



*Picture by Burton Mail*

# Abbots Bromley

## VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT

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# 1 Introduction

## Why a design statement?

- 1.1 Many people feel that they have no say over what development takes place in their community; but a Village Design Statement (VDS) offers a constructive solution to this dilemma.
- 1.2 Local communities have a unique appreciation and understanding of their own area. A VDS is based on this knowledge and describes the qualities that residents value in their village and its surroundings.
- 1.3 A VDS sets out clear and simple guidance for the design of all development in a village, based on its character. It is an advisory document produced by the village community, not by the planning authority.
- 1.4 A VDS will not stop change from happening, but it can help affect how any new building fits into the village. Village Design Statements are intended to influence the operation of the statutory planning system, so that new development is in harmony with its setting and makes a positive contribution to the immediate environment.
- 1.5 A VDS is of value to residents, planners, designers and developers. There should be broad involvement of local interests so that the finished design statement is a representative document, and one that presents ideas for stimulating and sustaining community involvement in planning issues.

## What is a design statement?

- 1.6 An effective Village Design Statement:
  - is developed, researched, written and edited by local people;
  - reflects the representative views of a community;
  - involves a wide cross-section of residents in its production;
  - describes the visual character of the village;
  - demonstrates how local character and distinctiveness can be protected and enhanced in new development;
  - is compatible with the statutory planning system and its local application;

- should be adopted as a supplementary planning document (and thereby influence developers and decisions on individual planning applications);
- is relevant to all forms and scale of development, and
- is about managing change in the village, not preventing it.

- 1.7 A Village Design Statement is unlike any other planning document. It offers planning advice directly applicable to the statutory planning system and is entirely community based.

## Public consultation

- 1.8 Action 4 in the 2004 Abbots Bromley Parish Plan identified the need for a VDS. Extensive public consultation in the form of workshops, meetings and reviews informed the content of the VDS.
- 1.9 The work would not have been possible without the involvement of many in the village, who gave up their time to participate, contribute and review.

## Acknowledgements

- 1.10 This VDS has been prepared by Linda Fox, Andy Grondowski, Bill Richards, Eric Roy and Mithra Tonking
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- 1.12 Photographs by the VDS team except:
  - Aerial picture on front cover by kind permission of Burton Mail
  - Wildlife pictures on pages 3-4 by kind permission of Ken Webb
- 1.13 Encouragement and financial support from Abbots Bromley Parish Council and East Staffordshire Borough Council was also fundamental to the project.

## Contact information

- 1.14 Feedback and questions on this VDS can be addressed to:
 

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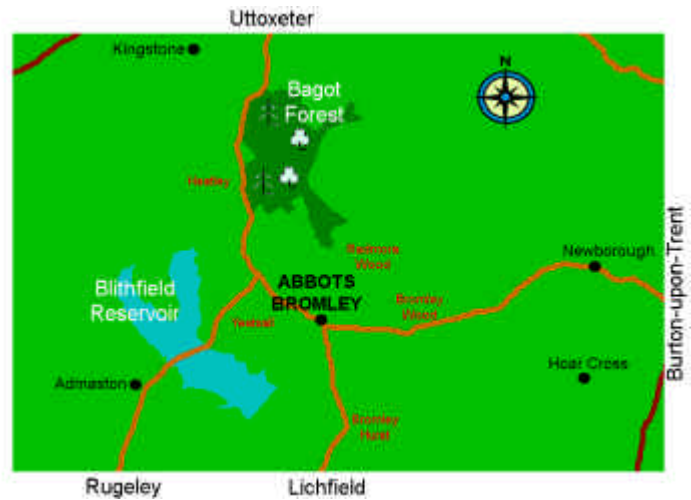
## 2 Character

### Setting

- 2.1 The village of Abbots Bromley is set in attractive undulating farmland with many hedged fields, wooded areas and water courses. Three 'B' roads enter the village, and lead to the towns of Lichfield (eleven miles to the south-east) Burton Upon Trent (twelve miles to the east) and to Uttoxeter (seven miles to the north). Rugeley lies six miles to the south west.
- 2.2 Lying between 80 and 150 metres above sea level, the parish - originally an area of ancient forest - now comprises open farmed landscape enclosing the village of Abbots Bromley and the nearby hamlets of Bromley Wood, Radmore Wood, Heatley and Bromley Hurst.
- 2.3 Geologically, Abbots Bromley lies in the central region of Staffordshire composed of rocks of the Triassic period, mostly keuper marl, a type of sandstone, overlaid by glacier borne deposits of clay, sand and gravels. There are numerous ponds, many of which are the result of old marl pits. Several brooks run through the parish and the River Blithe meanders its way into the northern end of the Blithfield reservoir and continues to flow from the southern end.
- 2.4 The long distance path, the Staffordshire Way, traverses the parish and the surrounding farmland is crossed by many footpaths so the area is popular with walkers.
- 2.5 Blithfield reservoir, through which runs the parish boundary, is the largest reservoir in the West Midlands and a Site of Special Scientific Interest. It is an important location for wildfowl and passage waders providing interesting bird watching year-round and especially in autumn and winter. A further Site of Special Scientific Interest is at Goat Lodge to the north of the village.
- 2.6 Although many have disappeared from the vicinity over the years, the village is still surrounded by farms of various sizes. Larger farms now dominate the agricultural economy, where at one time there would have been predominately small or medium sized family farms. The locality is part of the excellent and productive grass growing area of

Staffordshire. A modern trend is for the diversification of farm land and buildings to provide bed and breakfast, teas or equine activities.

*Area around Abbots Bromley*



- 2.7 Surrounding the fields are many miles of hedgerows verging narrow lanes. These are home to rich bird life, flora and other wild species. Several of the hedges consist of native species such as field maples, crab apple, holly, blackthorn, honeysuckle, as well as damsons, for which the area is well known. Damsons were gathered in large numbers and used for dyeing, especially in Leek some thirty miles distant. Wild flowers grow in many parts of the parish, including autumn crocus. In the spring the local woodlands abound with bluebells and patches of cowslips, primroses, and violets can still be found.

*Fallow deer*



- 2.8 As well as the waterfowl which frequent the reservoir, a wide range of other birds are seen locally. Osprey pass through regularly during migration in spring and autumn; buzzards are also seen. Goat's Lodge has an important heronry, and although no longer seen in profusion, skylarks, curlews, lapwings and tree sparrows can be sighted as well as jays, owls and woodpeckers.
- 2.9 The local ponds and streams are home to more wild life. Amongst the usual frogs, toads and newts, there are many types of dragonfly. Kingfishers are still occasionally seen.



*Damselfly and woodpecker*

- 2.10 Although the area is no longer surrounded by the former magnificent broad-leaved forest of oak, ash, holly, lime, elm and other native species, many copses and woods surrounding Abbots Bromley still contain a mixture of indigenous, long living trees and those planted for a shorter life.
- 2.11 Bagots Forest is the largest local plantation, administered by the Forestry Commission, and neighbours the SSSI at Goat Lodge.
- 2.12 There is still an example of the unusual "wild service tree" - sorbus torminalis – in the parish.
- 2.13 This rich natural environment ensures the survival of many foxes, badgers, deer and hares.

**History**

- 2.14 The original settlement at Abbots Bromley was called Bromleige, probably based on the meaning of the Saxon words brom and leah, a "clearing in the forest". For practical reasons the clearing would have been sited near a brook. The first written mention of the settlement of Abbots Bromley dates to 942 when King Edmund's Charter granted lands including the manor of "Bromleige" to Wulfsige the Black. King Aethelred's charter granting lands to Wulfric Spot, Earl of Mercia in 996 gives details of the estate which on three sides are recognisable as the present day parish boundary – Pur Brook, River Blithe and Tad Brook. Under Wulfric's will dated 1002-4, Bromley, together with other lands, was given to the Abbey of Burton.
- 2.15 The Domesday book, a general survey and valuation of land and property, taken in 1086 on the orders of William the Conqueror, records the land at Bromley belonging to the Abbey as consisting of half a hide (around 60 acres) with its dependencies, and with woodland two leagues long by one league wide. The lands were valued at 20s.
- 2.16 Abbots Bromley did not have a resident Lord of the Manor, with attendant great house and manorial dues; its allegiance was to the Abbey at Burton. Granted borough status in 1222, the village was then allowed to hold a market and a yearly fair. The villagers were "villeins" [feudal slaves] or tenant farmers making payment to the Abbey through labour or farm produce. Any surplus produce or labour could be bartered at the weekly market at the Butter Cross and on the surrounding village green. The annual fair was of three days duration around the feast of St. Bartholomew, originally at the end of August but with the alteration of the calendar in 1752, falling on 4<sup>th</sup> September.
- 2.17 The village thus became increasingly prosperous and a valuable source of income to the Abbey. Gradually over four and a half centuries of monastic rule, Abbots Bromley slowly changed from a village to a prosperous township or small market town.

2.18 The Dissolution of the monasteries in 1545 under Henry VIII led to the end of the Abbey's influence. The King transferred Bromley Abbatis to Sir William Paget, Clerk of the Signet, Privy Councillor and ancestor of the present Marquis of Anglesey, and the village became known as Paget's Bromley. The family continued to hold the estate for around three hundred years, and for a while the village grew and developed, especially during the coaching era when it lay on the route between Birmingham and Manchester.

2.19 However during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries the Pagets began gradually to sell their properties and the village reverted to its original name of Abbots Bromley as the connection with the family ceased. Bypassed by the railway, the village ceased to thrive as before, so that by 1851, it is described in White's "History, Gazetteer and Directory of Staffordshire" as "a decayed market town, consisting of one long street of irregularly built houses".

2.20 This decline from prosperous market town back to village continued until after World War Two. Despite the advent of the School of S.Mary and S.Anne (originally two schools amalgamated in 1921 and now called Abbots Bromley School for Girls) which increased the population and provided employment, the village was isolated from surrounding towns and the consequent possibility for growth. The steady increase in private car ownership has reversed the population decline as villagers are now able to travel much more freely to work outside the village.

**Abbots Bromley today**

2.21 Abbots Bromley today is probably best known for the annual Abbots Bromley Horn Dance. Famous world wide and attracting visitors from as far afield as Canada and New Zealand, its early origins are not recorded. Plot writes of it in his "Natural History of Staffordshire" in 1686 and it was undoubtedly revived in Victorian times. The dance takes place on Wakes Monday, following an ancient formula related to Abbots Bromley's earlier annual fair, and so is always performed on "the Monday following the

first Sunday after the 4th of September". The twelve dancers, of whom six carry the reindeer antlers and the rest depict other traditional characters, collect the horns from St Nicholas Church early in the morning, and then proceed to follow a circuit of the parish, dancing at certain points around the village, and finally returning the horns to the church late in the evening.

2.22 Abbots Bromley is a busy and varied community which, since it is some 6 miles from the nearest town, retains and maintains many important local services. There are two schools – one state First School (ages 3-9) and an independent girls school (ages 3-18) – a health centre, two churches, almshouses, a fire station and a First Responder unit, both manned by local volunteers. Five pubs, a butcher, garage, Post Office, newsagent, general purpose store and numerous small businesses run from home provide local employment. It is essential to support and retain these enterprises to keep the community vibrant and to avoid the village becoming too heavily commuter based.

*Horn Dancers in Bagot Street*



2.23 Several recreational areas provide opportunities for leisure and sport:

- A village hall with adjacent bowling green, basketball and tennis courts
- A Millennium Green with play equipment for children
- Shared use of Abbots Bromley School's playing fields for cricket

An under 5s play area is planned to be open by May 2006 although the village still lacks a dedicated sports field.

2.24 Many clubs and societies are active within the village and these provide for young and old alike. A community transport scheme and the Evergreens is well used by older members of the village, whilst youngsters are accommodated with a Mums and Toddler group, Play group, Nursery as well as Rainbows, Brownies, Cubs, Scouts and Guides. Abbots Bromley Players also have a junior group to hone young acting skills. The British Legion, Women’s Institute, Ladies Club, Footpath Society and Produce Guild are all well supported. Sporting clubs include badminton, swimming, bowls, indoor bowls, cricket, tennis, junior football and the Gentleman’s Keep Fat Club; sailing and angling clubs are based at Blithfield Reservoir.

include traffic calming at all entrances to the village, together with a group of volunteers who check motorists’ speed with the use of a speed monitor.

2.27 Abbots Bromley’s rural setting has both benefits and drawbacks. Services within the village are threatened by the ease of supermarket shopping and entertainment elsewhere and the current amenities within the village do rely on support of local people. Youngsters and the elderly who cannot travel easily out of the village do need to find opportunities within it. A recent audit of the parish as part of a local ward initiative has led to a Parish Plan, to identify actions on all fronts to preserve and enhance the unique community that is Abbots Bromley.



*Blithfield Reservoir*



*Community Speedwatch*

2.25 A lack of frequent bus services has led to a rapid increase of car ownership which is a constant problem for a community whose basic layout has not altered since the horse and cart. On the main routes through the village the cottages and houses have no off-road parking, so increasing numbers of cars are being parked at the roadside, further reducing the carriageway, as well as on pavements to avoid collisions. This leads to driver frustration and pedestrian hazards.

2.26 An increasing volume of traffic, with attendant speed issues, has encouraged the village to seek solutions which

**Character guidelines**

- 2.28 Developments and improvements should be designed to enhance the main character elements – rural nature, heritage and community.
- 2.29 Developments should not be detrimental to views into and around the village; the rural aspect of the village as seen from its approach roads and surrounding footpaths should be retained.
- 2.30 Development of redundant farm buildings in the surrounding countryside should be as unobtrusive as possible so as to protect the village setting.
- 2.31 The rural setting and the historic built environment should be respected in any development to enhance the village’s surroundings and links with the past.
- 2.32 Developments should be small enough and infrequent enough to allow their full integration into the community.
- 2.33 Development should include smaller houses and starter homes to encourage a good social mix within the village.
- 2.34 Community facilities and local businesses of appropriate scale to the village should be protected and supported.
- 2.35 Developments should actively address the car parking, traffic and access problems within the village.

### 3 Built environment

#### Settlement

- 3.1 The original settlement pattern of the village is linear, following the line of the main street. Buildings were small, close to the street and with long burgage plots to the rear. Some larger properties were built during Georgian times, but these too fronted the street closely and had long garden areas to the rear.
- 3.2 The original village pattern is still discernible within the Conservation Area although there has been infilling over time. In the twentieth century, some ribbon development occurred, with individual properties being built along the three main routes out of the village.
- 3.3 Occasional infilling occurred where larger properties with land adjoining sold part of their original land for development. Examples are The Beeches on Bagot Street, as well as the six houses on Bagot Street/Mires Brook lane built on the former field known as the Pollycroft.
- 3.4 Within the main settlement, development of council houses and bungalows took place in the late 1940s on Ashbrook Lane and in the 1960s on Swan Lane, Lintake Drive. Sites further out included Seedcroft Lane and Bromley Wood.
- 3.5 Late in the 20<sup>th</sup> century came an expansion into the building of estates, a move away from the original linear development. These occurred on the former timber yard – Alfred Lyons Close – on Bagot Arms land – Paget Rise - and on former fields – St Nicholas Way and Friary Avenue, Bagots View, Hillside and Needwood Grange.
- 3.6 In the final decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, a major project saw the village institute replaced by a new village hall, designed to blend into the largely rural setting.
- 3.7 In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, there has been a small social housing development on former fire station land – Cottrell Close – as well as the building of another estate on Ashbrook Lane, on part of a field long included within the village envelope – Nancy Talbot Close. A further estate-style development is currently under discussion on brownfield land at Ivy House on High Street.

1846 tithe map of village



Village Hall



#### Open and Connecting Public Spaces

- 3.8 The village is surrounded by the open spaces of the surrounding farms. Within the village the Market Place is a significant open space containing the War Memorial and Butter Cross.

Market Place





*St Nicholas Church*

3.9 Other major open spaces are centred on the Church; spaces left by closed businesses; spaces maintained by Abbots Bromley School for Girls as sports playing fields and around the playground and Village Hall.



*AB School for Girls*

3.10 These open spaces are linked by narrow lanes or footpaths that also serve as car-free access to the village amenities especially for residents of the different housing estates.

**Conservation Area**

3.11 A major part of the village has been designated as a Conservation Area since November 1969 with more than 40 listed buildings – an unusually high proportion.

3.12 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.”

3.13 The large proportion of the village within the defined Conservation Area is based on Bagot Street, High Street and Market Place including lanes which lead off the main thoroughfare and land to the North and South of the village which contribute to its context.

3.14 In addition to the normal planning controls, within a Conservation Area additional restrictions apply for which prior written authority of the Borough Council is required. These include (but are not limited to):

- The demolition or partial demolition of buildings larger than 115 cubic metres;
- Some garden walls;
- The cutting, lopping or topping of most trees, and
- The cladding of the outside of a house.

3.15 It is recommended to contact the ESBC Planning Officer or Conservation Officer in advance of undertaking work in the Conservation Area.

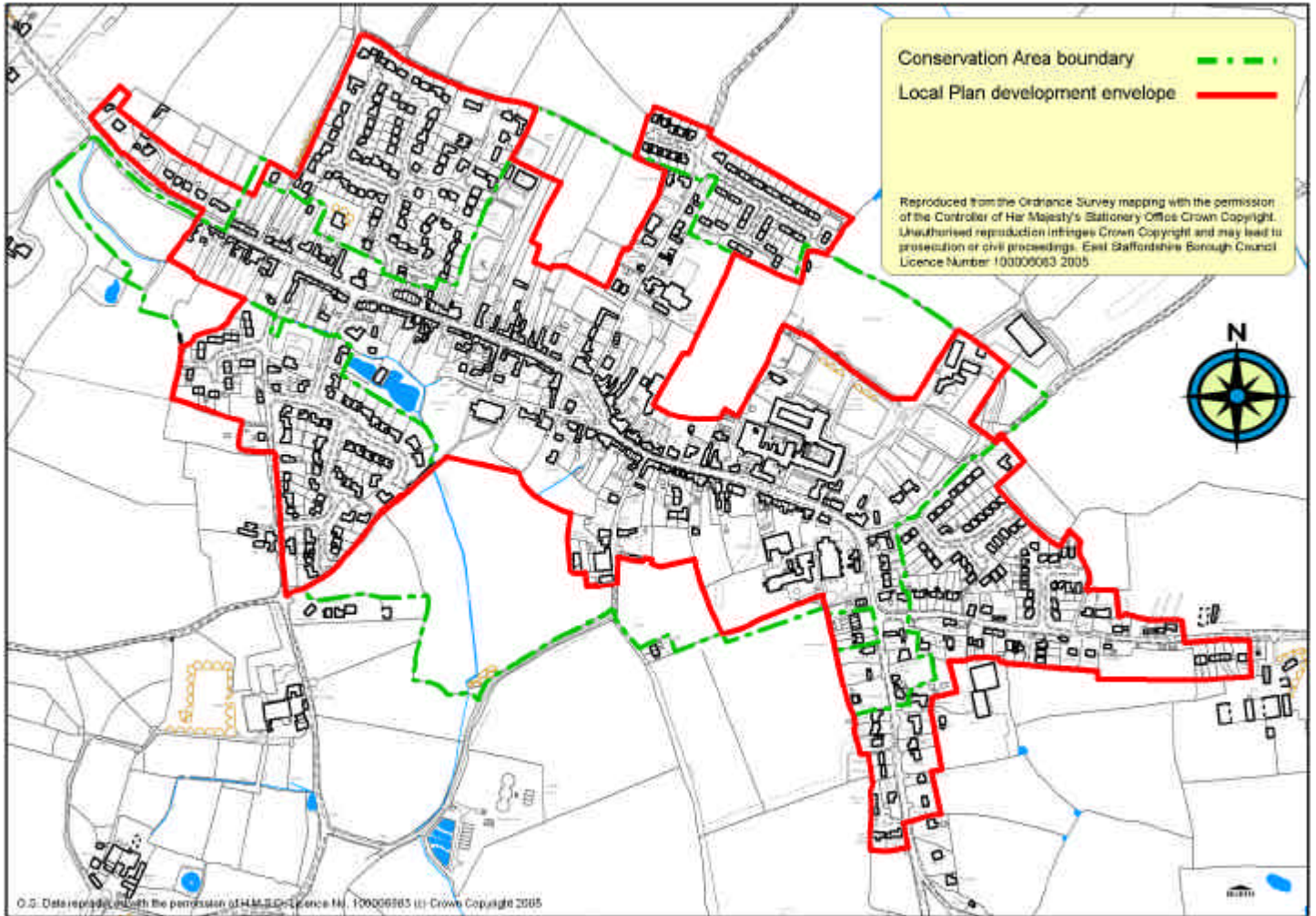
**Village settlement guidelines**

3.16 Individual development should respect the settlement character of that part of the village in which it occurs, and adopt a sensitive and co-ordinated approach to design and layout.

3.17 If larger new developments are ever considered they should in addition:

- Include open space, parking and landscaping designed into the layout in an integrated manner. Particular consideration must be given to the spacing of individual buildings and groups of buildings.
- Include green open spaces and should maximise the opportunities for views out to the open countryside.
- Include the provision of footpaths with links to existing footpaths and recreational routes.
- Allow for informal recreation or meeting places.
- Include a traffic impact analysis assessing the capacity of the infrastructure and the likely traffic effects on the settlement.





- 3.18 The emphasis should be on the quality of the environment created and its enhancement of the existing character and infrastructure of the village.
- 3.19 Infill developments or extensions to existing buildings should avoid filling in gaps that provide substantial views to surrounding countryside or contribute to the street scene.
- 3.20 Landscaping should be designed to frame the buildings.
- 3.21 Tree and hedge planting must be incorporated on the boundary of

- developments at the edge of the village to preserve and add to this characteristic feature of the village setting.
- 3.22 Public open spaces within the built-up area of the village should be preserved and enhanced.
- 3.23 The footpath network in and around the village should be preserved and enhanced in keeping with the local character. Provision of adequate footpaths should form part of any new development and connect to the existing network.



## 4 Development considerations

### Buildings

4.1 Within the village, and especially within the Conservation Area concentrated on Bagot Street, High Street and Market Place, are examples of building styles from many centuries.



*Market Place*



*Bagot Street looking west*



*High Street looking east*

- 4.2 The core of the village, radiating out from the Market Place on the main thoroughfares to Lichfield, Burton and Uttoxeter, has hardly changed in its essential form since the Industrial Revolution.
- 4.3 The growth of the village was essentially in the size and style of dwellings that infilled along the village core, with limited growth on the outlying lanes.
- 4.4 However the greatest expansion has, like many surrounding villages, been in the period since the Second World War where growth of the village has been through estates of uniformly styled houses between Harley and Schoolhouse Lanes, between Radmore and Ashbrook Lanes and either side of Goose Lane.

### Relationships

- 4.5 From Market Place, the views into the main thoroughfares are limited by the curvature of the roads, isolating the focal point of the village and creating a sense of enclosure that is continued elsewhere in the village.
- 4.6 The views around the Market Place contain much of the history of the village, with the village green, the Butter Cross, St. Nicholas's Church, the War Memorial, the Goat's Head Public House and a number of styles of cottages and historic shop fronts.
- 4.7 The Westerly view, along Bagot Street and Uttoxeter Road, presents a good mixture of the architecture typical in the village. Groups of cottages are interspaced by some larger genteel Georgian Houses that appear to purposely mark and dominate the lanes leading off the main thoroughfare. The buildings, or their frontages enclosed by formal walls and gates, closely press in on the pavement and continues the sense of enclosure.
- 4.8 The Easterly view along the High Street is terminated by the road curving south into Lichfield Road. Many of the houses on the street frontage belong to the Abbots Bromley School for Girls and, although not residential, their exterior has been preserved. While the trend continues, for larger buildings to mark and dominate the lanes leading off the main thoroughfare, the High Street is not

closely enclosed by the frontages, though the School Chapel has undeniable presence in a stretch of predominantly two story buildings.

- 4.9 South of the Coach and Horses Public House and Radmore Lane, into Lichfield Road the village takes on a more modern and informal character based on 19<sup>th</sup> C houses interspersed with 20<sup>th</sup> C infill developments.
- 4.10 Goose Lane, to the South of Uttoxeter Road and marked by Middleton House, while still retaining several older cottages has had its rural character compromised by the modern developments centred around Lintake Drive on the West and Friary Avenue and St. Nicholas Way to the East. Even so the countryside is no more than 5 minutes walk away, and Blithfield Reservoir is less than a 20 minutes walk away.
- 4.11 Hall Hill Lane, to the South of the High Street, is dominated by Manor Farm and gives an attractive view from its elevated position back towards the village.
- 4.12 To the North, Harley Lane, marked by Harley Farm, has retained its rural charm being a narrow lane with high hedges that connects, via a path across fields, to the Village Hall and on to Schoolhouse Lane.
- 4.13 Between Harley Lane and the Village Hall is the major new housing estate accessed via Paget Rise.
- 4.14 Schoolhouse Lane changes from earlier to modern building styles as one gets further away from the village centre, and at its entrance into the village is marked by The Crofts. The lane is characterised by small cottages scattered along its length with the Old School House and the Old School Hall as distinctive buildings. The lane, part of the Staffordshire Way, also continues into the countryside with clear views back towards the village that show the historic narrow linear burgage plots that characterise the layout of the village. (See tithe map on page 7)
- 4.15 Radmore Lane, marked by the Coach & Horses Public House, has extensive open spaces to the North and a new housing estate (centred around Needwood Grange) to the East.

- 4.16 Ashbrook Lane contains a variety of building styles from almost every era of village development up to the 21<sup>st</sup> C. Early cottages are interspersed with more recent dwellings, creating a street scene that is unique in its variety, but impossible to categorise. Small off-road developments feed their traffic onto a carriage-way already struggling to cope with the size and volume of modern vehicles.

*Hall Hill Lane*



*Harley Lane*



**Materials**

- 4.17 The original medieval building construction was timber frame with wattle and daub, however this was replaced by locally made bricks. Local brickyards were located along Port Lane and Back Lane. Of the few houses that remain with their timber framing visible, the most prominent are Church House and the Goat’s Head Public House.
- 4.18 Thatch was used in medieval roof construction and was replaced by locally produced plain red clay tiles. In the early 19<sup>th</sup> C Welsh slate became popular, permitting less steep roof geometries. Stone has not been adopted locally for building, except for the church and details such as lintels, quoins and sills.
- 4.19 Housing estates have continued the national trend of construction in brick with concrete tiles and softwood joinery.

**Typical Examples of Proportions and Details**

4.20 There are some distinctive local building types and materials, some of which may provide useful references for new designs of houses or in the restoration of existing buildings.



*Timber framing*



*Georgian*



*Farm house*

4.21 In older buildings, bricks are commonly laid in variants of Flemish bond and roofed using Staffordshire blue clay tiles.

4.22 **Timber-framed** : (e.g. Goats Head Public House and Church House)

4.23 **Brick clad timber-framed cottage**: (e.g. Coleridge House )

4.24 Single span, one-and-a- half or two storey building with steeply pitched gabled roof with plain clay tiles. Most exteriors were clad in the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century with locally-made bricks. Brickwork is plain with only simple embellishments such as denticulation or dogtooth work at the eaves.

4.25 Original windows are wooden with side hung casements. The lower floor windows are elongated with flat arches of rough brick with segmental mortar joints. In the upper storey they are flat topped, close under the eaves. Dormer windows are common, placed in the roof or through the eaves line. Typically there has been much alteration to internal design, often two cottages have been converted to a single dwelling.

4.26 **18<sup>th</sup> century house**: Large, flat fronted, three storey dwellings, brick built with hipped or gabled plain tile roofs with parapets a common feature – as seen on Norman Villa.

4.27 **Farmhouse**: Although a number of farm-houses existed as part of the village, these are now solely residential. (e.g. College Farm, Town End Farm, Manor Farm)

4.28 **Early 19<sup>th</sup> century**: Brick built, gabled, with steeply pitched tiled roof or sometimes with hipped slated roof. Flat double-fronted four square house. Windows tall with vertically sliding sashes and with stone lintels and sills or brick voussoirs (shaped brick arches). Imposing central front door with wooden doorcase or brick and stone porch.

4.29 **19<sup>th</sup> century paired and terraced houses**: Unremarkable, in brick and slate but the brickwork in many instances is in Flemish bond carrying the characteristic denticulations at the eaves.

4.30 **Victorian and Edwardian**: (e.g. College Farm, Stretton Villas, The Gables and the School Chapel) with individual designs, some large and elaborate. In brick with stone embellishments, or stuccoed and painted.

- 4.31 **Recent houses:** Unremarkable in general, but close attention has been given to the design of some "executive" style houses inserted recently into the Conservation Area.
- 4.32 **Modern Housing Estates:** The village has examples of relatively high density housing built in the 1960s and more spacious estates of the 1970s & 80s but neither type makes any reference to local character in design or layout. The earlier of these areas make inadequate allowance for modern needs and later ones are cramped and unimaginative layouts with narrow roadways and very little space around the houses partly due to the impact of central government planning standards. Inevitably in such places public and private areas are now suffering in terms of aesthetics and convenience as people adapt available space to meet their needs.

**Building guidelines**

- 4.33 Any new development must sit comfortably with its neighbours and enhance the area, taking into account the scale, 'footprint' area, shapes, proportion and material of older buildings, their gardens and open spaces in the neighbouring townscape and the lie of the land.
- 4.34 Visual interest can be created by sensitive design detailing, and by incorporating features such as well-proportioned and spaced windows, and in roof lines, chimneys, and carefully designed and detailed rainwater goods. The design of the sides and back of a new building, where visible from public access is as important as the front.
- 4.35 A range of building types and sizes is to be encouraged provided careful consideration is given to the suitability of the location, spacing, grouping and the effect on the existing character of the area.
- 4.36 Before painting, rendering, cladding or otherwise covering original brickwork consideration should be given to the potential impact of the change on the local street scene so that proposals harmonise with neighbouring properties.

*Victorian School Chapel*



*Late 20<sup>th</sup> century*



*Early 21<sup>st</sup> century*



- 4.37 The good practice laid down in Conservation Area principles should be followed more widely elsewhere in the village with respect to designs, materials and proportions with particular reference to ESBC guidance notes.
- 4.38 When windows and doors in buildings are replaced there should be careful attention to design and materials to retain harmony with the structure.

## 5 Infrastructure



*Post boxes from past and present*



*Diversity of boundary styles*



### Street furniture, walls and pavings

- 5.1 Street furniture such as road signs, street names, lamp posts, litter bins, benches and bollards exist in a number of styles and materials.
- 5.2 Apart from a small number of milestones, such as that at the Pinfold, older cast iron signs have been replaced by a variety of late 20<sup>th</sup> century styles – sometimes at odds with their surroundings.

### Boundaries

- 5.3 Although some properties front directly onto the pavement or road, others are delineated with a variety of boundaries including hedges, walls and railings.
- 5.4 The types of railings, walls and hedges also vary considerably and the juxtaposition of these variations within relatively small areas is one of the defining characteristics of the village especially within the conservation area.

### Transport, roads and footpaths

- 5.5 The village is regularly served by the following public transport:
  - Bus services to Lichfield, Burton & Uttoxeter
  - Postal Bus service to Rugeley
- 5.6 Footpaths connect:
  - St. Nicholas Church (via Narrow Lane) to St. Nicholas Way; Friary Lane; Preedys Close; Goose Lane and Yeatsall Lane.
  - Narrow Lane to Hall Hill Lane and on to Lichfield Road and Ashbrook Lane.
  - Ashbrook Lane and Hillside to Radmore Lane and on to Swan Lane.
  - Schoolhouse Lane to Harley Lane.

**Infrastructure guidelines**

- 5.7 Any new or replacement item of street furniture should be in keeping with its neighbours or part of a planned move to consistency across the village. Additionally such street furniture should be sited to minimise visual intrusion, confusion and meet the needs of the visually impaired.
- 5.8 New or replacement boundaries should be sympathetic to the context in which they are being placed and reflect the diversity that already exists. Extensive runs of a single style should be avoided.
- 5.9 New or replacement cabling should avoid adding to the overhead telephone and electrical lines and poles. Appropriate reductions in these should be made when enabled by new development in a locality.
- 5.10 New or replacement street lighting should adopt best practice to reduce glare and light pollution. The use of modern designs of high pressure sodium lamps directs a more pleasant light more efficiently.
- 5.11 The existing network of footpaths should be preserved and enhanced, where appropriate by new surfacing and lighting, to provide a safe and viable alternative to car use within the village.
- 5.12 Developments should provide for adequate pedestrian and cycle access links to the centre of the village.
- 5.13 Road geometry and housing layout must demonstrate an integrated design which encourages awareness of pedestrians and restrains vehicle speeds.
- 5.14 Major developments should be capable of being served by public transport and developers should engage in discussions with public transport operators when bringing schemes forward.

*Narrow Lane*



*Churchyard*



*Schoolhouse Lane/Harley Lane*



## 6 Location of guidelines

This table is provided as a cross reference to the guidance contained in the body of this document.

Topic	Paragraphs	Page
Character guidelines	2.28 - 2.35	6
Village settlement guidelines	3.16 - 3.23	8
Building guidelines	4.33 - 4.38	13
Infrastructure guidelines	5.7 - 5.14	15

### What local people say about the kind of housing they think would be appropriate for Abbots Bromley

- Affordable larger family houses (5 people) with good sized gardens
- In keeping with the character of the village (3 people)
- We have plenty of 4 bedroom executive style homes. We need to attract and keep young people and families who will support the village school and balance the older majority of the village. This would rejuvenate the village (5 people)
- At the end of the day the developer/builder wants to secure maximum financial use from land
- More people are living alone and there is a need for that sort of accommodation at all income levels (2 people)
- Bungalows for elderly 2/3 bedrooms
- Sheltered housing/bungalows (3 people)
- Evaluation of needs – or are you looking to increase the population in the area? Care is needed
- The village is being spoilt and becoming too big (4 people)
- A mixture but not too many (2 people)
- Homes for old retired and those who would like to return to the village

### What local people say about the kind of housing development they think would be acceptable in Abbots Bromley

- None – already too many (11 people) true village ambience is already being eroded
- No expansion on edge of village (5 people)
- No estates
- Uniqueness creates desirability, desirability creates prosperity(2 people)
- Any development must provide adequate parking
- 2/3 bed flats
- Bungalows for the elderly

*Taken from responses to the 2003 Vital Villages survey which itself gave rise to the creation of this Design Statement*