Little Somerford

Village Design Statement

and

Conservation Area Statement

Little Somerford
Village Design Committee

North Wiltshire District Council
LITTLE SOMERFORD VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT AND CONSERVATION AREA STATEMENT

1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 Little Somerford is a small but vibrant village whose residents take a close interest in its development in a changing world. The purpose of this document is to reflect the views and aspirations of the villagers and so help guide change in ways that will enhance rather than detract from the quality of life in the village and its environment.

For North Wiltshire District Council, the project was managed by Julian Kasdun-Brown and Paul Garrett. Photographs in the Statement were taken by, and the document was set up by, members of the working group. Acting as facilitators for the project were Chartered Town Planner Jan Bertram and Architect Mark Ellisbey.

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This document was adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance to the North Wiltshire Local Plan 2001 on 25th July 2002.

Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) is guidance which supplements, and interprets in a specific context, policies contained in the Local Plan. Relevant policies are listed on Page 41, in the guidance recommendations and enhancement schemes contained in Part 3 and in the summaries at pages 34-36. Planning Policy Guidance Note 12: Development Plans, 1000 (PPG12), contains the Government's guidelines for preparing SPG, and this document has been prepared in accordance with those guidelines. A statement of the public consultation undertaken in the preparation of this document is available on request to North Wiltshire District Council.
1.2: Village Design Statements

1.2.1 Village Design Statements (VDS) are the outcome of a 1996 initiative by the Countryside Commission (now the Countryside Agency). The Commission's guidelines are set out in the advisory booklet Village Design.

1.2.2 The purpose of a VDS is to manage change, in ways that will enhance rather than detract from the quality of life in the village and its environment, whether that change is major new development or just cumulative, small-scale additions and alterations. VDS are not concerned with whether development should take place; that is a job for the Local Plan. Their concern is about how planned development should be carried out, so that it is in harmony with its setting and contributes to the conservation and, where possible, enhancement, of the local environment.

1.2.3 Although there are many VDS in use in various parts of Britain, Little Somerford VDS is not a generic document but is unique to Little Somerford. It was prepared by local people based on the views of the local community gathered over a two-year period from a series of public meetings and consultations. Thus it takes into account the unique characteristics of the village and the aspirations of its population.

1.3: Conservation Area Statements

1.3.1 In the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, a Conservation Area is defined as an area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.

1.3.2 Conservation Area designation seeks to address the problem of the loss of local and regional identity and the loss of valued historic environments. This, along with the need to halt the growing similarity of developments, resulting in "everywhere looking like everywhere else", was the engine behind the Civic Amenities Act of 1967, when the concept of Conservation Areas was first introduced into planning law.

1.3.3 While the VDS concerns the village as a whole, the Conservation Area Statement (CAS) concentrates on that part of the village that lies within the Conservation Area Boundary. It is the responsibility of The Local Authority to prepare the CAS for adoption as Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG). Little Somerford CAS was prepared by North Wiltshire District Council following full consultation with the village community, thus ensuring that locally derived patterns, building character, etc. form the basis for the CAS.

1.3.4 The purposes of a CAS and a VDS are broadly similar, except that a CAS is a legal requirement and is supported by specific policies contained in the Local Plan.

1.4: Combined VDS/CAS

1.4.1 This combined VDS/CAS is intended to provide a single reference for persons seeking policy guidelines for development within Little Somerford. These will include local residents and businesses, the Parish Council, the Local Authority and other statutory agencies, and developers, architects and designers. It contains policy guidelines and recommendations for enhancements affecting the whole village and, where specified, other policies pertaining only to the Conservation Area.

1.4.2 The VDS/CAS has been adopted by NWDC as SPG in support of the Local Plan. This ensures that its guidelines will be taken into account in planning proposals and decisions in order to maintain the distinctive character of the village and its setting.

1.5: The VDS/CAS and the Local Plan

1.5.1 Development in Little Somerford is subject to policies contained within the North Wiltshire Local Plan. There are no specific policies affecting Little Somerford in the Local Plan, but a number of general policies do affect the village. The Local Plan is under constant review and is revised periodically as the need arises. This VDS/CAS will be reviewed approximately every five years, or more frequently if circumstances dictate, to ensure that it continues to reflect the views of the village community and to conform with the Local Plan. The current edition of the North Wiltshire District Council Local Plan may be viewed in local libraries or may be purchased from North Wiltshire District Council.

1.5.2 The Local Plan does not define a Framework Boundary for Little Somerford. This signifies that only very limited residential development within the physical limits of the village will be permitted, subject to strict conditions.

1.6: The Importance of Good Design

1.6.1 This Statement encourages good design and does not propose to stifle innovative and imaginative proposals by dictating solutions in advance. In turn however, the community expects all development proposals to be well researched, responsive to context and always of a high standard of design and materials.

1.6.2 The quality of many of the buildings in Little Somerford is high. The common denominator of the best 20th century developments in the village is that their designers have taken considerable care to build with high-quality materials and to study the context of their site. Where schemes have not met these high standards they have been the subject of much local opposition.

1.6.3 One of the purposes of the Little Somerford VDS/CAS is to inform developers and property owners of the issues affecting quality which are held to be important by the local community.

1.6.5 The context consists of all the existing environment of a site. The following are the more important features contributing to the context:

- the lie of the land
- ground levels
- the scale, form and appearance of nearby buildings
- the characteristics of the spaces between buildings
- the number of storeys
- the heights of roof ridges and eaves
- roof spans
- the appearance of chimneys
- rooflights or dormer windows
- the building materials used for roofs and walls and their colours
- the details of windows and doors and their surrounds
- the landscaping of the surroundings such as the enclosures of external spaces with garden walls, hedges, fences and gates
- the surface materials of roads, drives and paths
- the layout of grassed or planted areas and the presence of trees and open countryside.

1.6.6 The context of each site will be different. The onus is on the designer to establish the facts and to demonstrate how the proposals take account of them.

The safe design solution might be simply to attempt to render any new development 'invisible' as though it had always been there, or to resort to pastiche. However, the opportunity should be taken to produce contemporary designs which are also appropriate to their surroundings. The character of Little Somerford has been created through the sensitive use of a local range of building materials for a variety of styles over past centuries. In the same way designers today should not be discouraged from producing buildings that will reflect our time with credit.
2: The Character of Little Somerford

2.1: History and Setting

2.1.1 Little Somerford village lies 4 kilometres to the south-east of Malmesbury, 19 kilometres west of Swindon and 9 kilometres north-east of M4 Junction 17. The village is surrounded by open countryside, and lies in the broad valley of the River Avon, deriving its name from a ford across the Avon which was only passable in summer.

2.1.2 An ancient ridgeway lying along the east-west ridge just north of Little Somerford is now followed by the B4042 Malmesbury to Wotton Bassett road. The village is sited where a route leaving the ridgeway south-eastwards towards Lyneham and the Marlborough Downs meets the route northwards from the ford on the Avon. The route towards Lyneham is now The Hill and the eastern part of The Street. The route from the ford turns east through the village. The Street is the most important thoroughfare in the village. A series of paths and lanes leave this route and fan out towards the ridgeway. (See Map 1 on Page 1 and Map 3 on Page 9)

2.1.3 The parish is a Saxon, or older, estate, first recorded in the 930’s, when lands at Somerford were granted to Malmesbury Abbey by King Athelstan. Little Somerford is also described in the Domesday Book. The present parish church of St John the Baptist dates from the 13th Century.

2.1.4 Much of the land was once farmed as arable under the open field system, which left its mark in lines of ridge and furrow still visible in the pastures surrounding the village. The land was mainly enclosed pasturage by the 16th Century, and is seen today as a gently rolling landscape subdivided by thick hedges with many mature hedgerow trees, chiefly oak and ash. Little Somerford remained essentially an agricultural village until the second half of the 20th Century.

2.1.5 Though a branch railway to Malmesbury passed nearby from 1877, improving communications into and out of the village, a much greater physical change came in 1903, when a new mainline railway was completed from Wootton Bassett to South Wales. This passed just south of the village on a major embankment. Little Somerford then gained its own station, but both the mainline station and the Malmesbury branch line were closed by the 1950’s. The mainline railway remains and the embankment imparts a sense of enclosure where once open fields extended as far south as the River Avon.

2.2: The Form of the Settlement

2.2.1 The church stands at the historic heart of the village near the western end of The Street, amongst a number of older houses, farms and cottages with a few 20th-century infill houses. This western core area is slightly separated by small fields and large gardens from an eastern centre, mainly of lesser antiquity, which lies around the junction of The Street, The Hill and Clay Street. The eastern area contains a wide variety of houses, many on the small Vale Lea estate and others further east along The Street. Outlying development is present on the upper part of The Hill, on East End Lane, and south of the railway towards Great Somerford.

2.2.2 At one time a string of farmsteads stretched from Church Farm in the west to East End Farm in the east. The farmsteads are still identifiable. They were well separated, and a range of outbuildings and farm-labourers’ cottages sprang up around each. Many of the cottages are now gone but some still remain and are visible down narrow driveways or lanes leading from The Street. Development was not so great as to prevent the fields from extending right up to The Street, as they still do in many places today.

2.2.3 It is clear that Little Somerford developed over time mainly through a process of agglomeration of farms and their associated buildings and workers’ cottages. Each farm would originally have had a farmhouse at its centre with smaller buildings, some agricultural outbuildings, residence, disposed around it in varying angles, but generally related to the main house at the focus. Buildings would have been added, or modified, as needed to satisfy the requirements of the time. The building groups that evolved, from now on called “clusters”, are the characteristic pattern of development in the village.

2.2.4 A cluster is therefore:
A distinct group of buildings usually, though not necessarily, related to a single farm, and characterised by:
• A larger building that may be dominant and is typically, though not necessarily, a former farmhouse, and
• An associated range of agricultural and residential buildings of varying size and orientation, disposed in a subsidiary and usually informal relationship to the main building, and
• A range of plot sizes.

2.2.5 There is no single building line, but space between buildings is characterised by open fields, such as faynards, which are not merely “left overs” between buildings. Unless the pattern has been disrupted by modern development, each cluster is separated from adjacent clusters by paddocks or open pastureland.

2.2.6 The group of buildings in the triangle just west of the junction between The Hill and The Street has different origins from the clusters described above, and may have evolved as a commercial and communal area with associated housing. At various times, two pubs have been present, as well as a school, a post-office, a shop, a railway cottage and a reading room. The present and former pubs are the dominant buildings, and other characteristics of the group allow it to be described as a cluster.

2.2.7 Character is defined by three main factors: the tranquil pasture-land setting, the attractive land forms and foliage which may be viewed through gaps in the settlement from many parts of the village, and the historic clusters of smaller buildings around larger ones.
2.3: Community and Employment

2.3.1 Little Somerford's rural location and proximity to Swindon and the M4 make it a desirable place to live. It has a strong community spirit and organisations based in the village itself, or nearby, cater for many interests. The church has an active congregation, and the Village Hall is a focal point for much community activity.

2.3.2 Until comparatively recently, Little Somerford had its own school, shop and post office. All these are now gone, but there remain two active farms, a pub/restaurant and two motor repair businesses - one with a filling station and a small shop providing basic groceries. On the village outskirts, the late 19th Century Hill House has been converted into a Residential Home which employs several villagers and is likely to expand. A blacksmith with a national reputation who lives in Great Somerford has based his forge in the village.

2.3.3 Most employed villagers commute, some to London or even farther, but at least one small business is being run from home and also employs staff from outside the village. Several other individuals work from home.

2.4: Growth and Expansion

2.4.1 The Tithe Map of 1847 is the earliest map of the village, and shows the area near the church to be little changed today. However, there was no development south of Pound Penn, and the eastern portion of The Street beyond the road junction shows only Street Farm, Yew Tree Farm and a few cottages. A scatter of cottages are present on The Hill, but at lower density than today. Apart from railway developments, Ordnance Survey maps from 1885 and 1900 show no significant changes.

2.4.2 Historically, building density became more sparse as one moved outwards from the centre towards the boundaries of the village.

2.4.3 By 1956, ribbon development had begun on the road to Great Somerford, but the greatest changes began in the 1960's, and are continuing today.

2.4.4 The past forty years have seen growth of the village on all its roads, the biggest single development being the Vale Leaze estate of twenty-nine houses and bungalows built north of The Street in the 1960's. Expansion within the Conservation Area has chiefly been 20th Century infill. 12 new houses have been built and two more have been converted from existing buildings since designation of the Conservation Area in 1975. These new houses have increased the housing stock of the Conservation Area by some 26%.

2.4.5 The Local Plan contains no provision for other than very limited residential development within the physical limits of the village. Nevertheless, there is concern about the possibility of future developments and their location. Further outward expansion would bring consequent loss of countryside. Additional infilling would have the effect of increasing the housing density, losing more open space and reducing the frequent views of open countryside that are an important feature of the village.

2.4.6 Development since 1960 has tended to erode the historic village structure of clusters of smaller buildings grouped around central nuclei, such as farm houses. Modern development has often featured large houses which challenge the dominance of the central building.

2.4.7 Elsewhere, relatively high density building is in unhappy contrast with the historically more diffuse structure. Occasionally, modern development displays an uncharacteristic abrupt transition to open countryside.

Growth of Little Somerford

Map 2a. The Tithe Map of 1847 is the earliest map of the village. Later Ordnance Survey maps show that little change took place in the 19th Century.

Map 2b. Considerable development took place during the first half of the 20th Century, but the greatest changes began in the 1960s.
2.5: Historic Routes and Footpaths

2.5.1 The Tithe Map of 1847 shows essentially the current pattern of roads and lanes. The map also shows that the track diverging north-west from The Street just west from the church then connected through to the Malmsbury road, and was therefore of greater importance than at present. Two Public Footpaths also leave The Street close to the church, one leading west, the other north-east to the ridgeway road. These routes suggest that the area of the church was once a more important transportation focus than is apparent today.

2.5.2 All Public Footpaths in and around the village are currently open and most are reasonably well marked. The Street, The Hill and East End Lane have mainly wide grass verges, which may reflect droughing. These broad verges and their flanking hedges are an important part of the character of the village. Clay Street is partially a sunken lane, and has intermittent wide verges.

2.5.3 Within the Conservation Area, the only relatively modern road is Mill Lane, which was built around 1900 when railway construction cut off the original Mill Lane (now Meadow Lane).

2.5.4 With one exception, all the routes are traceable on the earliest maps. The Public Footpaths are widely used for recreational purposes.

Fig. 7: Public Footpaths are widely used for recreational purposes.

2.6: Views, Tree and Foliage, Boundaries and Focal Points

2.6.1 There are a number of important views, many of which result from the characteristic gaps in the settlement pattern, where fields or large gardens abut the roads within the village. The loss or impairment of any of these views would have a serious effect on the character of the village. The most important views are illustrated on Map 3. These include:

P1: Panoramic view from The Hill to the ridge, clockwise from north to east.

V1: View from The Hill south across the village.

V2: View from The Street north towards The Hill.

V3: View from Mill Lane north towards Mill House.

V4: View from The Hill, south east towards The Green.

V5: View from the end of the lane behind The Old Rectory north towards Vale House.

G1: Glimpse from footpath behind The Old Post House north-west towards Hill House.

G2: Glimpse from The Street south-east across fields towards the railway embankment.

G3: Glimpse along the lane beside Mills Farm towards Vale House.

G4: Glimpse from The Street south towards Somersford House and the railway embankment.

G5: Glimpse between Minor Farm and Chapel Cottage, south towards the railway embankment.

G6: Glimpse from footpath beside Knights Cottage, north across fields to the ridge.

G7: Glimpse from the Street near Aynsley House, south across the old orchard.

Note: Two views lost through high density infill are also shown on Maps 6 and 7.

2.6.2 Fields are almost exclusively bordered by hedges of native species, as are many gardens. These make a positive contribution to the appearance of the village by providing landmarks, visual and physical barriers and screens, and by shaping open space and softening built forms. Oak, ash and horse chestnut predominately, but many other species are present. The seasons add a further dimension. Elsewhere, traditional boundaries in the village are walls built of stone or brick.

2.6.3 The chief focal points are the church, and the area around the junction between The Street, the Hill and Clay Street.

2.6.4 Views of particular importance include vistas north-east and south-west from The Hill, and north from The Street.

2.6.5 Foliage is evident on all sides in the hedgerows of trees that come right into the heart of the village as well as in the gardens. This makes a major contribution to the character of the village.

2.6.6 Some modern boundaries are of non-native species such as Cupressus Leylandii, or are marked by wooden fences or blockwork. These are out of character with the village.

Braydon Forest Countryside Management Project.

2.6.7 Little Somersford lies within the area of Braydon Forest Countryside Management Project. The project aims to promote the sensitive management of woods, meadows and hedges, and to enhance the public’s enjoyment of the countryside in general, by working with landowners and local people.

Fig. 8: The view to the north-east from The Hill (P1) extends across open fields to the ridge along which runs the B4142 road. Breaks such as this, which occur at several points in the village, are important characteristics of the village.

LEGEND

Conservation Area boundary
View - with ref. number
View - with ref. number
Glimpse - with ref. number
B1 BUILDINGS
Listed buildings
Unlisted buildings
(mainly pre-20th Century)

Map 3: Little Somersford Conservation Area, showing Listed Buildings, Older Unlisted Buildings, Important Views and Street Noses.
2.7: Valuable Open Space and Water

2.7.1 The most important open spaces of the village are the rural surroundings. Public open space in the village is limited. The "Millennium Village Green", east of the junction between Clay Street and The Street was recently acquired for the village. The remaining public open spaces are the churchyard, a small children's play area on the north side of The Street, allotments and a cemetery lying south of the railway on the Great Somerford road.

2.8: The Conservation Area

2.8.1 Little Somerford Conservation Area was first designated in October 1975 following consultation with the Parish Council and the local population. The Conservation Area has been reviewed once since its designation, in 2002. This is the first CAs to be written for Little Somerford.

2.8.2 The Conservation Area covers the historic heart of the village around the church and extends east and north to include most of the older buildings of the village on The Street and the lower part of The Hill. A number of fields are also included.

2.9: Protected Buildings and Features

2.9.1 Little Somerford contains a number of listed buildings. This listing includes objects or structures fixed to or within a building, or any detached pre-1908 building within its curtilage. Listed Building Consent is usually required to carry out works to the building or feature. Buildings within the Conservation Area, whether listed or not, generally require consent for any demolition work.

2.9.2 Tree Preservation Orders exist in respect of a number of trees within the village of Little Somerford. Additionally, if it is wished to fell, top, top, or uproot a tree in a Conservation Area other than those already covered by a tree preservation order, 6 weeks notice must be given to the Local Planning Authority. Some trees are exempt, including those with a trunk diameter less than 75 mm at 1.5m height.

2.10: Buildings in Little Somerford

2.10.1 Of eleven listed buildings in the village, ten fall within the Conservation Area. Only the church is listed as Grade I, the others being Grade II. All but one of these buildings lie in the clusters along The Street, though mainly set back from it. The exception is Fast End Farm, an 18th Century red brick farmhouse which is set amongst its own cluster of mainly 20th Century outbuildings at the extremity of Fast End Lane. The Listed Buildings are frequently the dominant buildings within their clusters.

2.10.2 The ten Grade II Listed Buildings of the village fall into two clear groups, eight are essentially traditional (vernacular) buildings, one being a barn, whilst two are "designed" houses of Georgian style. Though diverse at first sight, the traditional buildings tend to share a number of important characteristics. They are usually two and a half storeys, have long plain façades with "horizontal" windows, steeply pitched hipped or halfhipped roofs with a central chimney, and have dormers within the roofs. Materials are stone-rubble or red brick, variously bare, limewashed or painted, with mainly stone-tile roofs. The two "designed" Georgian houses are both in red brick with stone-tile roofs. Plot sizes are generally large, reflecting former use as farms, and most buildings are set amongst mature trees behind high hedges or walls.

2.10.3 The village also contains 34 older unlisted buildings, some 21 of which lie within the Conservation Area. About two-thirds are of traditional type, though common modified, whilst twelve are "designed" buildings of Victorian or Edwardian style. Most occur in three groupings: one near the church, a second around the junction between The Street and The Hill, and a third on the upper part of The Hill.

2.10.4 Larger unlisted buildings include a small Victorian mansion known as Hill House, and Coach House Farm, a substantial "designed" house adapted from stables, both at the top of The Hill, and Malthouse Farm, a traditional building of lime-washed stone rubble at the end of Fast End Lane. Other older buildings include several smaller houses, a considerable number of cottages, and agricultural buildings.

2.10.5 Though the traditional buildings show marked similarities in form and detailing, the range of materials and finishes gives some diversity. Diversity is a stronger characteristic of the older "designed" buildings. Plot sizes and layouts vary greatly, with a tendency towards smaller plots for houses near the junction of The Street and The Hill.

2.10.6 The juxtaposition of the buildings in the Conservation Area, with their variety of heights, sizes, roof pitches, window patterns and construction materials give Little Somerford an important part of its individuality.

20th Century Development

2.10.7 Since the mid-20th Century much development has been permitted both within and outside the Conservation Area, resulting in a doubling of the total housing stock.

2.10.8 This development includes the 1960s Vale Leaze estate of 29 houses and 8 former council houses in Field View. Some ribbon development has occurred chiefly south of Field View on the road to Great Somerford and minor backland developments have taken place elsewhere. Aside from Vale Leaze, the greatest impact on the character of the village has resulted from infill and brownfield site development, which has taken place in various locations throughout the village. The effect of this has had on the character of the village is discussed in the forthcoming analysis.
3: Detailed Analysis and Recommendations

3.1: Introduction

3.1.1 This section contains a detailed analysis of the character of Little Somerford. Section 3.2 relates to the appearance of the village. Section 3.3 contains an overview of matters relating to road safety and Section 3.4 relates to sustainability. Subsequent sections concentrate on specific geographic ‘Identity Areas’, which are depicted on the map below.

3.1.2 For this purpose, the village has been divided into six ‘Identity Areas’, some of which are subdivided into clusters. The aim has been to designate Identity Areas on the basis of recognizably different characteristics; however, where confusion might otherwise result, the Conservation Area boundary has been followed. Thus, Areas 1 and 2 lie almost entirely within the Conservation Area. Areas 3-6 lie wholly outside the Conservation Area. Boundaries are notional but the spaces and buildings in an area will almost certainly have an impact on those in the adjacent area.

3.1.3 In each section, discussion is followed by analysis, guidance recommendations and where applicable, enhancement schemes. Where appropriate, each proposal is annotated to show the applicable Local Plan Policies.

3.2: Appearance of the Village

Preservation of the Rural Character of the Village.

3.2.1 There is a danger that the village is becoming unnecessarily suburbanised by inappropriate development in terms of location or housing styles, or because roads and roadsides, boundaries, public open spaces and services may be maintained or modified in a suburban manner.

3.2.2 Vale Leaze and other suburban developments along the eastern part of The Street are not considered appropriate development styles for Little Somerford and should not be taken as precedents for future development.

3.2.3 Near identical pairs of suburban-style houses were built during the 1980s at four locations within the Conservation Area, a trend that has continued elsewhere in the village. The pairing, as well as the building styles, scales and spacings, are considered inappropriate for Little Somerford and particularly regrettable in the Conservation Area. They should not be taken as precedents for future developments.

3.2.4 In places, important views have been blocked out or damaged by insensitive development. Future development should take into account the need to preserve remaining views, which are an essential part of the character of the village. These are shown on Map 3.

3.2.5 There is concern that brownfield developments (e.g. disused farmyards) within the village may become too “cramped” and that rural outlooks could be further restricted. Development on such sites should seek to retain the level of openness of the existing building clusters and avoid further encroachment towards the roadside. Building scales should reflect those of the original cluster, not those of the large, modern agricultural buildings that may now occupy the site.

3.2.6 In a similar manner, should a future change in the Local Plan make further development permissible on greenfield sites, this should be in the historic style involving clusters of houses of various sizes and types, loosely grouped around a larger building.

3.2.7 These concerns have led to the following definitions, which are reflected in the Guidance Recommendations:

- **Development within a cluster**: Development that takes place on previously developed land within the limits of a cluster or within the curtilage of an existing building within a cluster.

- **Development that extends a cluster**: Development that physically extends the limits of an existing cluster by taking access through it. Such development may be within the cluster or on previously undeveloped land.

- **Development between clusters**: Development on a paddock, open pastureland or other open space not previously developed and not related to an existing cluster.

**Affordable and Low-Cost Housing.**

3.2.8 Since 1970, more than 25 new houses have been built in Little Somerford. Almost all have been large houses. In 5 cases, modest dwellings have been demolished to make way for much larger houses. At the same time a large number of house extensions have been approved. In most cases these have resulted in a modest house being extended to form a substantial dwelling. In addition to the effect these developments have had on the character of the village, the stock of modest “affordable” houses has fallen, both as a total number and even more so as a percentage of the total housing stock.

3.2.9 It is felt that the trend towards larger, more expensive houses together with disproportionately rising property prices, make it difficult for local people to remain in the village, with adverse social consequences—no less for rural primary schools. Future planning decisions should take note of the need to maintain a balanced stock of all sizes of housing.
Industry
3.2.10 There is little employment in the village. However, Little Somerford does not wish to become simply a dormitory. Scope exists for developing home working, perhaps by converting redundant farm buildings to small industrial or Live-Work units. Such development might create sufficient demand to warrant reopening a shop and post office.

Street Furniture
3.2.11 Lighting, overhead cables, signs, bus stops, seats and property boundaries demonstrate the mishmash of styles and materials that has appeared over the years. The use of utilitarian designs which result from the choice of vandal-proof, cheap or standard options, detract from the appearance of the village and dilute its special character. This is particularly so in respect of public utilities and in the choice of materials for fences and hedges. Where possible, telephone and power cables should be buried while essential street furniture (telephone kiosks, streetlights, etc.) should be of designs which harmonise well with their rural environment, especially in the historic core of the village. In the case of telephone kiosks, care should be taken to ensure that the replacement does not create new problems through inappropriate use.

Guidance Recommendations
1 Further expansion of the village in a manner unrelated to clusters, or the concept of clusters, by infill, backland development, or on greenfield sites should not normally be permitted. (RH10, RH11, RH14, RH15, RH3)
2 New development within the village (RH10, RH11, RH15, RH3) should generally:
   a) be within an existing cluster or
   b) extend an existing cluster or
   c) repair a damaged cluster.

It should be noted that the creation of new clusters would not conform with Local Plan policy.
3 Development within or extending a cluster (RH10, RH11, RH15, RH3) should generally:
   c) be subsidiary in scale to the main building in the cluster, and
   d) reflect the variety of spacing, plot size and orientation of existing buildings in the cluster, and
   e) use existing access arrangements for the cluster, and
   f) avoid multiples of identical or near-identical buildings
4 Development designed to repair a cluster (RH10, RH11, RH15, RH3) should restore the characteristics of the cluster as set out in Section 2.2 above. Therefore, developers will be expected to
   d) explain how the cluster has been damaged, and
   e) demonstrate how the proposed development will repair the damage.
5 Development between clusters (RH10, RH11, RH15, RH3) will not normally be allowed since such development would:
   a) cause blurring of the distinct identity of these clusters damaging to the character of the village
   b) lead to the loss of views out from the village to open country beyond
6 The requirement for affordable housing in the village should be reviewed periodically. (RH21)
7 Sensitive conversion of traditional agricultural buildings to light industrial use should be permitted provided it does not detract from the character of the village. (RH3, RC9)

Fig. 3. Essential street furniture (telephone kiosks, streetlights, etc.) should be of designs which harmonise well with their rural environment, especially in the historic core of the village.

3.2: Appearance of the Village
3.3: Traffic in Little Somerford

3.3.1 Little Somerford suffers from the seemingly intractable problem of speeding traffic and the present 40 mph speed limit is ignored by much passing traffic. The problem is particularly bad on the route between Malmsbury and a major local employer, RAF Lyneham, especially at peak travelling times. The problem is exacerbated by a number of factors, eg:
- The absence or inadequacy of footpaths over much of the main route, which also has bus stops for general and school services.
- The existence of two blind corners.
- Difficult exits from some side roads and houses onto the main road.

Fig. 4. The characteristic wide verges in The Street have been used to good effect to provide an informal setting for footways.

Guidance Recommendations

1. A co-ordinated assessment of traffic issues needs to be undertaken by the Highway Authority in conjunction with the local community and measures implemented which are effective though not inimical to a suburban feel. Proposals should then be adopted as part of the Highway Authority’s Local Transport Plan. (R122, R124, R131)

Enhancement Schemes

1. Reduce the speed limit to 30mph through the village and introduce sensitively designed signage and physical traffic calming measures to help enforce it where appropriate. (R124)

3.4: Sustainability

Refuse Recycling

3.4.1 No public collection of recycled waste exists in Little Somerford. Many residents go to considerable personal trouble to separate different categories of waste (paper, glass, tin, etc.) and transport it to recycling centres in neighbouring towns and villages. A local recycling centre would be valued, well-used and would avoid environmentally wasteful journeys, however it should be on a site where it will not adversely affect the character of the village.

Energy and Water Conservation

3.4.2 People are concerned about the need to conserve resources, such as water and energy. These considerations come under the umbrella of “sustainable development”, which is now a nationally accepted concept and will increasingly influence the location, layout, design and materials used for new buildings. Measures to conserve resources can be included in the design from the beginning. Buildings can be located to take maximum advantage of the sun for heat and light and be provided with high levels of insulation, solar panels, dual flush cisterns, and rain and used (grey) water collection systems. Materials with lower environmental costs in their extraction, production and transportation can be chosen. Construction and site management can be planned to reduce waste and minimise energy and water use. Sustainable Drainage Systems should be provided to cater for surface water discharges.

3.4.3 In considering the application of these principles consideration must be given to the overriding requirements of good design; for example, building orientation should be decided primarily through consideration of the relationship of the building to its neighbours, and solar panels should not be used where they will spoil the appearance of the building.

Guidance Recommendations

1. Encourage the establishment of a local recycling centre on a site that will not detract from the appearance of its location. (R121)

2. Encourage the principles of sustainable development in building design and materials where this would not adversely affect the village character. (R125)
3.5 Area 1 - The Western end of The Street

3.5.1 Area 1 is wholly within the Conservation Area and covers the historic core of the village centre on the 13th Century church of St. John the Baptist. It extends north and then eastwards from the railway bridge, along The Street, almost to the junction with St George's. The area includes most of the older buildings of the village, grouped into five main clusters, as well as a number of small fields.

3.5.2 The village hall lies just north of the railway bridge, which is a classic, corrugated iron, First World War army hut, now much improved. The wooded railway embankment on the other side of Mill Lane marks the southern boundary of the Conservation Area.

The Pound House Cluster.

3.5.3 To the south of the church stands Pound House, once the rectory, a fine stone-built house in extensive wooded grounds behind a high wall. With its two cottages, various outbuildings and a nearby house to the north, Pound House forms the focus of a widely dispersed cluster of buildings which has changed little over the years. Only the Meadows, tucked out of sight behind the stable, dates from the 20th Century. The loose structure of the cluster allows the country-side to penetrate to the heart of the village.

The Church Farm Cluster.

3.5.4 Opposite Pound House, Church Farm farmhouse is set in pleasant gardens close to the road just north of its yard, and is a fine, 18th to 17th Century traditional building with a stone slate roof and dormer windows. This working farm is a rare reminder of Little Somerford's origins, and imparts a strong rural character to the western end of The Street. However, farming at this location is to cease. The largely modern, unattractive outbuildings to the south are to be replaced by four new cottage style houses. A large traditional brick barn is to be converted to a dwelling. If sensitively carried out, this development should reinforce the structure of the cluster.

The Church Cluster.

3.5.5 The Church lies north of The Street on a slightly elevated site with rounded grass slopes dropping to the road, and forms the centre of a loose cluster of buildings on both sides of The Street which includes two large houses as well as several smaller houses, cottages and outbuildings. The Church stands in a walled churchyard set out with medium-sized trees, and has a backdrop of larger trees and pleached windbreaks such as the Old Rectory and Mills Farm, which impart a distinctly traditional rural feel to the area. Its setting is marred only by the intrusion of overhead cables.

3.5.6 Down a lane behind the church, partly visible from the road, stands the Old Rectory, a beautiful old brick cottage of Georgian design. On the west side of the lane, out of sight from the road, a pair of substantial and near-identical suburban-style houses, stand on the site of two small cottages demolished in the 1980's. Similar in size to the Old Rectory, they understate the structure of this cluster. In front of them, the Old Post House, of timber with brick infill, is the last remaining thatched cottage in the village. Its unaltered façade adds old-world charm to this prominent position on the outside of a curve in the road.

3.5.7 To the east of the church is the grey stone building of Mills Farm, once a grist mill, and now a large house of traditional design. Mills Farm has an attached red-brick cottage and barns. These houses are similar in size to the Old Rectory and Mills Farm, and impart a distinctly traditional rural feel to the area. Its setting is marred only by the intrusion of overhead cables.

3.5.8 A purple beech by the roadside here was planted to commemorate the Coronation of King George VI in 1937. To the east, two cottages follow on this side of the road. Manor Cottage, once a modest traditional cottage, has been extended in stone to form a large dwelling, which does not look out of its place in its spacious gardens. Next to Manor Cottage stands Smokey Cottage, a 20th Century brick cottage which has also been extended.

3.5.9 Directly opposite the Church, and still part of the cluster of buildings around it, is Bob Shepherd's Garage, with a forecourt and fuel pumps set back behind a low, flowered stone wall. The forecourt is backed by the garage, a pleasant traditional, whitewashed rubble cottage with a stone roof. The workshop is set further back from the road, south of the house, and is a small warehouse-like building, which, though not beautiful, is not unnecessarily intrusive. An old corrugated iron hut with a pitched roof lies beside the road at the west end of the garage, and serves as the office. Though perhaps not ideally sited opposite the Church, the village is fortunate to have a garage at all, and Bob Shepherd's Garage fits in well without being out of character.

3.5.10 Next to the garage a modern house of reconstructed stone has been built on an infill site; its relative size, construction materials and closeness to the road make it appear as a new addition to the existing character of the western end of The Street.

Fig. 5. Pound House together with some of the buildings which go to make up this cluster. The dispersed structure of this cluster with its ample vegetation reinforces the rural character of the village.

Fig. 6. Bob Shepherd's Garage fits in well with the existing character of the area.

Fig. 7. A pair of substantial and near-identical suburban-style houses, previously taken to replace two cottages demolished in the 1980's. These houses are similar in size to the Old Rectory and Mills Farm, and impart a distinctly traditional rural feel to the area. Its setting is marred only by the intrusion of overhead cables.
The Somerford House Cluster.

3.5.11 Beyond the garage a gravel drive leads to Somerford House, the oldest house in the village. Somerford House is a substantial attactive vernacular house with a hipped roof and modernised windows set amongst mature trees, and surrounded by its garden and by small paddocks. It is moderately screened from the road. There are a number of barns and sheds mainly beyond the house, some converted into a modern bungalow accessed from a private drive by the railway line.

3.5.12 A modern B1 callbox stands on the road verge just to the east of Somerford House. Built of reflective materials with a sharp outline and brightly painted logo it is conspicuous and is out of character with the grass verge and wooded hedge against which it stands out prominently.

The Manor Farm Cluster.

3.5.13 Beyond Somerford House, a field gives place to a high stone and brick wall screening the garden of Manor Farm. These open spaces are mirrored on the north side of the road, and form important visual breaks in the settlement pattern. The view northward from The Street here includes the rising ground of the Hill and beyond, and is one of the key elements defining the overall character of the settlement.

3.5.14 A single pine tree stands near the entrance to Manor Farm, a large and attractive lime-sashed stone house with dormers. The house is visible from many points in the village, and makes a strong visual statement. Though no longer an active farm, the house is flanked by a range of mainly modern and unattractive agricultural buildings. The roadside at the entrance to the house is marred by a small but obstreperous pumping station, which is concealed from the road by a stone wall but clearly visible to a pedestrian.

3.5.15 Opposite Manor Farm is a modern, single storey, "L" shaped bungalow of stone with a tiled roof, built in the 1990s, which replaced outbuildings formerly belonging to Manor Farm. Though of appropriate height in this sensitive location, the style and materials of the building are less appropriate than its predecessor. Well-designed windows in the blank west wall could offer improvement; alternatively, its strong lines could be softened by tree planting in the adjacent field.

3.5.16 The modern functional design of street lighting is at odds with the rural environment, and the otherwise attractive view westwards down The Street from the Millennium Green is badly marred by the many poles and wires.

Significant Features

Topography: Generally level but with the railway embankment to the south and the ridge rising to the north forming elevated backdrops.

Access: The main street through the village. Mill Lane and other lanes and public footpaths lead to dwellings set back from the road and to open countryside. A footway borders the road over its entire length, crossing the road just once. For most of its length the footway has a grass verge.

Settlement Pattern: Open, low density development along the main village street, many houses set well back from the road.

Morphology: The church, two farmsteads (only one still in use), and two other substantial houses each form the focus for clusters of buildings which are separated from the next cluster by paddocks or large gardens. There is little infill, and each backland development as exists lies within the clusters down lanes and driveways.

Activities: A quiet residential area with church, village hall and garage.

Space: Most dwellings are set in large gardens bordered by walls or hedges and interspersed with fields and paddocks affording attractive views south to the railway embankment and north to the upward sweep of the ridge. The road is bordered on both sides by grass verges, sometimes quite wide, for most of its length.

Buildings: Most of the houses are detached pre-19th Century buildings, seven of which are listed. Most houses are two-storey, though some have dormer windows. Some houses are very large; and there is great diversity in form and architectural style.

Construction: Mostly stone, either natural or lime-washed. Some are brick or rendered block. Roofs generally of Cotswold stone but some clay tiles or other modern materials. Older houses have timber sash or casement windows.

Guidance Recommendations

1 New developments should either: (RB3)
   a) be within an existing cluster, or
   b) repair a damaged cluster.

(see definitions given under Section 2.2 above)

2 In addition to the general guidelines given under
   Section 2.2 above, developments within clusters, as well as extensions or alterations, should observe the following: (RH10, RH2, RH3, RH5, RH10, RH11)
   - Natural building materials, brick or lime-washed finishes should be used. Reconstituted stone is not acceptable.
   - Roof shapes and pitches should reflect those of prominent older buildings within the cluster.
   - New buildings should generally be lower and smaller than prominent older buildings within the cluster.
   - Replacement of a large modern agricultural building by a large house is unacceptable.
   - Window shapes, sizes, spacings and detailing on new buildings should visually complement high quality traditional buildings nearby.

3 Designs for new buildings within the visual context of traditional (vernacular) buildings should take account of local vernacular style, avoiding introduction of picturesque "vernacular" styles from elsewhere. (RB3) (See Glossary of Traditional Building Features in 1.1 Somerford.)

4 Maintain the densely wooded nature of the railway embankment. (RH1, RH18)

5 Retain informal grass banks and verges. (RB3)

6 Avoid urbanising The Street by use of formal footways and kerbs. (RH3)

7 Retain existing trees and native hedges. (RH3, RH18)

8 Encourage replacement of Leylandii hedges with native species. (RH3)

Fig 9. Church Farm: the largely modern, unsightly outbuildings clearly visible from The Street are to be replaced by four new cottage style houses. A large brick barn (not visible in this picture) is to be converted to a dwelling. If sensitively carried out this development will reinforce the structure of the cluster.

9 Encourage planting of native only species of trees and shrubs. (RH3, RH18)

10 Any enhancement scheme planned needs to take account of both the location of existing services and the species of planting proposed. (RH18)

Enhancement Schemes

1 Buy overhead wiring and remove posts (RB3).
   Priorities are as follows:
   (1) 100 metres either side of Church.
   (2) From Millennium Green (see Area 2) for 200 metres west along The Street into Area 1.
   (3) The remainder of The Street within Area 1 (+200m)

2 Replace telephone kiosk with one of more traditional design. (RB3)

3 Remove plastic litter bins, and replace by wood-stated types where needed. (RB3)

4 Implement an appropriate form of screening to the pumping station near Manor Farm. (RH3)

5 Review street lighting to eliminate major pools of darkness, particularly near village hall (RH1)

6 Replace street lighting with a design more appropriate to a rural village setting (RB3)

Fig 8. Manor Farm with a mix of traditional and modern outbuildings visible from the road. These include a large modern barn faced with reconstituted stone blocks which contrasts strongly in scale, form and materials with the other buildings in the cluster. Manor Farm is a traditional farm house modified by a Georgian facade.
3.6: Area 2 - The Eastern End of The Street.

3.6.1 This area is centred on the eastern end of the village around the Millenium Village Green, with 19th Century buildings and open fields. Open fields mark the eastern and western limits of the area.

3.6.2 Area 2 may be subdivided into five sub-areas, three of which may be regarded as clusters. For the most part, the sub-areas are not separated by open spaces.

The Street/Hill Cluster.

3.6.3 A cluter of mainly older houses and cottages is concentrated in the corner between The Street and The Hill. At the northern limit of Area 2, low hedges provide important views across open fields to the village. Nos. 1 and 2 The Hill are old colour-washed cottages, once thatched. The Saladin public house is an interesting building, mainly of Victorian brick with patterned clay tiles. Three more stone cottages lead to a pair of colour-washed brick cottages standing at the junction of The Hill with The Street. Behind the cottages stands the Old School, converted to a house when the school was closed in 1983. Beside the brick cottages, on the north side of The Street, are two identical 1980s houses whose scale and fenestration are discordant with that of the traditional brick cottages nearby. West of these, Yew Tree Cottage is a charming traditional stone cottage set back from the road behind a low stone wall. Next to it stands a small children's play area. The older buildings are of varied scales, though generally small to medium size, and are of various styles, materials, orientations and roof-lines. This variety contributes character to the cluster; the uniformity of the modern buildings is at odds with this diversity.

3.6.4 The open area at the road junction is one of the focal points of the settlement with a sense of being at the heart of the village, with views of the surrounding buildings and clear views along all three arms of the junction. The northern side of this open space, lying between the road and Vale Lane, consists of an open grooved area, which was acquired for the village in 2000 and is now known as known as The Millenium Village Green. A Village Sign and a seat have been erected on the Green. The Green is characterised by its openness, by the dominance of poles carrying overhead cables and by the variety of different types of fence and hedge separating it from Vale Lane. The suburban feel imparted by these features could be reduced by sensitive planting of native species of trees and shrubs carried out in co-operation with the Trustees and with the Highways Agency. In this way, it could provide a rural counterpoint the busy roads and a link between the modern estate of Vale Lane and the older buildings to the south. The whole area is entered by a network of telephone and power cables and their poles.

The Staveley/Street Farm Cluster.

3.6.6 A cluster of older buildings on the south side of the Street comprises a cottage, a large house with outbuildings, two modern houses and a farmstead. Across The Street from the play area, after Manor Farm, a walled paddock gives way to Chapel Cottage - named for its unusual fenestration, though whether it has religious origins is unknown. This adjoins Staveley, a substantial stone house with rendered facade and stone roof, originating from the 18th Century. Staveley stands behind high stone walls in a large garden together with a range of attractive stone outbuildings. Two identical modern houses of reconstituted stone represent 1980s infill between Staveley and Street Farm, again their similarity next to each other is out of character.

3.6.7 A single pine tree stands at the entrance to Street Farm, a substantial, listed building of stone under a cement the roof built in the late 17th Century, but extended and altered sympathetically periodically since then. Out of sight from the road stands an 18th Century barn built of stone with a hipped stone roof. The remains of an old shelter shed can still be seen from the road but most of the property is concealed behind a tall hedge of hedges, trees, and shrubs.

Modern Houses Eastwards along The Street.

3.6.8 Next, along the south side of the Street beyond Street Farm, come six modern houses of reconstituted stone. Four of these were built as infill in the 1960s, the two at the eastern end replaced a cottage demolished in the 1980s.
Significant Features

Topography: Generally level but rising steeply at the commencement of The Hill. The railway embankment to the south and the ridge rising to the north form elevated backdrops visible throughout the area.

Access: The main route for traffic from Malmsbury to the RAF station at Lyneham is busy at peak times. East End Lane, probably once an important thoroughfare, is now a cul-de-sac. Clay Street is a steep, narrow, windy road leading to the Swindon road. The Street, The Hill and Clay Street are all on regular bus routes. Footways are lacking at the eastern and western ends of the area.

Settlement Pattern: Original open, low density development is becoming difficult to perceive due to extensive 20th Century infill.

Morphology: A few old houses and cottages grouped around the Old School and Public House close to the road junction form an original cluster of some character, now much modified by infill and backland development. Two other clusters relate to a farmstead near a large Victorian house, both with outbuildings, and to a another farmstead with associated cottages. Much 20th Century estate-type development on infill sites, usually with large front gardens.

Activities: Busy public house and restaurant. Road busy, particularly at peak times.

Space: The Millennium Village Green, the children’s play area, the northern side of The Hill and several paddocks are important open spaces. For much of its length the road is bordered on both sides by grass verges. Most dwellings are set in large gardens, usually behind low hedges or walls.

Buildings: Pre-20th Century buildings include three Listed Buildings. Most houses are detached two-storey, but some older cottages are terraced. Other than garages, sheds and greenhouses, outbuildings are rare outside the grounds of Street Farm and Staveley.

Construction: Older buildings are usually of stone or lime washed, although Yew Tree Farm, two cottages and The Saladin are of brick. Roofs are generally of clay tiles, but Staveley and Yew Tree Farm have stone tiles and Chapel Cottage, the Old School and several nearby cottages are roofed in blue slate. Modern houses are mostly of reconstituted stone under clay tile roofs. The windows of older buildings are mostly wooden casement or sash. 20th Century houses are almost exclusively double glazed.

Guidance Recommendations

1. New developments should either: (RB3)
   a. be within an existing cluster, or
   b. repair a damaged cluster.
   (see definitions given under Section 2.2 above)

2. In addition to the general guidelines given under Section 3.2 above, developments within clusters, as well as extensions or alterations, should observe the following: (RB10, RB14, RB12, RB3, RB5, RB10, RB11)
   - Natural building materials, brick or limewashed finishes should be used. Reconstituted stone is best avoided, even on alterations/extensions to houses originally built in such materials.
   - Roof shapes and pitches should reflect those of prominent older buildings within the cluster.
   - New buildings should be lower and smaller than prominent older buildings within the cluster.
   - Replacement of a large modern agricultural building by a large house is unacceptable.
   - Window shapes, sizes and spacing and detailing on new buildings should visually complement high quality traditional windows nearby.

3. Designs for new buildings within the visual context of traditional vernacular buildings should take account of local vernacular style, avoiding introduction of parrotic "rural vernacular" styles from elsewhere. (RB3) (See Glossary of Traditional Building Features in The Street.)

4. Maintain the densely wooded nature of the railway embankment. (RB18)

5. Retain grass banks and verges along the south side of the Street. (RB18)

6. Retain existing trees and native hedges. (RB18)

7. Encourage the replacement of Leylandii hedges with native species. (RB3)

8. Encourage planting of native only species of trees and shrubs. (RB18)

9. Any enhancement scheme planned needs to take account of both the location of existing services and the species of planting proposed. (RB18)

Enhancement Schemes

1. Bury overhead wiring and remove posts, particularly near The Green. (RB3) Priorities are as follows:
   - Remove all posts and wires from Millennium Green (±100m)
   - Recommended under Area 1. Above. From Millennium Green for 200 metres west along The Street into Area 1)
   - From Millennium Green up The Hill 200 metres
   - From Millennium Green eastwards along The Street and into start of East End Lane (100m)

2. Improve or replace facilities in the children’s play area. (RB1)

3. Extend footway along lower part of The Hill. (RB1)

4. Improve footways at crossing points. (RB1)

5. Extend footway eastward into East End Lane as far as Knights Cottage. (RB1) (See also Area 3)

6. Consider planting The Green with native shrubs and trees following consultation with Millennium Village Green Trustees and the Highways Agency. (RLF1)

7. Hide fencing bordering The Green with native species hedging or replace with fencing of standard pattern. (RB3)

Fig. 13. Yew Tree Farm, an attractive 18th Century brick house with a stone-tiled Mansard roof, is in the course of renovation. To the east, a row of three old cottages form an important link with the past. Behind these, permission has been obtained to build two houses on the site of former farm buildings. If sensitively executed, these should go some way in repairing the damage caused to the cluster in the 1960s by the erection of 3 large suburban houses to the west, which replaced a single cottage.

Fig. 14. The boundary of The Green would be made more attractive by native species hedging as by the adoption of a standard pattern of fence in future replanning.

3.6: Area 2 - The Eastern end of The Street
3.7: Area 3 - Vale Leaze

3.7.1 This area centres on Vale Leaze, a small modern estate which backs onto The Street, and includes all that area bordering the road to the north of Area 2.

3.7.2 Open fields to the north of The Willows mirror the fields on the southern side, giving views to the ridge below the B4042. Two fine oak trees, one situated near the forge and the other in a hedges slightly lower on the north are protected by Tree Preservation Orders. At the bottom of The Hill, an old stone outbuilding has been converted to a forge, used by a local blacksmith. This carefully converted building combines functionality with traditional appearance, in spite of the use of adjoining verge for parking by nearby residents.

3.7.3 Next to the forge, opposite The Saladin public house, an unobtrusive car repair business is run from a bungalow, screened from the road by mature shrubs and trees. The Hill has a strong rural aspect with undergrown grass verges.

3.7.4 A footway starts at the eastern end of The Green at a point that does not correspond with the footway on the other side of the road. It continues around the estate and finishes on The Street just beyond the last house in Vale Leaze. Beyond this point there is a narrow undergrown grass verge. The speed limit of 40 mph along The Street is too high for road conditions and is widely ignored by passing traffic.

3.7.5 Behind The Millenium Village Green stands Vale Leaze. Trees and shrubs and a variety of high hedges mainly screen the houses.

3.7.6 Vale Leaze is the largest development in the village and lies on a south sloping site. The building of this mixture of 29 basically similar houses and bungalows in pale brown brick in a style typical of the era presented a very strong contrast to the other houses in Little Somerford as well as almost doubling the size of the village.

3.7.7 As a suburban development, Vale Leaze has much to commend it. Its houses are well spaced in generous plots around a central meandering road from which they are separated by open-plan front gardens. There is an undoubted sense of being part of a community within the village of Little Somerford. However, the estate with its uniform building style, size, spacing and materials, all foreign to the traditional character of the village, is out of place in a rural environment.

Significant Features

Topography: The bottom of The Hill and The Street are essentially level ground whilst the land rises steeply northwards up City Street and through the Vale Leaze estate to the ridge along which runs the B4042.

Access: The main route from Malmesbury to Dauntsey and Lyneham passes through this area. At its heart lies the junction with the Great Somerford Road and Clay Street. A quiet cul-de-sac serves Vale Leaze. Footways stop short of the eastern and western limits of the area.

Settlement Patterns: A small 1960s housing estate and modern infill development within the visual context of the Conservation Area.

Morphology: Medium density development, in contrast to the low density building scale elsewhere in the village. Vale Leaze dwellings have open, unfenced front gardens whilst all other frontages are variously screened.

Activities: Quiet residential.

Space: The northward views over rising fields from the lower part of The Hill are some of the most attractive and important in the village. The Millenium Village Green is an important open space at a focal point in the village.

Construction: The houses of Vale Leaze are built entirely of brick. Elsewhere in Area 3 a variety of modern materials include pebbledash and artificial stone. There are no architectural references to the older buildings of the village; although, within itself the Vale Leaze estate has a certain character which warrants sensitive treatment.

Where houses have been extended or altered this has often been done in brick which does not match well the original brick, resulting in a patchy appearance.

Guidance Recommendations

1. Observe general guidance recommendations given under Section 3.2 above (RB2)
2. Retain further infill. (RH10, RH15)
3. Retain great greens and verges. (RB2)
4. Retain existing trees and native hedges, particularly where they soften the impact of modern buildings. (RB18)
5. Encourage the use of closely matching designs and materials in alterations and extensions. (RB2)
6. Encourage replacement of fencing bordering The Green with hedging of indigenous species or with fencing of standard pattern (see also Area 2). (RB2)
7. Encourage planting of native trees only species of trees and shrubs. (RB2, RB18)
8. Any enhancement scheme planned needs to take account of both the location of existing services and the species of planting proposed. (RH18)

Fig. 13. As a suburban development, Vale Leaze has much to commend it, but it is out of place here.

Enhancement Schemes

1. bury overhead wiring and remove posts, particularly near the Village Green. (RB2)
2. extend footway eastwards along The Street and into East End Lane as far as Knights Cottage. (See also Area 2) (RB1)
3. improve footways at crossing point at the eastern edge of The Green. (RB1)
3.8.1 This area includes a few buildings on the main Swindon—Malmesbury road (B4042) near its junction with The Hill, and the upper half of The Hill to the Conservation Area boundary.

3.8.2 The Hill is an ancient established route through the village which falls in a southerly direction from the Swindon—Malmesbury road down to The Green. The upper part of The Hill is the highest part of the village and has excellent views across fields towards Manor Farm and the church, and upwards to the ridge. For the most part, attractive mixed native-species hedging and grass verges line both sides of the road. Occasionally, this is punctuated by less rural conifer hedging and low walls. The overall appearance is marred by poles carrying heavy black cables on both sides of the road.

3.8.3 The houses along The Hill are mostly well spaced, and in several places fields come right up to the road, affording pleasant views across open pasture. The oldest house is probably early 19th Century; this and four other old stone cottages, mostly considerably extended or modified, are scattered up The Hill on both sides of the road, interspersed with a variety of 20th Century houses in a wide range of styles and materials. Some recently built houses feature a multiplicity of gables, which are found only sparsely in traditional village buildings. Unfortunately, in a few places infill development has eroded the dispersed character, giving a slightly suburban feel to this essentially rural location.

3.8.4 On the south side of the B4042 stand two large and important houses in extensive grounds. Hill House was built between 1885 and 1898 and given a stone Georgian style west front in 1927. This house, formerly home to close relatives of a Prime Minister and subsequently an American president, was converted from residential use in the late 1970s and is now a much valued residential home. The building is significant for its age, its style, and its association with historical figures.

3.8.5 The B4042 Swindon—Malmesbury road is a busy and fast main road. The Hill is a village road with no footways or markings, except at junctions. The Hill is one of the four main routes into the village and is also the main route from Malmesbury to nearby RAF Lyneham, making it busy at peak travelling times. The speed limit of 40 mph is too high for road conditions and is widely ignored by passing traffic. The B4042 road and The Hill itself lack footways. There is, however, real concern that poor design of the footway would adversely change the character of this essentially rural lane.

**Significant Features**

**Topography:** The Hill falls in a south-easterly direction from the B4042 road down to The Green. The road is about 700m long and the difference in height between the highest and lowest points is about 5m.

**Access:** The B4042 is the main road between Malmesbury and Swindon. The Hill lies south-east from the B4042 and descends into the village. Both roads lack footways.

**Settlement Pattern:** The original development was sparse with fields coming right up to the lane. 20th Century infill has increased the density substantially in places.

**Morphology:** Mostly 20th Century houses set at least 5m back from the road in their own gardens.

**Activities:** A residential area but with the heaviest traffic in the village, especially at peak times.

**Space:** The Hill affords pleasant views to the south east over the village and the fields beyond to Dunsleybury, where the land begins to rise again. There are also views to the south west glimpsed between houses and through hedgerows.

**Buildings:** A mix of houses of varied size, age and style. Some modern houses are suburban in style and out of character.

**Construction:** The oldest surviving buildings were originally traditional cottages (now much enlarged) of rubble stone under clay tile roofs. Later buildings are mostly of brick — some rendered or pebbledashed. Houses built in the last few years are blackwork with stone facing.

**Guidance Recommendations**
1. Observe general guidance recommendations given under Section 3.2 above. (RII2)
2. Resist further infill reducing open space and views between buildings (RIH10, RH11, RC9, RC10).
3. Design new buildings within the visual context of traditional (vernacular) buildings, taking account of local vernacular style, avoiding introduction of pastiche 'rural vernacular' styles from elsewhere. (RII2) (See Glossary of Traditional Building Features in Little Somerford.)
4. Ensure new buildings and extensions are designed with respect to the rural character of the settlement. (RII2)
5. Retain existing hedgerows and mature trees (RII2, RC9, RC10).
6. Avoid urbanising The Hill with formal footpaths, kerbs and inappropriate traffic calming features (RII2).
7. Encourage planting of native species of trees and shrubs. (RII2, RII8)
8. Any enhancement scheme planned needs to take account of both the location of existing services and the species of planting proposed. (RII8)

**Enhancement Schemes**
1. Consider scheme to encourage reinstatement of mixed native-species hedgerow where this has been lost (RII8, RC9, RC10).
2. Provide footway between Hill House and the bottom of The Hill. (RII1)
3. Reduce speed limit and introduce sensitively designed traffic calming measures in appropriate places to help enforce the speed limit. (RII2)
4. Bury overhead wires and remove posts. (RII2)
3.9: Area 5 - Field View and Meadow Lane

3.9.1 This area commences at the railway bridge where the road leads to Great Somerford, and continues along this road to embrace a group of 8 former council houses known as Field View and three modern houses beyond. Also included are four cottages in Meadow Lane.

3.9.2 On the west side, after passing under the bridge, a group of allotments are followed by the cemetery and several fields before reaching Field View. Although built close to each other on the busy Great Somerford road, the houses of Field View enjoy a feeling of open space and excellent, far reaching country views to both front and rear. This pleasant aspect is shared by three modern houses set in large grounds further to the south along this road. One of them operates an equestrian establishment from the buildings to the rear. The four blocks of semi-detached rendered houses in Field View are now mostly owner-occupied, and owners are personalising the appearance of their properties. On the eastern side, the road is flanked by hedged fields, partly pasture, partly arable for its entire length.

3.9.3 Beyond the cemetery, Meadow Lane meets the railway line, then curves to the left before reaching its end. At this point are four cottages. One detached and a pair of semi-detached red brick former railway cottages have blue-black brick detailing and the character of the houses is further enhanced by distinctive, tall chimney pots. The plots are small and the houses are near to the roadway, which is only single track and leads to a dead end. A two-storey stone cottage surrounded by its own grounds quietly nestles around the corner at the end of this lane. A large, open sided cattle shed has recently been built in an adjacent field: the building is visually jarring and would benefit from tree screening.

Significant Features

Topography: Rising gently from south to north.

Access: Neither road has footways or markings and verges are intermittent, wide in places. Footpaths and vehicular accesses lead onto the roadway.

Settlement Pattern: Sparse development in the countryside remote from the main settlement area.

Activities: A sparsely developed area containing the cemetery, allotments and an equestrian establishment.

Space: Considerable views over open countryside enjoyed in all directions, except to the north where the railway blocks the view. The houses in Meadow Lane are in close proximity to the elevated railway line to the north.

Buildings: Predominantly residential with no recent buildings, although extensions have given the appearance of modernisation. A new agricultural building of some size is visible from the road.

Construction: Various, including brick, rendered reconstructed stone and pebble-dashed. Roofs are slate or thatch, some with distinctive chimney pots.

Guidance Recommendations

1. Retain existing hedgerows and mature trees (RB2, RB18).
2. Observe the general guidance recommendations given under 3.2 above. (RB2)
3. Encourage planting of native only species of trees and shrubs. (RB2, RB18)
4. Any enhancement scheme planned needs to take account of both the location of existing services and the species of planting proposed. (RB18)

Enhancement Schemes

1. Provide footway to link Field View to the village. (RB1)
2. Implement speed restriction to commence before Field View (RB2)
3. Reduce visual impact of agricultural building adjacent to Meadow Lane by screening with trees and shrubs (RB2)
3.10: Area 6 - East End Lane

3.10.1 This area comprises two clusters of buildings. The first contains East End Farm and its outbuildings; the second contains Malthouse Farm, its outbuildings and two modern dwellings. Both clusters are situated at the eastern end of East End Lane. Area 6 also includes the fields that separate the clusters from the remainder of the village.

3.10.2 The houses stand amid hedged pastureland with many mature trees and enjoy extensive views across Daunstey Vale. East End Farm is a Grade II Listed traditional brick farmhouse with mainly modern outbuildings, situated at the very end of the metallated part of East End Lane. It is still an active farm. Beyond the farm the lane once continued onwards to the B4042 road, but now exists solely as a footpath. Malthouse Farm stands to the south of East End Farm, separated from it by a field. No longer a working farm, this substantial, traditional stone house stands in extensive grounds. The other buildings in this area are modern dwellings built on the sites of former cottages.

3.10.3 The only other structure on East End Lane is a group of abandoned sheds known as Ropers Field Farm.

Significant Features

Topography: Rising gently from south, then more steeply north of the lane. The lane itself rises gently throughout its route out from the village.

Access: A narrow, winding cul-de-sac with no footpaths or markings and intermittent verges. Footpaths deviate from the lane at various points. The light traffic and tranquil rural environment in the lane makes this a popular route for walking. The essentially rural nature of this lane should not be compromised by any attempt to “improve” it.

Settlement Pattern: Development is concentrated only at the eastern end of the lane.

Activities: Quiet rural area with limited residential development and some farming, much used for recreational walking.

Space: The lane is flanked by beautiful mature oaks and hedgerows. Considerable views over open countryside enjoyed in all directions.

Buildings: Two substantial traditional farmhouses with outbuildings, a house and a bungalow.

Construction: Various including brick, stone and reconstructed stone. Roofs are either stone or clay tile.

Fig. 17. The rural character of the area is typified by East End Farm, a working farm surrounded by fields. The farmhouse shows traditional features such as a half-timbered roof.

Guidance Recommendations

1. New developments should either:
   a. be within an existing cluster, or
   b. repair a damaged cluster.

(see definitions given under Section 2.2 above)

2. In addition to the general guidelines given under Section 3.2 above, developments within clusters, as well as extensions or alterations, should observe the following (RH10, RH14, R12, RB10, RB11):
   - Natural building materials, brick or lime washed finishes should be used. Reconstituted stone is best avoided, even on alterations/extensions to houses originally built in some such materials.
   - Roof shapes and pitches should reflect those of prominent older buildings within the cluster.
   - New buildings should generally be lower and smaller than prominent older buildings within the cluster. Replacement of a large modern agricultural building by a large house is unacceptable.
   - Window shapes, sizes, spacings and detailing on new buildings should visually complement high quality traditional windows nearby.

3. Designs for new buildings within the visual context of traditional (vernacular) buildings should take account of local vernacular style, avoiding introduction of pastiche ‘vernacular’ styles from elsewhere. (R12) (See Glossary of Traditional Building Features in Little Somerford.)

4. Retain existing hedgerows and mature trees. (R12, R18)

5. Encourage planting of native only species of trees and shrubs. (R12, R18)

6. Any enhancement scheme planned needs to take account of both the location of existing services and the species of planting proposed. (R18)

Enhancement Comment

The essentially rural character of East End Lane and of this area in general derives from its unspoilt nature. Any attempt at enhancement beyond normal rural maintenance risks being counterproductive and should be avoided.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section No.</th>
<th>Recommendation No.</th>
<th>SUBJECT (summarised)</th>
<th>RELEVANT LOCAL PLAN POLICIES</th>
<th>IMPLEMENTATION PARTICIPANTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Further expansion in manner unrelated to concept of clusters not normally permitted.</td>
<td>RH10, RH11, RH14, RH15, RB3</td>
<td>DCC, County Council, Utilities, Parish Council, Land Owners, Residents, Planning Applicants, Other Groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>New development should normally be within or extend or repair an existing cluster.</td>
<td>RH10, RH11, RH15, RB3</td>
<td>DCC, County Council, Utilities, Parish Council, Land Owners, Residents, Planning Applicants, Other Groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Guidelines for development within or extending a cluster.</td>
<td>RH10, RH11, RH15, RB3</td>
<td>DCC, County Council, Utilities, Parish Council, Land Owners, Residents, Planning Applicants, Other Groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Guidelines for development to repair a cluster.</td>
<td>RH10, RH11, RH15, RB3</td>
<td>DCC, County Council, Utilities, Parish Council, Land Owners, Residents, Planning Applicants, Other Groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Development between clusters not normally allowed.</td>
<td>RH10, RH11, RH15, RB3</td>
<td>DCC, County Council, Utilities, Parish Council, Land Owners, Residents, Planning Applicants, Other Groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Requirement for affordable housing to be reviewed periodically.</td>
<td>RH10, RH11, RB3</td>
<td>DCC, County Council, Utilities, Parish Council, Land Owners, Residents, Planning Applicants, Other Groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Sensitive conversion of agricultural buildings to light industrial use permitted.</td>
<td>RH10, RB3, RC9</td>
<td>DCC, County Council, Utilities, Parish Council, Land Owners, Residents, Planning Applicants, Other Groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Street furniture to harmonise in style.</td>
<td>RH10, RB3</td>
<td>DCC, County Council, Utilities, Parish Council, Land Owners, Residents, Planning Applicants, Other Groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Retain important views.</td>
<td>RH10, RH13</td>
<td>DCC, County Council, Utilities, Parish Council, Land Owners, Residents, Planning Applicants, Other Groups</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Protect existing water courses.</td>
<td>RC10A</td>
<td>DCC, County Council, Utilities, Parish Council, Land Owners, Residents, Planning Applicants, Other Groups</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Review road traffic management.</td>
<td>RT22, RT24, RB3</td>
<td>DCC, County Council, Utilities, Parish Council, Land Owners, Residents, Planning Applicants, Other Groups</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Encourage local recycling centres.</td>
<td>RF1</td>
<td>DCC, County Council, Utilities, Parish Council, Land Owners, Residents, Planning Applicants, Other Groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Encourage sustainable development.</td>
<td>RB2</td>
<td>DCC, County Council, Utilities, Parish Council, Land Owners, Residents, Planning Applicants, Other Groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>New development either within a cluster or to repair a damaged cluster.</td>
<td>RH10, RH11, RH14, RH15, RB3</td>
<td>DCC, County Council, Utilities, Parish Council, Land Owners, Residents, Planning Applicants, Other Groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Additional guidelines for development within clusters.</td>
<td>RH10, RH22, RB3, RB5, RH10, RH11</td>
<td>DCC, County Council, Utilities, Parish Council, Land Owners, Residents, Planning Applicants, Other Groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>New buildings should respect vernacular style.</td>
<td>RB3</td>
<td>DCC, County Council, Utilities, Parish Council, Land Owners, Residents, Planning Applicants, Other Groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Maintain wooded nature of railway embankment.</td>
<td>RB3, RJ18</td>
<td>DCC, County Council, Utilities, Parish Council, Land Owners, Residents, Planning Applicants, Other Groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Avoid use of formal footways and kerbs.</td>
<td>RB3</td>
<td>DCC, County Council, Utilities, Parish Council, Land Owners, Residents, Planning Applicants, Other Groups</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Maintain existing native trees and hedges.</td>
<td>RB3, RJ18</td>
<td>DCC, County Council, Utilities, Parish Council, Land Owners, Residents, Planning Applicants, Other Groups</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Encourage replacement of Leylandi hedges.</td>
<td>RB3</td>
<td>DCC, County Council, Utilities, Parish Council, Land Owners, Residents, Planning Applicants, Other Groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Encourage planting of native trees and shrubs.</td>
<td>RB3, RJ18</td>
<td>DCC, County Council, Utilities, Parish Council, Land Owners, Residents, Planning Applicants, Other Groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Tree planting not to interfere with services.</td>
<td>RB2</td>
<td>DCC, County Council, Utilities, Parish Council, Land Owners, Residents, Planning Applicants, Other Groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>New development either within a cluster or to repair a damaged cluster.</td>
<td>RH10, RH11, RH14, RH15, RB3</td>
<td>DCC, County Council, Utilities, Parish Council, Land Owners, Residents, Planning Applicants, Other Groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Additional guidelines for developments within clusters.</td>
<td>RH10, RH22, RB3, RB5, RH10, RH11</td>
<td>DCC, County Council, Utilities, Parish Council, Land Owners, Residents, Planning Applicants, Other Groups</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>RB3</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Maintain wooded nature of railway embankment.</td>
<td>RB3, RJ18</td>
<td>DCC, County Council, Utilities, Parish Council, Land Owners, Residents, Planning Applicants, Other Groups</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: ✓ denotes primary responsibility
ENHANCEMENT SCHEMES SUMMARY TABLE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section No.</th>
<th>Enhancement No</th>
<th>Subject (summarised)</th>
<th>Relevant Local Plan Policies</th>
<th>Implementation Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Reduce speed limit to 30 mph.</td>
<td>1 RY24</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>Nil</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Buried overhead wiring and remove posts 100m either side of church.</td>
<td>1 RB3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>Buried overhead wiring and remove posts elsewhere (2,3)</td>
<td>2 RB3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Replace telephone kiosk.</td>
<td>2 RB3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Replace plastic litter bins.</td>
<td>2 RB3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Control pumping station.</td>
<td>2 RB3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Review street lighting.</td>
<td>2 RB3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Replace street lighting.</td>
<td>2 RB3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Buried overhead wiring and remove posts 100m either side of Village Green.</td>
<td>1 RB3</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>Buried overhead wiring and remove posts elsewhere (2)</td>
<td>2 RB3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Improve or replace facilities in children’s play area.</td>
<td>1 RL1F</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Extend footway along lower part of The Hill.</td>
<td>1 RB1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Improve footway at crossing points.</td>
<td>1 RB1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Extend footway eastwards into East End Lane.</td>
<td>1 RB1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Consider planting The Green with native shrubs.</td>
<td>2 RL1F, RB3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Hide fence bordering The Green or standardise.</td>
<td>2 RB3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Buried overhead wiring and remove posts.</td>
<td>2 RB3</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Extend footway eastwards into East End Lane.</td>
<td>1 RB1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Improve footway at crossing points.</td>
<td>1 RB1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Reinstate of native species hedges.</td>
<td>2 RB1, RC9, RC10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Provide footway from Hill House down The Hill.</td>
<td>1 RB2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Speed limit and traffic calming measures.</td>
<td>1 RB2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Buried overhead wiring and remove posts.</td>
<td>2 RB2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Provide footway to Field View.</td>
<td>2 RB1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Implement speed restrictions from Field View.</td>
<td>1 RB2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Screen agricultural buildings.</td>
<td>2 RB2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: ✓ denotes primary responsibility
Priority levels: 1 denotes high priority / 2 denotes longer term priority

Glossary of Traditional Building Features in Little Somerset

G1: Introduction

G1.1 This glossary is intended to assist designers in understanding the context in which they are working. Reference should also be made to General Guidance 1 leaflets produced by the Built Environment Team at NWDC.

G2: Traditional Buildings in Little Somerset

G2.1 Traditional houses and other buildings, were usually constructed by the future occupier, or by a local builder, and are often termed “vernacular”. They used locally available materials, utilitarian principles, and their construction and any aesthetic choices were guided by tradition. By contrast, many houses were wholly or partly designed by an architect, or other expert, to follow a national or international fashion, style or set of conventions, towards an aesthetically satisfying result. Naturally, many older buildings have some traditional and some designed content. Traditional architecture had largely died out by the second half of the 20th Century after which even cottages began to follow national rules rather than local traditions. Practically all houses built since are “designed”.

G2.2 Traditional houses in Little Somerset range in size from cottages to large houses, and typically have two and a half storeys with steeply pitched (c. 50°) roofs, which are often hipped or half-hipped. They frequently have dormers and a central chimney, and usually have a long, plain façade (length:height ratio commonly more than 2:1) with “horizontal” windows. Gable ends may include upper windows. Their walls are stone rubble or brick, often originally lime-washed, and roofs are now, or were, stone-tiled. Some examples are shown in Figs. 1 & 2.
G2.5 It is important that the traditional houses of the village should be recognised, and that modifications to these buildings, as well as developments within their visual contexts, should be carried out with great sensitivity.

G2.6 It is also relevant to note what the traditional buildings of the village are not. In particular, they are not typical Cotswold houses, which generally use more regular stonework, are rarely in brick, are less commonly lime-washed, and usually have one or more gables in their facades. Typical Cotswold houses, and particularly their modern equivalents, would look wrong in the visual context of Little Somerford’s traditional houses. A comparison is shown in Figs. 5 & 6.

G3.1 The traditional houses of the village have stone rubble or brick walls. Much of the stone rubble is a shelly limestone derived from the Cornillian of a long-closed quarry in Garsden. Normal “Cotswold” stone is rather more regular. Reconstituted stone is shown in Figs. 7 & 8 for comparison, and is inappropriate in the visual context of traditional buildings.

G3.2 Older brickwork in the village often uses Flemish Bond, whilst modern work is invariably in the cheaper and plainer stretcher bond. When modifying a building, or trying to merge a new development with neighbouring brickwork, colour match, brick sizes and bonds are all important.

G3.3 Roofs of traditional buildings are now, or were, mainly stone tiled, though some houses were originally thatched, and some have been re-roofed with reconstituted stone tiles, or with slate or clay tiles.

G3.4 Several 19th century buildings in the village are roofed in slate, and there is a wide variety of clay tiled roofs, mainly but not exclusively on 19th century or later buildings. New clay tiles can be excessively red, and darker types should be selected, as in Fig. 13 below.

G3.5 Double Roman or pantiles may be suitable where the context does not call strongly for stone tiles or slate. Cement tiles are not appropriate on older buildings.

G3.6 Traditional buildings built in stone rubble or brick in Little Somerford were often lime-washed, or rendered and lime-washed. Today, many are painted, or rendered and painted with the result that the patina and breathability of lime-wash is often lost. In addition, use of many types of modern paints and renders can result in damage to stone and old bricks. Examples of lime-washed and painted finishes are shown in Figs. 14-16 below.

G3.7 Nevertheless, in traditional contexts involving stone or brick, lime-wash finishes or appropriate render and paint finishes are acceptable alternatives to stone or brick.
Local Plan Policies affecting Little Somerford

The Local Plan

The current North Wiltshire Local Plan was adopted on 21 January 2001. The function of the Local Plan is to set out the policies of the Local Planning Authority for the control of development and use of land and to allocate land for specific purposes.

The Local Plan policies listed below are policies which it is considered will be relevant to future development in Little Somerford. Highlighted next to each Guidance Recommendation and Enhancement scheme in Part 3 are the most relevant of these policies.

Housing

RH10: Housing Outside Framework Boundaries
RH11: Housing in the Countryside
RH12: Residential Conversions
RH13: Residential Replacements
RH14: Residential Extensions
RH15: Backland Development
RH21: Affordable Housing on Rural Exception Sites

Employment:

RH19: Employment Policy for the Countryside
RH20: Change of Use to Employment

Transport

RT24: Highway and Parking Proposals in Conservation Areas
RT27: Public Rights of Way

Shopping

RN7: Village Shops
RN8: Change of Use of Village Shops and Public Houses

Local Facilities

RF11: Local Facilities in Towns and Villages
RF13: Golf Courses
RF14: Equestrian Facilities

Tourism

RT1: Outdoor Recreation
RT2: Tourist Accommodation and Indoor Recreation
RT2A: Adaptation of Existing Buildings for Tourist Accommodation

Built Environment

RH1: Infrastructure Conditions and Planning Obligations
RH2: Design
RH3: Development in Conservation Areas
RH5: Townscape Considerations in Conservation Areas
RH6: Demolition in Conservation Areas
RH10: Listed Buildings
RH11: Demolition and Alterations involving Listed Buildings
RH12: Preserving Listed Buildings and Other Important Buildings in Conservation Areas
RH17: Satellite Dishes
RH18: Trees and the Control of New Development

Countryside

RC9: General Policy for the Countryside
RC10: The General Landscape of the Countryside
RC10A: Watercourses
RC11: Telecommunications
RC22: Advertisement in the Countryside
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