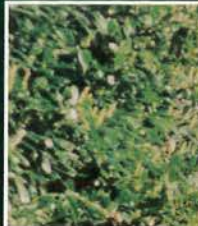


## ~ Village Design Statement ~



## The future of Bagborough ~ "making local opinion count"







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This document was adopted by Taunton Deane Borough Council on 27 January 2000 as Supplementary Design Guidance. Where there is a planning application this document will be considered in the planning process as a material consideration.

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all other photographs by the people of West Bagborough

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# 1. Introduction

1.1 This West Bagborough Village Design Statement (VDS) has been prepared with the full support of the Parish Council and has been compiled by local residents. Its purpose is to describe the village as it enters the third millennium and to set out guidance for the design of any future development in the village which can be used by residents, planners, developers, builders and public bodies. The VDS seeks to highlight what is special about the village and act as a means through which all residents can influence its conservation and any future development. It is a tool to help manage change.

1.2 The VDS has been endorsed by the residents of the Parish through a process of consultation which has involved:

- a) *A photographic exhibition, public lecture and discussion attended by 60 people*
- b) *A questionnaire - which had a limited response*
- c) *The circulation of a consultation draft to every household, followed by a public meeting which was attended by 28 people*
- d) *The Taunton Deane Borough Council Planning Officer*
- e) *The Community Council for Somerset*
- f) *The Quantock Hills AONB Service representing the Quantock Hills Joint Advisory Committee*

1.3 The West Bagborough community comprises a village settlement and a number of neighbouring hamlets (Shoptoller, Westwood, Triscombe, Seven Ash) which are all part of the Civil Parish. This VDS is concerned with the whole community which will be referred to as Bagborough (the short name generally used by residents).



## 2. Village Context

### 2.1 Geographical Location

Bagborough is a small parish of some 360 residents located on the south west slopes of the Quantock Hills in the County of Somerset. It is equidistant (8 miles) from both Taunton and Bridgwater. The parish has an average elevation of about 200 metres and is an integral part of the Quantock Hills (including their highest point 386 metres) which were given national recognition in 1957 when they were designated as the country's first "Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty" (AONB). The village lies between the A358 Taunton-Minehead road and the higher slopes of the Quantocks.

### 2.2 Historic Bagborough

The earliest settlement on the site is believed to have developed in Saxon times

when it was known as Begas Barrow (Badger Hill). The Domesday survey notes the settlement as Bageberge. During the Middle Ages, there was little change in the basic composition of the village, although larger farms did develop from the previous strip cultivation and the church was rebuilt. The village continued to be centred on the church and the Bagborough estate, and was largely agricultural in activity with a core of artisans which ensured its self-sufficiency. It is likely that the community only really opened up to the outside world with the improvement in the road network and the





#### Recommendation 8.1

*If in the future new housing development is permitted then it should remain within the settlement area of the village whose linear nature should be respected (2.6)*

#### Recommendation 8.2

*Any new business or commercial premises should be developed in a sympathetic way in what is primarily a residential village (2.7b)*

advent of the mail coach route from London to North Devon in the 19th century. The network of local lanes has been widened in the 20th century to allow the increased use of vehicular traffic.



#### 2.3 Present day Bagborough

Local businesses are largely of two types, rural or tourism. There are farms in the area sustaining agricultural activity, and

rural and equestrian based businesses. Businesses related to tourism also provide local employment. The population is an increasing mix of families who have deep roots in the area and those whose work or interests brought them here more recently.

2.4 There is only one road through the village and this provides a strong focus. On it, or just off it, are situated all the main social and architectural features of the village:

church (including the lychgate), inn, play-park, cricket and football grounds, village hall, Bagborough House (including the walled garden), Littlecourt, Old School House, and pottery. This road is over a mile long, with four lanes leading off it. The south side is mainly residential, the north side being bordered by farmland, parkland

and the lower slopes of the Quantocks. A Conservation Area covers the older parts of the village.

**Section 2.5 /2.6 have been amended.  
See addendum November 2018**

#### 2.5 Present Planning Context

~~This is governed by the West Deane Local Plan, adopted 6 May 1997, and has three policies relating to Bagborough. They are:~~

~~WD/WB/1. New housing development at West Bagborough will be resisted.~~

~~WD/WB/2. Development which would adversely affect important views will be resisted.~~

~~WD/WB/3. Part of the grounds of Littlecourt will be protected from development.~~

~~2.6 The above policies are in the process of being superseded by the policies emerging from the Borough-wide Local Plan which is currently in draft form.~~

~~There is no specific allocation for Bagborough but there is a general development policy for villages (S7):~~

~~"Development will be limited to that which supports their social and economic viability, protects or enhances their environmental quality and is unlikely to lead to a significant increase in car travel." (Recommendation 8.1)~~

#### 2.7 Special Considerations:

a) Mineral extraction: As a result of wide concerns and the expiry of planning permission, Triscombe Quarry closed in 1998, and is now being landscaped in accordance with plans approved by the local authority.

b) Tourism: As an economic activity, tourism exercises a direct influence on the physical character of Bagborough. Local businesses, a number of which depend on visitors to the area for their income, offer local employment and do therefore need to be sustained. Care needs to be exercised that business and commercial premises are developed in a sympathetic way which ensures a comfortable relationship with what is primarily a residential village.

(Recommendation 8.2)





### 3. The Character of the Landscape Setting

3.1 Bagborough is situated on the south-western side of the Quantocks with extensive views across the Vale of Taunton to the Brendon and Blackdown Hills. The village is set in an area of exceptional natural beauty comprising hillside and lowland landscapes. The ridge of the Quantocks is covered with heather, gorse, bracken and whortleberry, and some windswept, gnarled and stunted thorn trees. Wooded slopes sweep down to a lowland farmed landscape. The

surrounding countryside is a patchwork of hedge-enclosed pastures for grazing sheep and cattle, some arable land and small wooded areas. Some of the fields have been enlarged by the removal of hedgerows. (Recommendation 8.3)

3.2 Trees enhance the village at every turn, including individual trees, lines of trees and groups of trees. The 222 acres of the Bagborough Plantation encircle the village to the north and contain the largest tree group. (Recommendation 8.4)

### 4. The Settlement Pattern

4.1 Within the village itself there are two areas of open space of particular importance to its character:

- views northwards over the parkland with its mature trees, together with the church, Bagborough House, the walled garden and views of the Quantocks provide a unique and beautiful setting making it easy to understand the designation as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
- views over Littlecourt gardens with distant views of the Blackdowns to the south and of the Brendons to the west. (Recommendations 8.5 and 8.6)

4.2 In addition to the panoramic scenery, there are more discrete views over open spaces, and glimpsed between buildings,

over gardens, walls and gates. (Recommendation 8.7)

4.3 The village is linear, being for the most part, only one building deep either side of the road with almost all properties having views over open countryside. Although there has been some in-filling along this road, there are considerable stretches that are directly open to fields and provide some outstanding views of the surrounding countryside. (Recommendation 8.7)

4.4 The sense of space and openness in the parish is also due to the geographical relationship between the village and the four neighbouring hamlets, each of which has its own character which should be respected. (Recommendation 8.8)

#### Recommendation 8.3

*Existing hedges should be preserved and protected (3.1)*

#### Recommendation 8.4

*The preservation, maintenance and replacement of existing trees is very important (3.2)*



#### Recommendation 8.5

*The unrivalled views across parkland and fields should be retained (4.1)*

#### Recommendation 8.6

*The extensive views of surrounding hills are of paramount importance in maintaining the character of Bagborough (4.1)*

#### Recommendation 8.7

*The open spaces between buildings should be protected as they form an essential part of the character of the village (4.2 and 4.3)*

#### Recommendation 8.8

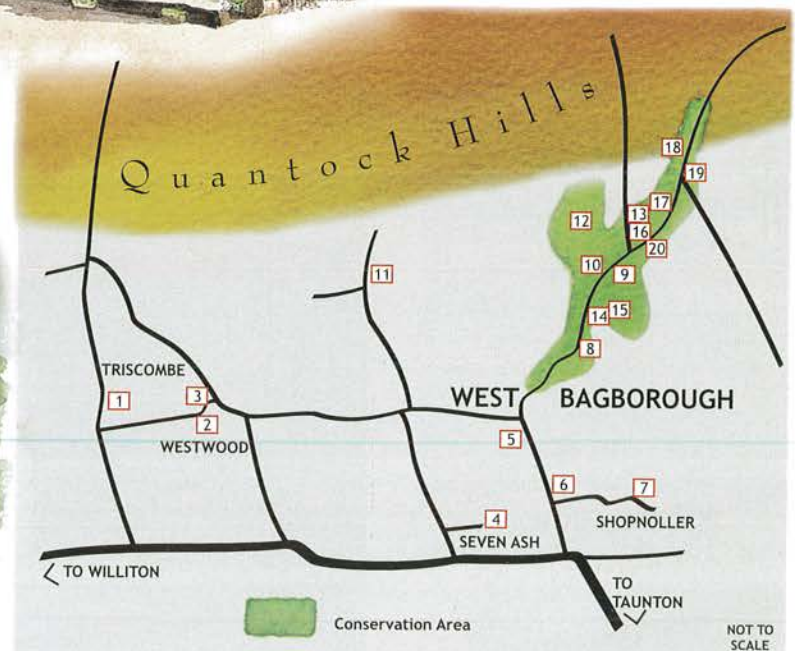
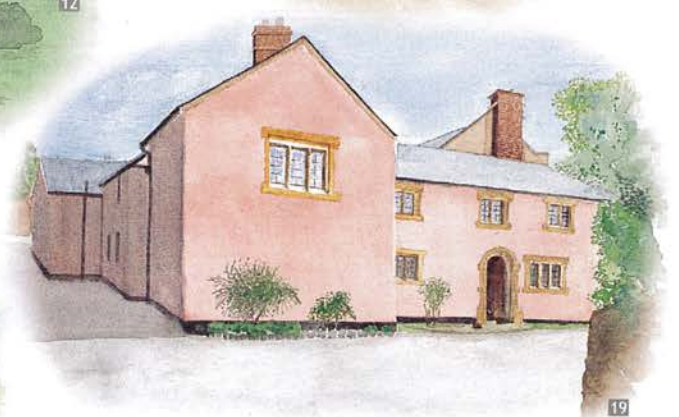
*The present openness, between the village and each hamlet, should be preserved (4.4)*















## 5. Buildings and Spaces in the Village

**5.1** Bagborough, being an historical village, has many older properties still remaining from past centuries. These properties, having been built during different periods, are presented in a miscellany of different styles. They are generally constructed from red sandstone and grit and, in a majority of cases, the external walls are left un-rendered. A number of these properties are thatched. Some distinctive buildings are listed of which the Church of St Pancras, Bagborough House and Littlecourt are Grade II\*. The Grade II listed buildings are: Triscombe House, Rock Farmhouse, Ford Seven Ash, the walled garden of Bagborough House and Richards, together with five chest tombs and a sundial. (Recommendations 8.9 and 8.10)



**5.2** Cottages constructed about 100 years ago have slate or tiled roofs. These properties are built in pairs in a semi-

detached style, often with a porch at either end.

**5.3** More recent buildings are constructed from modern materials, reflecting cost and availability constraints. Red brick was used for houses constructed around the 1940s, and some of the most recent properties have used lighter coloured brick; both are in marked contrast to the traditional materials of stone or render. (Recommendation 8.11)



**5.4** The sound of running water is never far away and streams can be seen at various points at both ends of the village, and in the adjoining hamlets. They meander along by the side of, and underneath, the roads. Where they are uncovered they provide a strong feature of the village, adding greatly to its natural beauty. However, culverts can be a problem; they are easily blocked and can cause flooding. (Recommendation 8.12)



### **Recommendation 8.9**

*Buildings should be maintained using materials sympathetic to their original design (5.1)*

### **Recommendation 8.10**

*Listed Buildings have been identified as of particular importance to Bagborough and support for their maintenance is essential (5.1)*

### **Recommendation 8.11**

*Any new building(s) should be in keeping with the traditional designs, patterns and materials of buildings in the*

### **Recommendation 8.12**

*The conservation and management of existing streams should be encouraged. Where possible culverts should be opened up to improve appearance and for maintenance (5.4)*





## 6. Highways and Traffic

**6.1** All the roads in Bagborough are minor. They exist in a rural setting, winding up and along the hillside, with no footpaths but bounded by stone walls or hedgerows. They have escaped the intrusiveness of white markings and street lighting. In the spring the verges are full of wild flowers with their rich colours and aromas. (Recommendations 8.13 and 8.14)

**6.2** Traffic through Bagborough is mainly private cars, agricultural vehicles and equipment, and delivery vehicles. There are no public car parks in the village and some houses do not have off-road parking. Parking congestion at the east end of the village is due to customers visiting the inn and walkers who are roaming the hills. The density of parked cars does, however, provide a traffic calming effect but the possibilities of off-road parking should be urgently investigated. (Recommendation 8.15)

**6.3** Street furniture is limited in quantity. Replacements tend to be the modern

plastic and aluminium variety. A return to the traditional cast iron design would benefit the visual impact. (Recommendation 8.16)

**6.4** Electricity and telephone lines are overhead and this results in a profusion of unsightly poles carrying wires and an assortment of transformers. Their presence severely detracts from the streetscape and is unacceptable in an AONB. These services should be put underground. (Recommendation 8.17)

**6.5** The village has traditional post boxes (nearly all set in walls) and a red telephone box which should be retained. (Recommendation 8.18)

**6.6** There are a number of public footpaths and bridleways in Bagborough. These are well established, sign-posted and maintained, and should be protected. (Recommendation 8.19)



### Recommendation 8.13

*The local Highway Authority should ensure the preservation of the character of the minor roads, lanes and verges, and avoid urbanisation (6.1)*

### Recommendation 8.14

*The traditional stone walls which line many of the roads should be retained and repaired where necessary (6.1)*

### Recommendation 8.15

*Traffic movement through the village, together with parking provision, should be considered as a central issue in protecting the amenity for both residents and visitors (6.2)*

### Recommendation 8.16

*Unnecessary signs and clutter should be resisted. Street furniture should be unobtrusive and in keeping with the rural setting (6.3)*

### Recommendation 8.17

*Existing, and all future, utilities lines and cables should be laid underground (6.4)*

### Recommendation 8.18

*The traditional post-boxes and telephone box are attractive features and should be retained (6.5)*

### Recommendation 8.19

*Footpaths and bridleways must be maintained, protected and clearly signposted (6.6)*



## 7. Suggested Guidelines for Property Alterations\*

*If you are considering altering the exterior of your property, changing any external detail of the building or its paint-work, front garden or boundaries, please make use of these suggestions:*

7.1 Look at your property as others see it. Take a look from the front and any other view from which your changes will be seen.

7.2 Make a note of what makes your property either distinctive or blend in with its neighbours. Look at roof lines, roofing materials and colour, chimney patterns, overall window pattern, boundary walls, etc.

7.3 Take a closer look at details such as special brickwork detail, window design and shape, doorways and door design.

7.4 Imagine the changes you need to make and consider the effect on the appearance of your property and how the changes you make will reflect on neighbouring properties especially where your property is joined to or grouped with others of the same or very similar style.

7.5 Look at other altered buildings; are there lessons which can be learnt?

7.6 Will your changes sit well with the original design and the surrounding area? If the answer is not a clear **yes** then examine other ways of achieving the functional changes whilst conserving the scene.

7.7 Are window proportions being maintained?

7.8 Can reclaimed or closely matching materials be used?

7.9 Check that your architect or designer understands your requirements. Does he /she have any suggestions that will improve it?

7.10 If you have any doubts about the design of your project, or if your property is within the Conservation Area, you should contact:

Taunton Deane Planning Services, The Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton TA1 1HE (phone 01823 356356)

*\* This version has been adapted with permission from the Henlow VDS.*





## 8. Recommendations

- 8.1 If in the future new housing development is permitted then it should remain within the settlement area of the village whose linear nature should be respected (2.6)
- 8.2 Any new business or commercial premises should be developed in a sympathetic way in what is primarily a residential village (2.7b)
- 8.3 Existing hedges should be preserved and protected (3.1)
- 8.4 The preservation, maintenance and replacement of existing trees is very important (3.2)
- 8.5 The unrivalled views across parkland and fields should be retained (4.1)
- 8.6 The extensive views of surrounding hills are of paramount importance in maintaining the character of Bagborough (4.1)
- 8.7 The open spaces between buildings should be protected as they form an essential part of the character of the village (4.2 and 4.3)
- 8.8 The present openness, between the village and each hamlet, should be preserved (4.4)
- 8.9 Buildings should be maintained using materials sympathetic to their original design (5.1)
- 8.10 Listed Buildings have been identified as of particular importance to Bagborough and support for their maintenance is essential (5.1)
- 8.11 Any new building(s) should be in keeping with the traditional designs, patterns and materials of buildings in the area (5.3)
- 8.12 The conservation and management of existing streams should be encouraged. Where possible culverts should be opened up to improve appearance and for maintenance (5.4)
- 8.13 The local Highway Authority should ensure the preservation of the character of the minor roads, lanes and verges, and avoid urbanisation (6.1)
- 8.14 The traditional stones walls which line many of the roads should be retained and repaired where necessary (6.1)
- 8.15 Traffic movement through the village, together with parking provision, should be considered as a central issue in protecting the amenity for both residents and visitors (6.2)
- 8.16 Unnecessary signs and clutter should be resisted. Street furniture should be unobtrusive and in keeping with the rural setting (6.3)
- 8.17 Existing, and all future, utilities lines and cables should be laid underground (6.4)
- 8.18 The traditional post-boxes and telephone box are attractive features and should be retained (6.5)
- 8.19 Footpaths and bridleways must be maintained, protected and clearly signposted (6.6)







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