references Bisley-With-Lypiatt Parish Appraisal 1998 – 2000.

Eastcombe Conservation Area, however, has not been reviewed recently.

Whilst both the village of Bisley and Eastcombe have historic buildings of architectural interest, Eastcombe also is distinctive in its setting of a farmed and wooded landscape which forms an integral part of its character.

CONSERVATION AREA No 38-EASTCOMBE was designated in January 1991. There have been no boundary changes since its original designation. There is no adopted Conservation Area Statement for it. Ref. Stroud District Council website.

A further conservation area is shown within Eastcombe Ward- Industrial Heritage Conservation Area. Toadsmoor Lake in the ward is within this.

The formative 'Stroud Residential Design Guide' November 2000 has detailed design of what has come to be known as the 'Cotswold style', covering materials and detailed design in depth. This does include suggested urban street layouts which **do not** apply to Eastcombe.

The Stroud Local Plan 2015 and its current Review have since shown potential housing locations, and sensitivity of landscapes, protecting character and tranquillity.

1.4 A SUMMARY OF THE IMPLICATIONS FOR MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY.

‘Conservation Area – is an area of special historic and/or architectural interest which is designated by the local planning authority as being important to conserve and enhance. Special planning controls apply within these areas.’

Stroud District Council. GLOSSARY LOCAL PLAN 2015.

The implications for anyone living in a Conservation Area are both individual responsibility and supporting the community by caring for the buildings, public spaces and one’s care for a private garden. Those specific characteristics that are the basis for its designation should be preserved and enhanced. By doing one’s own part in retaining these aspects, one is belonging to and caring for this community.

Consideration of the community as a whole and its well-being is at the core of a successfully managed Conservation Area. Bisley with Lypiatt Parish Council welcomes and encourages residents who support it particularly in the following ways:-

- Awareness of the Conservation Area and your responsibilities.
- Upkeeping your dwelling: a home or business premises.
- Caring for gardens for yourself and others to enjoy.
- Maintaining verges to sustain wild flora, unless where sight lines at road junctions are hindered.
- Protecting and restoring private boundaries- dry stone walls, hedges or hedgerows. Fencing is not appropriate.
- Helping us to plant more trees in gardens, particularly fruit trees which are traditional here.
- Avoiding undue noise and making bonfires in areas of tranquillity and clean air.
- Parking considerately.
- Protecting your recycling and litter from being distributed by winds.

Bisley-with-Lypiatt Parish Council maintain public space, including the Village Green, and recreational spaces beyond the CA including sports pitches, playground and allotments, and share maintenance of the burial ground.

Awareness of the Conservation Area and your responsibilities and adherence to the legal and planning implications:-

- **Planning applications are required in Eastcombe for construction**, both new build and extensions. A full description under ‘Historic Settlement Pattern’ and ‘Architectural Interest and Built Form’ is given below.
- **A Planning Application is also required for tree work** for trees that have a trunk diameter of more than 75mm when measured at 1.5m from ground level (or more than 100mm if reducing the number of trees to benefit the growth of other trees).
- **Permitted development Rights:**
‘Town and Country Planning General Development Order (GDO 1988) requires planning applications for certain types of development in conservation areas which are elsewhere classified as ‘permitted development’.
B. C. A.S. 2007

Owners are advised to check with Stroud District Planning Department for updates on their requirements, before undertaking any work.

Parish Council policies and guidance may be found on their website. www.bisley-with-lypiatt.gov.uk:

Dark Skies

Tree Management Policy

Stone Walling and Boundary Treatments.

Hedgerow Policy

Guidance-Suggestions for Tree Planting in Eastcombe

Queries on any aspects above should be addressed to The Clerk, Bisley-with-Lypiatt Parish Council.

Highways issues are under the authority of Gloucestershire County Council.

1.5 THE PURPOSE OF A CONSERVATION AREA STATEMENT.

*‘Conservation Area Statements - the central consideration in designating a conservation area is primarily the relationship between buildings, and the spaces between them, rather than the individual buildings. An historic street pattern, village green, archaeological features, along with walls, railings, paving, street furniture and trees and hedges can all be important to the place’s character. **The Conservation Area Statement is prepared to assist with the management of the Conservation Area. It identifies the features that give the area its special character and appearance, provides best-practice advice and contains management proposals. It is a material consideration when considering planning proposals.**’*

Stroud District Council. GLOSSARY LOCAL PLAN 2015

This document aims ‘to identify what makes up the ‘special interest’ of the area and define its ‘character and appearance.....

‘visual appearance of an area is often the cumulative effect of many influences. The appearance is frequently the aspect that most people relate to in terms of defining what is of special interest and worth preserving or enhancing.’

Conservation Area Statement- Conservation Area Bisley-no 6.June 2007 B.C.A.S.

1.6 SCOPE OF THE STUDY AREA

APPENDIX No. 3 Figure 1 BASELINE.

The scope of the study area includes both the historic core which comprises the Conservation Area but also its setting in its natural context of steep scarp slope of the Cotswold Escarpment, combs, open fields, woodlands steep valley, and its water courses on its north and west side.

It embraces the dominant skyline and distant views to Lypiatt and far distant view of the Wiltshire Downs and the Brecon Beacons.

It also relates to the built up twentieth century estates that abut it along its southern edge.

It addresses its symbiotic and integral relationship with the remainder of the village, its public open recreational spaces and secondary school on its outskirts.

1.7 CONSULTATION AND PROCESS

- To relay current experience of the Conservation Area from within it and from beyond its boundary.
- To draw together local knowledge, past and current.
- To consider outcomes of the Neighbourhood Development Plan Workshop: the table of residents’ responses to landscape is included within this text.

This ‘Landscape and Visual Appraisal’ brings together the different strands from existing historic and academic research, a consideration of planning documents, current observation, and local knowledge, underpinned by historic images. The process has drawn on residents’ enthusiasm. During this draft text, a new ‘Eastcombe and Bismore History Group’ was formulated as a digital platform for both this purpose and as the foundation of an embryonic local history group. A wealth of archival photographs, stored for sharing with the community, are now being experienced and discussed. It has opened the doors to a new method of communicating in this time of the pandemic.

The earlier appraisal for Eastcombe, carried out by Juliet Shipman, a resident and historian, was not included within the Bisley-with-Lypiatt Village Design Statement of 2010. This appraisal and recommendations have been considered and quoted in the text of this document. ‘Houses in the Conservation Area’, ‘Places of Worship in the Parish of Bisley’, and ‘The Village Setting,’ were written over the period of 2009-2010. Although it has not been published, it contains important photographs highlighting details of buildings. Photographs have been taken in 2020 and 2021; these have been included and compared to those of 2009-2010, and archived images and postcards.

Landscape is dynamic, it does not continue as a museum piece but is constantly evolving as man works on it, whether it is on building or tending the land and its components as can be seen in these views. Vistas have been identified from both recognised and important viewpoints, and from those less known. These are identified in

APPENDIX No. 3 FIGURE 2 Views and Vistas

APPENDIX No. 4 PHOTOGRAPHS

A professional photographer has also been commissioned to take these and many images throughout the text using a Sony DSC-HX60.

An i-phone has also been used to capture these whilst out walking by the author.

In order to provide a close up of architectural details, some images have been cropped.

Seasonal and atmospheric effects have been taken into account and have not been modified by Photoshop.

A Zone of **Visual Influence** has been drawn initially from topographical maps and then images taken in the field during winter and spring of 2020-2021.

1.8 LOCATION OF EASTCOMBE CONSERVATION AREA AND PLANNING PRECEDENT.

APPENDIX No. 3 FIGURE 1 BASELINE illustrates boundaries of the Conservation Area, the Eastcombe Settlement Limit and Eastcombe Ward, and Parish Boundary, all within the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

It comprises of both the built environment, and green spaces of garden plots, verges and footpaths, Village Green, burial ground, pasture, woodland, and spring.

The Conservation Area comprises mainly clusters of old cottages with interspersed Victorian villas on the hillside and the lower slope at Bismore, but excludes Kitlye and Hawkley.

The fields overlook and drop down to another protected area, a further Conservation Area shown within the ward boundary. This is Toadsmoor Conservation Area, which includes Toadsmoor Lake and a small length of rural valley which lies within this ward boundary but the majority of which is set within Brimscombe and Thrupp Parish Council's areas of jurisdiction. It is not addressed in the Bisley with Lypiatt Village Design Statement 2010.

The Toadsmoor Lake, part of the Stroud Industrial Heritage Conservation Area is an important visual asset to the community of Eastcombe. The ridge and steep slopes of Lypiatt as far as Bisley, together are in the envelope of visual high sensitivity.

The scenic beauty of the wooded and grazed fields across the valley to Lypiatt Park, Ferris Court Farm and Middle Lypiatt is significant.

Although within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, (Cotswold National Landscapes), it is most under threat from development of varying degrees and types. These 'Issues and Pressures' are discussed and listed in **PART 111 STRATEGY.**

Although the Eastcombe Conservation Area was given designation in 1991, there is no Statement to describe its attributes or any 'Landscape and Visual Appraisal' of its special qualities and beauty.

The Decision Notice on Land at Fort View's Appeal on a newbuild, also notes that '*There is no Conservation Area Statement or appraisal for the area..*'

'I am required to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the locality in a Conservation Area under Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.'

Where the Inspector weighs up housing supply versus preservation or enhancement of the character or appearance of the locality: '*proposal constitutes less than substantial harm as defined by paragraph 196 of the*

National Planning Policy Framework (2019). However, there would be limited public benefit from contribution to housing supply to outweigh the harm.

Ref. Decision notice for Land at Fort View Appeal Decision APP/C1625/W/20/3252363 Yr 2020

APPENDIX 1 NATIONAL AND LOCAL PLANNING POLICIES.

Once given a Conservation Area status, there is a requirement of the local planning office to carry out a review from time to time. Bisley Conservation Area, however, was first designated in November 1975 and reviewed with its boundary amended in 1997.

This document looks at the Eastcombe Conservation Area and land adjacent to it, to see if any further amendments to its boundary should be considered. It will also consider character zones.

There is a review of the Settlement Development Limit pending by Stroud District Council, but this does not follow the same boundary line as the Conservation Area.

PART II: ANALYSIS

As the **Bisley Conservation Area Statement: No. 6 Bisley** well describes the elements that make up reasons for designation, it provides a framework as the basis for this study:-

2.0 THE ANALYSIS OF CHARACTER

*'The aim of this section of the Conservation Area Statement is to define what makes up the **special interest or 'character' of the study area, in order that this may be preserved and enhanced.** Although the character of an area may be very obvious in visual terms, it is about much more than just appearance. History, geography, use and appearance are usually intricately and inextricably linked in the evolution of any settlement, and in the creation of its character.*

The origins

Current or former uses often have implications for the shapes, sizes and types of buildings that are created, and their massing and relationships to each other. Uses can also create distinctive sounds or smells, adding 'life' to the built form.

*The origins and evolution of a settlement may frequently be dependent on its **setting and location:** these may have suggested a particular industrial, defensive or cultural role, for example. Furthermore, **the location almost always dictates the types of materials and building traditions that prevail.***

*The visual appearance of an area is often the cumulative effect of many influences. The appearance is frequently the aspect that most people relate to in terms of defining what is of special interest and worth preserving or enhancing. The appearance may be made up of **locally typical buildings, or structures of great architectural importance**'.*

Conservation Area Statement-Conservation Area No.6. Bisley

The 'Genius Loci' is the prevailing character or atmosphere of a place.

'Character' is defined by not only its buildings and their historic significance and the spaces between them but also and most importantly in Eastcombe, its setting, which together make up the key characteristics of what makes this place special.

DEFINING ITS CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE

'The visual appearance of an area is often the cumulative effect of many influences.' B.C.A.S.

This succinctly sums up the character of the Conservation Area: historic, organic evolution of the cottage settlement, settlement grain /pattern, relationship of plots and size within the context of mature woodland belts; high scenic quality: matrix of hidden paths: significant vistas and views.

These vistas are from Eastcombe Conservation Area across the Toadsmoor Valley to the listed Lypiatt Park landscape and wilderness, along with Ferris Court and Middle Lypiatt, heritage buildings of note. Of equal merit and visual importance is the view from Lypiatt Park, back towards Eastcombe Conservation Area.

'The setting of a historic park or garden, for instance, may include land beyond its boundary which adds to its significance.....land which is a detached part of the site and makes an important contribution to its historic character either by being visible from it or in some other way, perhaps by historical association.'

Historic England: The Setting of Heritage Assets. Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning. Note 3. Second Edition December 2017

The village is protected under the Cotswold A.ONB Management Plan, and 'has its own distinct character derived from topography, the settlement pattern, local architecture and history. This is a very fragile environment where a very small number of inappropriate new houses or other development can have a disproportionate effect on character.'

'the Board would expect the specific guidance for each landscape type found in the Board's Landscape Character Assessment and associated Landscape Character Strategies and Guidelines to be used to guide siting and suitability of development in conjunction with any more recent detailed guidance developed by individual Local Authorities, including Village Design Statements, and Design Codes.

C.A.O.N.B. M .P.

APPENDIX 5 PUBLIC CONSULTATION WORKSHOP: EVIDENCE/RESEARCH.

Cotswold A.O.N.B. Landscape Strategies and Guidelines have identified Eastcombe within two specific character types. These are Type 8, the High Wold Valley, in which most of the old village lies. The second is Type 7 High Wold of which Bisley Plateau is listed. Each have their specific levels of sensitivity to any form of development.

'Proposals that are likely to impact on, or create change in, the landscape of the Cotswolds AONB, should have regard to the scenic quality of the location and its setting and ensure that views –including those into and out of the AONB – and visual amenity are conserved and enhanced.' Policy CE1 A.O.N.B. M.P.

2.1 HISTORY OF EASTCOMBE

2.1.1 ORIGINS

The origin of a settlement due to its choice of location and setting would have come about for a number of key reasons, from the early Bronze Age of which there is evidence.

The hillside of Eastcombe would have satisfied the early settler, with wide ranging vistas, set on uplands at the head of a valley. Originally the site of Eastcombe was probably covered by trees up to around the middle of the 17C but an early development was at Rodways, where a farmhouse dating to pre 1500 survives.

It was set up high to avoid marshy lowland and allowed for tending the land where soils would be the most fertile for crops and pasture for grazing. The geology defined the choice of materials for building, and enabled avoidance of haulage from a distance wherever possible. There was also an imperative to access a clean water supply for both drinking and for washing fleeces.

Once the key needs were satisfied, these would lead to an evolving community by ease of communication and trade along routes where a settlement acts as a central hub. The massing of buildings for shelter, community and working together, resulted in the sharing of skills and knowledge, including medicines, tools and produce from the neighbouring industry and farming.

Bronze Age:-

There are a number of burial mounds dating back to the Bronze Age close by, within the parish: these are Bowl Barrows, based @ two hundred metres south of Sheepphouse Farm, **NGR: SO 89 04 Monument Number: 119**

Medieval:-

NGR: SO 89 04 Monument Number: 16284

These are at a FindSpot and were discovered in the twentieth century, by workers digging trenches close to the disused reservoir. These comprised medieval opaque rainbow tinted glass from ornaments and large flat stones, the latter believed to have been recycled and come from the Bronze Age burials.

These stones also reappear as stone stiles in Fidges Lane and another on the fields leading to Nash End.



Stone stile in Fidges Lane, relocated from the Bronze Age burial site

NGR: centred at SO 89237 04782...

A third site, of particular note, was a medieval settlement located in a field adjacent Fidges Lane at Eastcombe and, comprising a deserted medieval village, a curvilinear medieval strip lynchet and cultivation terrace are visible on historic aerial photographs and remote sensing data as earthworks and were mapped as part of the Severn Vale NMP Project.

APPENDIX No.3:

FIGURE 2 Views and Vistas.

FIGURE 5 Heritage-Character and significance.

2.1.2 EXPANSION AND DEVELOPMENT

Commonland

As early as Henry 11's reign, 1154 to 1189, a vast area of commonland, close by 'Eastcombs' on the land now known as Bussage, Nash End Common or Bisley Common as far as France Lynch, wound round the upper slopes of Chalford Hill inclusive, of Brown's Hill. It was @ twelve hundred acres of thick woodland.

It was given to the poor for plots to build homes and the stone required for them. It provided timber as fuel along with other means of earning a living from woodland. There were opportunities for vegetable growing, foraging for pigs, and grazing sheep on the open land.

The Black Death in the mid 1300's struck Europe and Asia when the Stroud Valleys were quite sparsely populated. The embryonic medieval cloth industry was all but wiped out.

The site of Eastcombe was originally thick woodland and clearings in the woods were made by a small farming community based on Rodways (Daniel's farm), a farmhouse in 1500, and was the beginning of settlement here. Other smaller cottages existed around that time and possibly older.

'The resurgence of the Black Death in the 1500's coincided with the emergence of what we now think of as the archetypal 'Cotswold style' of building. Spurred on by land and wealth distribution following the dissolution of the monasteries, a series of massive building booms swept away much of what had previously existed, and the process of settling the steep valley sides began. The growing cloth industry influenced the appearance, form and siting of buildings to a very great extent over the following centuries.'

History of the Industrial Stroud Valleys SDC 2008.

16 - 20th Century

'Sixteenth, Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries, Bisley's growth relied heavily on agriculture and cottage industry and was profoundly rooted in the natural resources of the surrounding landscape.' B.C.A.S.

In the 1500 and 1600's the cloth industry flourished and local craftsmen looked to the uninhabited and barren edges of the common land, with its abundant supplies of easily quarried stone and numerous springs to build their 'squatter' cottages', as the land in the valley in Chalford and Brimscombe, the site of major mills, was becoming over populated'. Ref. Juliet Shipman.

Between 1630- 1730, men and families left their homes in the Frome valley to make new dwellings for themselves where they could set up as weavers supplying the Clothiers. Cottages were small and dispersed, with no public buildings.

On the fringes of the plateau they cut into the slopes to provide modest homes, protected to some extent from the strong winds. This formed the basic settlement pattern with its characteristic snaking location of the cottages following along below the ridge of the Cotswold scarp with distant views across the valley.

These dwellings were built in stone, quarried from nearby. Cottages were dug into the hillside, gable ends set at right angles to the hill with the chimney breast at the southern end to maximise heat. These cottages had high ceilings to take the broadlooms.

Cottages were also set on roadside verges but most were constructed at right angles to the lanes, although, unusually The Old Bakehouse, 17th seventeenth century, was built to follow the contour of the hill.

The garden and windows usually faced west and south west to maximise sunlight and free heat. They enjoyed the fine views over the Toadsmoor Valley, with sizeable gardens where they were able to grow flowers and vegetables and were reasonably self-sufficient. Many would have had one or two fruit trees. Orchards, of which there have been a large number, provided both fruit and cider. Villagers kept pigs and ran sheep on the common if they had commoners' rights. Outbuildings of stone and timber provided shelter for the pig and sometimes chickens. Some of the plots were as much as an acre in size.

The geology of the plateau and slopes offered grazing for the sheep, spring water at their foot, and fuller's earth to reduce the lanolin in the raw wool which all provided the essentials necessary for their cloth.



Bismore and Eastcombe- early 20C postcard shows the considerable plot sizes and dense woodland of the hillside scarp

Numerous quarries locally provided the building material of Oolitic Limestone, the lower seams provided poor quality stone for dwellings, often one up one down in rubble walling. The stone was easily eroded by the bitter cold winters and render was later applied to the outer surface to protect it. The upper seams provided stronger roof tiles at this period, likely from the tile quarry at Througham. They were graded with the smaller tiles from just below the ridge to larger ones lower on the roof. This has become another characteristic feature of Eastcombe.

By the end of the 1700's all processes were gradually carried out in the mills in the valley and the cloth industry became centred in the valley. Workers needed to reach the mills from their isolated settlement and many narrow routeways grew up allowing them access to the mills, to the church at Bisley and to Bismore where a major junction existed for movement of goods.

Workers travelled down and along steep paths to collect wool and return with their cloth, into the valleys where mills would carry out a range of refining and processing - fulling and dyeing. The broadlooms were abandoned and the workers' free lifestyle fettered.

By 1800 there were rich owners of property, but not gentry, some owning several houses in Eastcombe. One up one down dwellings of rubble walling were still being built in 1850 such as Highlands, later extended considerably in 1878.

The Baptist Chapel, non-conformist, commenced building in 1801 and expanded in size in 1817 and 1860 to accommodate the four hundred strong chapel goers.

In the mid 1800's, quality residences also with ashlar stone blocks for their public facades were built in Eastcombe, by excellent builders such as Henry Hook, such as his own dwelling of The Laurels. He also built Lypiatt Villa, which remains as a fine example of the period.

'Stroud's cloth industry was at its peak at this time (c.1790-1830) and it seems the industrial wealth – and the technological innovation and investment in quality architecture that accompanied it – brought the booming area greater status and respect.' ... *'at the dawn of the 19th century, Stroud's improving road system was also, literally, putting it on the map.'* SDC H.I.S.V.

Clothiers owning the mills, moved the locations of their homes, now wealthy and beautifully designed mansions, well away from the noise of the new power looms introduced by 1836, which must have been incessant and mentally debilitating for their employees.

A Change in Economics.

Mill owners were encountering bankruptcy. Stroud produced rich coloured woollen cloth and silk thread for ribbons and had been providing the red cloth for military uniforms, but the cloth trade was in terminal decline by the end of the 19th century. This was principally as a result of being beaten at home and abroad by the

Yorkshire competition and the number of mills dropped drastically. Whilst some workers found new work as silk winders and throwers and in the new industries of bone knitting needles, pins, machine parts, bobbins, reels, and ready-made clothing, some workers in the cloth industry moved away to Yorkshire, and with the instability caused by the presence of Fuller's Earth, abandoned some cottages, which became derelict, without buyers.

By 1851 industry had become more important for employment. Local woodlands gave the opportunity for mills to continue to operate for matchsticks, quills for winding which went into the shuttles, spools, reels and crook, (Ref Census 1851), walking stick and umbrella manufacture, whilst stone masons and the building trades were important.

Specialist tradespeople were on the increase.

The 1891 Census showed that the population had increased to 482 inhabitants. Several men had brought back wives from elsewhere and some with no Gloucestershire connections at all.

World War 1 saw change again for the village, when many young men never made it back from the front. In 1918 the Lord of the Manor's role at Lypiatt Park ended. Many cottages and land had been rented out from Lypiatt. These were sold off when the estate broke up in 1919, quite cheaply and even those who had emigrated returned to buy plots. Ref Muriel Brooks.

There were three public houses in Eastcombe, of which one was The Red Lion. It is known to have been operating in 1910, but by 1918 it had closed. The White House amongst other private dwellings became men's drinking clubs.

There were several shops interspersed throughout, creating cohesion and animation in the different parts of the Conservation Area. Each provided different commodities, such as at least one bakery, post offices, haberdashers, and general stores which also provided pork from the locally slaughtered pigs reared in a number of gardens. Income from the shop supplemented their incomes from various trades.

Historic Land Ownership and Land Use defined by its Topography

The steep slopes are detrimental to large agro-arable farming, as the narrow steep cart tracks do not lend themselves to large modern tractors and harvesters.

Therefore this land continues to be managed for grazing sheep and retains small fields intersected by stock fencing. The Conservation Area is surrounded on three sides by farmland. The remainder of the steep slopes are heavily wooded and include ancient and semi natural woodland and beech woods with occasional cleared land in combs.

The thin soils of the hillside were ideal for sheep grazing but not arable. It is listed under the Agriculture Land Classification as Grade 5 very poor. On the plateau, where it is Grade 3, the land is grazed by cattle and further north, well used for arable at Bisley. **APPENDIX No. 3 Figure 7 Constraints.**

Ferris Court, 'lesser manor', owned some cottages and its land, seen from the village stores, was divided up in 1647. The presence also of Lypiatt under the Lord of the manor- the John Doringtons, father and son, also had large land holdings. Small dwellings were constructed without permission, *'the situation was easily regularised by payment of a fee and the granting of title deeds by the lord of the manor.'* Ref. JS.

Lypiatt Park estate's owner John Dorington, senior, used his riches to re-establish and improve the estate, by buying back farms which had previously been sold by previous owners to meet debts.

*'His son also Sir John Dorington 1822-1911, was the epitome of the improving landlord, benevolent to his tenants, a building enthusiast in cotswold style, put up new dwellings for his keepers in Bismore valley and a house for the Manor Farm, created out of the 'Inclosure of the Common', **planted copses on his estate** and with his wife nurtured a profusion of flowers.'* He played a major part in the 1860's 'Inclosure of Bisley Common .
'Then and Now.' Ref. M.D.Lambert and E Crouch.1999

Allotments were part of the Inclosure by Sir John Dorrington in 1869 to compensate for the loss of commoners' rights. Eastcombe allotments were originally part of the common. Allotments had also been sited on the field adjacent to Bismore.

Pheasant rearing for the table provided local food and coverts of conifers were planted to aid shooting, with the bonus of aesthetics. On the valley floor, a poultry farm was set up in Bismore when the Lypiatt Estate was broken up and sold off and the Waites, who had emigrated, returned and bought five acres.



A postcard showing haystacks in the field early 19th century, looking as much now with woodlands as then

Orchards and the growing of individual fruit trees on the hillsides has always been central to both farms and individual residents- their food production and for use in cider. Usually a family would have had fruit trees in their gardens.

The evolution of land values traces ownership and land use listed in the 1909 Lloyd George Survey which shows not only monetary value, but also the trades, many of which were connected to the environment directly, as woodsmen, walking stick and umbrella makers, matchstick manufactures, shepherds and the village service

providers that supported them such as bakers. As the cloth trade declined, timber continued to support livelihoods.

2.2 HISTORIC ROUTEWAYS AND FOOTPATHS.

Bismore once was at the centre of a network of busy routeways- from Eastcombe to Stroud and from the Bourne to Bisley. Bismore Bridge, also known as Swilley Bridge, was the start of an old road in 1516 which linked up to the main roads leading to, Gloucester, Painswick and Cheltenham. Crossing points were often dictated by the ability of pack horses and donkeys to climb the adjacent steep hills. A stone depot in a copse fronting Hawkey Wood was the location where weavers would take their cloth, for delivery by others to the finishing mills in the valley. These narrow early tracks remained as footpaths for the mill workers who travelled to the Frome Valley to work. More strategic routes have allowed for the expansion of the village.

Now the old village, the core of Eastcombe is not visible from a highway as several estates have grown up initially from the early 20th century with growth to its south east along Fidges Lane, Brockley Acres and Woodlands Close infilling to the Bisley Road, and south and west to Bracelands. Mid 1900's saw limited infill development in the Conservation Area.

Organically expanding, with a spurt of growth in development in the last sixty years, and due to the increased use of the car, the village has now access by car to Stroud, Cheltenham and Chalford.

**Footpaths: (See APPENDIX No.3 Figure 1 Baseline
Figure 2 Views and Vistas)**

P.R.O.W. key routes nos.11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 30, 186; around Kitlye-26,27,66;-fields to Nash End 23, 181.

Little has changed visually to anyone coming to Eastcombe over the hills by foot into the Conservation Area.



Footpath from Rodways Farm

The network of well used footpaths extend from the Conservation Area across the fields both south west to the Toadmoor Lake and northwards to Nash End and Bisley, some via Cricketty Mill across fields of wild flora, although with the invasive Himalayan balsam. Now these are particularly used by residents and visitors, mostly dog walkers, for keeping fit. Some are defined by County yellow footpath direction arrows on timber stiles, some retaining the older stone stiles, once used as markers. The fields comprise ancient monuments of Bronze Age Barrows, a medieval settlement and Findspots of excavated medieval and Bronze age finds.

A matrix of small pathways zigzag through the settlement itself, lined with wild flora, bramble, self sown plum trees and low stone walls. Hedgerows do not usually form boundaries within the settlement which would block views along and across the valley.

The skies can be overarching and dramatic with the trees in hedgerows standing out on the skyline.

2.3 CONTEXT: CONSERVATION AREA IN ITS NATURAL SETTING

APPENDIX 3 Figure 1: Baseline.

National Character Area profile: 107 Cotswolds. Natural England 2015

2.3.1 TOPOGRAPHY:

- GEOLOGY AND LANDFORM

The village lies at 780 feet above sea level dropping to 530 feet at Bismore.

Set on the steep slope of the Cotswold scarp, the hillside village faces mainly north and west.



View from footpath northwards above the brook flowing downstream to the Toadsmoor Pond

Below the Conservation Area is 'secluded valley' as identified in Stroud Landscape Assessment dated 2000, by L.U.C.. 'is deeply incised into the Cotswold plateau',...this steep sided valley is of 'almost v-shaped profile' typically and one of several with 'small tributary side valleys divided by spurs of high land.'

'The mass of oolite occurs in two basic layers. The older, deeper layers are known as the 'Inferior Oolite,' a type of which are the 'freestones' which are easily cut and shaped and particularly characteristic of Cotswold building. The upper layers, known as the 'Great Oolite,' provided the stone for many local roofing slates.'

'The tilt of the Cotswolds means that the lower layers are exposed along the western escarpment, where they are more easily accessible than in the eastern Cotswolds. Thus the Inferior Oolite is prevalent in the valley bottoms to the south of the Bisley area.' B.C.A.S.

Quarries were created to provide stone for cottages and walls to define plots and later inclosure of fields. By 1732 many quarries had been dug in and near the village. Expansion of the village started due to the growth of the cloth industry which ran from 1630-1730, with one up one down cottages being built during the 17c. The

majority of cottages of the village were built from 1680- mid 18century.

A known band of Fuller's Earth extends from the plateau near the location of The Banks between The Street and Fidges Lane to the valley by Bismore. Cottages built over these limestone steps set with Fuller's Earth have become derelict following cracks in the walls and demolished. The unstable land reveals itself particularly on the lower slope of Wells Road where there are shelves of limestone with Fuller's earth between them that are visible as steps across the meadow.

Wells Road in the late 20th century collapsed due to heavy rains, with a burgeoning spring line and the presence of Fullers Earth.

The exact location of Fullers Earth in the village does not appear to have been surveyed.

A combination of poor rubble stone, lack of maintenance, desertion in the early 20c due to the depression and emigration to Australia and Canada, and the presence of Fullers Earth undermining dwellings, may have caused a cluster of buildings, once scattered along the valley, to fall down, leaving only a few fruit tree as indicators of their former presence. There had been a number of cottages at Cuthams, and the Bismore settlement had a further twenty cottages, all of which have gone.



Quoins on Sheephouse Farm.

Fragility of the stone buildings: Unless well maintained the stone cottages, many of rubble walling, could collapse and did so. Sheephouse Farm set on the field to Bisley became derelict in the 1940's after the original owner, Andrews, had sold it on to another who passed on the roof tiles/slates when finances were low, and was unable to restore them. It has become a local 'ruin' which many on the Bisley- Nash End field walk see regularly. This is also a potential for designation as 'Local Green Space.'



Cotswold 'slates' of stone, visible here and usually replaced with a composite to retain the tone without high costs or where there are difficulties in obtaining salvaged items. Note the metal windows. Chimneys of various designs on this group of cottages, now two homes where previously had been four cottages as a terrace

Mortar was usually lime mortar as it moves with the settlement of the stonework.



Slate roof on 19 century cottage with a coursed ashlar window



Ashlar stone finely square cut with narrow jointing



Brick and tile detailing on Model Cottages

In the 19th century. 'The railways greatly changed the appearance of the area. Their haulage capabilities meant an influx of red brick and Welsh slate, building materials that were far cheaper than the district's traditional stone.'
S. D.C. H.I.S.V.

Honeyhill, in Bismore, was previously called Slate house, probably 1830-1840's when canal barges brought roof slates from Wales, although the building is thought to be older.

- **HYDROLOGY**

'Where the oolitic limestone meets beds of impervious clay, water is driven out in the form of springs. Hence the Cotswolds are riddled with streams and brooks as well as rivers. These have been highly active in the formation of the topography, carving deep and complex valleys into the 'Oolite' plateau, a process that continues and means that the landscape is ever changing.'
B. C.A.S.

The western boundary of the parish is the Toadsmoor Brook and the southern boundary follows the River Frome, centre of mills in the valley. Badgers Brook runs from the base of 'The Spout' on Wells Road, to join it.

There was a 'pool' or marshland in Anglo Saxon times near Bismore. It has been a larger expanse of open water, but now has silted up to form a marshy area.

'In both the words 'Toadsmoor' and 'Bismore' there are also references to 'pond' or 'lake', or 'moor' meaning marshy ground. An entry for the Lypiatt Park auction is listed as 'Land Upper Toadsmoor Swamp'. The Fullers Earth that is present, accumulates as silt, lying in the Toadsmoor mere or meadow at the foot of Bismore. The result is an unstable field that also acts like quicksands, according to historic evidence.

The spring line has provided clear drinking water for inhabitants in various locations, including the 'The Spout' and another at Beam End at the south end of the village.



The Toadsmoor Brook was culverted and dammed at Bismore Bridge, flowing into a narrow stream joining the Toadsmoor Lake, synonymous with 'Pond', further down the valley, which was in part excavated to increase its size.

Today the owner of Toadsmoor Woods and valley (Upper Frome) has a management scheme to aid flood alleviation. He has installed this with a grant 60:40 from Stroud District Council. *'These will slow down peak flows and attenuate water and importantly allow sediment and soil to accumulate behind structures. Downstream of the spring lines, Toadsmoor pond provides important headroom storage for flood flows down the valley and preventing silt from filling this pond will provide Flood risk benefit in the longer term'.*

There has been planting this spring of hawthorn and hazel saplings densely planted along the north side of the lake on its bank as an additional way of reducing silt into the lake from the steep slope with broadleaf woodland above it. This is a much used Public Right of Way M.B.L.13, and views across the lake may be restricted for those enjoying the landscape; currently good management is allowing for views.

The Spout or Well, Wells Road



Bismore (Swilley) Bridge – potential designation as a 'Local Green Space.'

2.3.2 BIODIVERSITY.

This subject, its research and recovery plan, is well recorded in Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust. Ref. Draft ECOLOGY APPRAISAL March 2021.

See also APPENDIX No.3 Figure 3 Habitats

Recent changes in ownership of a few families, since the latter part of 2019 has seen a new interest and use for the land in and above the valley. With the removal of ash with Ash Dieback, it has opened up opportunities and different light densities for the management of food production including an edible Forest Garden on the south west of Toadsmoor Lake, on the slopes with plans for new fruit and nut trees, soft fruit and perennial vegetables following permaculture principles. At this location it had been overgrown with bramble and clearance of brambles to aid management of the land is underway.

Bisley with Lypiatt has a **Dark Skies policy** in place to ensure the valley and Eastcombe Conservation Area maintains low light levels and no spillage. This fortifies the need for habitat protection and the enjoyment of tranquillity.

2.3.3 LANDSCAPE SETTING: Experiencing the Conservation Area in its Setting:
'Significance (for heritage policy): The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.' www.gov.uk/guidance/annex-2-glossary Annex 2: Glossary-National Planning Policy Framework. 2017.

'The Courts have held that it is legitimate in appropriate circumstances to include within a conservation area the setting of buildings that form the heart of that area (R v Canterbury City Council ex parte David Halford, February 1992; CO/2794/1991)'.Historic England advises that 'thorough assessment of the impact on setting needs to take into account, and be proportionate to, the significance of the heritage asset under consideration and the degree to which proposed changes enhance or detract from that significance and the ability to appreciate it. ...Setting is the surroundings in which an asset is experienced, Hist..Eng..S.H.A.

APPENDIX No 3 The setting of the heritage asset i.e. the Conservation Area, is integral to its character.

Open cattle pasture lies to the north east of the village, exhilarating with the winds and distant open views, whilst to the immediate north of the Conservation Area lies an intimate and enclosed hidden valley with Kitley and Hawkley, set within mature woodlands.



Bismore Farm track MBN 16, with views down into the valley from the track which is usually open to the public for walking just below Wells Road

Sloping pasture to the west of the Conservation Area is intersected by terraces of cart tracks in a scenic and picturesque landscape. Occasional stone buildings of medieval origin are set on the north and west facing slopes. A brook, sometimes gushing with seasonal rainfall, winds down and over stones to the lake to its south. Awareness of our local distinctiveness has been all the more apparent at this time of the pandemic, walkers engaging in seeing, looking, observing and studying the detail of the wild flora particularly along the track above Toadsmoor Lake and with sensitivity to the wild field flora that are as yet unmapped within the Eastcombe fringe.

The village Conservation Area appears to grow up out of woodlands, principally sweeps of beech and ash. Views from within the village and vistas beyond are uplifting and draw one to experience the landscape in the mid distance across the valley.



Bismore from a garden in Wells Road.

Exotic tree planting of Grade 11* Lypiatt Park's Victorian pinetum/arboretum along with an avenue of mature trees define the ridge and skyline. Skies, both stunning sunsets and starry skies emphasize the beauty.

There are fine vistas across the valley and Conservation Area to Middle Lypiatt, Ferris Court Lypiatt Park and its gothic mansion, and Copsegrove, from individual dwellings, and landmark locations.

The enfolding vistas of winter into spring, summer and autumn, are each transformative. The movement of the winter sun brings waves of light on the combe from early morning, highlighting the filigree of the branches of the woodlands, moving across creating interspersing light and dark, in time with the movement of the clouds.

The high summer's canopy of dense woodland acts like a blanket wrapping around the hillsides, and the setting sun creates a blaze of colour as it sets against a purple skyline. So strong are they that we can experience a sense of awe and wonder.



Prospect: Typical View of Grade 11* Lypiatt Park and Grade 1 Lypiatt House from a historic dwelling in the Conservation Area.

The autumn skies are illuminated by the russet tones of the broadleaved woods, exaggerated by the dark charcoal skies beyond, making the skyline once again become an integral part of the view. Mists rise along the combs from the Toadsmoor Brook and its tributaries and lake in the early morning.

The quality of the unpolluted air allows for good visibility when there is a high ceiling. Unpolluted clean air is evidenced by the presence and abundance of lichen.

Mature trees form a spine through the Conservation Area from the north east to the south west, overarching the garden plots, with their stature. Looking upwards to these fine pines, beech, and sycamore in the hedgerows and plots makes the skyline, even within the old core of the village an important feature.

Even beyond the Conservation Area the dominant lime trees in the avenue leading to the Orphanage, St Elizabeth's, and the towering pines, chestnuts and limes above Bracelands together continue this strong 'spine.'

Views across the gardens themselves are open and the village breathes out.

The openness is held/punctuated by the woods on the south east facing slope. The hills wrapping around the valley, give the impression of the village being held by them. The sight and sounds of bird song in gardens and the predominance in the sky of the increasing numbers of buzzards as they wheel overhead can be heard over the whole valley. Kites have been recently sighted.

Tranquillity embalms the valley, with the sounds of the unfettered rivulets from springs weaving amongst green mosses and tangled scrub of the lower area beyond Wells Road. The torrent of gushing water of the dam by Bismore Bridge is almost gothic in nature.

2.4 BUILT ENVIRONMENT

APPENDIX No. 3 Figure 5 Heritage- Character and Significance: Character Zones A and B are illustrated. These are purely for this Appraisal and are not defined in other documents.

APPENDIX No. 3 Figure 4 Built Environment and Access. Gateways for both pedestrian and vehicles are shown.

2.4.1 GATEWAYS



Initial view of Eastcombe travelling northwards along Vatch Lane, a busy highway from Stroud



Dr Crouch's Road, a shared vehicular and pedestrian route, leads off Vatch Lane and is a priority gateway into the village. It acts as an arterial vehicular route, although identified as a 'Local Road.' There is no footpath for pedestrians but it is used regularly by residents on foot. A highways sign to show pedestrian priority would reduce speed. Travelling must be slow as the entry point is narrow, with parked cars and pedestrians.

A further access is regularly used close to this junction, a cut-through across grass, which allows for pedestrians to cross The Vatch to The Ridge and Bussage. Vehicles can speed at this dangerous crossing point.

There is no indication that shows entry into the Conservation Area, nor any welcoming. There is a lack of a significant entry point, such as an oak sign, or granite setts on the road to indicate that it is time to slow down and appreciate the area. This should improve safety for pedestrians.

Vehicular parking is responsible for the reduction in visual

Landmark Black Pine trees close to the entry point from Stroud and Bussage, provide a picturesque framing of the road into the village and the Conservation Area.

amenity. To the north west side of Dr Crouch's Road are parked cars. To the other side, cars are randomly parked along the kerb for school children's collection. At certain pick up times, this road is almost impossible to move along either by vehicle or walking. Visibility for cyclists is poor. On the positive side there are no kerbs and few urban yellow lines or signage.

There is a second gateway by foot which leads from Bracelands to the primary school through a metal railing barrier onto Dr Crouch's Road.

Two other gateways by vehicle are down Middle Hill from Chalford and secondly past the Village Hall, where it joins Dr Crouch's Road in Conservation Area Character Zone B.

The Vatch Road /Bisley Road are arterial roads dissecting the village. Leading off this priority route one of the busiest roads into the centre of the village is Middle Hill, identified as a 'Minor Road' off the Bisley Road. Delivery vans regularly use this and speed down Middle Hill to where people gather and talk outside the general stores. There is no signage to indicate entry into the Conservation Area. This should be a major consideration to slow traffic with a permanent build out and welcome sign to careful drivers.



Entering the Conservation Area Character Zone B along Middle Hill (also known as Bracelands)

Vehicular entrances into Conservation Area Character Zone A are via The Street from the Village Green or from Fidges Lane by way of a sharp junction down into The Street. The sharpness of the turning here has resulted in damage to the fabric of the lane, and the steep verge which is a local asset.

Most are on foot when they enter Eastcombe Conservation Area Character Zone A from the North East and West.



A secondary and lesser used route, Vehicles enter past the Village Hall and St Augustine's and join Dr Crouch's Road. This leads off Vatch Lane/ Bisley Road past Bracelands.

A well-worn route by foot, is from Bisley through Nash Farm cottages across the fields, past Sheephouse Farm, now derelict and along a narrow footpath abutting what was Will's Orchard to join Fidges Lane. A seat here offers the prospect of the Conservation Zone A with the Baptist Chapel on the skyline. Interestingly this high point does not allow one to see the remaining part of the Conservation Area Character Zone B.

Another track from Rodways Farm leads by way of winding paths into upper Wells Road and the Village Green.



A gateway on foot, along a droveway, winds round the south end of the lake, part of the Industrial Heritage Conservation Area which includes Toadsmoor Lake. It is tranquil and restorative. This level track along the north side of the lake leads to Cutham's stile and up into C.A Zone A of Eastcombe.



Vista from the seat over Eastcombe Conservation Zone A

2.5 ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST

2.5.1 HISTORIC SETTLEMENT PATTERN AS A CHARACTER FEATURE.

Distinctiveness



Narrow paths often lined with flora and wild self-sown plum trees provide linear green corridors weaving between plots.

The cottages and the settlement pattern of the Conservation Area with its matrix of narrow lanes and alleyways that cut through from lane to lane as one descends the hill, provide a **classic** example of local distinctiveness.

The settlement pattern is defined by its geology and landform and the availability of stone, land to work and access to clean water.

It is **the gardens of the steep scarp slope that defines the layout and high permeability**, with many small alleyways, cutting through between plots which gave workers the ability to access employment and provisions, and allowed them to distribute coal and milk by horse and donkey locally.

The relationship between the early settlement pattern of 1700's and the current footprints of buildings remains largely linear, as it was, **snaking around the edge of the plateau**, following the contours down into the valley. Cottages are set into the scarp slope, fringing the parallel narrow lanes including Wells Road, which lead down the hillside into the valley by way of Bismore a nucleated group of dwellings.

The map by Bryant of 1824 is a sketch survey of the area, showing the large plots between lanes, cottages set around The Street and the lanes down to Bismore. The Village Green is not shown as it came after the enclosure of commons, only the Baptist Chapel 1801's triangular plot of its burial ground.



Bryant's sketch map of 1824. Ref.(J) Gloucester Archives.

Other historic cottages are set along the upper length of The Street and Fidges Lane, several tucked into the North West facing hillside with **exceptionally steep gardens**. There is a small clustered rural settlement at Kitlye and an isolated farmstead with cottage at Hawkley.

The fine historic grain within the core of the Conservation Area has **cottages, usually in clusters**. Their footprints are irregular and form cottages sometimes sideways on.



Image of 1907 clusters

Cottages were also set usually gable end onto the lanes to maximise shelter and heat both for their dwelling and garden.



Occasional individual cottages are set into the steep scarp slope, particularly in those areas just outside the settlement boundary

Plot sizes and irregularity

The Great Common, as it was known reduced to @900 acres by 1865. Further, some from Eastcombe were fined for enclosing the Common adjoining Eastcombe without permission, to be later addressed by being given a licence.

It wasn't until the late 1800s that other cottages were built and became part of the core of the old village. Fidges Lane did not exist in its present form, as the entrance into it was wide and was part of the Bisley Common which stretched away to its south and east.



Tithing Map of 1842

With the imploding of the woollen industry and further depression in agriculture after 1870, many abandoned their cottages, with some emigrating.

APPENDIX No.3 Figure 5 Heritage- Character and Significance shows the inset of approximate plot sizes pre 1903.

THE BUILT FORM: BUILDINGS AND SPACES BETWEEN THEM.

'The built environment of the Conservation Area can be very simply divided into two main elements, namely: -

- *The buildings themselves.*
- *The spaces adjacent to and surrounding the buildings.'*

B.C.A.S.

Subdivision of dwellings and plots within the Conservation Area.

Property may have had several owners, and included outbuildings, large productive gardens, orchard with fruit trees, individual apple trees and woodlands. Archive postcards from the early 20th century show these large open gardens, although early settlers had some irregular plots as large as an acre.

From 1825 few new houses were built. There were thirteen houses standing empty and many divided into two. Workers were laid off and in 1826, 2000 or the parish's workforce of 6000 remained employed.

Several cottages housed shops, from general stores to various specific trades such as a haberdasher's, and the post office moved premises more than once. These were distributed throughout the Conservation Area. Later some of these were restored to a single dwelling.



Subdivision of plots with stone buildings, cut into the hillside, their warm tones of the Oolitic Limestone. Baptist Chapel, Manse and primary school are prominent.

Local Listing.

The majority of historic houses are not listed and there is no Local Listing. They form the majority of buildings in the Conservation Area and in the vernacular style. Identification of any of these significant heritage assets should be carried out and form part of the Neighbourhood Development Plan. These should include the outbuildings.

The Keepers Cottages extend the uniqueness of Lypiatt House and Parkland and stand alone in the setting. Whilst the majority of cottages were built by owners, some were tenanted from principally Sir John Dorington. Two outstanding buildings were built for his keepers, both in the valley, by Toadsmoor Lake (South) and north of Bismore Bridge.



'Gothic' Keepers (South) close to Toadsmoor Lake.

Within the Conservation Area itself, period dwellings are in clusters. Some started as simple one up one down cottages and later extended.



Typical grouping with later extensions and closely knit together as clusters.



Cottages have been extended at different periods to satisfy their use, as a post office in this image, and dwelling for one or two families when funds were tight.

The roofscape provides a positive contribution to the distinctive character of the Conservation Area, particularly Conservation Area Character Zone A.

The mid 1800's saw the growth of fine quality building, in particular by skilled masons and these Victorian villas, with their fine ashlar stone on their visible facades, are set in large gardens behind high walls or yew hedges.

2.5.2 SUMMARY OF DESIGN CODE:-

The buildings document the area's history:-

- Early cottages set in large plots
- keepers' cottages in woodland, and farmhouses in open agricultural fields
- cottages for weavers with 16-19 century dwellings and outbuildings for previous trades, stores and animal enclosures.
- 19th century public buildings of the imposing landmark Baptist Chapel and Manse, Church and school.
- 16c-19c boundaries of dry stone walls and both simple and ornate iron railings.
- 20th century fine villas of ashlar stone facades set in large plots and hidden behind clipped hedges.

Scale of the settlement-

Parish: 1,012 dwellings on the Stroud District Council list on the Council Tax Register in October 2020 over all the parish, in three settlement villages, hamlets and individual rural dwellings.
Ref. G.R.C.C. Housing Needs Survey.

Eastcombe Conservation Area:

Form: Organically grown over centuries.
Principally linear, and snaking, with parallel lanes zigzagging steeply down the Cotswold scarp. Dwellings stepping up or down to follow terrain and taking in the vistas of the valley.
Cottages narrow in plan form.*
Clusters of cottages, many enlarged with extensions offset irregularly.
Many dwellings set gable end on to the lanes with gardens facing south west to maximise sun.
Cottages cut into the hillside, some with steep gardens.
Large plots with narrow matrix of paths between them.
Stone outbuildings frequent.

Materials: Rubblestone masonry: structural construction of local pale oolitic limestone from the lower beds. Limited use of render to soft rubble walls of buildings and wall ties visibly evident.
Ashlar limestone on wealthier buildings.
Roofs of natural stone or slates.
Porches of stone.
Window frames of stone lintels, mullions, drip mouldings.
Casements of metal with original fixings.
Chimney stacks- stone, usually ashlar. Ceramic pots of varying designs.
Downpipes and water collection: traditional metal goods- head of downpipes, gutters, various, many replaced.

Mortars: Lime.

Style: Cotswold vernacular.

Early cottages with one living room and spiral winder staircase adjacent to the fireplace.
Later cottages with two ground floor rooms including a kitchen and parlour, later extended.
One and a half storey with dormers.
Pitched roofs with graduated stone tiling on narrow plan form cottages to carry their weight.*
Roof configuration often complex by later extensions.
Upper floors with higher ceilings for weaver's looms.
Increased height to attics with gable end windows.
Three storey with end gable with graded windows and mullions-only one example on Wells Road that has been re-built in 2023
Classical 18c additions include stone doorways added to finer ashlar buildings –The White House.
Ashlar facades and dressed stone quoins, doorways and windows.
Victorian villas- of two or three storeys.
Individual, many unique features, including those of Arts and Crafts inspiration- The Triangle.
Unique grotesque.- Red Lion.

Colour/tone Warm pale golden
Gravels as surfacing.

Paintwork: Tones of pale green and greys. Limited paintwork.

** The physical form of buildings was largely dictated by the materials. Plan forms were narrow, reflecting the spanning capabilities of timber floor joists and rafters. Roofs were built at a steep pitch (45 - 55 degrees) because, at this pitch, relatively small timbers could carry the considerable weight of stone slates. SDC .R.D.G.*

LOCAL ARCHITECTURE



ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS CONTACT SHEET



ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS CONTACT SHEET 2



Outbuildings: Many stone outhouses remain within large plots. Most families kept a pig and records list them: in 1909 The Red Lion had a 'brick and tile store room loft over 3 lean- to piggeries.'

Other outbuildings would have housed chickens, pigs and stored trade materials. Others were bakehouses, breweries, washhouses, privies and slaughterhouses.

Now some of these more substantial outbuildings are used for working at home. Another recent planning application was for a new barn to house pigs and farm machinery in the rural fringe.



Near Rose Cottage, The Street with stone piggery in the foreground with fruit trees

OUTBUILDINGS



FUTURE VISION.

Issues:-

New 'traditional' style buildings would be out of place, even using the same character features within the existing settlement pattern.

Local quarries have closed, so sourcing appropriate stone is limited and stone masons are few. New substitutes for stone are concrete block with a facing of stone, or Bradstone. Neither can replicate the aesthetic tradition.

Early windows are made from metal. Some have been replaced with U.P.V.C., inappropriate to this Conservation Area, whilst double glazing with metal frames suits the aesthetic and function. Treated softwood timber with double glazing is harmonious with this environment. Tropical hardwoods should be avoided.

Renewable materials should harmonise with the locality and be sustainable.

Energy: -previously heating the cottage by its design and location, maximised the free energy from the sun and reduced the impact of high winds. Contemporary good practice for sustainability should be central to the design and position and could employ similar early methods. Solar panels have been approved where not fronting the main public roads and lanes.

Mortar, and pointing can have incongruous visual effect. Lime mortar would move with the stone and allow it to breathe. Cement mortar can be detrimental, but re-pointing with lime mortar to replace it, may damage ashlar by any severe method to remove it.

<https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/planning-and-building/cotswold-design-guidance/historic-building-features/> provides excellent guidance on protection and restoration.

Although only small scale development of less than ten dwellings is stated, using the local '**design and build**' your own home on separate or shared plots, would be encouraged. These would be unique designs and features with unusual footprints. Two or three could be back and side on to each other, as the template of those existing in the Conservation Area. This could limit heat loss, with sustainable modern materials.

Planning process:-If these could be presented as **sketch concepts for pre-planning applications for discussion**, initial ideas could be talked through and would save on unnecessary costs on an application that could be refused. It would allow residents to offer alternative options at a low design cost, utilising Architects who are well versed, highly trained and experienced. The same approach could be taken on extensions and alterations on historic buildings, commissioning advice from a specialist Conservation Architect.

Building in the late 20th century in Eastcombe Conservation Area has been minor works, predominantly extensions and porches. The local vernacular for porches is stone. Catslide roofs and curved walls feature.

The organic growth developed from innovation by early settlers, with homes growing in size when fashion and finance allowed, show a creative approach. Our period now needs to have that same innovation and cutting edge design of eco homes, to represent our 21st century.

One cottage, one of previously several attached together in a stepped terrace, was later extended with an arm facing the view, and most recently with a further extension with a sedum roof.

A contemporary Eco House of glass and steel has been approved for construction with high energy efficiency and sustainable elements. It is to be set within woodland and with mirror glass to minimize the impact of a large building, and turf roof.

IMAGES OF GOOD PRACTICE



Typical small cottage with adaptations at different times to suit needs, in the form of extensions, retaining its modest and compact character.



Modest dwelling recently constructed in the local vernacular. Small dwellings for a single person are welcomed within a tight limit on number, as infill.



Original draughty metal casements replaced with appropriate metal double glazing



Detail of good practice: colour and scale to fit at Spring Cottage replacing the original metal casement and maintaining light levels within the cottage. Original fixings were reinstated.



Sedum roof on an extension, receiving aftercare.

The inextricable relationship of the space and the built form.

The pattern of the settlement in the Conservation Area of groups of old cottages set in clusters together within large plots, defines the specific approach to any new development proposals for Eastcombe.

Stand-alone individual buildings are not traditional here. These clusters may have evolved over a period of time, but they are innovative, and in close proximity, cottage with cottage, back to back and sideways on and usually set gable end onto the lanes.

The open spaces between these clusters are to be cherished. They are distinctively edged with stone walls and a series of narrow footpaths between groups of plots.

The Decision Notice of the Planning Inspector on a development proposal for Land at Fort View Appeal identifies the distinctive qualities for preservation:-

Appeal Decision APP/C1625/W/20/3252363 APPENDIX No 1. NATIONAL & LOCAL PLANNING POLICIES.

The Decision speaks of the relationship between historic buildings, defined by the openness of the land between them: of the frame of stone walling and trees as a backdrop:

'the relationship between the buildings to be an important characteristic of the CA worthy of preservation and the loss of this is therefore harmful'

Modern development would be seen as an intrusion in the form of a narrow long plot that would be created in developing the land, harmfully detracting from the traditional layout.

The scale of the proposed property would be higher than the other houses and facing the road and would harmfully dominate the existing cluster of houses when viewed from the public domain.

2.5.3 CONTEXT OF THE CONSERVATION AREA IN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

APPENDIX No. 3 Figure 4 Built Environment and Access.

Principally affected by the loss of some stone buildings, significant infill of new dwellings occurred between 1885- 1903 on enclosed land, reducing plot sizes and with further, later, occasional infill from late twentieth century large homes. Out of scale with the small intimate cottages, they were constructed as stand- alone and not in the traditional irregular tight clusters of cottages from previous centuries, often replacing stone buildings that had fallen into disrepair.

POST WORLD WAR 1 DEVELOPMENT.

To the east and north of the Conservation Area, before its designation, the Andrews brothers built bungalows on the eastern side of Fidges Lane. Owners of old cottages had been tempted to move into drier conditions with modern services, indoor toilets and heating.

Brockley Acres, a later expansion of the village is set between Fidges lane and the Bisley Road, offering further bungalows and chalet bungalows, in private ownership, in a leafy setting with large gardens and dwellings well-spaced.

The land had been sold as individual plots for self- build/ Design and Build. As a result, this good example has a visually wide range of dwellings but all cohesively brought together by the mature treescape and formal hedges.

In the late 1960's Bradstone built further bungalows extending Brockley Acres.

Bracelands, a post-war council estate, on the site of the former Orphanage, abuts the Conservation Area along Dr Crouch's Road. Some bungalows were built as homes for the elderly, provision of access for all is a priority, and most dwellings are set around a large grassed, mown space with few trees. Some are privately owned now or tenanted by Stroud District Council. Other dwellings are two storey, some of which were sold off in the Thatcher years into private ownership. Gardens are variable- either attractive with flower borders or others where parking the car has taken priority. Overall there is little in the way of any landmark or specimen trees.

2.5.4 DEFINING LOCAL CHARACTER : CHARACTER ZONES

Two distinct but symbiotic areas are identified by this appraisal within the Conservation Area. Distinctively different in character, Character Zone A is outward-looking and quiet while Character Zone B has more restricted views from the southern part of Dr Crouch's Road, has more vitality and provides the community gathering spaces around the Village Green, Eastcombe Stores, Eastcombe Primary School, Village Hall, Baptist Chapel and St Augustine's Church.

This appraisal has identified these as shown on the Figure below.

APPENDIX No.3 Figure 5 Heritage- Character and Significance shows the location of these two zones.

CHARACTER ZONE A: THE NORTHERN and WESTERN AREA- THE STREET, WELLS ROAD- upper and lower.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS:-

- Outward looking.
- Essentially rural in character.
- Woodlands act as a foil and buildings appear to rise up through them.
- Clusters of stone cottages: Unique and randomly placed cottages, some in clusters, snaking along below the plateau. Stepping down the scarp. High survival rate of period features.
- Some buildings of note, including occasional fine Victorian villas.
- One and a half storey historic cottages, residential dwellings, interspersed with two storey fine period buildings.
- Picturesque.
- Scenic long distant vistas across the settlement. Long and broad vistas across the Toadsmoor Valley and the upper ridge from Middle Lypiatt to Bisley including the Grade II* Lypiatt Park.
- Vistas across fields and down into the woods of the Toadsmoor Valley.
- Quiet ambience and tranquil.
- Matrix of steep zigzagging footpaths for pedestrians only and small vestiges of verges as part of the Green Infrastructure/Green Space
- Extensions have been sensitively designed over many years to be in the character of the Cotswold Style.
- There are a few large infill properties from the late 20th century, interspersed and facing the valley.
- Large gardens: many with open aspects, mainly visible to the public, vegetable plots, heritage outbuildings, newly planted orchards and garden fruit trees.

Gardens are variable in size and with differing degrees of privacy. The matrix of smaller alleyways between them leads to Wells Road. Fine, longer views over grassy lawns and fruit trees are apparent, with occasional small 20th century dwellings as infill between them. From here, grass intersections with other alleys take a direction down the valley westwards to the brook via Fairview Cottage at the Bismore Bridge or dam, or southwest to Rodways Farm and the far end of the lake. All are narrow routes designed or used initially for carts. The vistas are expansive and the ambience gentle, quiet except for bird song or the call of a buzzard.

Notable buildings are The Laurels, and the former Red Lion, once home of the cobbler/ postman, with a 'grotesque' red lion high on its facade. It was also an informal drinking club before a residence, until 1919 one of several scattered in the Conservation Area.

CHARACTER ZONE B: THE VILLAGE GREEN, DR CROUCH'S ROAD AND A SECTION ON MIDDLE HILL.

KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Active
- Includes the principal and well used services: general stores, primary school, hairdressers, public house
- Some historic public buildings of note- Baptist Chapel, St Augustine's Church, Eastcombe Primary School and The Lamb.
- Heritage dwellings include the fine buildings of those in The Triangle, Manse, and Church House.

- Part suburbanised in character in 20th century.
- Mainly inward looking at its south west point.
- The only open green spaces for public use: the Village Green, Burial Grounds.
- Stately and dominant trees @100 -150years old, part of the wooded 'spine' that threads through the whole Conservation Area.
- Old apple trees in gardens.
- It has the main vehicular gateways into the heart of the village, with arterial routes, bustling at particular times of the day e.g. school run.
- Visually intrusive vehicular parking.

The hub of the Village Green included in the active zone of Character Zone B, acts as the pivot, with various developments of different periods leading from it:-

- North to The Street and Fidges Lane.
- South and East to Middle Hill and the old Victorian Orphanage, St Elizabeth's, post war housing of Bracelands, Bisley Road with modern housing and Brockley Acres mid 20th twentieth century and Woodlands Close.
- West along Dr Crouch's 'Road', whose name indicates its importance as an artery.

Entering into Character Zone B along Dr Crouch's Road from the Village Green:-



19 century Baptist Chapel with its historic iron gates, posts and walling are noteworthy features. Iron gates at the entry to The Manse and the Burial Ground make a coherent whole.

The imposing tunnelling effect of high conifers in the curtilage of the Baptist Chapel grounds and its Burial Ground opposite, leads off from the Village Green. The Burial Ground is Green Space and has recently had tree work undertaken to improve access and visibility to the Village Green. Its dark, dominant boundary of old yews and fine tall stately lime trees, is significant. In spring there is a plethora of primroses and cow parsley in areas of increased light levels and these continue lining the narrow lane past The Manse. **It should be noted that there is no public burial ground at all in the village, and few sites at Bisley for burials.**

Fine stone walling as a boundary with prominent gate posts was built by Hook, a Victorian builder and provides a good practice example.

The experience changes sharply from the slightly dour ambience walking below tall trees, with a threshold leading into a more open aspect by the primary school with its small school playground maximised for use and colour and the sounds of lively play.

The open aspect of Bracelands to the south is set around an open grassy space. A barrier preventing anyone stepping into the road requires maintenance and entry into the estate needs to be more inviting. Opportunities for wild flora here and on the bank could be a sustainable attractive feature.



A well made new oak notice board adjacent to this is now provided. Historic clusters of cottages have been infilled with modern houses and bungalows from the 1960's. This part of Character Zone B has been in part suburbanised. The number of cars that park, rises at different times of the day or week particularly at pupil collection times add visual intrusion into what is an attractive road. Access to the hairdressers and churches increase the vehicle movement.

A group of fine tall pine trees lie at the junction of the lane leading to the village hall.

Occasional short views towards historic cottages looking down the unnamed road/'upper' Wells Road are inviting, but without knowledge of the network of lanes and location of the Toadsmoor Valley with Middle Lypiatt beyond, a

visitor would not be aware of the closeness of the rural tranquillity beyond. Finger posts would be helpful to visitors.

Whilst other long vistas are intermittent between old cottages, which should always be retained, views out of the southern part of Dr Crouch's Road are restricted.

Further on, towards the exit onto Vatch Lane is another dominant landmark group of pines which mark the gateway into the village.



Vistas of the countryside over old garden plots should be retained.

Landmark Buildings in Character Zone B

Character Zone B has fine examples of landmark historic buildings, mostly public. These are notably The Chapel and its Manse, St Augustine Church formerly the Church School and Church House (now with planning approval for a residential building), Eastcombe Primary School, The Lamb Inn, and Dr Crouch's house and the Old Coach House on The Triangle designed by Henry Resthall in the semi gothic style, in the grounds of which was the former location of the surgery.

LANDMARK HISTORIC BUILDINGS, MAINLY FOR PUBLIC USE



Baptist chapel manse & early 19th century notable stone walling & gate posts.



Baptist chapel: landmark vista. Seen from the Conservation Area & other side of Toadsmoor Valley. Historic England ref: 10E01/01850/28 statutory list 2001. 1860.



St Augustine's church with planning approval for residential use, previously the National School & chapel-of-ease. 1868



The Lamb Inn, public house on the village green.

APPENDIX No. 3 Figure 5 Heritage- Character and Significance shows both listed and unlisted buildings.

The Baptist Chapel whose '*construction commenced in 1801, enlarged in 1817 and enlarged again in 1860*'* Ref. JS, to cope with the extensive congregation of four hundred. The bell chimes on the hour.

St Augustine, 1868-1869, was built as a school and Chapel of Ease, being converted to a house in 2024 from a church. Church House, adjacent was built for the schoolmaster.

The Lamb Inn, built 1852, once owned land with a large barn on the site of Listed Two Pillars.

2.6 VIEWS AND VISTAS

APPENDIX No 3 Figure 2 Views and Vistas
APPENDIX No. 4 PHOTOGRAPHS.

Both panoramas across the northern Character Zone A and from the western part of this zone, provide distant vistas out to swathes of woodland, and green swards with copses of conifers in an Arcadian landscape, sheep grazing a tranquil scene. Unique stone cottages, bridges, waterfalls, narrow paths zigzag up the hill with the combs incising the mixed woodlands and beech.

Importance of Skyline

Vistas out from Character Zone A

To Lypiatt Park listed Grade 11*, *'Group value: it forms a particularly strong and important group with Lypiatt House (listed at Grade I), as rebuilt in the baronial style in the early C19 to designs by Sir Jeffery Wyattville.'* H.Eng. listing. Although on a medieval manor site, its most recent incarnation as a *'baronial fortress'* was created in the 19 century, to create an imposing mysterious almost gothic prospect. It resonates with the raison d'être of the early National Parks with the Right to Roam, and windswept North Yorkshire Moors, although this is now private land with limited entry. The group of buildings includes Lypiatt House Grade 1 and lodge Grade 11, medieval stone granary, dovecot Grade 1, the chapel Grade 11*, terrace Grade 11 within a Park Grade 11* It was illustrated by Kip in 1712. The awesome, scenic quality of wild grassland and windblown hawthorns set in an otherwise barren landscape are the backdrop to Chadwick's stark sculptures- his abstract forms often of immense size in this landscape,- contemporary from 1960's, and later his son's sculptures, include kinetic pieces, which further make use of the speed of winds, against the dramatic quality of the land and the light reflected back into the sky. The 'Pinetum'/Arboretum, 1863, with its Giant Sequoias' black spires rise behind with a break in the block of trees to reveal Lyn Chadwick's simple slab grave, close to a seat where he used to look out to the distant vistas.



Lypiatt Park- its gothic dominance surrounded by the Arboretum and wilderness to its foreground.

Beyond Lypiatt Park, the skyline, is for the most part, not dominated by buildings, but only a few historic buildings and Copsegrove Farm, with its avenue of trees is clearly visible.

Marginal areas and open views and vistas.

Vista across from Fidges Lane along the hillside of Eastcombe and over to Toadsmoor and ancient woodland, is on the edge of the settlement and could be interrupted by development.

Views down into the fields of Rodways Farm also are close to the Conservation Area and may be contested for development along its margins and the fields.

The cottages are stepped down the hillside and open vistas across this early settlement are integral to its character

Vistas towards Eastcombe Character Zones A and B

These vistas across to Eastcombe from Lypiatt Park listed Grade 11* are equally important. This tract of landscape is of high scenic value and no barriers or despoliation of these vistas should distract or mellow its impact. Lypiatt's vista embraces an unimpeded prospect down the valley.

A further vista for walkers towards the Conservation Area from Copsegrove, shows Eastcombe's historic centre with the extended settlement, forming a more compact central core than the early linear, snaking settlement to

the north and west. The ‘spine’ of mature trees acts as an important backcloth and skyline reducing the impact of the stark buildings of Thomas Keble School that rise beyond.



Vista to South West: Eastcombe Conservation Area from Copegrove

The importance of reducing any light spillage within the Conservation Area, which has no street lighting and from neighbouring farms and Thomas Keble School is vital to maintain dark skies.

Views and Vistas out from Character Zone B

Views and vistas include:-

- From Village Green to Ferris Court across the valley.
- Over the Burial Ground to the primary school.
- South west across to The Ridge of Bussage, over passing traffic of Vatch Lane.
- South- up Middle Hill and west towards the protected avenue of limes of the old Victorian orphanage.

Restricted views and vistas-

- Interspersed development of the mid 20th century faces inwards. This includes the south west section of Dr Crouch’s Road.
- Vistas between dwellings on Dr Crouches Road towards Rodways and distant woods are intermittent and valued.

2.7 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF HERITAGE ASSETS.

‘The significance of heritage assets is defined in terms of their value to this and future generations because of their heritage interest, deriving not only from their physical presence, but also from their setting. This interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic.’ NPPF Annex 2.

‘Step 2: Assess the degree to which these settings and views make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s) or allow significance to be appreciated.

The second stage of any analysis is to assess whether the setting of an affected heritage asset makes a contribution to its significance and the extent and/or nature of that contribution; both setting, and views which form part of the way a setting is experienced, may be assessed additionally for the degree to which they allow significance to be appreciated...

- *the physical surroundings of the asset, including its relationship with other heritage assets.*
- *the asset’s intangible associations with its surroundings, and patterns of use.*
- *the contribution made by noises, smells, etc to significance.*
- *the way views allow the significance of the asset to be appreciated.’*

Historic England: The Setting of Heritage Assets :Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note3 Second Edition

The Picturesque: Artistic and architectural merit.

The clusters of small cottages, some joining back to side make for scenic and artistic merit. Picturesque clusters of cottages became the desired retreat of town owners after the Arts and Crafts Movement brought the initial urban migrants here as craft workers to, what were then, dilapidated dwellings.

Stone walling is an archetype to the Cotswolds appearance encircling irregular plots.

Today enclosed fields have not fallen foul to larger machinery for agro-farming as elsewhere so their existence from medieval times is apparent. Farmland is bounded by hedgerows creating a hidden valley with occasional views across the terraced pasture.

The wooded hillside drops steeply above Hawkley to the brook, where the sound of gushing water over rock bed is uplifting.

The Conservation Area's relationship with other heritage assets:-

- **Archaeological Heritage Assets within the setting of the Conservation Area.**

List of Monuments scheduled under The Archaeological Areas Act include a number of archaeological sites- Bowl Barrows, a medieval village settlement and lynchetts and other Findspot, mentioned above and set out on **APPENDIX 3 Figure 7 Constraints.**

- **Architectural Heritage Assets within the setting.**

The attributes of setting can well be seen in **Lypiatt Park**. Its mansion set high on a windy wilderness site, exemplifies the gothic and enhances it. It is also listed within Parks and Gardens Of Special Historic Interest as Grade 11*

Lypiatt Mansion Grade 1, chapel Gr. 11, terrace walls Gr.11, stables, coach house and outbuildings Gr.11, dovecot Gr.1, granary Gr. 1, lodge and gateway Gr.11.

HIGH SIGNIFICANCE

The site provides attributes that make a strong, positive contribution to the understanding and /or appreciation of the interests that embodies its significance. **HIGH CONTRIBUTION.**

A number of other historic buildings are also in the setting-

Middle Lypiatt Farmhouse Gr 11*, Garden Cottage Gr 11, barn Gr 11; and other smaller cottages in the vicinity Woodside Cottage Gr 11 and Toadsmoor Cottage Gr 11.

Ferris Court Farmhouse, barn and granary all Grade 11.

Rodways Gr.11, Gateposts Gr.11

THEIR SIGNIFICANCE

Any planning applications for these will be subject to careful scrutiny as these are within the setting but not all in the vistas from Eastcombe. However lighting and noise could still remain issues.

Unlisted heritage assets

- **Keepers, by Toadsmoor Lake**, with its high visual amenity due to its isolation, and high scenic quality, although not listed, would impact on the enjoyment of the valley if any development was allowed.

MEDIUM SIGNIFICANCE regionally

The site provides attributes that make a strong, positive contribution to the understanding and /or appreciation of the interests that embodies it significance. HIGH CONTRIBUTION .

- **The industrial age Bismore Bridge**, a landmark of engineering skill in its construction, allows the rushing of the stream to provide the sense of awe and wonder found in many National Parks. The sound and appreciation of the waterfall in this setting lies close to the Conservation Area boundary, but within its sound /visual envelope.

MEDIUM SIGNIFICANCE regionally.

The site provides attributes that make a strong positive contribution to the understanding and /or appreciation of the interests that embodies it significance. HIGH CONTRIBUTION.

Two specific places should be considered for ‘Local Green Space’ designation. These are:-

1. **Sheephouse Farm, a derelict ruin** on the field close to Nash End, is part ruin in a romantic setting, illuminating the mystery in its isolation and brokenness. Many residents walk through this on their way to Nash End.

LOW SIGNIFICANCE telling a local story.

The site provides attributes that make some positive contribution to the understanding and /or appreciation of the interests that embodies its significance. MEDIUM CONTRIBUTION.



Sheephouse Farm and orchard.



The ruin steadily falling into further decay.

2. The Well or ‘Spout.’

Once a major provider of spring water, set in Wells Road, has historical importance to the local residents. Rising at the spring line, many would draw water in the early settlement here. Badgers Brook continues to the Toadsmoor Brook from here. One of the reasons for this settlement selecting this location was for access to clean fresh water for both drinking and washing of fleeces.

The site provides attributes that make some positive contribution to the understanding and /or appreciation of the interests that embodies it significance. MEDIUM CONTRIBUTION.

LOW SIGNIFICANCE telling a local story.

The contribution of these historic assets in the integral and significant setting of the Conservation Area itself provides the basis to judge the criteria for sensitivity.

2.7.1 SENSITIVITY TO CHANGE: development and tourism.

What is the capacity of the landscape to absorb change created by any new development within the Conservation Area with its immediate proximity to a finely balanced intact valley landform and plateau of the Cotswolds?

Although woodlands can embrace development to reduce their visual impact, the sense of place in Eastcombe Conservation Area is more than powerful, imbued by strong historic assets.

'Overall, sensitivity is taken to mean the ability of a given landscape to respond to and accommodate change. It reflects character, the nature of change and the way both are perceived and experienced by people'

Final Report Stroud District Landscape Sensitivity Assessment. White Consultants 2016

It is noted that this Landscape Sensitivity Assessment Part 1, was addressing the potential for change for residential and employment use, but did not include Eastcombe. This suggests that White did not consider it at high risk of change from these factors.

Eastcombe is designated as Tier 4a, with limited scope for development, in the Stroud Local Plan 2015. Any proposed development in Eastcombe village, has been identified by Stroud District Council as being small, below ten dwellings. This includes those in potential, individual building plots, which in themselves are set scenically between and in relationship to, adjacent, or offset to historic dwellings to form a frame.

White speaks of *'change with value: factors that underpin landscape value'*.

- *'Designations in and around the site for landscape e.g. national or local, cultural heritage i.e. historic or archaeological, or for biodiversity.*
- *Indications of local or community interest or use e.g. local green spaces, village greens, allotments, area used for recreation where the landscape is important.*
- *Culture- e.g. art and literature, tourism or promotional literature including key views.*
- *Local conservation and/or landscape objectives*
- *Assessment of integrity/condition, scenic quality, sense of place/ character, rarity, representativeness, perceptual qualities e.g. tranquillity.'*

Final Report Stroud District Landscape Sensitivity Assessment. December 2016

Residents, or visitors, relaxing with families and dogs, enjoy the wellbeing from the open paths and woodland walks as a place to feel free of anxiety, is well recorded.

It might also be part of a greater experience of the parish and environs. The location of an isolated hillside village is alluring and walkers will often include Eastcombe to experience its **scenic beauty** en route to the Wysys Way and the further afield Cotswold Way.

Tourists staying with family, or at the Air,B&Bs, and campsites, come to enjoy the vistas from The Lamb and relax over a welcome drink after or before a hard day of walking or running.

How far would visitors be willing to travel to experience the Conservation Area and its setting and what visual amenity would they expect to find? So close to urban Stroud they can experience agriculture - the sounds of sheep and smell of hay and manure, the lambing, and woodland management first hand. The Council for the Protection of Rural England have promoted and mapped places of tranquillity, *'The quality of calm experienced in places with mainly natural features and activities, free from disturbance from manmade ones.'*

The gentle harmonious tones of the oolitic limestone buildings and walls that thread around the gardens provide an alternative to the harsh urban environment of tarmacadam, concrete and steel. The woodlands and in particular the towering beech trees provide soft tones of the natural environment. The rich green of the mosses, the yellow and oranges of lichens provide a tapestry, gentle on the sight away from computer screens.

Tourism is promoted by the Cotswold Natural Landscape to this exceptional visual amenity as people will travel from a distance to come here. There are elements that need to be considered in regard to their welcome and enjoyment.

2.8 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER.

As identified under the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty/Cotswold National Landscape:-

The Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Landscape Character Assessment: Landscape Character Types - descriptions apply. These are Type 8, the High Wold Valley, in which most of the old village and setting is situated. The second is Type 7 High Wold . **Character Typology map 8 shows location.**

2.8.1 LANDSCAPE OVERVIEW.

- A mosaic of small open fields bounded by mature , principally deciduous, trees form the rural hinterland of the hillside village.
- Beech stands are a prominent feature and ancient woodland and semi natural woodland borders the tributary of the River Frome. The steepness of the Cotswold scarp provides beech hangers on above the Toadsmoor Brook.
- Well used local footpaths in the Conservation Area, fringed with wild flora, lead zigzagging down the steep gradient out into the sheep pastures to the north and north west of the scarp.
- Tall hedgerow trees in Fidges Lane lead down into the valley framing the lane.
- The exposed, sometimes wind swept, cattle-grazed fields lie to the north.
- Beyond, in all directions, with the exception of the built environment to the east of the village, are dense and encircling woodlands, within which cottages nestle into the hillside.
- Conifer copses set into the fields below the Grade 1 Lypiatt House, add to the scenic quality and prospect.
- Open vistas across from the arterial route up Vatch Lane and beyond on the Bisley Road.
- Fruit trees, some orchard remnants in gardens allowing vistas over them.



Tall hedgerow trees in Fidges Lane lead down into the valley framing the lane.

However, photographs postcards from early 20c show us that the upper slope and plateau were fairly devoid of woodlands and lane-side trees and these have sprung up over the last one hundred and fifty years as a minimum.



The landscape devoid of trees with Rose Cottage in the foreground with large garden plot and pigsty.

- **LANDMARK TREES FORM A GREEN SPINE WITHIN THE VILLAGE.**

A woodland ‘spine’ of mixed deciduous and evergreen pines snake along just below the plateau, on the skyline and are a vital element of this character and form a backdrop to the dwellings. Yews and other tall conifers of the Burial Ground continue the ‘spine’, also providing the canopy along with mature limes.

Other major landmark groups beyond the Conservation Area include a fine lime and chestnut avenue to the historic old orphanage, St Elizabeth’s.

Another group of dominant pines- some felled recently, and lime can be seen from the Bisley road/Bracelands, and forms part of the character and treescape of Eastcombe. It serves both as a backdrop to the village, when seen from the hill beyond Wells Road, and reduces the impact of Thomas Keble School.

APPENDIX No.3 Figure 6 Green Spaces and Treescape identifies the location of ‘the spine’ of mature trees through the Conservation Area and beyond, and T.P.O.s

- **TREE PRESERVATION ORDERS.**

There are a limited number of Tree Preservation Orders within the Conservation Area itself, although major groups outside it but within the village, provide an important backcloth to the Conservation Area when seen from north east of Rodways Farm. Further T.P.O.s and T.P.O. Group Designations should be placed. A group to monitor trees in the different wards will be set up shortly. There have been a considerable number of recent applications for removal or pruning under ‘Trees in a Conservation Area. This is mainly due to the loss of Ash

Together the importance on the skyline behind the houses acts as a backdrop to the village, and should be protected. A regular monitoring should be carried out on these mature trees for structural integrity and only if essential for safety reasons to be removed , should have replacement trees that will grow to the same proportions and height.

- **BEECHWOODS**

Beech woods, although undesignated here, are valued for their beauty, their flora of dry shade, ferns and, fungi clothe the steep scarps .

Local history records have informed us that the woods around Bismore were known to have been removed for use during the Great War.

Storms and arctic weather conditions recorded by Stroud News, spoke of an extraordinary ice storm in January 1940 which damaged trees. Bismore Valley was recorded in the Bisley Parish Magazine a few weeks later as having stately trees, heavy with snow of which many fell.



Bismore after World War 1 with beech woods. Honeyhill seen in the centre of the postcard behind the beech woods. Ref Muriel Brooks.

- **ANCIENT WOODLAND AND SEMI NATURAL WOODLAND.**

APPENDIX No. 3 Figure 4 Habitats, distinctly shows ancient and semi natural woodland.

Together they cover large areas of hillside, seen across the valley and in Kitlye and Hawkley.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest- Key Wildlife Site designated by Gloucester Wildlife Trust and of county wide importance are Hawkley Wood SO80/039, Hill House Wood SO90/019, Toadsmoor Wood SO80/044, and Toadsmoor Valley Slopes SO80/070.



On the hillside facing south west and immediately above Toadsmoor Lake, seen to the south of the combe, is Natural England's 'Priority Area' of 'mixed mainly broadleaved' woodland.

Above this and around the combe is 'ancient and semi-natural woodland'. Beech is predominant on the lower slope with many larch interspersed on the upper hillside. The combes have been identified by the National Habitat Network as 'Network Enhancement Zone 2'.

- **GROUPS OF EXOTIC TREES.**

'Identification of important single trees and groups and a description of their location and species, age and assessment of condition and potential lifespan can recognise their importance to the conservation area.' Historic England 2019 Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management Second edition, Historic England Advice Note 1.

- **VISION**

Without an artistic eye and the vision, we would be lacking some of the most beautiful landscapes enhanced by prudent choice of location in the vistas seen from Eastcombe Conservation Area. Sir John Dorington, the Younger, late in the 19 century planted an Arboretum around his home at Lypiatt Park. As a landowner, he was likely to have either known or been inspired by Holford at Westonbirt, now the Arboretum at Tetbury, who employed artist /designers to select and place his young imported trees and they designed on a grand scale. Trees were of scientific interest and in fashion with the gentry, who tried to outdo each other in having the most recent and exotic trees.



The Arboretum at Lypiatt Park has a range of exotics, most likely planted during the massive upsurge of plant imports in the Victorian period. They add to the scenic value of the hillside, with Giant Sequoias piercing the

skyline. There is a ride cut through to allow a vista out to the hilltop of Eastcombe on the opposite side of the valley. Lyn Chadwick would enjoy the vista from this seat and later had his gravestone placed within it, which one comes suddenly upon in a shaft of light between the dark conifers.

Sir John Dorington was also responsible for planting copses of conifers-spruce, on the hillsides in open fields. These are particularly apparent in vistas across the farmland leading down to Toadsmoor Lake from the Toadsmoor Road/Vatch Lane. When these were planted, this section of the road did not exist and access to Stroud and the valleys was by way of the narrow cart track parallel to Toadsmoor Lake.

Other land was also a recipient of conifers. Dr Crouch's photo of the 1960's shows young conifers in the garden of the Baptist Chapel and graveyard. These are now stately, creating a sombre ambience.

Pine groups on the plateau in Fidges Lane have created an evergreen and dominant skyline, and individual Atlas Cedars, good under exposed conditions, are planted occasionally throughout the Conservation Area.



The track above the lake PROW no 14, close to the original track to Stroud below Vatch Lane are many spruce adding to the scenic beauty.

New exotics for future timber.

The Royal Forestry Society journal of winter 2020-21 refers to a new wave of exotic trees at a ratio of @ 30% exotics:70% proposed in new plantings of woodlands and forests. The aim is to diversify species to avoid a monoculture which can easily be lost in any major disease. These bio security issues and climate change, with its usually hotter summers and wetter winters, high winds and extreme weather, may not suit our existing trees.

2.8.2 INDIVIDUAL TREES, WOODLANDS AND HEDGEROW MANAGEMENT.

Other deciduous native trees of beech, ash, sycamore, oak, larch, birch, field maple, hawthorn, blackthorn, and evergreens including yew, pine and holly are present species in woodlands and hedgerows.

Planting of new woodlands should be predominantly native species without replanting ash at present.

The Cotswold A.O.N.B. recommend planting trees of local or southern provenance.

'To ensure woodlands are resilient to climate change and disease the Forestry Commission now recommends the inclusion of trees of a species from between 2 and 5 degrees of latitude south of that currently used. For the Cotswolds this means sourcing some seed or young trees from native tree species from a range between Cornwall to La Rochelle in France.'

Hedgerow: Growth can be rather poor in parts. Gapping up these to fill the lower layers will increase habitats for mammals in the lower layers and bird cover from sparrowhawks which share this air space. Creating dense hedgerows will also reduce wind strength. Layering of hedgerows between fields is minimal here.

Connectivity: Identification of spaces between hedgerows should be checked and replanted, considering and protecting any specific key vistas. This will promote connectivity and join up corridors for mammals to move along. Consideration of linking these to neighbouring parishes is essential.

Hedges: Within the village settlement itself, hedges are often clipped and formal.



The woodland setting of Eastcombe - vista from The Street

Impact of Ash Die Back.

Recently ash, a dominant species in these woodlands, have been hit by Ash Die Back. The reality of their loss has yet to be experienced. The main footpath, MBL 23, across the fields from Nash End to Eastcombe, has mature intermittent ash in the hedgerow. These are set wide distances apart and it is hoped that these will not suffer from the disease. However younger trees bunched together along the edge of the lower field seen from the grassy well-trodden footpath spur MBL 181, that leads across the lower field to Fidges Lane by the pedestrian timber stile, are likely to be hit.

However individual landmark trees are less likely to have the disease, caused by a fungus, and there are several that stand alone in and around the Conservation Area. Pollarding these should be considered where there is no danger to the public.

National Capital.

Now the recognition of the high value of woodlands and forests in terms of the ability to reduce the rate of climate change, will result in payments by developers, wishing to offset their carbon footprint to woodland owners. Woodland offers increased prevention from soil erosion through their roots systems, aids against flooding, and provides recreation along designated paths. The preference is to give cash payments to local owners.

E.L.M.

'Farmers and land managers have the opportunity to share their views on the Environmental Land Management (ELM) scheme which is due to be fully rolled out by the end of 2024, replacing the schemes currently available under the EU's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP).

Under the ELM scheme, farmers will be paid for work that enhances the environment, such as tree or hedge planting, river management to mitigate flooding, or creating or restoring habitats for wildlife' Defra Press Office February 2020.

Individual landmark trees in the rural area.

Occasional oak trees on terracing down to the valley, are suffering. Many dead limbs may be the result of a fall in the water table. Any stress may also have given rise to disease.

2.8.3 ORCHARDS AND FRUIT TREES IN GARDENS

The crossover of Landscape Character with wildlife and essential food resource.

Traditional orchards are a heritage asset, without which, much of our wildlife would not be here. The landscape character includes the special orchards and individual fruit tree in gardens, as an important food source for human settlers here but also for the wide range of wildlife.



Typical garden with remnants of an old orchard in the Conservation Area.

Birds, particularly song birds, who can be heard when noise levels are low, in particular have found food sources of insects in the rough fissured bark. Over thirty different species of birds, British and migratory birds, have been recorded in the Conservation Area from a resident observation. The orchard fruit is welcomed by foraging birds and migrants in the cold winters. The long grasses amongst them are cover for ground insects. They have a symbiotic relationship with orchard owners, as they will predate on the insects, such as Winter moth caterpillars and wingless females from laying eggs, ensuring larger crops of fruit.

The blossom provides nectar for the pollinators - moths, butterflies, and hive, bumble and solitary bees.

Hedgehogs, now endangered species, find suitable habitats in the Conservation Area. Badgers and foxes are present.

Wild flora - woodland fringe species enjoy the shade and opportunity to flourish.



Many cottages would have one or two fruit trees on their plots, many retaining vestiges of these today.

Plums, apples and pear trees were dominant species and many of those remain.

Existing traditional orchards.

Within the setting of the Conservation Area.

3.2.1 *Traditional orchards are a priority habitat, but they also contribute to both the open habitat (species-rich grassland) network and the wooded network if managed correctly. Gloucestershire as part of the “Three Counties” has a particularly rich orchard history. Due to the number of specialist orchard dependent species, traditional orchards may need a separate connectivity assessment which is a further step in the Nature Recovery Network Mapping which is yet to be undertaken.*

3.2.2 *Until traditional orchard networks are assessed developments impacting orchards should undertake ecological surveys for the noble chafer beetle, an orchard-specialist species which may only be able to travel up to 200m.*

G.W.T Ecological Appraisal for Bisley-with Lypiatt neighbourhood Plan. 8 March 2021

GWT Nature Recovery Network Maps indicate orchards at Lypiatt Park of 3.13 hectares and another at Ferris Court of 1.06 hectares.

There are records of orchards at Middle Lypiatt, and at Ferris Court, previously a lesser manor. An image of Ferris Court Farm had an orchard in 1935 in a vista from the village green. Ref. Juliet Shipman.



View from Bismore Farm lane across their old orchard.



In Bismore:- There are vestiges of fruit trees at Honey Hill and Fairview.

There would have been a great need for cider for the farm workers. Ref J.S. Cider presses existed at a few farms in the parish. It is likely that orchards were on farms as they had a greater acreage.



Orchard trees around the ruin of Sheephouse Farm.

Historical evidence of orchards and fruit trees in the Conservation Area.

Title maps, the 6 inch 1888-1913, the 25 inch Ordnance Survey map of 1892-1914 illustrate their locations. The glos1909survey.org.uk's map has vital evidence of the presence of orchards. A sale notice 1871 for the Bakehouse, also revealed the extent of the holdings of George Hook. Ref J.S.

Oral history evidence and vestiges of old orchards has also been helpful at locating positions of orchards, now lost:-

- Will's Orchard spanned an area from the footpath to Nash End, and along the southern side of Fidges Lane before it was developed for residential use. Another orchard, also owned by the Andrews brothers ran at the rear of Hoarstones.
- Land south of Cutham's Stile along by an old footpath, now gone.
- The Lamb once was surrounded on three sides with orchards, of which one section has been replanted at Brittany.
- Land owned by the Hook family including The Old Bakehouse.
- Hawkley Farm- evidence of a previous orchard from fruit tree schedule, Ref. M.B., now grubbed up.
- 'Orchard Cottage' behind the school indicates by its name, the presence of former orchard and fruit trees remain.
- Land owned by John Dorington, the younger, on land adjacent to Laburnum Cottages.

APPENDIX No. 3 Figure 5 Heritage-Character and Significance shows positions of the extensive orchards.

Without the public awareness of their heritage asset, there have been changes to this land use.



Orchard below Wells Road.

NEWLY PLANTED ORCHARDS WITHIN THE LAST 20 YEARS.

Four orchards planted within the last twenty years:- at Brittany on the slopes behind The Lamb, which itself used to be surrounded on three sides by orchards; at Laburnum Cottages, Fidges Lane, adjacent to a previous orchard plot owned by Sir John Dorington the younger; Torbank, The Street; and on lower Wells Road, on land that has been unstable, their roots aiding the stability of the hillside.



Young orchard set in large plot. Often plots and buildings were separate - on the other side of the lane or alleyway.

COMMUNITY ORCHARDS

Two local community orchards at Bisley and Whiteway set the pace with keen workers from the community who can learn skills of pruning, caring for the land and soils, and encouraging wild flora. Fencing, staking, gathering fruit and sharing it with local food banks are opportunities for holistic and organic production.

An extensive number of community orchards are listed on the Gloucestershire Orchard Trust website, and by continuing the presence of orchards here in this location, **it will aid the connectivity with other orchards** in the vicinity - Bisley Community Orchard, Water Lane within the Bisley with Lypiatt Parish: neighbouring parishes:- Whiteway Community Orchard, Tetbury, Avening, Minchinhampton, Painswick, and in the Slad Valley. Provision of connecting these valuable habitats allows for migrating redwings, fieldfares and local resident birds and mammals to find food. Owls are encouraged and mistletoe harvested.

The high volume of information in booklet, case studies and guides are evidence to their current upsurge in interest with the local communities. Day's Orchard, Cirencester, an exemplar in traditional orchard care provides courses and will press apples into juice from collections of fruit trees around the area.

There are social gains from sharing and communicating within and between groups and individuals, which aids against mental anxieties, and physical sharing of apple juicing, presses and social events.

Possibilities exist for a new community orchard to be established in Eastcombe should any landowner offer land for the purpose. Apple, plum, damson, quince and perry pears are the main fruit.

2.8.4 FINGERS OF GREEN INTO THE CONSERVATION AREA FOR NATURE RECOVERY.

APPENDIX No. 3 Figure 3 Habitats.

Linear copses, often of self-sown damsons, and green lanes are promoted to act as green corridors for wildlife and spreading of wild flora. The parish is also looking to remove 'boundaries' across parishes, particularly Chalford and Whiteway, aiding wildlife corridors to connect together. It is likely to extend into other parishes under Climate Change Action Groups with pupils continuing to plant hedgerows as part of their wider environmental education.

The Gloucestershire Recovery Network works with the parish and local farmers to show where specific habitats exist. The aim is to merge these across boundaries to allow the spread of specific habitats e.g. increased limestone grasslands with their rich flora. Equally, where there could be a likelihood of woodland scrub proliferating and growing into species- rich grassland, land owners can remove scrub to open up light levels, which meadow plants must have to flourish.

Vestiges of woodland on the eastern margin of the Conservation Area, with dry shade loving species, owned by residents, remain: some had been used for foraging pigs in the 20th century, such as in woodland along Fidges lane. Maintaining light levels for the flora habitat is important, whilst felling should be kept to a minimum.



Upper Fidges Lane- site of a new small dwelling retaining woodland abutting the lane, beyond the Conservation Area.

2.8.5 GARDENS AND PLOT SIZE

APPENDIX No.3 Figure 5 Heritage - Character and Significance shows an inset with plot shapes and sizes.

Plots were defined by the matrix of small paths that ran around them allowing access through and across the settlement.

Having created spaces by cutting into the commonland, some early settlers enlarged their plots by pushing out their boundaries and these were punishable by court and fines were given if they did not give up their extended gardens. More reduction in the woodlands occurred as gardens became larger as those owning the plots extended outwards with the approval of the Lord of the Manor.

Where weavers moved away to Yorkshire, the dwellings fell into dereliction and neighbours bagged their gardens, hence extending the irregular plot sizes. The shape of the plots was irregular and did not form any narrow confined length as typical of 20th century suburban plots. There is still evidence of these early plot layouts as the 1842 Tithe Map shows, despite some having since been subdivided.



Unusually a restricted view across this large plot on The Street where high boundary walls provided privacy. The hillside within other plots above it, is visible.

Coupled with this, is the ability to view green spaces **within gardens in the Conservation Area itself from the public domain through enticing gates.**

Many of the gardens may be seen by the public due to the topography. Open views of hillside gardens with woodland 'spine' at the back of them are most dominant.

Vegetable plots were in every garden and 19th century images show the evidence of well-tended and prized vegetable and fruit in these large gardens. They grew the basic foods- cabbages, sprouts, potatoes and also fruit bushes. These may well have included raspberries which grow well on these soils.

Fruit trees were also traditional and many gardens would have had one or two, and many gardens still have old heritage varieties or orchard remnants.



Fort View in the 20 century with Laburnum Cottages on the far side of Fidges Lane.

Even within the village itself, visitors are drawn in to see the large number of private gardens open to the public under the National Garden Scheme. They sense the value that owners place on the gardens and recognise the community spirit, gathering in the village hall for tea following the trail. Visitors come from a long distance and return year after year.

Individual fruit tree planting is also encouraged to follow the old traditions here.

Fort View has a large plot within the Character Zone A of the Conservation Area and when this was sold with the dwelling, following the death of the owner, the land became the centre of controversy, with many residents objecting to a new build planning application. This was rejected twice initially by Stroud District Council and dismissed on Appeal, and a further design was rejected. Its juxtaposition with the neighbouring historic buildings and backdrop of the stone wall together created a frame, and its development in this setting, it was considered would do significant harm.



Fort View and its plot seen from Fidges Lane 2020

- **VALLEY BOTTOM AND FLOOD PLAIN: wild brook corridor and cultivated gardens as seen from pathways.**

The land to the north of the valley beyond Bismore, is uncultivated and the brook runs alongside, below a large field where horses graze.

It follows past Cricketty Mill in Eastcombe ward, with its valley garden, through a deeply cut wooded valley to Hawkley Cottage redesigned as a contemporary garden.

Another, belonging to Keepers (North) between Hawkley Farm and Bismore Bridge, is set on the flood plain with white birch, and play equipment, seen from PROW MBN186.

APPENDIX 3



Toadsmoor Brook below Nash End, above Hawkley, in an incised valley covered with native woodland. The sound of the brook as it flows over stones, breaks the quiet and stillness.



Keeper's (south) garden in the open valley floor below it- sensitive design in a transitional wild/cultivated garden.



Flowing on to Keeper’s Cottage (South), it lies again at the base of a combe, just at the entry point to Toadsmoor Lake on PROW ref. MBN13. This fine building is set up off the plain but has a substantial mown area of the valley that is tended with winding brook, water marginal plants, and enclosing shrubbery on its northern side and provides an expansive view to the lake further on. The transitional area of the wild landscape where it meets the cultivated domestic garden has been sensitively designed.

Garden at Keeper's (South) opens out with view of the lake beyond.

2.8.6 MEADOWS AND SEMI IMPROVED GRASSLAND.

APPENDIX No. 3 Figure 3 Habitats - identifies lowland meadows and semi-improved grassland.

Natural England Priority Habitat identifies meadows with rich flora, which are few. Sheep pasture of lowland meadow lies close to Bismore Farm.

Their Priority Habitat also includes ‘good quality semi-improved grassland’ on Nash End Farm to the north and north west of Eastcombe Conservation Area, where no herbicides or non-organic fertilisers to this species rich lower field are applied, abutting the north edge of Fidges Lane. These are visually accessible from the lane and on the grass footpath PROW ref MBN 181 that runs through them.

Further fields that wrap around Eastcombe are extensive and also under this category and lie along the popular PROW ref. MBN23 to Nash End. These are all used for cattle grazing and extend to the Bisley Road.

The National Habitat Network’s ‘habitat restoration-creation’ identifies a further area to the ward boundary and just beyond it.

2.9 PUBLIC OPEN SPACE IN EASTCOMBE: ambience and appearance.

APPENDIX No. 3 Figure 6 Green Spaces and Treescape

2.9.1 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE AND LOCAL GREEN SPACE

‘Green Infrastructure is a network of multi –functional green spaces, urban and rural, which can deliver a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities.’ NPPF and Env Agency Toolkit

It includes street trees, woodlands and private gardens. It can include streams and other water bodies. Assets of Community Value can be brought forward by the community, linking them to the Green Infrastructure, possibly alleviating flooding and reducing air pollution, and providing new uses including opportunities for arts and culture, enhancement and biodiversity.

Further research for opportunities by the community is intended to supplement this section.

‘Green Infrastructure (GI) - is a network of high quality green spaces and other environmental features. It needs to be planned and delivered at all spatial scales from national to neighbourhood levels. The greatest benefits will be gained when it is designed and managed as a multifunctional resource capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits (ecosystem services) for local communities. Green Infrastructure includes parks, open spaces, playing fields, woodlands, wetlands, grasslands, river and canal

- **IMPORTANCE OF 'LOCAL GREEN SPACE'-Designated, and Parish Council Assets.**

APPENDIX No. 3 Figure 6 Green Spaces and Treescape.

'2.4 Local green spaces and community facilities.

*The review of the Local Plan provides the opportunity to consider whether there are local community needs within existing towns and villages that are not currently being provided for..... **Local green spaces can be identified for special protection. These are local areas of particular importance to local communities for their beauty, tranquillity and/or historic, wildlife or recreation value but should not involve extensive tracts of land.***

S.D.C. Local Plan Review Issues and Options Paper Sept 2017

Parish Assets:-

- **Village Green:**

This was originally common land and later part of the Lord of the Manor's estate.

With the commencement of the building of the Baptist Chapel of 1801, on the landmark corner of what was to become the village green, it assumed a sense of place.

After the Great War, Lypiatt Park Estate, the Lord of the Manor's residence, was sold at auction and the minister J.E. Blackaby bought it for a shilling and gave it to the village as an Open Space in perpetuity.

- **Grass intersections of footpaths and lanes:**

'Local Green Space' includes a number of these intersections of footpaths and lanes, which are now maintained by the Parish Council for wild flora.



Intersections of grassy areas at junctions of footpaths/
routeways in Character Zone A

A survey was carried out by ward councillors and the Parish Clerk in February 2020 to identify these in the Conservation Area. Findings showed erosion of some spaces, either by a construction company for access, new proposals for permanent access to a newbuild or by parked resident cars. Solutions to these are being sought and Highways consulted.

- **Verges:**

These vary in width, some with woodland fringe flora along lanes and alleyways. A cutting regime following 'Plantlife's guidelines, is carried out by the Parish Council where it has control of strimming. Highways operate verge cutting on specific lanes and residents on other sections. There are opportunities for conversation with residents who have wide verges beyond the property to reduce the number of cuts to allow the native flora to increase, whilst limiting the introduction in these areas from 'pictorial' packets of seed, which could well be sown in other areas further from the native woodland and open unherbiced grasslands. Fidges Lane has a number of verges with gardens in the Conservation Area. Some are maintained by residents in order to protect wild flora.

Further resident discussion and consultation is necessary to provide a coordinated approach.

- **Open Grassland beyond the Conservation Area e.g.. Bracelands.**

A large mown area could provide opportunities for further tree planting with blossom and shade and seating for elderly residents to rest and chat with others. This would require checks below ground for any services before planting, but could be a great joint project with the schools. Wild flora plugs could extend biodiversity and visual interest, encouraging pollinators.

'A potential Local Green Space site must meet the criteria set out in the NPPF, and further detailed in the National Planning Practice Guidance. These criteria are not specific – they do not give set distances or areas, but act as guidance which should then be interpreted at a local level. ...In order to ensure that any designation in the District is robust, we have created a checklist against which potential Local Green Space sites should be tested.'
Cotswold District Community Toolkit. Nov 2016

2.9.2 'LOCAL GREEN SPACE' as community memories.

Local Green Space should be identified to include places that residents see as special, due to activities and memories. This could place protection on them from development. Some of these have been identified as 'sensitive' in 'significance of heritage assets.'

Of these, some could be defined as Local Green Space, whereby residents have special memories of specific spaces or views that must be kept from development.

These should be explored in the Neighbourhood Development Plan to identify which places hold high value with residents.

Character Zone A

APPENDIX No. 3 Figures 4 Built Environment and Access and 5 Heritage-Character and Significance

There is no open, wide area of public green space for recreation, but verges of 'local green space'. It does have within it a matrix of narrow footpaths, and importantly those in its setting of fields and woodlands, within our green infrastructure. P.R.O.W. key routes nos.11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 30, 186; -around Kitlye 26,27,66;-fields to Nash End 23, 181.

This landscape is mainly owned by a few landowners of long standing or by those recently moved into the area. Tourists and residents value highly the ability to access the land, and knowing its close proximity, it provides them with a welcome sense of breathing out and wellbeing. This access depends on the generosity of landowners to allow public access and which we appreciate. Peace and tranquillity are an intrinsic part of the enjoyment. Even where no access is allowed, the long views across open land offer elation with the sweeping form of the combe, and interplay of light and the skyscape.



View above, from MBN16: open farmland provides many views over tranquil fields, from lanes or Public Rights Of Way. This hidden valley near Bismore is grazed by sheep. This lies close to the settlement and part of the setting of Eastcombe.

A Consultation workshop held in 2019 pre-Covid wave 1, highlights the importance to residents of the Conservation Area and its setting. It was carried out before this appraisal which has since identified the two Characters Zones A and B. The workshop table is included in **APPENDIX No.5 Public Consultation Workshops 2020 – evidence/research**

Further workshops for Bisley and Oakridge held separately, also identified its importance to Bisley and the green space to Oakridge where it should be noted that there is no Conservation Area designation on the built environment as such.

Character Zone B

The Village Green is usually a busy hub.





A seed and CD exchange has been restored by a neighbouring artist, and painted in an unused bus shelter in 2021. It has become popular since its creation particularly as it is located close to the shop and the village green.

Beyond the Conservation Area

The village beyond its historic core has the principal sports fields, pleasure grounds with playground, allotments, and scout hut outdoor activity space. All are well used.



2.9.3 LAND FOR PUBLIC ACCESS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENHANCEMENT

The open spaces within the Conservation Area comprise:- the Burial Ground, churchyards and historic setting of farmland close to Rodways farm and wooded areas surrounding Bismore , Kitlye and Hawkley.

Opportunities for a community orchard and wild flora meadows are an aspiration on fields close to dwellings.

Quiet reflective places.

The sombre but atmospheric Burial Ground of the Baptist Chapel is principally mature treescape, with burials in a central open space. Its carpet of wild primroses and flora offer places for time alone, or gatherings for

community contemplation and prayer.



St Augustine, once a rose garden.



Now with biodiversity in mind.

These spaces and the farmland, woodland walks and grassy alleyways with glimpses through gates, often with arching hedging, carries the viewer beyond the physical public access.

They are quiet and reflective places but others are for social, active participation.

Recreation.

Very different in ambience, the expansive, grassy public open spaces comprise the community centred Village Green, The Recreation or Pleasure Grounds adjacent to Thomas Keble playing fields, which themselves are county council owned, the Junior Football Pitch known also as Hodges Field, allotments OS Ref.SO89 2040, and the adjacent scout hut's activity area. All but the Village Green, are beyond the Conservation Area. All are maintained by the Parish Council under contract.

Recently, community native tree and shrub planting has been underway with wild flower plugs and seed, bordering the Junior Pitch with additional trees in a corner of the Pleasure Ground. Wild flora seeding adjacent to the entrance with small plug plants for woodland fringe have been added. This follows on from Parish Council planting of large lime trees as an avenue along the edge of the pitch to provide a dominant tree avenue with others on the opposite side of Middle Hill.

Hard surfaced areas at Eastcombe Primary School which is owned and leased to the school by the Baptist Chapel is maximised to support eco study, whilst the village hall grounds, owned by the Anglican Church, is much used for outdoor events particularly to support the Horticulture Show.

PART 111 STRATEGY

3.0 PRESERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT.

- **KEY POLICIES OF THE NATIONAL AND LOCAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK.**

These are recorded in APPENDIX No 1. NATIONAL AND LOCAL PLANNING POLICIES

The Government White Paper: The Planning for the Future October 2020 Draft and the final document, following public consultation, will affect the strategic national policies that developers will need to take into account when making planning applications.

Revisions to the N.P.P.F., and The National Model Design Code consultation closed on 27 March 2021

- **GUIDANCE ON DEVELOPMENT GENERALLY in the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.(Cotswold Natural Landscape.)**

Landscape Character Area 8: High Wold Valley: Toadsmoor:-

'Landscape Sensitivity: The High Wold Valleys are sensitive to developments that might interrupt the sense of seclusion within them and their rural, pastoral character. In addition, the confined landform and steep slopes within the valleys, together with many areas of nature conservation interest together form a further constraint to development. Such areas include riparian and riverine habitats along watercourses at the base of the valleys, areas of ancient broadleaved woodland, and calcareous grassland on steep landform beyond the limits of grazing stock. The valleys are therefore particularly sensitive to direct change brought about by development, and also by intensification of agricultural activities leading to overgrazing or fertiliser run-off.' A.O.N.B.

APPENDIX No 2. FURTHER STATEMENTS, POLICIES AND PROTECTION.

'The 1990 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act requires that special attention is paid to the protection and enhancement of a Conservation Area and places additional development control on new works, as well as seeking to minimise the loss of the existing built and natural environment.' C.D.S.

APPENDIX No. 3 Figure 7 CONSTRAINTS.

3.1 MAINTAINING LOCAL DISTINCTIVENESS: CONTINUING VERNACULAR IN DETAILING , SETTLEMENT PATTERN AND QUALITY STANDARDS.

Addressing these key design elements is to be promoted through the application of 'Architectural Interest and the Built Form', 'Historic Settlement Pattern' and use of stone under 'Topography and Geology'. Images supplement the text.

Vistas and Views should be protected from any intrusion to maintain scenic beauty.

This is also to form the basis of the Design Code with Stroud District Council.

- **POLICY: To promote local distinctiveness.**

3.2 DEFINING ISSUES AND PRESSURES AND MITIGATION

The pressures fall into the following categories:

- 1) potential major changes of the Government White Paper: 'Planning for the Future' that will impact on planning of developments, particularly in the setting of our rural areas of the ward.
- 2) suburbanism and the ongoing pressure of speculative new developments on the fringe of the Conservation Area
- 3) infill of dwellings in fringe village gardens, with reapplications for larger dwellings after obtaining approval for smaller buildings.
- 4) construction traffic:- access of large vehicles in narrow lanes, and damage caused.
- 5) lack of public awareness of Conservation Area status and the responsibilities in planning terms and approvals for both construction and tree work.
- 6) maintaining quality standards of design in the local vernacular without being an 'anywhere' house.
- 7) at the micro level small details of the local vernacular are being eroded. E.g. metal /or timber window frames, cat slide roofs, curved stone walling on cottages, concrete mortar replacing lime mortar.
- 8) impact of Ash Die Back.
- 9) increase of vehicle movements and parking around the Village Green.
- 10) increase of future tourism in line with Cotswold National Landscapes: Outcome 1 Working Together.

Although management of the issues and pressures are set out in the adopted Bisley-with-Lypiatt Parish Village Design Statement of November 2010 it is necessary to update this, to match current conditions and policies. Bisley with Lypiatt Parish is currently working on the Neighbourhood Development Plan and has already, and will be consulting further with residents.

Therefore this is a work in progress.

APPENDIX No.3 Figure 7 CONSTRAINTS, addresses the key elements that need to be protected, preserved and enhanced, whilst by a matter of deduction, shows areas that are less sensitive to any development.

3.3 POLICY PROPOSALS FOR THE PRESERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE CONSERVATION AREA.

APPENDIX 3 Figure 1 Baseline, shows existing boundary.

3.3.1 A REVIEW OF THE CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARY.

The original Conservation Area boundary was set in 1975 and amended in 1977 to include the wider spaces and setting. In the light of this approach to extend the boundary to include a wider setting, see maps 1 and 2 of the Bisley Conservation Area Statement : 'Study Area.'

The Conservation Area Statement Bisley No 6 was adopted by Stroud District Council on 7 June 2007.

No amendments appear to have been made to the Eastcombe Conservation Area, whose open spaces, landscape and historic features all make highly positive contributions to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Open spaces include both dense woodland cover and open fields.

- POLICY: With pressures of development, extensions and infill any applications for development of residential and industrial buildings will be refused on the fringes of the Conservation Area.

3.3.2 SETTLEMENT GROWTH.

APPENDIX No.3 Figure 4 Built Environment and Access outlines the periods of development to the settlement of the whole village.

Eastcombe's Conservation Area's most southerly point now has a large estate of Manor Farm, Bussage to its south-south west, south and south east constructed in the 1980's. Vatch Lane separates the two areas. Small areas of woodland and open space privately owned within the newly adjusted Eastcombe Ward boundary should remain without development as A 'LOCAL' GAP' to protect the integrity of each community.

Other marginal areas of Chalford Parish also should be considered for retention as open space, remaining in agriculture or public open space.

The largest development recently has been Woodlands Close built on the northern edge of Eastcombe from 2010.

Major development underway 2021 at Middle Hill is eroding green belt between Bussage and Eastcombe Conservation Area. At Appeal this was allowed on a Rural Exception Site.

- **POLICY: The concept of 'local gap' should be upheld to avoid the merging of individual communities with unique characteristics to become one.**

3.3.3 SUBURBANISM: PRESSURES OF DEVELOPMENT :-

FRINGE: the ongoing pressure of speculative new developments on the fringe/margins of the Conservation Area.

There are particular areas abutting the Conservation Area, where new build will impact upon the Conservation Area, in particular on Fidges Lane along the full length of its eastern side, and the field abutting Hawkridge on its north, and the western and north west fringe of the Conservation Area abutting fields.

Recent evidence of this has been a number of recent planning applications in 2020 for new build houses and single storey homes in Fidges lane to be set in gardens of bungalows that had been built by the Andrews brothers in the early 20th century along the eastern upper side of Fidges Lane and later subdivided for further homes. Other dwellings on its western side, fringe the Conservation Area more directly, whilst those on the upper north eastern side, affect the ambience. The open areas of these gardens, set well back from the lane have always provided a sense of open space.

BREACHING THE BUILDING LINE

Both Fidges Lane, beyond the Conservation Area, and Brockley Acres close by, have many driveways that set the property well back from the road. These open views allow for public and resident enjoyment.

Whilst the Conservation Area has some clusters with close grain in large spacious plots, and dwellings set with their gables to the lanes, often set close to the lanes, Fidges Lane (north and east) has principally bungalows set far back from the lane suggesting a building line which one should consider in planning applications for any development.

Along with these infill proposals come the accompanying changes to driveways, kerbs and loss of screening for new builds with additional tarmacadam, an inappropriate tone in this naturalistic landscape.

Some new boundary treatments, not in accord with the characteristic dry stone walling have also been built.

Other plots on the western edges of the Conservation Area could also be affected by development proposals.

- **POLICY: retain the openness of the fringe and its rural setting.**

3.3.4 MODERN INFILL: infill of dwellings in gardens in both the Conservation Area and its fringe, with reapplications for larger dwellings after obtaining approval for smaller dwellings.

'S2 New developments should respect the individual and historic settlement patterns in terms of the balance between infill and open space.' BwL.V.D.S.

'I have noted arguments that infill and subdivision were a traditional activity, but this does not necessarily make it desirable now, not least because if vigorously pursued, it would lead to erosion of the historical pattern of settlement, which to a greater extent should be preserved. This is not to say that it is not possible to infill in a CA, rather that it needs to be assessed on a case by case basis. For the reasons above, I do not consider it appropriate at this particular location'

paragraph 10 Appeal Ref: APP/C1625/W/20/3252363, Land at Fort View, Fidges Lane, Eastcombe, Stroud, GL6 7DW.

Decision date: 17 September 2020

Original plot sizes were large and once were perhaps more open to view from public space. As landscape is dynamic, some gardens have different levels of privacy. Hedges, hedgerows, shrubbery and trees along their boundaries have resulted in a few more enclosed plots. The steep terrain additionally limits the ability to see any buildings that would otherwise have been visible.

However, green space of verges and woodland has recently been damaged by infill. More than one planning application, although supported by the Parish Council as a small dwelling for downsizing for the elderly or for a young couple, resulted in a further application to Stroud District Council Planning Department to revise the size to become a 1 ½ storey house with three bedrooms. This was approved by Stroud District Council. The *raison d'être* for initial approval by the Parish Council was to satisfy the need that was not fulfilled.

The scale of another development, although on a previous building plot, approved several years ago, has proved to be over dominant, set into the hillside, it overlooks the majority of houses on The Street.

The number of approved new infill dwellings should be monitored to ensure the distinctive historic plots are not eroded nor its verges and woodland setting damaged or destroyed.

A Neighbourhood Development Plan Workshop indicated this need for small dwellings and this is shown in a table APPENDIX No 5. This was further supported by G.R.C.C. Housing Needs Survey February 2021.

- **POLICY: Consider each plot and application on its own merit and appropriate scale to match its setting, and the distinctive historic settlement pattern as priority.**
- **POLICY: Where exceptional need can be shown, small dwellings of one up, one down or single storey in accordance with quality design and materials should be considered for approval.**

Items to be considered by the Planning Authority regarding construction, should allow for the following which have caused further pressures on our valued environment:-

3.3.5 CONSTRUCTION: APPLICATION OF CONDITIONS with planning approval: controls on construction companies, their vehicles and logistics require stricter conditions to ensure that design and management is considered before any pre-application meeting and during and after construction:-

- Design of driveways, kerb heights and unsuitable materials of tarmacadam to new builds. The use of Cotswold limestone aggregate would be appropriate and kerbs lowered to accommodate them. Changes in kerb heights should not result in any loss of screening by trees and hedges/hedgerows.
- Any damage to roads and lanes are put back to their former condition, with photographs provided pre-commencement.
- Narrow lanes shall be considered in the logistics Method Statement, allowing for double handling to avoid transportation of building materials, soils and spoil by large juggernauts and for construction purposes e.g. cranes. There shall be no reversing and building plots must allow for a hammerhead, to allow them to turn round. Maximum vehicle width shall not exceed 2.3 metres.

- Work hours must be adhered to.
- The applicant, developer or construction company is responsible for any damage to resident property.
- Bollards must be restored in good condition and not left damaged in situ.
- Vegetation lining the road or lane shall not be pruned, or verges reduced or damaged.
- Traditional stone walls shall not be removed.
- Protection of trees and hedges, including screening shall be adhered to in accordance with B.S. 5837.:2012) and amd.: Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction.
- Replacement trees, where approved to be removed, shall be in accordance with Bisley with Lypiatt Parish Council’s Tree Replacement Policy and ‘Tree Planting Suggestions for Eastcombe.’
- **POLICY: To continue to work closely with Stroud District and Gloucestershire County Councils to promote good practice including the above list.**

3.3.6 GARDENS AND TREESCAPE

It is essential that there is retention of vistas across roofs and gardens, where terraces drop down the steep scarp.

- **POLICY: Any applications for new development including extensions should have mind to retention of open vistas.**
- **POLICY: Protect the ‘spine’ of mature trees , principally pine, beech, and sycamore, that runs through the Conservation Area, as together their importance on the skyline behind the houses acts as a backdrop.**
- **POLICY Maintain the screen of Thomas Keble on the skyline beyond Bracelands of lime and horse chestnut and trees on the open greenspace in front of this school.**
- **POLICY: Fruit trees should be replaced that have been removed for development and the Parish council encourages the increase in number to continue the tradition of historic orchards and garden trees for fruit.**
- **POLICY: Bisley-with-Lypiatt Parish Council Tree Replacement Policy August 2019**

3.3.7 OUTBUILDINGS WITHIN THE CONSERVATION AREA.

Historic stone outbuildings need maintenance to preserve them.

Some larger outbuildings have been restored and used for office working, studio space or for storage.

- **POLICY. Encourage preservation, repair and use of outbuildings as a valued heritage asset.**

3.3.8. GARDEN BOUNDARY TREATMENTS.

Traditional local boundary treatments should also be promoted- the use of dry stone walls See ‘Stone Walling and Boundary Treatments Policy’ Bisley with Lypiatt Parish Council.

Garden dividing boundaries of wooden fencing is not seen to any significant extent but hedging and mature trees provide the backcloth and are in keeping.

Hedgerows on the outer fringes of development should be protected and increased for connectivity of wildlife corridors.

- **POLICY: Stone Walling and Boundary Treatments Policy. November 2020** Bisley with Lypiatt Parish Council.
- **POLICY: Hedgerow Policy April 2021** Bisley-with-Lypiatt Parish Council.

3.3.9 IMPACT OF TREE DISEASE INCLUDING ASH DIE BACK

APPENDIX No. 3 Figure 6 Green Spaces.

The ‘spine’ of mature and semi mature trees that weaves through the Conservation Area and into the remaining village have a limited number of ash trees among them. There are a few individual Landmark Ash, though, that could die throughout the built environment and also within hedgerows and field boundaries. Those that stand alone are less likely to get the disease. These should remain standing in situ unless an Arborist has written a report to say it is unsafe.

POLICY: Bisley-with-Lypiatt TREE REPLACEMENT POLICY.

3.3.10 IMPACT OF INCREASED TRAFFIC: parking and vehicle movement in Eastcombe Conservation Area.

The visual impact: The Village Green is already being eroded by vehicles pulling up over the grass to go round parked vehicles. Due to increased deliveries by online purchasing, there is an issue in their access to the cottages which lie adjacent to narrow lanes, former cart tracks. There is no opportunity to widen these lanes or the character of Eastcombe Conservation Area would be despoiled.

Gloucestershire County Council Highways Department would be responsible for any guidance or action. The scope of this document on visual appraisal does not include solutions for highway issues but there are opportunities for an appropriate methodology in a rural community.

Parking- Highways/Parish Council/continuing consultation.

1. Conservation Area Character Zone B- reduce parked cars along streets and Village Green, being mindful of rural limitations on signage and yellow road lining.
2. Reduce speeding of vehicles, e.g. placing new Conservation Area signs at the gateways.
3. Locate a new short term car parking area for visitors coming by car and adjacent new Pocket Park on the northern edge of the village with potential toilet, subject to availability of a maintenance/management cleaning contract. Suitable rubber matting sown with rye grass for vehicles to park, hedge and tree screening and information board at its entrance would need to be supplied.
4. Further discussion with Highways on accessing narrow lanes by delivery vehicles.

4.0 OUTSIDE THE SETTLEMENT BOUNDARY:-

4.1 RURAL:

- **LOSS OF TREES.**

Grants for increasing woodland planting is centred in the Severn Valley Project, where it has been assessed that the loss of Ash will have the greatest impact visually and on habitats. Eastcombe comes into that group. Community involvement, and education on site, of planting and protecting trees will aid and sustain the current landscape with other species suited to climate change and with the matrix of local species. Landowners could be aided financially to maintain their tree stocks, particularly in the early stages of growth, from deer and rabbits.

- **MANAGEMENT OF LAND.**

With the changing climate and global imports, there are a constant number of diseases that are hitting our U.K. trees. Native trees, under stress from the changing climate, could be affected. Some diseases have entered the U.K. before bio security had increased, particularly from Europe e.g. those affecting imports of Mediterranean

plants e.g. olive trees. Knowledge of these outbreaks with perhaps a long term detrimental effect on the landscape is essential for the woodland owner.

Some specific diseases that could affect our landscape are the Processionary Moth which will attack our English Oak, and Needleblight which attacks pine trees and Yew. A number of our common trees in this area can also be affected by Phytophthora. The complexity of diseases and their symptoms and potential to spread should be considered and researched. Full details can be obtained from the Forestry Commission.

It will require vigilance by landowners, and education regarding identifying diseases, for notification to Tree Alert by Forestry Research who are monitoring diseases across the UK.

Swift action to remove trees that have the early stages of these specific diseases, based on professional advice given by qualified arborists, will aid reduction of the spread of disease. Some viruses may only be transitory and may look as though they are dying but will recover the following Spring, reviving each year with new leafing. e.g. Horse Chestnut with leaf miner.

- **NATURAL CAPITAL:** grants will help landowners to replant.
- **E.L.M.: MONEY FOR PUBLIC GOODS:** With changes to the political stance, post Brexit, Government plans to give back to estate owners and tenants, a form of compensation for loss of profitable agriculture -payments for the creation of habitats for wildlife, re-wilding, carbon storage in the form of retention of woodland, and access for recreation.
- **PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY.** Care of the footpaths and clearance of fallen trees –unless retained in situ for habitats, is carried out by landowners, tenants, Cotswold Tree Wardens and Parish Council with support from residents and in co-ordination with Chalford parish Council.

Forestry management schemes and grants will apply.

Please refer to ‘Tree Planting Suggestions for Eastcombe.’ Bisley with Lypiatt Parish Council.

4.2 DEVELOPMENT

Recommended design guidance for development outside the settlement boundaries, countryside and hillside should be as follows for the ward of Eastcombe:-

- C21: Subject to the exceptions set out in Local Plan policies, new build will not be allowed in these areas unless it is an extension to or re-build of an existing property.*
- C22: The scale, form and footprint of a replacement building should be of the same size or smaller than the original building, allowing for minor enlargements as set out in Local Plan policy.*
- C23: Extensions to existing properties should not overwhelm or obscure the original building or result in overdevelopment of the site. Loss of off-street car parking space should generally be avoided where there is a lack of parking space in the immediate area.*
- C24: New buildings or alterations should not demonstrably harm the landscape character of the valley when viewed from public vantage points. The design and materials should not detract from the setting of existing or surrounding buildings.*

Chalford Design Statement February 2017

- **POLICY: To be attentive and vigilant to these points listed above.**

This should also apply to communication masts for the purpose of telecommunications’ development that would destroy the ambience of the setting of the Eastcombe Conservation Area.

4.3 LIGHTING

Floodlighting/security lighting on agricultural buildings outside the Settlement Boundary, has been an issue to be addressed.

There is no street lighting and minimal security lighting in the Conservation Area, which is well observed by residents.

- **POLICY: Dark Skies Policy.** Bisley-with Lypiatt Parish Council
- **POLICY: Maintain dark skies and promote education to residents of their value.**

4.4 TOURISM.

Whilst providing for tourism, an intrinsic strategy for the newly designated Cotswold National Landscapes will require careful management to avoid degradation of the Ancient Woodland in the Toadsmoor Lake Conservation Area both as a valued habitat and visual amenity. A campsite at Middle Lypiatt, whilst supporting the rural economy and diversification, has plans for new tree and hedgerow planting which is supported. However growth of any particular camp or glamping site needs to be small in scale with no recreation that would harm the sensitive and tranquil environment.

- **POLICY: Generally on Tourism- opportunities and considerations to preserve and enhance the environment as a priority.**

4.5 POTENTIAL SITE FOR A NEW BURIAL GROUND.

Development of green space for a new burial site should be considered, as the only site now is at All Saints, Bisley. The main site is now 'closed' and may shortly become a nature reserve. Their other burial ground is small and it is recommended that a site in Eastcombe should be found. This could be a woodland burial ground.

5.0 OPPORTUNITIES AND ASPIRATIONS – towards a Management Plan

Preserving and Enhancing the Character of the Conservation Area.

1. **Ensure that unique character features of buildings are not lost, and that the local vernacular and reference to the historic settlement pattern are included in planning applications for dwellings and extensions through the design stage, pre application and decisions.**
2. **Compile a list of significant heritage buildings under 'Local Listings'**- an item advised by Stroud District Council through the Neighbourhood Development Plan. This is **not** listing with Grades 1,2*, 2 and strict planning protections.
3. **Identify 'Local Green Space' by residents for protection-special places with memories.****

Enhance Conservation Area Character Zone B as a priority to include:-

4. Provide new oak welcoming board at the gateway to the Conservation Area in Dr Crouches Road.
5. Add finger posts as pointers to open countryside walks.
6. Review places for new seating.
7. Retain open intermittent vistas from the enclosed Dr Crouches Road through the planning system.
8. Plant wild flora plugs or sow pictorial meadow mix* at the entrance to Bracelands from Dr Crouches Road.
9. Upgrade the barrier at that entrance.

10. Ongoing upgrading of street furniture with oak or timber from sustainable sources.
11. Retain current use of shops and avoid a change of use to residential to retain the animation and activity.
12. Promote fruit tree planting in gardens.
13. Plant more and larger (subject to location and care) replacement trees in planning applications.

Preserving and enhancing the setting of the Conservation Area

14. Protect habitat-rich grasslands adjacent to poor habitats, allowing them to seed into neighbouring fields.
15. Location of a new community or private or social enterprise orchard. **Consultation to be carried out with local landowners, farmers and tenant farmers.** C.I.L payments can be allocated to setting.
16. Press for herbicide- free allotments.
17. Provide locations for new tree planting to give shade in built up areas. E.g. Bracelands open space.
18. Locate spaces for wild flora or pictorial meadows in and adjacent to the estates away from the local countryside to protect hybridising or becoming dominant over indigenous species.*.
19. Increase verge wild flora sowing and planting of plugs by residents.
20. Add more tree and native shrub planting e.g. round the Junior sports pitch on the north east and west sides.
21. Promote a project to provide a tree with a seat beneath on open green space in Bracelands with schools.
22. ‘Local Green Space’ –gather information from residents.**

Parish Council working with Climate Action Network for items above.

6.0 DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL OF OPEN SPACES.

In line with Historic England’s guidance: Historic England 2019 ‘Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management’ Second edition, Historic England Advice Note 1 Swindon. Historic England. This edition published by Historic England February 2019:-

‘Focused assessment of development potential of open spaces within or outside each conservation area, including impacts on the settings of conservation areas and views.’

a) The setting of Eastcombe Conservation Area is integral to its character.

On these grounds it is important that no development is approved along the west, north- west, north- east and south- east fringes.

The supporting **APPENDIX No.3 Figure 7 Constraints** identifies key features that require preservation and enhancement.

b) Open spaces to be maintained for the Local Gap

The Local Gap is identified on **APPENDIX 3 Figure 4 Built Environment and Access** and should be kept free of development.

c) Existing Garden Plots in the Conservation Area.

There is limited opportunity to develop plots within the village itself, due to the need for the retention of views and vistas, and protection of important significant treescape.

APPENDIX 3 Figure No.6 Green Spaces identifies the major dominant tree ‘spine’ that runs through the hillside and along the skyline. These will need to be assessed for structural integrity. Where it is essential to fell any of these due to disease or danger to residents and public, they should be replaced. It is advised that those particular species, in the ‘spine’ are replanted. These are principally pine, beech, sycamore, lime and yew with an understorey of native shrubs, holly, and hazel. **Tree replacements should grow to provide the significant visual amenity of those felled.** Any replanting should be with large stock of Selected Standards, supplemented with yews and pines to 900-1200 mm height, containerised..

There is scope for a minimal number of single storey dwellings on garden plots for single people, including elderly. The Housing Needs Survey by Gloucestershire Rural Community Council January 2021, identified a significant number of respondents had large dwellings with only two people. Of these some may wish to downsize. Further, the majority had lived in the village for over twenty years and some had children who would wish to move back to be near their parents.

In the spirit of innovation by early builders of historic cottages, eco build and self build to sustainable design and quality standards would be welcomed. Plots for self build would need to be brought forward.

d) New build beyond the Conservation Area, off the Bisley Road.

Government White paper ‘Planning for the Future’ Parish Council response August 2020:

The Parish Council submitted a response to this White paper and the following itemises our priorities as submitted to the Parish Council by the N.D.P. Steering group (full response on the BwL Parish website):-

4. What are your top three priorities for planning in your local area?

- *Increasing homes for younger and older people (i.e. smaller houses) and more affordable*
- *Protection of existing heritage buildings and areas*
- *Environment bio-diversity and climate change*

*9(a). Do you agree that there should be automatic outline permission for areas for **substantial** development (known as ‘growth areas’) with faster routes for detailed consent?*

Our response **‘NO GROWTH AREAS .’** (Note S.D.C. Tier 4a states maximum of 9 dwellings outside the Settlement Limit). These comments were submitted for good practice for the UK, whilst some points are relevant for any new dwellings in Eastcombe.

- *Need to maintain the quintessential British countryside with modest sized settlements and open land.*
- *A Model Design Guide should consider the **visual impact** of large scale development on **our** landscape, and potential timescale to allow for wildlife and ancient woodland surveys and planting a few years ahead of the proposed development, and put in place the necessary infrastructure including allotments for growing food.(not applicable to Eastcombe.)*
- *There should be buffer zones between settlements to allow for recreational green space, habitat recovery and farming.*
- *Settlements should utilise the landform to reduce visual intrusion.*
- *They should maximise benefits of the local geology – reducing energy consumption by reducing wind speeds, and on land selected for the benefits of woods to ameliorate flooding and erosion.*
- *New development should be sited within new woodland and forests to soften their impact.*
- *Settlements should include allotments for growing food.*
- *They should include proposed orchards.*

Stroud District Council’s Local Plan Review 2019: Tier 4.

‘Within the Settlement Development Limit.: *Infill and re-development (housing, employment, live-work and community uses). At least 30% affordable housing on all sites capable of providing four or more dwellings.*

Within or adjoining SDL- *Tourism/ leisure development subject to criteria. Protection of individual shops, pubs and other community uses.*

*Adjoining S.D.L.: Exception sites: 100% affordable, including entry- level homes and affordable self-build or custom-build homes. Single plots: affordable self- build and custom- build homes. Small schemes of up to 9 dwellings-** not exceeding a 10% accumulative increase in the settlement's total dwellings during the Plan period. At least 30% affordable housing on all sites capable of providing 4 or more dwellings. These to be restricted to people in need with a strong local connection.*

Outside S.D.L. Core Policy CP15 applies.

EASTCOMBE IS TIER 4a and as such the following applies:- - *'very limited infill and re-development to meet specific local needs, may be permitted within the Settlement Development Limit and (exceptionally) adjacent to the SDL(subject to policy criteria) , with a view to sustaining or enhancing' its 'role, function and accessibility as accessible settlements with basic facilities, and boosting community vitality and social sustainability.'*

'There are no site allocations' at this settlement.'

Up to 9 dwellings has been cited by Stroud District Council as the maximum.**

These might take the settlement form of the existing Conservation Area's historic dwellings. These are in small clusters with large gardens with the ability to extend. The footprint of each cluster might take the shape of three dwellings closely set together at obtuse angles. Please see 'Historic Settlement Pattern' A typical suburban road layout is not in accord.

The location of large plots with clusters of three small dwellings, should be set staggered out from the Settlement Development Limit, to avoid a harsh edge to the village as good practice of the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Beauty. **APPENDIX No. 3 Figure 2 Views and Vistas**, and **photograph in APPENDIX 4 Contact sheet**, shows the severe edge to the post war settlement and could be made irregular with any new dwellings set close to the Bisley Road.

The space should minimize any ingress into Nash End Farm's 'Restorable Habitat'. It should also minimise impact on the 'Good Quality Semi-Improved Grassland.' **APPENDIX 3 Figure 3 Habitats**.

Any proposed street shall include 'street' trees, according to the White Paper. However our street pattern does not have any trees in the actual lanes of the Conservation Area, and therefore tree planting would need to take a different approach. These could include fruit trees, a heritage characteristic, perhaps at intersections.

'The Street' itself does not have any trees within in, retaining the open views, whilst the area beyond on the plateau beyond the Conservation Area, where vistas would not be an issue, should have groups or avenues of trees. These could be selected from the Bisley with Lypiatt Parish Council's ' Tree Planting Suggestions for Eastcombe. 2019' or as upated..

Any development should have screening of hedgerows, as abutting countryside, with trees and wide verges where the form of the settlement allows.

The characteristic features of the dwellings should be in the vernacular design, and are documented above.

Lighting should be low level.

Stroud District Council also may permit tourist or leisure facilities adjoining the Settlement Development Limit, which may double up for resident recreation and play facilities. These could be provided from developer C.I.L. payments.

The opportunity for a home for the elderly would be welcomed, although this has not been identified within Tier 4a.

9.0 APPENDICES:-

APPENDIX 1

NATIONAL AND LOCAL PLANNING POLICIES

NPPF15. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

170. Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

(a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);

(b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;

(f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.

172. Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads⁵⁴. The scale and extent of development within these designated areas should be limited.

180. Planning policies and decisions should also ensure that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development. In doing so they should:

(a) mitigate and reduce to a minimum potential adverse impacts resulting from noise from new development – and avoid noise giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health and the quality of life⁶⁰;

(b) identify and protect tranquil areas which have remained relatively undisturbed by noise and are prized for their recreational and amenity value for this reason; and

(c) limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation.

PRECEDENT OF LAND AT FORT VIEW, FIDGES LANE:-

Case Officer's Review 7 April 2020 (Policy summary)

Land at Fort View Fidges Lane, Eastcombe, Stroud

Case Officer: Nick Gardiner

Application S.19/1281/FUL

Proposed erection of a new dwelling (389206 - 204385)

1. 'The proposed development due to its layout, scale and form, being set back from Fidges Lane in addition to the principal elevation fronting Fidges Lane, is out of character of the pattern of development of the local vernacular, in addition to the overall plot appearing cramped due to the size of the proposed dwelling. In totality therefore the proposed dwelling would appear jarring and

visually strident in the street scene. The proposal is therefore contrary to HC1 and CP14 of the Stroud District Council Local Plan, 2015.

2. The proposed residential development and its associated works would lead to the loss of an expanse of green space which is an important feature in this part of the settlement, as well as result in detrimental alterations to a significant stretch of boundary walling; another of the Conservation Area's defining features. The scale and design and siting of the proposed building cannot be deemed to either preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. The development of the site is therefore considered to cause significant harm to the Eastcombe Conservation Area, contrary to Delivery Policies HC1, ES10 and ES13 of the Stroud District Local Plan, Paragraphs within Chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework and would fail to accord with the duties laid out Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Stroud District Council: REFUSAL OF PLANNING PERMISSION:-

Land at Fort View Fidges Lane, Eastcombe, Stroud : Planning Ref:S.20/0035/FUL

Application Date: 07/01/2020 Dated: 07/04/2020

Description of Development: Erection of a new dwelling & demolition of existing outbuildings
Bisley With Lypiatt Parish Council 389206 204385.

The reasons for the Council's decision to refuse permission are:

The proposed development due to its layout, scale and form and layout being set back with its principal elevation facing Fidges Lane, is out of character with the pattern of development of the local vernacular. In addition, due to the overly large footprint of the proposed dwelling, the overall plot would appear cramped and would effectively result in the host dwelling of Fort View as an 'island'. In totality, the proposed dwelling would appear as an unsympathetic visually strident addition in the street scene. The proposal is therefore contrary to HC1 (1,9) and CP14 (5,9) of the Stroud District Council Local Plan, 2015.

2. The proposed residential development and its associated works would lead to the loss of an expanse of green space which is an important feature in this part of the settlement. The siting of the proposed building cannot be deemed to either preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. The development of the site is therefore considered to cause significant harm to the Eastcombe Conservation Area, contrary to Delivery Policies HC1 (4.9), CP14(9) ES10 and ES13 (2) of the Stroud District Local Plan, Paragraphs within Chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework would fail to accord with the duties laid out Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Article 35 Statement.

In dealing with the application we have worked with the applicant in a positive and pro-active manner and have implemented the requirement in the National Planning Policy Framework (2019) paragraph 38.

Inspector on Appeal at Land at Fort View Fidges Lane:-

Appeal Decision APP/C1625/W/20/3252363 dated 17 September 2020

'Pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the locality in a Conservation Area under Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. This proposal constitutes less than substantial harm as defined by

paragraph 196 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2019). However, there would be limited public benefit from contribution to housing supply to outweigh the harm.’
‘Policies ES10 and CP14 of the Stroud District Council Local Plan (2015), which aim to conserve and enhance the area’s historical assets.’

Case Officer’s Review

Case Officer Nick Gardiner

Application S.20/2563/FUL

Site Address Land At Fort View,
Fidges Lane,
Eastcombe,
Stroud

Parish Bisley With Lypiatt Parish Council

Application Type Full Planning Application

Proposal Erection of a new dwelling & demolition of existing outbuildings

RECOMMENDATION

Recommended Decision Refusal For the following reasons:

1. The proposed infill development, by virtue of its awkward layout, access, setback and height of the dwelling and proximity to neighbouring properties, results in a cramped and overdeveloped site that is out of character with the pattern of the settlement. The expanse of green space and openness of the site is particularly important to the setting and relationship between the historical buildings at this juncture of the Conservation Area along Fidges Lane known as Fort View, Maple Cottage and Laburnum Cottage. The proposed dwelling will dominate this cluster, eroding this important relationship and therefore offering an inappropriate, incongruous and out of keeping form of development that harms the setting of the Eastcombe Conservation Area. The loss of boundary walling and expansion of access into the green verge will further exacerbate the harm identified. The proposal is therefore Contrary to Policies HC1 (4 .9), CP14(9) ES10 and ES13 (2) of the Stroud District Local Plan, Paragraphs within Chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework and would fail to accord with the duties laid out Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Informatives:

1. ARTICLE 35 (2) STATEMENT - The case officer contacted the applicant/agent and negotiated changes and accepted additional information. These changes did not result in an acceptable scheme but the additional information removed further refusal reasons from the decision.

2. The following plans and documents submitted to the LPA have been considered in the determination of this application:

Site Location Plan, drawing 20, dated 27/11/2020

Proposed Elevations and floor plans, drawing 22 Rev A, Dated 27/11/2020

Proposed Street Scene, dated 14/01/2021

Proposed Site Plan, drawing 21 Rev B, Dated 08/03/2021

Wood & Vale Arboriculture Survey, Impact Assessment, Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan, February 2020

Ethos Environmental Planning Ecological Assessment, November 2020

CONSTRAINTS

Aston Down Airfield Consultation Zones

Affecting the Setting of a Cons Area

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Consult area

Conservation Area

Kemble Airfield Hazard

Bisley Town Council

Settlement Boundaries (LP)

Village Design Statement

HISTORY

Development Control Applications – Further information can be viewed [online](#). However, please note: Pre-applications and Miscellaneous applications are not publically available as they are not formal Planning Applications and therefore confidential.

S.19/1022/HHOLD PER Two storey rear extension (389218 - 204407) 10.07.2019

S.19/1281/FUL REF Proposed erection of a new dwelling (389206 - 204385)
09.08.2019

S.20/0035/FUL REF Erection of a new dwelling & demolition of existing outbuildings
07.04.2020

S.20/2563/FUL REF Erection of a new dwelling & demolition of existing outbuildings
22.03.2021

S.19/1281/FUL REF Proposed erection of a new dwelling (389206 - 204385)
09.08.2019

S.20/0035/FUL REF Erection of a new dwelling & demolition of existing outbuildings
07.04.2020

S.20/2563/FUL REF Erection of a new dwelling & demolition of existing outbuildings
22.03.2021

Appeal Applications

S.20/028/APPREF DISMIS Erection of a new dwelling & demolition of existing outbuildings

S.20/028/APPREF DISMIS Erection of a new dwelling & demolition of existing outbuildings

OFFICER'S REVIEW

BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

(MAIN ISSUES

- o Principle of development
- o Design and appearance
- o Residential Amenity
- o Highways
- o Ecology and Arboriculture
- o Landscape
- o Drainage
- o Contaminated Land
- o Obligations

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The application site is to the south side the dwellinghouse of Fort View and its large curtilage which includes a garage and sheds. The site is also located within the Eastcombe conservation Area (designated in 1991), with the southern edge of the application site forming the boundary of the conservation area.

The site is located within the defined settlement development limit of Eastcombe, as well is being within the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

PROPOSAL

The application seeks demolition of existing single storey outbuilding and the erection of a detached two-storey 3-bedroom dwelling in the garden of the property known as Fort View.

The proposal includes the blocking up the current access to Fort View and creating a new access through the Cotswold Stone Wall and forming a new shared access and parking area for the proposed and existing dwelling, encompassing an area of green verge.

The site plan proposed 2 parking spaces for the new dwelling as well as the existing Fort View as subdivision to allow front and rear gardens to each property.

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

S.19/1281/FUL - Erection of a detached dwelling. Application refused 07th August 2019.

S.20/0035/FUL - Re-submission for the erection of a detached dwelling. Application Refused 07th April 2020.

S.20/0035/FUL Appeal, APP/C1625/W/20/3252363. Appeal Dismissed 24th August 2020.

MATERIALS

Walls: Random coursed Cotswold Limestone walling, sawn limestone lintels and cills.

Roof: Reconstructed stone tiles, traditionally laid in diminishing courses.

Windows and doors: Mid grey powder coated aluminium narrow casement style doors and windows.

Rooflights: Conservation style flush fitting black rooflights.

Dormers: Lead sheet finish to cheeks and rough cast render finish to gables.

Gutters and Downpipes: Black powder coated aluminium.

Access and hardstanding: porous tarmac and gravel.

REVISED PLANS

Submission of a street scene as well as revised site plans with amendments to the access, and parking spaces.

Additional tree information.

REPRESENTATIONS

Statutory Consultees:

Bisley with Lypiatt Parish Council have submitted the following objection for the following reasons:

OPINION

- o The large number of objections that residents have put forward.
- o The passion and level of commitment by residents- A particular reference should be made to the in- depth comments made by residents of The Brow, Fidges Lane in particular ref 2604207.
- o The Planning Inspector's summary on the Appeal of another proposal for a house on this site, of which the essence of dismissal remains the same as for this application.

IMPACT ON THE COTSWOLD NATIONAL LANDSCAPE. (formally named the Cotswold AONB)

- o Degrades highly sensitive landscape: Julian Glover's Landscapes Review Final Report 19 September 2019:

'The Cotswolds stand out among our most famous and beautiful landscapes, as one of the places that make England special. They look unchanging but keeping their character and backing natural recovery will take effort and leadership. It's a fight we must win.'

Any approval of this planning application would: -

- o Permanently lose highly valued Heritage Assets: It disrupts the setting and cohesion of the four historic buildings of Fort View, Maple Cottage, and nos. 1 and 2 Laburnum Cottages, by being a newbuild of whatever design.
- o Lose open space: a distinctive character feature of this area of the Eastcombe Conservation Area where gardens are large.
- o Despoil the open or wooded views for the walker, both into and outwards from the village centre.
- o Lose semi- rural ambience*
- o Extends suburbanism.
- o Loses a unique historic structure- a privy. **
- o Dismantles the original dry stone walling to Fort View boundary and relocates.
- o Potentially there is a high likelihood of losing mature trees due to construction.
- o Lose valued village assets of green spaces. ***
- o Increase light pollution in a tranquil area with dark skies.
- o Affect bats known to be in upper Fidges Lane. No reference has been made to these in the Biodiversity Report. Any ecological report should be provided before any decision is made on the planning application

SPECIFIC DETRIMENTAL DETAILS

- o New materials: there is no point in discussing materials, as the very nature of a new 'traditional' build can only be but pastiche and no new building would be appropriate.
- o Landscape of native hedge parallel to the garden of Fort View is not a traditional boundary treatment in this specific area of the Eastcombe Conservation Area designated 1991. Please see the Parish Council's Stone Walling and alternative boundary Treatments November 2020.

IMPACT ON HIGHWAYS, AIR POLLUTION, ACCESS, AND DAMAGE TO SURFACING.

- o An increase in traffic by the new residents, in this already overused narrow lane and its junction with the Village Green, would result in difficulty for other residents accessing their property and vehicles delivering to site.
- o Further damage may occur to the verges, parked cars and the fabric of the lane itself.

- o Cause an unpleasant and unsafe mixing of vehicles with tourists and residents accessing Toadsmoor Valley. Construction traffic drivers have been particularly bullish and at times aggressive to residents.
- o Construction traffic would not have anywhere to turn round.

NOTES: A neighbour has raised the issue that a resident's car turning circle may not be adequate. An overlay of the proposed vehicle movements within the site should be shown on the drawings.

CONDITIONS There have been insufficient conditions set out for other planning applications in Fidges Lane, regarding necessity for double handling as the lane and others here are too narrow for two passing cars; making good of the highway and for keeping it clean during construction.

Qualification and References:

*Lose ambience: A wealth of landscape character assessments have been carried out for the AONB. High Wold and High Wold Valley designations apply to Eastcombe, which are protected. Land on the plateau is open and has distinctive characteristics: specific flora and limited treescape. As the land drops down to the valley of Toadsmoor, the character's merge to encompass woodland, tall trees along the Lane edge, hedgerow plants to dense woodland cover.

**Loses a unique historic structure

o L8 B-w-L Village Design Statement November 2010

o BE4 Bisley Conservation Area Statement adopted June 2007: demolition of unlisted buildings.

**NPPF Historic environment: Paragraph 201 of the National Planning Policy Framework ...

***Loses village assets of green spaces: Bisley-with Lypiatt Village Design Statement map of green Spaces and L6 verge maintenance.

NPPF Historic environment: Paragraph 201 of the National Planning Policy Framework ...

' An unlisted building that makes a positive contribution to a conservation area is individually of lesser importance than a listed building. If the building is important or integral to the character or appearance of the conservation area then its proposed demolition is more likely to amount to substantial harm to the conservation area'

o Height of the new build is set with its ridgeline well above Fort View and would be disproportionate to Fort View itself. ****

Bisley with Lypiatt Village Design Statement adopted by SDC November 2010'the undulating land makes the roofscape and skyline a particularly distinctive part of the village character and care should be taken to ensure that building elevations remain in proportion with surrounding buildings.'

o Stroud District Council: Bisley Conservation Area Statement adopted 2007

o Bisley with Lypiatt Parish Council: Bisley with Lypiatt Village Design Statement adopted June 2010: L6 highways verges management:L8 historic structures

o Stroud District Council Local Plan 2015; policies ES6,ES7, ES10.

o Cotswold A.O.N.B. Landscape Character Assessment Management Plan: Strategy and Guidelines

o Local Distinctiveness and Landscape Change Report 2005

o Landscape Review. Final Report September 2019 Julian Glover.

Bisley-with Lypiatt Parish Council: -

o Policy on Dark Skies

o Policy and Guidance: Stone Walling and alternative boundary treatments. November 2020
Environmental Health comment

With respect to this application, I would recommend that any permission should have the following conditions and informative applied: -

1. No construction site machinery or plant shall be operated, no process shall be carried out and no construction-related deliveries taken at or dispatched from the site except between the hours 08:00 and 18:00 on Mondays to Fridays, between 08:00 and 13:00 on Saturdays and not at any time on Sundays, Bank or Public Holidays.
2. Construction/demolition works shall not be commenced until a scheme specifying the provisions to be made to control dust emanating from the site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
3. I would also recommend that a condition should be required to assure provision of adequate turning facilities for all vehicles accessing the site during the development.

Burning Informative:

The applicant should take all relevant precautions to minimise the potential for disturbance to neighbouring residents in terms of smoke/fumes and odour during the construction phases of the

development by not burning materials on site. It should also be noted that the burning of materials that give rise to dark smoke or the burning of trade waste associated with the development, are immediate offences, actionable via the Local Authority. Furthermore, the granting of this planning permission does not indemnify against statutory nuisance action being taken should substantiated smoke or fume complaints be received.

Contaminated Land comment: The proposed property lies within 250m of a former quarry (unknown if filled). As such, please attach the landfill informative to any permission granted.

SDC's Tree Officer comment: I have no objection to the application subject to the following conditions.

The development shall be undertaken in accordance with the Arboriculture report/plan produced by Wold & Vale Tree Consultancy February 2020. All of the provisions shall be implemented in full according to any timescales laid out in the method statement, unless otherwise approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To preserve trees and hedges on the site in the interests of visual amenity and the character of the area in accordance with Stroud District Local Plan Policy ES8 and with guidance in revised National Planning Policy Framework paragraphs 15, 170(b) & 175 (c) & (d).

A pre-commencement meeting must take place with the main contractor and the local authority tree officer to ensure that the site is set up correctly prior to work commencing.

Reason: To preserve trees and hedges on the site in the interests of visual amenity and the character of the area in accordance with Stroud District Local Plan Policy ES8 and with guidance in revised National Planning Policy Framework paragraphs 15, 170(b) & 175 (c) & (d).

HSE has no comments and did not require to be consulted.

SDC's Water Resource Engineer has not observations.

SDC's Conservation Team comment: Fort View Cottage is situated in the Eastcombe Conservation Area; Section 72 of the 1990 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act requires that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area. This requirement extends to all powers under the Planning Acts.

It has to be remembered that the built environment derives its character as much from the spaces between and around the buildings as it does from the buildings themselves. The Council does not have an adopted Conservation Area appraisal for Eastcombe; however, the character of the area around the application site is very distinctive. The prevailing impression of the spaces in this part of the Eastcombe Conservation Area is of generous garden plots and expanses of greenery, closely bounded by stone walls, some covered in verdure. These walls create a 'hard' edge to the lanes. True to form, Fort View Cottage has a generous garden bounded by stone walls. The historic buildings along this part of Fidges Lane all tend to be gable-end onto the lane, so allowing an even greater sense of spaciousness between development.

The Planning Inspectorate, in dismissing the appeal for the previous application, agreed with this view.

The proposed dwelling, although set back, would still significantly infill the openness, and obscure the backdrop referred to by the Inspector. Its design has been simplified, nevertheless, given the land levels, it would still be a dominant structure within the surrounding group of buildings; this dominance would not be mitigated by the use of hedging.

The proposed building itself has been adjusted in order to address previous concerns, but it still fails to achieve any form of local distinctiveness in siting or design.

Whilst the access and parking arrangements have been redesigned, the introduction of a new driveway would still result in removal of a section of traditional wall and green verge, which the Inspector noted, currently provide a particularly attractive setting for Fort View house including from the adjacent public footpath. The loss of wall and verge at the wall at the point where they form part of one of the most charming views down the lane would be wholly harmful.

Overall, whilst it is appreciated that some of the previously harmful elements, particularly the fencing, have been removed from the scheme, it is still considered that the proposed residential development and its associated works would lead to the loss of an expanse of green space which is an important feature in this part of the settlement, and lead to the erosion of a key section of boundary enclosure. The siting and design of the proposed building could not be deemed to either preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.

The development of the site is therefore considered to cause significant harm to the Eastcombe Conservation Area, contrary to Delivery Policy, ES10 of the Stroud District Local Plan, Paragraphs within Chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework and would fail to accord with the duties laid out Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

The National Planning Policy Framework advises that where a development proposal would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, that this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. In this instance, the proposed house would affect only a relatively small part of the conservation area, and thus the harm caused to its significance would be less than substantial. However, the public benefits of the provision of a single dwelling cannot be deemed to outweigh the harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

GCC Highways comment: Gloucestershire County Council, the Highway Authority acting in its role as Statutory Consultee has undertaken a full assessment of this planning application. Based on the appraisal of the development proposals the Highways Development Management Manager on behalf of the County Council, under Article 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure)(England) Order, 2015 has no objection subject to conditions.

The proposal does not cause any significant highway safety or network assurance issues.

The Highway Authority has undertaken a robust assessment of the planning application. Based on the analysis of the information submitted the Highway Authority concludes that there would not be an unacceptable impact on highway safety or a severe impact on congestion. There are no justifiable grounds on which an objection could be maintained.

POC3 Reinstatement of Redundant Accessways

The vehicular access hereby permitted shall not be brought into use until all existing vehicular accesses to the site (other than that intended to serve the development) have been permanently closed in accordance with details to be submitted to and agreed in writing beforehand by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

POC5 Completion and Maintenance of Car/Vehicle Parking - Shown on approved plan

No building or use hereby permitted shall be occupied or use commenced until the car/vehicle parking area and turning space shown on the approved plan 21 Rev: B has been completed and thereafter the area shall be kept free of obstruction and available for the parking of vehicles associated with the development.

Reason: To ensure that there are adequate parking facilities to serve the development constructed to an acceptable standard.

POC6 Completion and Maintenance of Cycle Provision

The development hereby permitted shall not be occupied until cycle storage facilities for a minimum of 2 no. cycles have been made available for use and those facilities shall be maintained for the duration of the development.

Reason: To ensure the provision and availability of adequate cycle parking.

POC13 Provision of Vehicular Visibility Splays

Development shall not begin until visibility splays are provided from a point 0.6 metres above carriageway level at the centre of the access to the application site and 2.4 metres back from the near side edge of the adjoining carriageway, (measured perpendicularly), for a distance of 43 metres in each direction measured along the nearside edge of the adjoining carriageway. Nothing shall be planted, erected and/or allowed to grow on the triangular area of the land so formed which would obstruct the visibility described above.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

POC15 Electric Vehicle Charging Point

The development hereby permitted shall not be first occupied until the proposed dwelling has been fitted with an electric vehicle charging point. The charging point shall comply with BS EN 62196

Mode 3 or 4 charging and BS EN 61851 and Manual for Gloucestershire Streets. The electric vehicle charging point shall be retained for the lifetime of the development unless it needs to be replaced in which case the

replacement charging point shall be of the same specification or a higher specification in terms of charging performance.

Reason: To promote sustainable travel and healthy communities.

POC20 Residential Access

Notwithstanding the submitted details, prior to the occupation of the development hereby permitted, the vehicular access shall be widened to a minimum of 4.1 metres for the first 15 metres behind the back of the carriageway with any gates situated at least 5 metres back from the carriageway edge of the public road and hung so as not to open outwards towards the public highway and with the area of driveway within at least 5 metres of the carriageway edge of the public road surfaced in bound material, and shall be maintained thereafter.

Reason: In the interest of highway and pedestrian safety, and to ensure vehicles are able to pull clear of the adopted highway and avoid becoming an obstruction to oncoming traffic.

Informatives

A2 Alterations to Vehicular Access: The construction of a new access will require the extension of a verge and/or footway crossing from the carriageway under the Highways Act 1980 - Section 184 and the Applicant is required to obtain the permission of Gloucestershire Highways on 08000 514 514 or highways@gloucestershire.gov.uk before commencing any works on the highway.

SDC's Biodiversity Team comment: Comments relate to the following document: Ecological Assessment, Ethos Environmental Planning, dated November 2020

Recommendations Acceptable subject to the following:

The site is approximately 5.5 km from the Cotswold Beechwoods SAC, Stroud District Council as the competent authority has to make a decision as to whether they feel that the proposed new dwelling will result in any likely significant effects to the integrity of the site or any of its qualifying features. It is recognised that mountain biking and dog walking are the activities that are considered most damaging to the habitat and qualifying features for which the woodland habitat is designated.

Due to the close proximity of the development to the European protected site it is highly likely that new resident(s) will use the Cotswold Beechwoods for recreational purposes and may result in some indirect impacts to the qualifying features of the designated site. It is therefore recommended that prior to occupation, information is provided that details how this impact will be mitigated in the form of a homeowner information pack, explaining the importance of the SAC, code of practice for using the woodlands and alternative recreational opportunities in the local area.

REASON: The above homeowner information pack will ensure that the development does not significantly affect the Cotswold Beechwoods Special Area of Conservation, this enables SDC as the competent authority to discharge its statutory duty in accordance with the requirements of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).

I also recommend the following condition:

All works shall be carried out in full accordance with the recommendations contained in the Ecological Assessment, Ethos Environmental Planning, dated November 2020 already submitted with the planning application and agreed in principle with the local planning authority prior to determination.

Prior to occupation of the development written confirmation by a suitably qualified/experienced ecologist shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority confirming that the recommendations made within the submitted report have been implemented in accordance with the report.

REASON: To protect and enhance the site for biodiversity in accordance with paragraph 174 of the National Planning Policy Framework, Policy ES6 of the Stroud District Local Plan 2015 and in order for the Council to comply with Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

Comments:

The site falls in close proximity to the Cotswold Beechwoods Special Area of Conservation (also referred to as a Natura 2000 site) and as such is classed as a European Protected Site, which are afforded protection under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).

The site is also notified at National level as The Cotswold Common and Beechwoods Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). After carrying out a preliminary screening regarding the application SDC as the competent authority have determined, that there is potential that without appropriate mitigation the proposed new dwelling could result in negative effects to the European site through increased recreational pressure. Therefore, SDC as the competent authority has undertaken an Appropriate Assessment and has identified additional mitigation measures considered necessary to address the uncertainty of the proposal. As a result, a homeowner information pack (HIP) will need to be created for the new homeowners of the development. This will need to be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, it will need to detail the ecological importance of the Cotswold Beechwoods, appropriate code of practice for using the woodlands and alternative local recreational sites.

Natural England comment with No objection subject to appropriate mitigation being secured.

We consider that without appropriate mitigation the application would, in combination with residential development in the wider area:

- 1) Have an adverse effect on the integrity of the Cotswold Beechwoods Special Area of Conservation
- 2) Damage or destroy the interest features for which the Cotswolds Commons and Beechwoods Site of Special Scientific Interest has been notified.

In order to mitigate these effects and make the development acceptable, the following mitigation measures are required / or the following mitigation option should be secured:

o Homeowner Information Packs providing information on recreation including both opportunities for visits and the sensitivities of local and designated sites.

We advise that an appropriate planning condition or obligation is attached to any planning permission to secure these measures.

Public:

There have 13 public comments in objection to the proposal surrounding the following issues:

- o Impact to the setting of the conservation area
- o Size and scale of proposed dwelling
- o Layout out of keeping with the area
- o Plot appears cramped and overdeveloped
- o Erodes the sense of openness
- o Overbearing impact
- o Dwelling would appear dominant
- o Highway Safety.
- o Inappropriate design for this location
- o Accuracy of submission with questions being raised on comments found on within the heritage statement
- o Loss of green space in creation of new access
- o Potential for loss of dry stone walling for access visibility
- o Fails to preserve or enhance the setting of the Conservation Area.

NATIONAL AND LOCAL PLANNING POLICIES

National Planning Policy Framework.

Available to view at

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/779764/NPPF_Feb_2019_web.pdf

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Section 72(1).

Policies together with the preamble text and associated supplementary planning documents are available to view on the Councils website:

https://www.stroud.gov.uk/media/1455/stroud-district-local-plan_november-2015_low-res_forweb.Pdf

Local Plan policies considered for this application include:

- CP1 - Presumption in favour of sustainable development
- CP2 - Strategic growth and development locations
- CP3 - Settlement hierarchy
- CP4 - Place making
- CP9 - Affordable housing
- HC5 - Replacement dwellings
- CP14 - High quality sustainable development
- ES1 - Sustainable construction and design
- ES3 - Maintaining quality of life within our environmental limits
- ES4 - Water resources, quality and flood risk
- ES6 - Providing for biodiversity and geodiversity
- ES7 - Landscape character
- ES8 - Trees, hedgerows and woodlands
- ES12 - Better design of places

The proposal should also be considered against the guidance contained within:

SPG Residential Design Guide (2000),
SPG Stroud District Landscape Assessment (2000)
SPD Planning Obligations (2017)
Bisley-with Lypiatt Village Design Statement (2006)

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The application has a number of considerations which both cover the principle of development and the details of the proposed scheme which will be considered in turn below:

PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

The site lies within the defined settlement boundary where there is a presumption in favour of development subject to design and amenity considerations and to a satisfactory means of access being provided. Policy HC1 of the Stroud District Local Plan offers criteria for meeting small scale housing development within defined settlement limits.

The plot, in plan form, appears to offer an in-fill development opportunity which can easily accommodate a dwelling and the associated amenity and parking requirements. However, the plans cannot convey the importance of the open space and the reality of the sense of enclosure this plot has due to being surrounded by development and the narrow nature of Fidges Lane. This results in the plot having a sense of being much smaller, and therefore its importance as an open space to the Conservation Area can only be truly appreciated whilst being physically on site. It is the opinion of officers, that whilst the site falls within settlement development limits and therefore benefits from the presumption in favour thrust of current policy, that it is not possible to achieve development in conjunction with the material planning considerations below:

DESIGN/APPEARANCE/IMPACT ON THE AREA/ LANDSCAPE

This part of Fidges Lane falls within the conservation area, with the character being of varying size properties set within large plots, often sharing a close relationship with Fidges Lane and many at 90 degrees, gable end and in close proximity to the street.

The site itself comprises a section of garden to the rear and side of the dwelling known as Fort View. The adjacent Maple Cottage and Laburnum Cottage form a grouping of 3 historical buildings, to which their setting is largely uninterrupted by modern development. It has to be remembered that the built environment derives its character as much from the spaces between and around the buildings as it does from the buildings themselves.

The inspector of the appealed 2020 application considered that the "relationship between these 3 dwellings are an important characteristic within the Conservation Area" and one that was "worthy of preservation and the loss of this is therefore harmful".

This proposal has sought to address the comments made by the Appeal Inspector, in reducing the scale of the property, turning it to be gable end facing to the street and reducing the amount of stone wall being removed for the proposed shared access for the two dwellings. These changes are not fundamental and represent tweaks to an unacceptable scheme.

The proposed dwelling, although set back, would still significantly infill the openness, and obscure the backdrop referred to by the Inspector. Its design has been simplified, nevertheless, given the land levels, it would still be a dominant structure within the surrounding group of buildings; this dominance would not be mitigated by the use of hedging. The proposed building itself has been adjusted in order to address previous concerns, but it fails to achieve any form of local distinctiveness in siting or design.

A street scene drawing was submitted at the request of officers, which identifies that the proposed dwelling would sit higher than any of the dwellings within the historic cluster, at an awkward juncture with Fort View, and due to the rising land towards Brockley Acres, would result in a dwelling that is strident and incongruous within the street scene.

The proposal to be traditional form, trying to emulate the design cues of the immediate dwellings, but the reality of attempting to match these materials at this juncture of Fidges Lane in addition to the large degree of set back from Fridges Lane, the proposal would appear alien, being divorced from Fridges Lane, that ay never 'soften' into its plot and surrounding, again due its awkward and out of character positioning, not in keeping with the pattern of development at this part of the settlement.

The proposal represents infill development. The Appeal Inspector agreed that this infill and subdivision were a traditional activity, but countered that this does not mean that it is desirable now. This was concluded that the inspector did not "consider it appropriate at this particular location".

Whilst the access and parking arrangements have been redesigned, the introduction of a new driveway would still result in removal of a section of traditional wall and green verge, which the Inspector noted, "currently provide a particularly attractive setting for Fort View house including from the adjacent public footpath. As this is on the edge of the Conservation Area, it forms a key view into the area and removal of these features would be harmful".

Whilst the access will be discussed within the highways section of this report, the suggested condition in relation to the access necessitates the new access and therefore the width of the opening to be knocked into the stone wall, further to the east, of 4.1m. This is notwithstanding the proposed plans indicating a distance of 2.9m, which is the width of the current access, to serve the one dwelling. An opening of 4.1m is considered to be wholly unacceptable in terms of the impact to the street scene, and therefore will form part of a refusal reason for the application.

It is considered that the proposed residential development and its associated works would lead to the loss of an expanse of green space which is an important feature in this part of the settlement, and lead to the erosion of a key section of boundary enclosure. The siting and design of the proposed building could not be deemed to either preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.

The proposal in totality is not sympathetic to its setting, is out of character with the pattern of development at this juncture of the settlement, will appear incongruous and strident within the street scene due to its form and layout and is therefore incompatible with its surroundings, contrary to policies HC1, CP14 and ES10 of the 2015 Stroud District Local Plan.

RESIDENTIAL AMENITY

Due to the distances involved the proposal complies with the 25m distance guidance between clear glazing facing clear glazing and therefore does not give rise to a detrimental impact to overlooking. The first floor windows could offer some degree of overlooking to the site garden of Maple Cottage, which is open and visible from the road also, with Maple Cottage benefiting from a private area, so the degree of overlooking would not be unacceptable.

The proposed dwelling is in close proximity to the rear boundary as well as to the existing dwelling Fort View, but it is not considered that any overlooking, overbearing, loss of light or overshadowing impacts are so detrimental to warrant refusal on this basis.

HERITAGE ASSETS

Fort View Cottage is situated in the Eastcombe Conservation Area; Section 72 of the 1990 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act requires that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area. This requirement extends to all powers under the Planning Acts.

The siting of the proposed building cannot be deemed to either preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area for the reasons described above. The development of the site is therefore considered to cause significant harm to the Eastcombe Conservation Area.

The National Planning Policy Framework advises that where a development proposal would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, that this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. In this instance, the proposed house would affect only a relatively small part of the conservation area, and thus the harm caused to its significance would be less than substantial. However, the public benefits of the provision of a single dwelling cannot be deemed to outweigh the harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

HIGHWAYS

GCC Highways have reviewed the proposal and following additional plans and alterations to demonstrate that the proposed parking and turning area can comply with the 2020 Manual for Streets, they have commented in no objection subject to conditions.

As mentioned, GCC Highways have suggested a condition for an access being a minimum of 4.1m,

notwithstanding the proposed plans stating it is to 2.9m, but on the basis of the condition requiring 4.1m, highways have no objection to the scheme in highway safety terms.

The LPA are not supportive of a larger opening and access due to its unacceptable impact to the setting of the Conservation Area, which will give rise to a refusal reason of the application. The remaining conditions proposed in terms of parking layout, EV charging and amendments to the verge are all considered to be appropriate and reasonable conditions.

GCC have not recommended a Construction Management Plan, but Fidges Lane is very narrow and is accessed by narrow roads also, so it is considered to be reasonable and appropriate that a Construction Management Plan to include delivery management, construction and road management, as well as vehicle manoeuvrability be applied to any permission.

ECOLOGY & ARBORICULTURE

SDC's Biodiversity Officer has reviewed the submitted Ecological Appraisal and comments in no objection subject to a compliance condition to ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the recommendation contained within the appraisal. These include construction measures and enhancements for birds, bats and nocturnal mammals. This would need to be confirmed by an ecologist in writing to discharge proposed condition. This condition is considered to be reasonable.

The application has been supported by an Arboriculture Survey and Impact Assessment which has been reviewed by SDC's Arboriculture Officer, and following some additional information, has commented in no objection subject to the development being carried out in accordance with the submitted information. A pre-development meeting informative will be applied to any permission, to alert the applicant or contractors to engage with the LPA at an early stage, however the pre-commencement condition suggested to be applied to any permission is not considered to meet the tests to be applied.

LANDSCAPE

The site is located within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The site on the north side of Fidges Lane means that it is not on the settlement edge and in landscape terms the proposed dwelling, whilst having a taller roofscape, would be read in conjunction with the surrounding development. Therefore, it is considered that the proposal would not have a detrimental impact to the setting or important views into and out of the AONB.

DRAINAGE

This application did include proposals for surface water drainage to which was consulted upon with our Water Resource Engineer. The response was in one observation and therefore the proposals are considered to be acceptable.

CONTAMINATED LAND

The site falls within 250m of a former quarry and therefore the landfill informative needs to be applied to any permission to alert the applicant and contractors.

OBLIGATIONS

Stroud District Council is a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Authority. An additional questions form has been submitted as part of the planning application.

RECOMMENDATION

The proposal is NOT considered to comply with the provisions of policies listed in the reasons for refusal and contained in the adopted Stroud District Local Plan, November 2015 and the core planning principles set out in the NPPF.

HUMAN RIGHTS

In compiling this recommendation, we have given full consideration to all aspects of the Human Rights Act 1998 in relation to the applicant and/or the occupiers of any neighbouring or affected properties. In particular regard has been had to Article 8 of the ECHR (Right to Respect for private and family life) and the requirement to ensure that any interference with the right in this Article is both permissible and proportionate. On analysing the issues raised by the application no particular matters, other than those referred to in this report, warranted any different action to that recommended.

APPENDIX 2:

FURTHER STATEMENTS, POLICIES AND PROTECTION.

STATEMENTS:-

Cotswold Conservation Board: AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY.

‘The Special Qualities of the Cotswolds AONB – Statement of Significance

The Cotswolds are a rich mosaic of historical, social, economic, cultural, geological, geomorphological and ecological features.

The special qualities of the Cotswolds AONB are:

- the unifying character of the limestone geology – its visible presence in the landscape and use as a building material;
- the Cotswold escarpment, including views from and to the AONB;
- the high wolds – a large open, elevated predominately arable landscape with commons, ‘big’ skies and long-distance views;
- river valleys, the majority forming the headwaters of the Thames, with high-quality water;
- distinctive dry stone walls;
- internationally important flower-rich grasslands, particularly limestone grasslands;
- internationally important ancient broadleaved woodland, particularly along the crest of the escarpment;
- variations in the colour of the stone from one part of the AONB to another which add a vital element of local distinctiveness;
- the tranquillity of the area, away from major sources of inappropriate noise, development, visual clutter and pollution;
- extensive dark sky areas;
- distinctive settlements, developed in the Cotswold vernacular, high architectural quality and integrity;
- an accessible landscape for quiet recreation for both rural and urban users, with numerous walking and riding routes, including the Cotswolds Way National Trail;
- significant archaeological, prehistoric and historic associations dating back 6,000 years, including Neolithic stone monuments, ancient drove roads, Iron Age forts, Roman villas, ridge and furrow fields, medieval wool churches and country estates and parks;
- a vibrant heritage of cultural associations, including the Arts and Crafts movement of the 19th and 20th centuries, famous composers and authors and traditional events such as the Cotswolds Olympicks cheese rolling and woolsack races.

The special qualities of an AONB are those aspects of the area’s natural beauty which make the area distinctive and which are valuable, especially at a national scale. They are the key attributes on which the priorities for its conservation, enhancement and management should be based. They bring out the essence of the AONB as an evocative description of the area rather than as a statistical account’.

C.A.O.N.B. Management plan 2018-2023

CONSERVATION AREA STATEMENT – CONSERVATION AREA NO 6 BISLEY adopted June 7 2007

BISLEY WITH LYPIATT VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT November 2010 adopted by Stroud District Council. Supplementary Planning Guidance.

PARISH POLICIES

Council policies and guidance may be found on their website. www.bisley-with-lypiattp.gov.uk:-

Dark Skies Policy

Sustainability Policy

Tree Replacement Policy August 2019

Hedgerow Policy April 2021

Genetic modified organisms. G.M.O.s

PARISH GUIDANCE

Tree Planting Suggestions for Eastcombe 2019-2020

Stone Walling and Alternative Boundary Treatments.

APPENDIX 3: FIGURES 1-7

Figure 1: Baseline

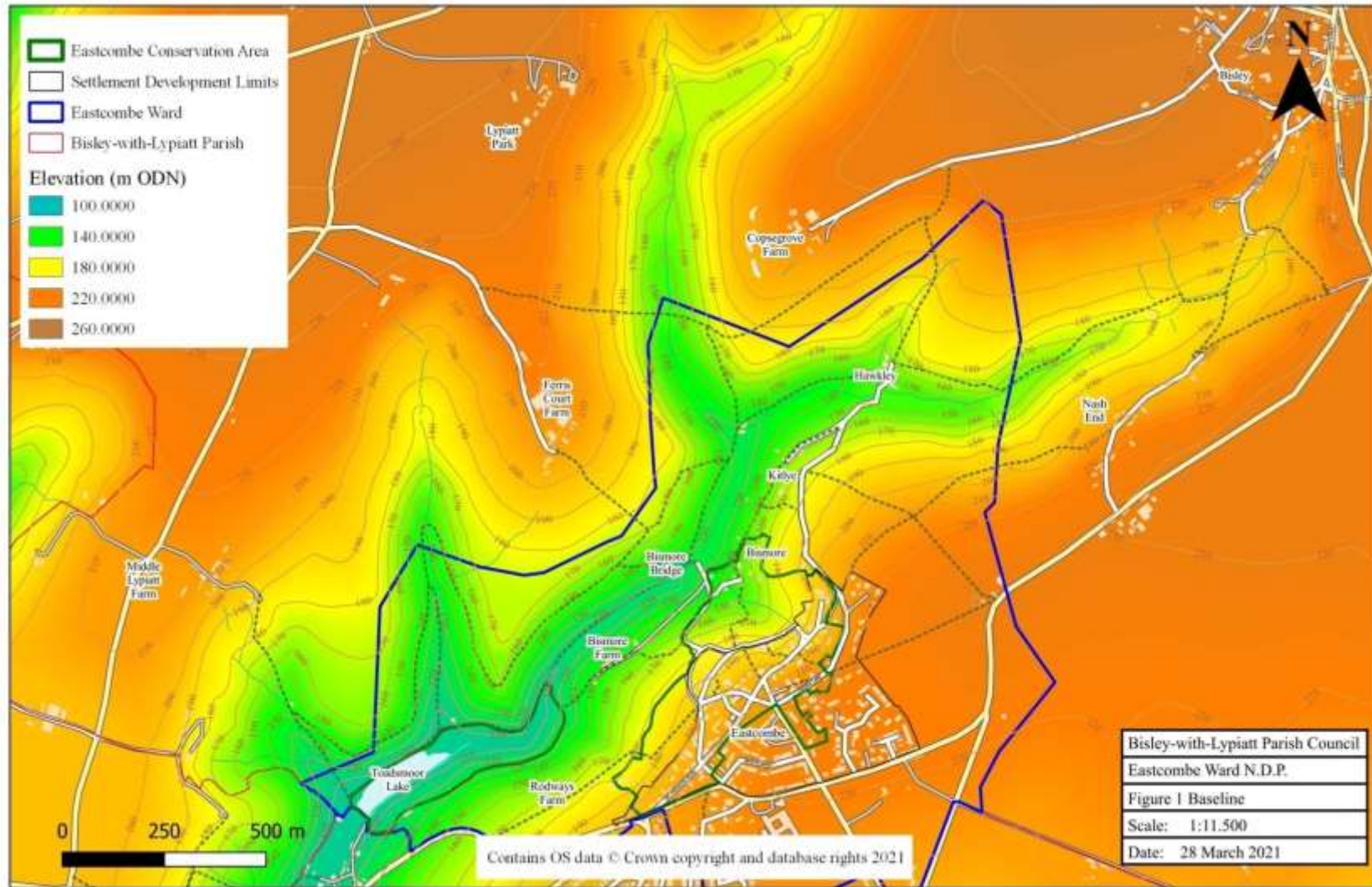


Figure 2: Views and Vistas

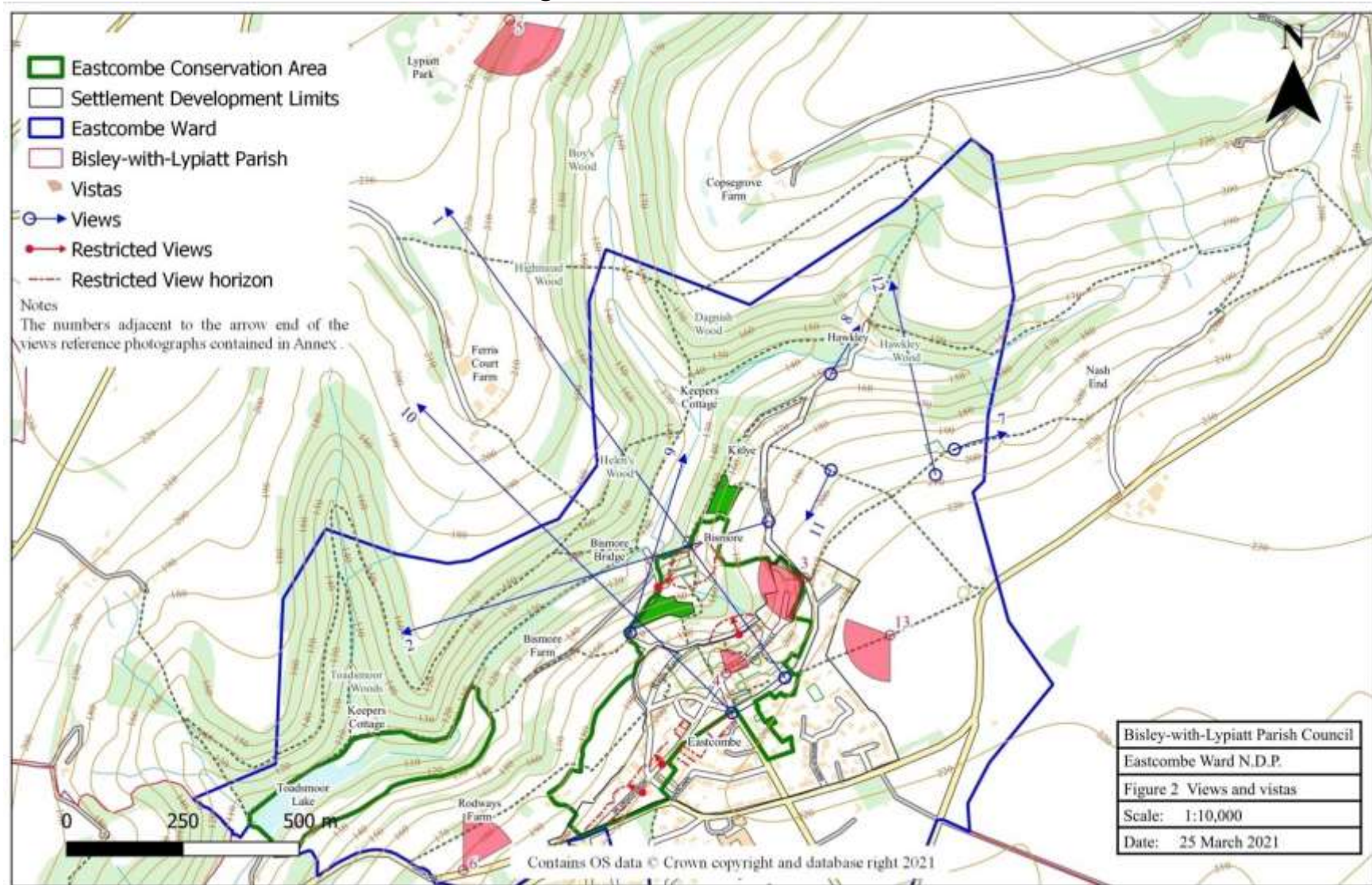


Figure 4: Built Environment and Access

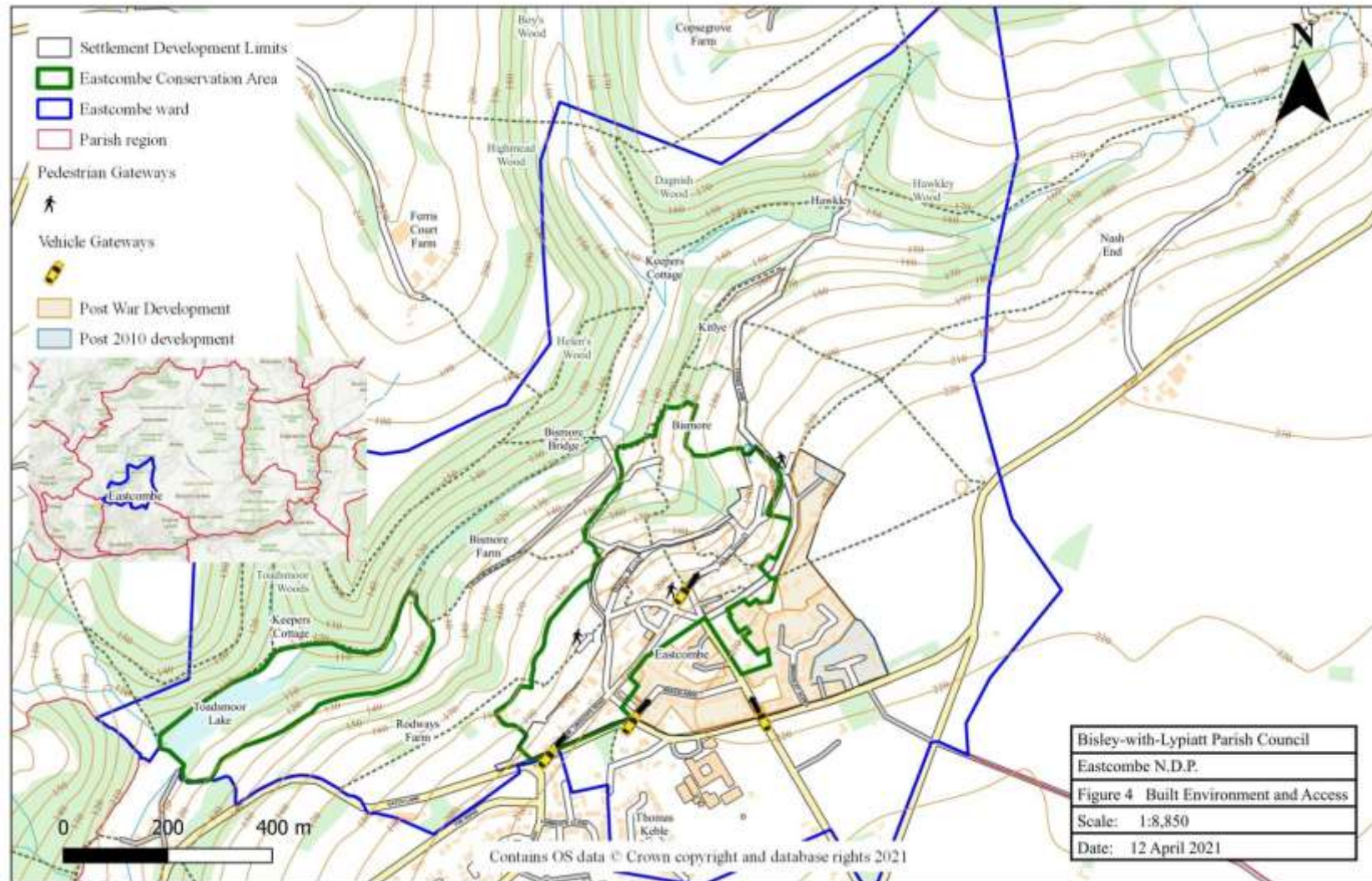


Figure 5: Heritage - Character and Significance (Including orchards)

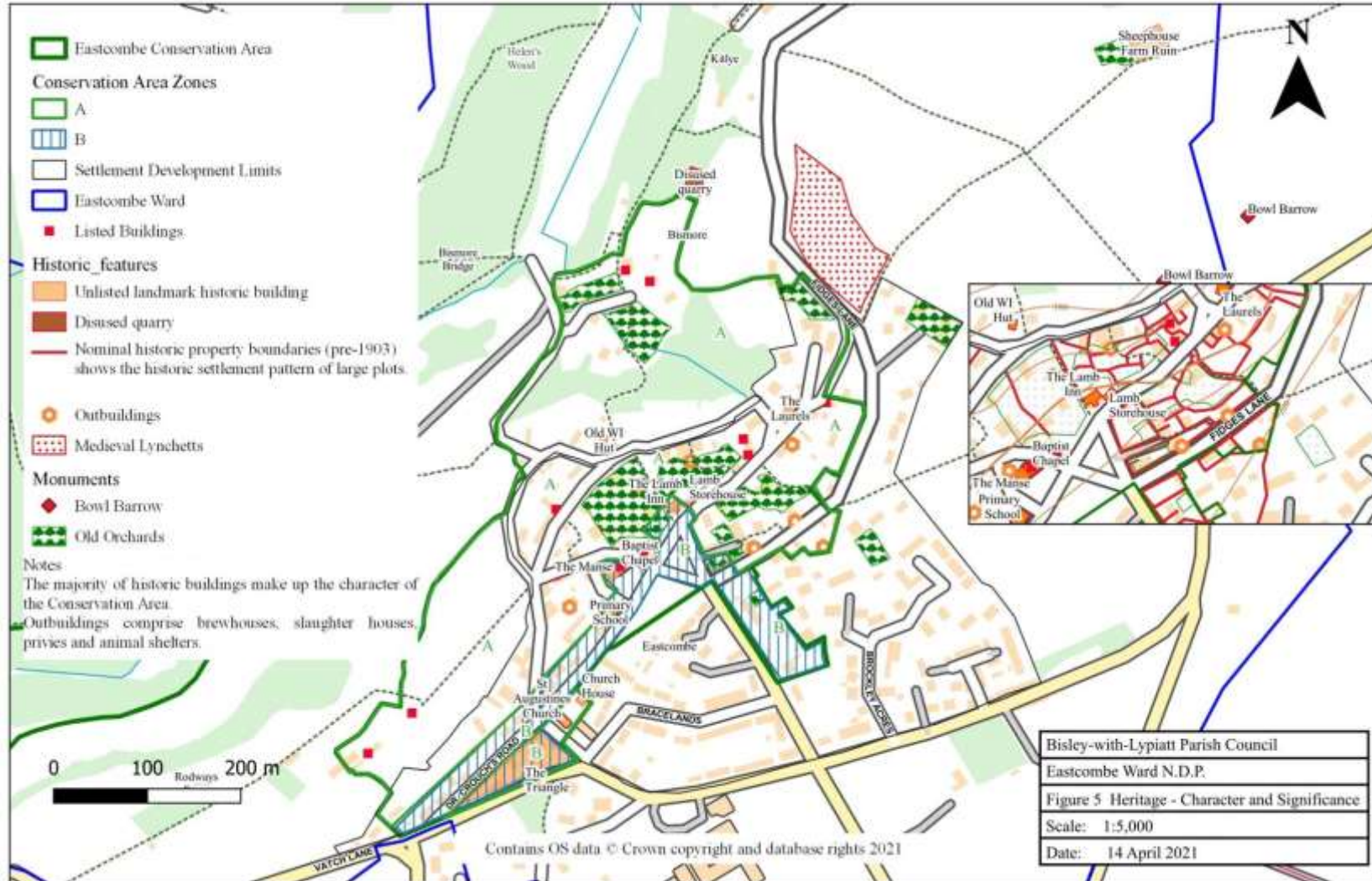


Figure 6: Green Spaces and Treescape (Refer to Figure 5 for orchards)

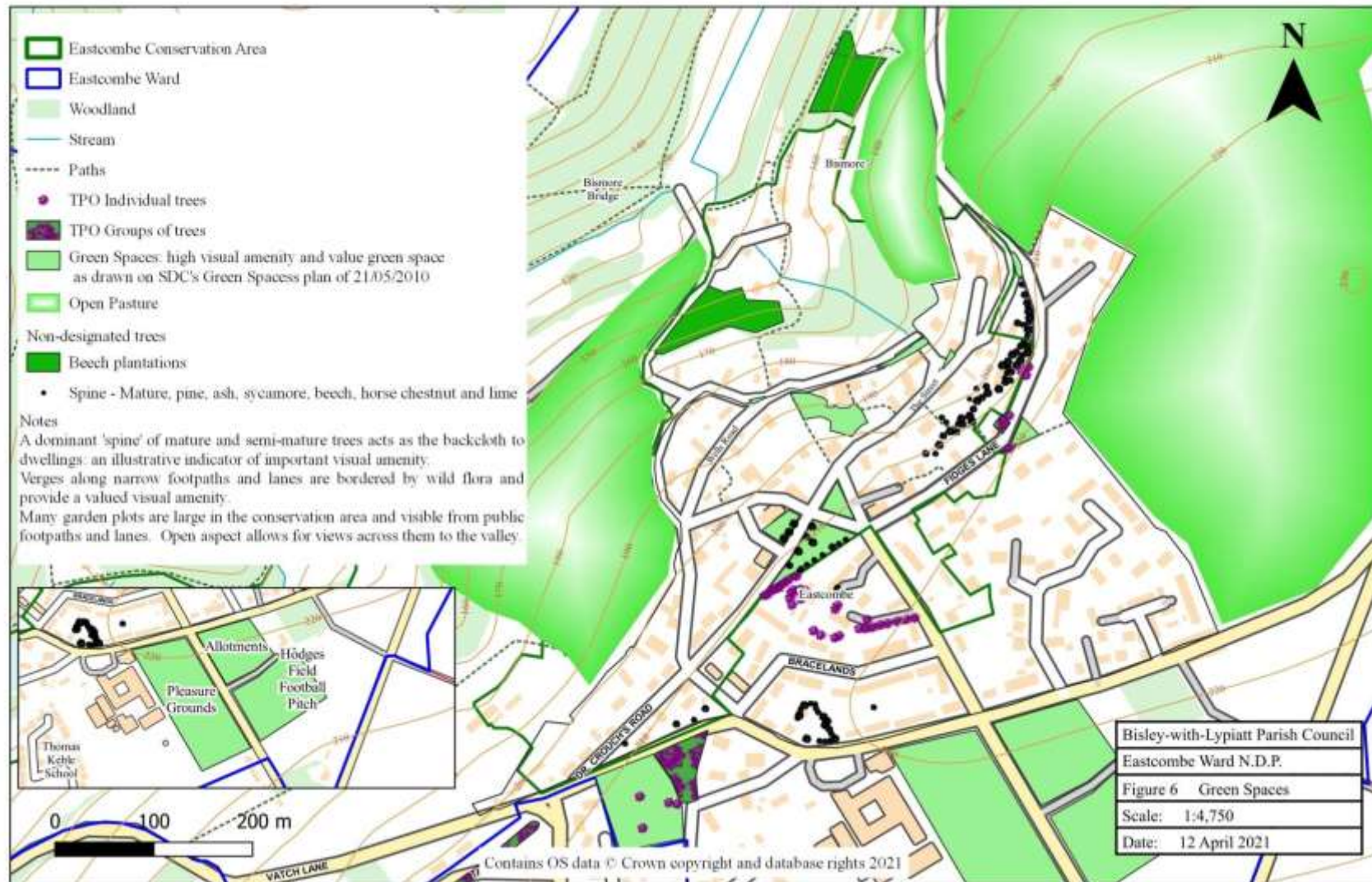
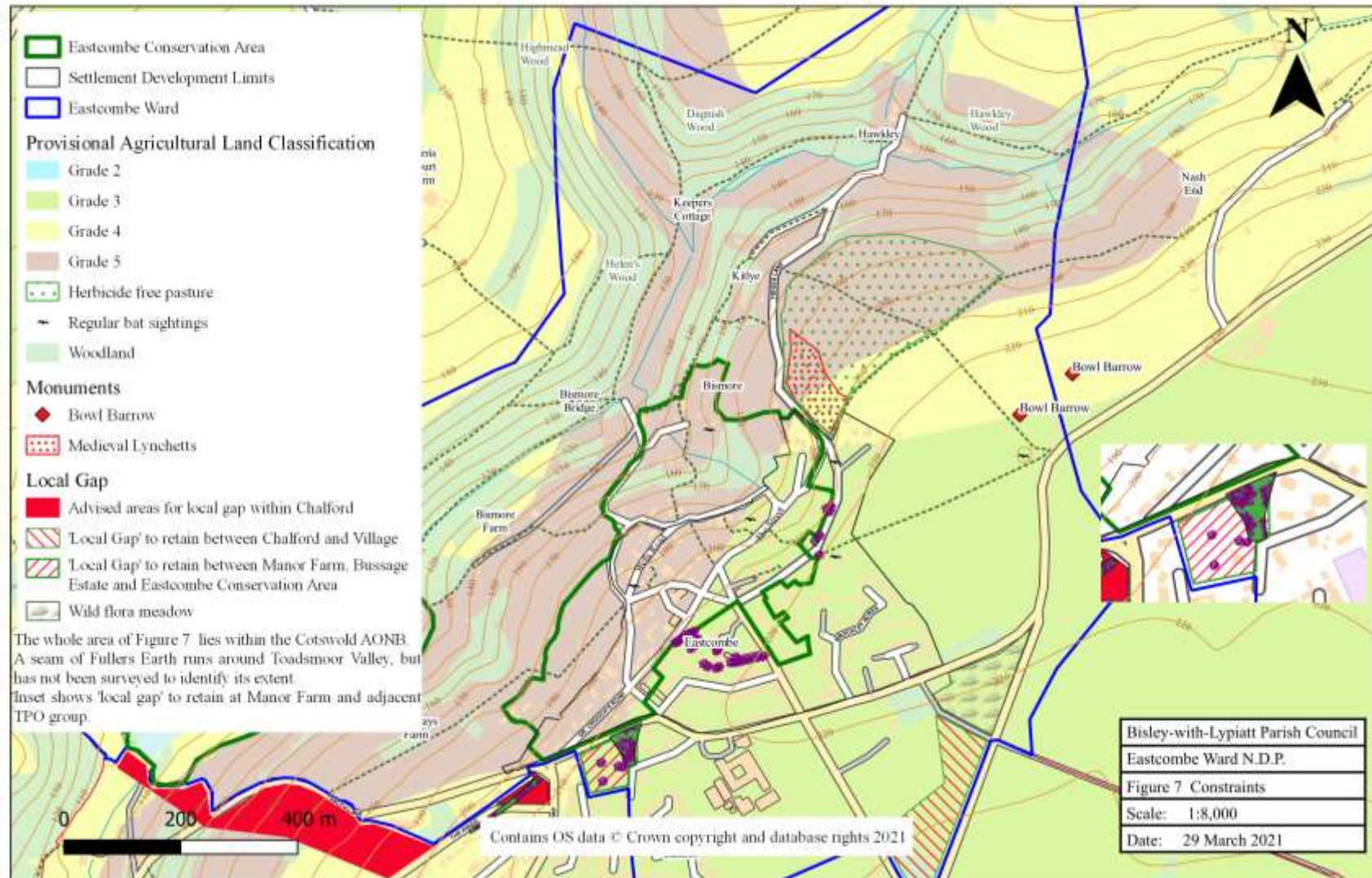


Figure 7: Constraints



APPENDIX 4: VIEWS AND VISTAS



Vista 1: To Lypiatt Park from Fidges Lane



Vista 2: From Fidges Lane along hillside to Toadsmoor ancient woodland



View 3: From Fidges Lane bench across Conservation Area Zone A



View 4: From entrance to The Street across Conservation Area Zone A



Vista 5: From Lypiatt Park towards Eastcombe Conservation Area



Vista 6: From Vatch Lane - initial view of village setting



Vista 7: From Sheephouse Farm ruin towards Nash End



View 8: From Fidges Lane approaching Hawkley



Vista 9: Across hillside to Toadsmoor Valley with Fairview Cottage



View 10: From village green to hillside of open farmland & new woodland



View 11: From lower field to site of medieval village



Vista 12: From Sheephouse Farm & old orchard to Copsegrove Farm's avenue



Vista 13: From field off Fidges Lane to edge of village: Woodlands Close, Brockley Acres & Fidges Lane

APPENDIX 5: PUBLIC CONSULTATION SUMMARY OF WORKSHOP 2019 SUPPORTING EVIDENCE/ RESEARCH

Prompt	Eastcombe	Bisley	Oakridge	Theme to be Developed
<p><u>DO YOU VALUE THIS PLACE: ITS HEART, LANDSCAPE, TREES?</u></p> <p>1) How sensitive is our Conservation Area to change?</p>	<p>Would not like houses built in conservation areas (ie) in private gardens.</p> <p>Possibility to build in gardens, to create new spaces.</p> <p>Very much appreciated but downsizing possibilities should be there.</p> <p>Highly valued. Would be happy for sensitive 'in-filling'-houses in keeping with the village. Build bungalows-more suitable for older people. Skyline is beautiful- would <u>not</u> want taller buildings to spoil the view. Much appreciated by visitors eg Gnome Hunt.</p> <p>I greatly value Conservation Area-some things may change but basic layout, skyline, vistas etc. should not.</p> <p>Sensitive development but not petty regulations. Be prepared to pay for recreational resources.</p>	<p>The balance between conservation, sustainability and a dynamic village is not easy to obtain. Arguably the dynamism of the village is held back by conservation.</p> <p>Good it is protected but it is also 'frozen' and does not allow it to change in a natural way. No street lighting we like it dark.</p> <p>Keep Bisley Conservation area dark at night. Sensitivity to the present skyline (any development).</p> <p>Please protect the Conservation area, particular by skyline above Bisley, extensive planting with very large old trees within the area and open valleys in all directions.</p> <p>Very- because the character of the village would change and no infrastructure to support more houses.</p> <p>Greatly value Conservation</p>	<p>Note: Adapted for Oakridge as the village is not in a Conservation Area</p> <p>Oakridge village-keep the character of the buildings, Cotswold atmosphere, no higher rise buildings.</p> <p>Oakridge should be considered as a Conservation Area.</p> <p>Value traditional cottages. Why are they not listed? -value landscape and views. -value footpaths.</p> <p>Light pollution. No lights. Protection of character, space and countryside. Provision to cope on impact of drought, storm or disease on trees.</p> <p>Many Oakridge residents may not want change. This may not work on the plan. Need to work with the Woodland Trust to help secure the woods + ? understanding.</p> <p>What to maintain? Lack of traffic.</p>	<p>PROTECT: Keep character as it is.</p> <p>IDEAS: How to progress-various</p> <p>VALUED:- Local materials importance</p> <p>Skyline, views importance</p> <p>Landscape importance</p> <p>Dark skies importance.</p> <p>Windbreak Protection imp.</p> <p>Lanes /access importance</p> <p>Allotments</p> <p>Management/maintenance importance</p> <p>community and health-space importance</p> <p>orchard importance</p> <p>habitat importance</p> <p>water importance</p> <p>financial incentives?</p>

Prompt	Eastcombe	Bisley	Oakridge	Theme to be Developed
	<p>Skyline-be able to view the valley.</p> <p>Conservation area-views buildings etc..</p> <p>Local materials for sensitive areas.</p> <p>Progress in a sensitive way.</p> <p>Extremely sensitive to change/development. Semi urban.</p> <p>Highly sensitive-already semi rural and could easily become semi-urban.</p> <p>Conservation area is sensitive to change, views into and from the area are important. Keep the woodland walks.</p> <p>Eastcombe is very sensitive to development.</p> <p>Very sensitive. It is important to keep the loved Conservation areas that people and animals</p>	<p>areas, which should be strictly protected-character and appearance v. important.</p> <p>Conservation area is vital (?)- I don't like the trend for building very modern houses amongst traditional buildings. Any new building needs to be in the style of surrounding houses using local materials.</p> <p>Conservation of stone buildings & stone (if possible) tiles. No red brick</p> <p>New buildings in old style.</p> <p>Buildings should be 'sympathetic' in use of materials. No extension to Conservation Area.</p> <p>Use of traditional materials, Cotswold stone and tiles etc.</p> <p>Viewing of individual planning applications on their own merits.</p> <p>Not allowing planning permission outside the settlement area or boundary.</p>	<p>Quiet</p> <p>Dark skies</p> <p>Rural</p> <p>Value the allotments in Oakridge</p> <p>-Value the low amount of traffic</p> <p>-Value Strawberry Banks</p> <p>And the wildflower meadows between Oakridge and Far Oakridge.</p> <p>Landscape Character Area.</p> <p>Feel of landscape-highly sensitive</p> <p>-Trees</p> <p>-Lanes</p> <p>-Hedges</p> <p>-to maintained.</p> <p>Rights of Way should be open to all-kept maintained and access for dogs/reduced mobility.</p> <p>The Conservation Area is valued as view (point) from houses within the village. Trees are a key feature.</p> <p>Valley area ok to revive the canal in this area while conserving wildlife habitats and creating new</p>	

Prompt	Eastcombe	Bisley	Oakridge	Theme to be Developed
	<p>enjoy. Perhaps downsizing or building in already built up areas.</p>	<p>Keeping buildings in keeping. More park and recreational spaces-walkways.</p> <p>No change in Conservation area. I hope our Conservation area is sensitive as the village needs spaces around it, not everything built on.</p> <p>Well just imagine if it wasn't there. No streams, no footpaths no wildflowers.No birdsong. No wildlife. Children would suffer beyond words.</p> <p>The old tracks that are part of our heritage.</p> <p>Non destructive building ie small/tiny homes for affordable living for the young who can't get on the ladder, but in places that would benefit the landscape ie a chance to grow more there.</p> <p>We need to find a balance between development to keep younger people in Bisley and protection of our beautiful</p>	<p>ones.</p> <p>Too close not to consider SSSI-ie Strawberry banks. Maintenance of 'lagers'?</p> <p>CAP reform -opportunities for new landscapes Woods Meadows etc.</p>	

Prompt	Eastcombe	Bisley	Oakridge	Theme to be Developed
		<p>village.</p> <p>wind protection for the village.</p> <p>Any new builds- Aesthetically fitting the village Zero carbon buildings. Community spaces.</p> <p>Solar-I am not averse to these being installed on listed buildings.</p> <p>I would agree to changing existing buildings in the centre of the village if this were done sensitively. (also to add to buildings and build new ones.) *We cannot live in the past, but can preserve some elements</p> <p>and modernise.</p> <p>It should be possible to add solar panels, double glazing, more insulation even in listed buildings- heat loss from houses adds to climate change.</p> <p>Conversion of redundant farm building.- avoid ploughing on</p>		

Prompt	Eastcombe	Bisley	Oakridge	Theme to be Developed
		<p>steep slopes.</p> <p>Barn conversions if done sensitively should be allowed- not overall dismiss conversions.</p>		
<p>2. What does the village green, the Rec.,allotments and sports fields mean to YOU?</p>	<p>Local green spaces important for children and relaxation. Village Green used for events.</p> <p>Spaces between buildings are as important as the buildings. Village Green is terribly important.</p> <p>Village Green –can this be protected officially? Allotments- very important in terms of producing local produce. Sportsfield should be preserved. Where else will young people exercise & play sports?</p> <p>Local Green Space needs preserving. If church closes</p>	<p>2. What does the Rec./showground, allotments and sports fields mean to you?</p> <p>Very important to keep local Green Spaces.</p> <p>Showground! Gathering place for the community. -allotments provide food for... Climate change brings imports difficult.</p> <p>Evans field should be protected for the fete and flower show.</p> <p>Would it be a great loss to the village if sustainable and attractive housing were built on the field behind the W.I. hall?</p>	<p>2. What do our local Green Spaces mean to us?</p> <p>Green Space is part of the character of the village and a main reason for choosing to live in Oakridge.</p> <p>Lose green, lose tourists, appreciate the national value of the area. Allotments- valuable & there should be more of them if required. Village green is used.</p> <p>Value of green village spaces have fete village hall 7 Sept. School green area has childrens fete.</p> <p>Green spaces are important for the feel of the village and</p>	

Prompt	Eastcombe	Bisley	Oakridge	Theme to be Developed
	<p>maybe consider develop. Allow judicious infill in private properties. Never develop the Village Green Plant more trees perimeter of green spaces.</p> <p>Green Spaces will become more and more valued and are essential to maintain.</p> <p>All Green Spaces (local) are very important to well being and peoples mental happiness.</p> <p>Local Green Spaces are key to giving the area its character.</p> <p>Keep all Green Spaces. Do not plant lots of trees-no views etc.</p> <p>Recreation grounds must be protected. Sensory areas would be of value to the older members. Removal of overhead cables would be an advantage. Allotments valuable asset. More trees planted around</p>	<p>King George playing fields good but difficult to access from Windyridge side of the village (where most young people are_ -crossing on main road.</p> <p>The village rec/sports field is essential for adults and children to meet and play.</p> <p>It is amazing value. You can walk to it. You don't have to drive everywhere.</p> <p>Allotments essential for food production locally=reduced carbon footprint. Playing fields essential for kids' health. Also not many other facilities for kids in Bisley.</p> <p>No light pollution. Keep all green spaces, play areas for children.</p> <p>The allotments and community orchard need to be protected against development.</p>	<p>recreational activities.</p> <p><u>Green spaces</u>-Rec. and play areas for children are important-very valuable. Allotments will be even more essential after Brexit and with climate change.</p> <p>Play field- much part of the community. Allotments the same Local walkers important.</p> <p>Prefer Green Spaces-parks/cricket pitch and allotments.</p> <p>Many Green Spaces and facilities are maintained through the goodwill of a few villagers.</p> <p>Oakridge needs a surrounding Conservation Area especially between Oakridge Lynch and Far Oakridge.</p> <p>Strawberry Banks and 3 Groves wood should be in a Conservation Area.</p> <p>Our landscape is essential to the</p>	

Prompt	Eastcombe	Bisley	Oakridge	Theme to be Developed
<p>3) Do we value our woods? How do they benefit us?</p>	<p>'second football field'.</p> <p>Allotments are fantastic, given that many people in future might live in apartments.</p> <p>Can allotments be moved outside village boundaries to release development land?</p> <p>Allotments + play areas very important for village life.</p> <p>I do value our woods for our well being.</p> <p>Value it greatly.</p> <p>Woods are valued for recreation and fitness and welcome shade in the hot weather.</p> <p>Woodland is important but needs to be managed properly. Yes- drought resistant species</p>	<p>Allotment space- self sufficiency. Community growing programs.</p> <p>We would die without them literally.</p> <p>Woods are essential for CO2 absorption.</p> <p>Trees are the lungs of the place very important!!</p> <p>Lungs of the planet and the village! Healthy for wildlife and positive effects on mental health.</p>	<p>health of the area.</p> <p>Our school relies totally on our natural environment.</p> <p>Green Space is an essential part of community.</p> <p>% of Green Space u? developed maintained.</p> <p>Continued voluntary contribution to maintenance of sidewalks & trees.</p> <p>Woods are a key part of the beauty and contribute to our climate change & mental health.</p> <p>It is great to be able to walk through the woods.</p> <p><u>Climate change</u>. Woods help the feeling of well-being as well as absorbing carbon. Do all we can to keep them intact.</p> <p>Woods need to be saved. Help.</p>	

Prompt	Eastcombe	Bisley	Oakridge	Theme to be Developed
	<p>should be introduced to replace which have died. Grants may be available from DEFRA.</p> <p>Trees definitely as many as possible but need (perhaps to be lopped and managed to maintain.</p>	<p>Very important for wildlife. Woods and trees in village one of the great benefit and much appreciated for their? Shade when walking on hot day and their ability to counteract pollution.</p> <p>Value the trees around Back Lane for a shaded walk in the summer.</p>	<p>Water and management. Diversity of trees need to be looked at eg ash may not be the best.</p> <p>Trees and woods are valued for walking & recreation. Also for water retention.</p> <p>Value our trees but must be right trees in the right place and well maintained.</p> <p>We value our trees but they need to be in the right place and maintained. If not in the right place plant elsewhere.</p> <p>Tree maintenance minimal-ivy choking many beautiful trees.</p> <p>Butterflies important.</p> <p>Woods are capable of natural regeneration if they are permitted to do so. Let nature be...</p> <p>Woods should be accessible to all-easier access for families & dogs-no padlocks in gates.</p>	

Prompt	Eastcombe	Bisley	Oakridge	Theme to be Developed
<p>4) Loss of trees: should we put back what we will lose and how?</p>	<p>Yes put back trees but native trees. Raised in the UK. Community orchard.</p> <p>Native trees.</p> <p>Yes we should replace.</p> <p>Definitely put back trees lost. People should be encouraged to grow them.</p> <p>Trees for wildlife.eg crab apples for birds. And hedgerows.</p>	<p>Enjoy established trees.</p> <p>Planting native species+ resistant to increasing temperatures. Undisturbed/ rewilded areas. Soil regeneration.</p> <p>Also needs to look into rapidly growing trees= timber/fuel-plastics replacements etc..</p> <p>Clarity +educate+ ?slow.</p> <p>Native trees and hedgerow re-instate. Habitat positive trees.</p> <p>We need to plant trees if trees are cut down.</p>	<p>Allotments are vital to encouraging local food production going forward.</p> <p>Allotments are a vital part of the village as is the village green/playing field. Encourage villagers to use the allotment space.</p> <p>Should we replace our lost trees? How?</p> <p>Standard should be to replace trees. Type of replacement should consider climate.</p> <p>Trees lost through disease. Important to have knowledgeable people managing ?work. Woodland Trust- Manager of Groves woodland.</p> <p>We should replace trees that are lost through age with English hardwoods.</p>	

Prompt	Eastcombe	Bisley	Oakridge	Theme to be Developed
	<p>Replace trees with suitable species for the situation.</p> <p>Replant trees that have died. Maintain and prune trees. Good shade areas under trees. Introduce new trees to gardens with space.</p> <p>Local newsletter- make available free trees for planting in gardens (drought and disease resistant?) esp Bracelands for example.</p> <p>Ash die back. Yes substitute with fruit trees.</p> <p>No orchards- need to be cared for and fruit needs to be used.</p> <p>Orchard survey?</p> <p>Important to manage trees as much as replacements.</p>	<p>Encourage landowners to plant more trees</p> <p>Replace ash with native oaks.</p> <p>Replace ash trees with other native varieties.</p> <p>Where we lose trees- replanted with deciduous ones.</p> <p>Deciduous trees are important and should be encouraged and protected -tree planting should be encouraged.</p> <p>Replace ash trees as they die and are drought resistant.</p> <p>Investigate some fast growing trees to replace ash die back but also looking for large trees that take time to grow but give better shade.</p> <p>Yes we should try to replacethe trees that are lost in the village. If able to identify 'healthy' ash trees to preserve their saplings to grow on and replace sick trees.</p>	<p>Replace trees that are lost with same species or other hardwood trees.</p> <p>Lost trees- maybe need to replace with different species- more resilient.</p> <p>See how local children can be involved in planting trees.</p> <p>Encourage more landowners to clear fallen trees in fields more quickly and request they are replaced. Creation of more wildflower meadows.</p> <p>Orchards need to be encouraged. -invite people to collect -local resource.</p> <p>Encourage more fruit trees. The population will need feeding more locally on healthy food.</p> <p>Encourage planting of fruit trees in</p>	

Prompt	Eastcombe	Bisley	Oakridge	Theme to be Developed
		<p>More hedgerows with variety of plants to withstand disease and function as windbreaks.</p> <p>Use green lanes as corridors to plant trees, wildflower seeds etc..</p> <p>Access is important- maintain footpaths and ensure that they are not lost.</p> <p>Trees are of great value and benefit-beauty eg Back Lane: ?Coptgrove but must be cut if unsafe. Replace trees if lost-sustainable.</p> <p>Use trees that grow in people's gardens to replant in community areas.</p> <p>Fruit trees struggle here. Heritage of orchards seems questionable.</p> <p>Plant hardy species eg Rowan.</p> <p>Every village should have a community orchard. Vintage orchard- Medlar & Mulberry?</p> <p>Replace dead trees-give grants to plant.</p>	<p>gardens, on verges and in the allotments.</p> <p>Community orchard of rare English trees.</p>	

METHODOLOGY.

The subject of this table is LANDSCAPE CHARACTER, WHICH INCLUDES HOW MUCH PEOPLE VALUE THE PLACE THEY LIVE IN- BOTH THE BUILT AREAS (WITHIN OR OUTSIDE A CONSERVATION AREA) AND THE LANDSCAPE. HOW SENSITIVE TO CHANGE IS IT AND HOW FAR WOULD THEY ALLOW CHANGE?

All responses were written up and different colour coding applied to different elements that are valued. This identifies the majority wishes at the workshops.

‘Brown’ represents responses that show specific aspects that could be considered for change.

‘Red’ -all comments that represented community working and recreation.

The word ‘Conservation Area’ actually defined different types of environment: Eastcombe straddles urban and rural: Bisley ditto: whilst Oakridge had only a rural area covered by this term. This made it difficult to compare resident responses.

BASELINE-OBSERVATIONS.

Those attending Eastcombe, Bisley and Oakridge workshops commented on:-

The Conservation Area: the Built Environment:-

Themes common to all villages:-Traditional buildings are greatly valued in all villages.

All attendees passionately value the place they live in.

The majority fought to protect the highly valued traditional housing. The use of local stone and local vernacular was seen as important.

Retaining the skyline and views was key.

Specific to each village:-

1) Eastcombe:-

Eastcombe tended to have residents who were more able to comprehend change to the ‘urban’ Conservation Area than Bisley.

Some Eastcombe residents suggested using infill in gardens within the Conservation Area to provide for downsizing and bungalows to be built for older residents.

Dark skies was not mentioned by residents as valued in Eastcombe.

Seen as semi rural with development changing it to become semi urban. Another attendee sees it as already semi urban.

2) Bisley:-

Some Bisley residents suggested upgrading of accommodation in listed buildings eg solar panels double glazing and extending. Others are strongly opposing change to the inner urban Conservation Area.

Some were offering many constructive ideas for future developments, albeit development mainly on the outskirts.

A split community with regards to retention of the old versus those in favour of growth to allow village to retain young people and additionally those promoting sustainable living and life styles.

3) Oakridge:-

Oakridge does not have any built environment within the Conservation Area which is in fact rural.

Residents hotly wanted to retain the old style housing, and offered the idea that Oakridge village should become a Conservation Area and buildings should be listed.

New buildings?:- then traditional styles, local stone and tiles should be continued.

Most comments related to the landscape rather than buildings, due to terminology of ‘Conservation Area’ and did not include the village. ‘Reviving’ canal in harmony with wildlife habitats was a suggestion.

Local Green and open spaces

Themes common to all villages:

The number of responses embracing community in all villages is exceptionally high, indicating that there is a strong bond between residents and a desire to retain community events on community spaces; teamworking.

Green spaces are part of the character.

Allotments, play areas and playing fields are highly valued.

1) Eastcombe

Village green should never be built upon.

2) Bisley

Playing fields are difficult to walk to from the north part of the village. There are not many facilities for 'kids.'

Positive responses for self sufficiency and the compost unit.

3) Oakridge.

Landscape character was the reason for moving there. 'School relies totally on our natural environment.'

Focussed comments on SSSI's and protection.

RURAL NATURE OF THE OAKRIDGE RESIDENTS IS FAR MORE APPARENT IN OAKRIDGE.

Woodland Trees valued

Themes common to all villages:-

Passionate about trees and the benefits for health.

Benefits planet with co2 absorption and oxygen output. Terrific for protecting against climate change. Enjoyment and well being, recreation, fitness and shade.

Consideration of tree management

accessibility

water retention and management by trees.

1) Eastcombe.

No comments on wildlife in this table –see wildlife corridors table comments.

2) Bisley

Residents keen on wildlife.

They value mature trees around Back Lane.

3) Oakridge

Some warned that with the loss of ‘green’ we would lose tourists. The area was of national importance. One resident mentioned the importance of butterflies.

Trees – loss and Replacements

Themes common to all village

Majority of resident responses are passionate about replacing any lost through disease, or old age. Many suggestions for replanting have been made and collated below.

Fruit trees should be planted for sustainable food production. Habitats and food supply for wildlife should be included.

1) Eastcombe

Native

Raised in the UK

Create Community orchard

Encourage people to grow them.

Introduce to gardens with space.

Suitable species for the situation.

Orchard survey? (*pre and existing*) Management.

2) Bisley:-

Offered a wide variety of suggestions.

More education needed on trees.

Use trees that grow in people's gardens to replant in community areas.

High interest in orchards, although one considered winds as making fruit trees impossible replacements. More hedgerows with variety of plants to withstand disease and function as windbreaks.

3) Oakridge:-

Management by knowledgeable people.Planting by children.

Focus on hardwoods as replacements.Natural regeneration within woods.

Planting trees with the ability to withstand drought.

Consider possible change in CAP after Brexit and effect on the landscape character.High interest in planting fruit trees and orchards.

Encourage landowners to clear fallen trees in fields and replant.Maintenance.

Actions wanted by the residents:

THEMES TO DEVELOP.

Dark skies was not mentioned by residents as valued in Eastcombe.-ACTION: *follow up to see if this is actually a true representation of Eastcomberesidents.*

The majority of residents wanted to plant trees.

A lack of education about trees, protection, diseases was cited.

SET UP A TIMELINE TO ADDRESS THE FOLLOWING:-

ACTION: SET UP TALKS ABOUT TREE PLANTING, AND WHAT TYPES ARE APPROPRIATE WITHIN THE AONB. (attend SDC's discussion on this on 12 November)

Invite those who had signed up to work on projects to a meeting:- A list of residents willing to help in various ways- research, plant up, was drawn up from the workshops.

ACTION: SET UP GROUPS FOR EACH ASPECT.

1) GROUP TO WORK ON FRUIT TREES AND ORCHARDS- RESEARCH OLD ORCHARDS- mapping; walk about to identify which gardens had fruit trees and their condition.

2) GROUP TO WORK WITH NATIVE TREE REPLACEMENTS.

Identify new locations on council owned land and map. Kick start with planting group or avenues of large trees as a major landmark and which will eventually provide shade, habitats and add to the landscape character.

A walk-about to see which private gardens and open land had sufficient space to take a tree and follow up with owner. Draw up a list of trees that would be suitable to replace ash.

Source availability from nurseries, sizes and costs.

Source saplings growing in gardens which can be transplanted.

3) GROUP RESPONSIBLE FOR TREE PLANTING. Put a group together to plant up trees and include children join in.

4) GROUP TO WORK WITH THE FARMING COMMUNITY- likely to be the 'wildlife and corridor' table but should include copses of large trees for shade in fields.

5) GROUP TO SOURCE GRANT OPPORTUNITIES.

PLANNING

Much of this workshop subject includes planning issues and basic facts about what people value.

Committee members who deal with planning applications to be aware of specific wishes of the parishioners eg in Conservation Area

Oakridge village:- should this become a Conservation Area?

Should more protection be given to areas between Oakridge Lynch and Far Oakridge from development?/ local nature reserve?

Oakridge- should some buildings be listed which aren't already?

Issued by Jenny Exley 3 November 2019- for discussion.

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Many thanks to residents whose dwellings are in this document.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT.

- **Workshops held in November 2019-** residents who attended a series of three workshops in 2019.

This has provided responses on the Conservation Area and its importance, landscape, trees and open spaces. Please see Bisley with Lypiatt website. See also **APPENDIX No. 5 PUBLIC CONSULTATION WORKSHOP: SUPPORTING EVIDENCE/RESEARCH.**

Note no further workshops have been held due to the impact of Coronavirus.

- **Eastcombe and Bismore History Group** –supply of photographs and local knowledge.

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