

BROADHEMBURY DESIGN STATEMENT



**As drawn up by Broadhembury Parish Council during the development of a
Parish Plan and adopted at its meeting on 17th May 2010**

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Introduction

Supplementary planning guidance for the village of Broadhembury



A Village Design Statement has been produced by the local community for the Parish of Broadhembury as part of the Parish Plan. The Village Design Statement was adopted as interim Supplementary Planning Guidance for East Devon Local Plan on **XXth XXXX** 2010. Its guidelines add detail to and complement, the Local Plan policies and will be used in the determination of planning applications and to guide householders undertaking works not requiring planning permission.

Other Statutory and Planning Designations

- Broadhembury falls within the Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (ANOB) and is part of the Blackdowns landscape as described by the Countryside Agency (Adopted East Devon Local Plan 2006 - para. 4.5).
- The County Council is Devon County Council.
- The Local Planning Authority and District Council is East Devon District Council.
- East Devon District Council have produced a Conservation Area Appraisal, adopted in 1999.
- The Parish Council is Broadhembury Parish Council.

Broadhembury Village Design Statement

The purpose of a Village Design Statement is to manage change, whether that change is new development or just cumulative, small-scale additions and alterations. It is not about whether development should take place; that is a job, in this instance, for the East Devon Local Plan. Rather, it is about how planned development should be carried out, so that it is in harmony with its setting and contributes to the conservation and enhancement of the local environment. Its purpose, therefore, is to complement the statutory planning process and to that end this Village Design Statement for Broadhembury has been adopted by East Devon District Council as 'Supplementary Planning Guidance'.

This statement and the principles that it sets out emanate from the community. Following a questionnaire survey for all households in the Parish a Parish Plan has been developed and this Statement included. The results were presented to the wider community through the Annual Parish Meeting. It is the analysis of this questionnaire, (nearly a half of households responded) together with feedback from the Annual Meeting, which have shaped, and are referred to, in this document.

Such views, often strongly held, have been moderated and underpinned by reference to a number of publications on the East Devon landscape and the village of Broadhembury, its environs and its heritage; the 'East Devon Conservation Appraisals' (see bibliography). It should be stressed that this 'Statement' does not seek to replace or repeat these exemplary works but rather to draw from them in establishing this guidance.



Background

England's countryside has been shaped by man's activities from the prehistoric times to the present day. The village of Broadhembury, and the countryside that frames it is no exception although, up to the middle of the last century, that change was gradual. It was first settled in Neolithic times (C2500BC) and takes its name from Hembury Fort, the finest Iron Age fortress in Devon, built about 150BC. Developing principally as an estate settlement, it was substantially rebuilt in the 13th century and remains in that form to this day with little changed with its cottages fronting on to an open 'square' in the centre of the village and the lanes radiating from it. Over time, these became interspersed with other cottages and houses, the whole commanded by the Church and Public House, but the centre of the village remains "an outstanding unspoiled estate village of thatched houses" (Statutory Listing) and as such is one of Devon's finest conserved examples of Devon vernacular cob and thatch buildings.

It was this historic value of the village that was recognised by the designation of a conservation area prior to 1974. The wider landscape in which Broadhembury sits had already been recognised as nationally important through its designation as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Although still fitting relatively easily within the landscape, Broadhembury has witnessed substantial change to the countryside around in the last sixty years with the change of farming methods and emphasis.



Today, many walkers and tourists are drawn to the village by its character and setting.



Part 1 The Wider Landscape

Background and context

Physical Features

The area is part of the Greensands Ridges (East Devon Landscape Character Zone) with associated soil types and land forms. There are no exposures or geomorphologic features of conservation interest.

It is at an altitude of between 120 & 140 metres above sea level, highest in the East sloping down to the West.

Within the Northern boundary a stream (River Tale) runs from the east to west, with a bridge and ford, one of the notable landmarks in the village.

Archaeological Sites

There are no known Earthworks, stone monuments, below-ground sites, industrial archaeology and historic sites within the village boundary, although there are old workings for whetstone under the ridge to the north.

The basis for the settlement was the farms (principally Priory Farm) & fields enclosed by a network of hedgerows and mature trees.

Today

The village retains a rural feel. The effect of fields and former orchards reaching down into the village is to divide the built environment and give vistas into the surrounding countryside. Views into the landscape reinforce the rural character of the village and are very important to the character of Broadhembury as each of them retains something of the settlement's heritage. Trees are a feature of the village, and the aged yew trees in the church yard are precious links with our past. Indeed, for the overwhelming majority of people the fact that views from the village are mostly rural with few man made features is considered to be important.

Relevant Local Plan Policy: EN1 (Development in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty)



Part 2 – The shape of the Settlement

Background and context

Broadhembury was developed as an Estate settlement in the early 17th century, although the Parish Church of St. Andrew, Drewe Arms, Churchgate and several other houses are much older. Most of the houses in the centre of the village are still tenanted and in the ownership of the Drewe Estate, a major contributing factor in the preservation of the homogenous character of the village.

Today

The village centre has remained principally unchanged for centuries, although the road pattern has changed in the centre and steady infill development has occurred in the last century in the village.



Relevant Local Plan Policies:

- S2 (Built-up Area Boundaries for villages)
- S3 (Development within Built-up Area Boundaries)
- EN11 (Preservation and enhancement of Conservation Areas)
- EN12 (Demolition of Unlisted buildings in Conservation Areas)
- EN20 (River and Coastal Flooding)

Future

1. The Character principle of the village integrating with the countryside of farmed and wooded slopes rising up from the village, that define its character, be retained, safeguarded from unnecessary development and, where possible, enhanced.
2. Future development should avoid the skyline and not dominate the village.
3. Large cluster single design development should be avoided.
4. New development should be of small scale and in keeping with adjacent buildings, take account of the ridgeline of existing structures and be of a size that does not dominate the surroundings, or the wider village.
5. Generic 'off the peg' designs should be resisted. Rather, architectural design should refer to the style and detailed traditional features of the area to enhance the appearance and character of the settlement. Particular support will be shown to the incorporation of local building types, styles and details. (See Appendix I for detail).
6. Materials employed in the external appearance should be in keeping with the traditional character of the village. e.g. rendered cob & thatch with tile to rear additions of similar

colour/texture to what has gone before; clay tiles not concrete; use of local stone or stone of similar colour/texture etc. (See Appendix I for detail).

7. Retention of existing, and provision of new planting using appropriate species should form an integral part of any future development proposals.
8. Protection, enhancement and creation of traditional landscaping features including lanes, walls and boundaries, including Devon banks, to form an integral part of any future development proposals.
9. Provision of off road parking, preferably set back to the side or behind the principal building would enhance the village and should be integral to any new development.
10. TV aerials, solar panels and other development for a sustainable environment are not inconsistent with the preservation of a traditional rural environment and should be discreetly sited to the rear of buildings.



Part 3 – Building Design and Materials

Background and context

Until recent times the practical and monetary cost of importing building materials led to the use of those available locally. Broadhembury displays a range of such materials, which lend it a sense of time and place. A settlement that, for the most part, sits easily and naturally in the landscape, built as it is from that very landscape.

Local Vernacular

The Village vernacular is one of a homogenous Cob and Thatch, two storey terrace and semi detached cottages with (predominantly) single storey back additions. As noted earlier, there are

several prominent larger buildings exhibiting local stone. Thatch frontages incorporating 'eyebrows' over windows intruding into the eaves, solid wooden street doors and small 2 or 3 light wooden casement windows with narrow glazing bars define the facades.



Materials

Cob – is the dominant construction material within the village, finished with render and lime washed.



Thatch – is the principal roofing material, sourced from currently available materials of the time.



Clay Tiles – profiled and confined to the rear additions and outbuildings of properties.



Slate – confined to some rear additions and properties developed in more recent centuries, on the fringes of the village.



Chard Stone – examples of its use on hard ground cover can be found in the village.



Joinery – is of simple profile soft wood, painted, although there are one or two examples of older wooden mullioned and more complex joinery.





Height, scale and density of buildings

There is a mixed density of building in the village - from larger detached houses (often former farmhouses retaining significant gardens), to terraced cottages with narrower plots. Notably, there are few tall and single storey buildings within the village and as a result the similarity in scale creates a sense of unity. A handful stand out either because of their size or position such as Broadhembury House, Churchgate, The Drewe Arms, the Old Vicarage and Bridge House.

Relevant Local Plan Policies:

EN1 (Development in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty)

EN11 (Preservation and enhancement of Conservation Areas)

Part 4 – The Future

Clearly, Broadhembury will and must continue to evolve, but that evolution must, as in earlier times, be for the good of the settlement, for the people who live here, rather than for the good or convenience of would be developers. For the character of the Broadhembury built environment is special – an overall homogenous character unified by a vernacular style, use of materials, and setting within the countryside. The Parish view on how this can be achieved is set out in Appendices 1 & 2.

For other settlements within the Parish there is a desire to maintain the rural nature of their settings and the local vernacular within each. Guidance on this is set out in Appendix 3.



Appendix 1

Design and material detail

Much can be done to ensure any new development enhances and complements the old. It is vitally important that new development, however innovative, evolves from and draws on the past and that it is of a scale and design that complements, not dominates, its surroundings.

Through careful thought, modern construction methods, e.g. rendered block construction, can be softened with the rounding of corners, the external/decorative use of stone or brick and through the sensitive choice of roofing material: thatch or profiled clay tile is preferred.

Roofs and chimneys

Particular regard should be given to roof lines and pitch. If appropriate, consideration should be given to matching the predominant thatch with brick chimneys of simple design.

Colour of walls

The predominant rendered finish is coloured either in beige or white lime wash, a conformity that enhances the overall character and should be continued on any new development.

Use of carpentry

The use of traditional carpentry through porches, pediments, doors and windows (whether single or double glazed) easily complements the past while continuing the tradition for individual detail, so evident in the village's older buildings.

Appendix 2

The shape of the settlement

The prominence and visual importance of the farmed and wooded slopes, the green spaces within the village and the predominantly linear nature of the layout of the properties provides the essential character of the settlement.

If development is deemed necessary when there is a specific, identified need for accommodation to maintain the rural nature of the settlement and balance of the population in the village, it should follow this linear layout within the village boundary, avoiding larger blocks of buildings set within a plot or striking off into the surrounding countryside. Any such infill development should maintain adequate breaks between properties to maintain the essential 'glimpses' of the farmland beyond.

Appendix 3

Design Guidelines for other Settlements within the Parish

(Colliton, Dulford, Kerswell & Luton)

Colliton – A number of houses on or adjacent to the main road through the Parish. Originally, the majority were serving Colliton Barton which has now diversified with a number of small enterprises supporting agricultural businesses based within the farm buildings.

Dulford - A number of houses also on or adjacent to the main road through the Parish and associated with farms.

Kerswell – Second in size to Broadhembury Village, it formed around the Kerswell Abbey and its associated farms and supporting buildings. The presence of several springs in the area and the topography has led to the development of fish farming adjacent to the current hamlet.

Luton – a small farming based hamlet adjacent to the parish boundary with Payhembury.

1. The design element of any new building should be sympathetic to the general character of the settlement and particular locality.
2. Where new buildings are to be sited adjacent to traditional buildings their design should be sympathetic. Similar roof pitches, windows and colour schemes should be adopted.
3. A variety of roofing materials is acceptable including:- thatch; local traditional profiled clay tiles; or slate are preferred.
4. Gable overhangs and eaves, which create a 'shadow line', are preferred.
5. Windows with wooden casements are preferred. For traditional buildings these ideally should be painted. Size and scale are important and where possible should be set back from the face of the wall.
6. When siting new houses, spaces should be left between them so that the views within the settlement and the connection with the parish's rural nature are not lost.
7. New development in open country beyond the Settlement Boundaries should be resisted and high-density development unsuited to the rural character of the settlement should not be approved.
8. Further large-scale industrial type development should not be countenanced, and existing developments should be screened by trees to reduce environmental impact.
9. New housing schemes should only be considered upon identified local social need or as a one for one replacement. The location and visual impact being the principal considerations.
10. Chimneys should be included as a design feature in all new houses.
11. Dormers should have pitched roofs and be appropriate in size and scale to the main roof.
12. Garages should have pitched roofs similar to their house roofs, and where detached, need to be set back from the building line. Flat roofs are not acceptable.
13. Where new development is permitted, particular attention must be paid to landscaping, including the preservation of existing trees and the planting of new ones.
14. Designs for new houses should be commensurate with the size of the site. Large houses on small sites should avoid any appearance of overcrowding of the site, particularly when replacing an existing building on the site.
15. TV aerials, solar panels and other development for a sustainable environment are not inconsistent with the preservation of a traditional rural environment and should be discreetly sited.

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