



Alveston Village Design Statement 2015

Adopted by Stratford-on-Avon District Council





Background

The Alveston Village Design Statement (VDS) was first adopted by Stratford-on-Avon District Council in October 2001 as Supplementary Planning Guidance. The VDS expressed the collective views of the villagers at that time. Following the building of Church Close and the resulting significant increase in the population, the Alveston Villagers' Association (AVA) sought the view of villagers, with the aim of keeping the design statement up to date which resulted in an update in 2010. This document updates the 2010 VDS and should be adopted as supplementary design guidance to be considered alongside the original 2001 version.

What has changed in Alveston since 2001?

The most significant development in the village was the construction of houses in Church Close, the site previously occupied by greenhouses. The number of dwellings in the village has increased by nearly 20%, from 138 in 2001 to 169 by 2015. Other developments include house extensions and renovations. The main employers in the village continue to be Alveston Leys Nursing Home and the Youth Hostel. An increasing number of residents work from home. The most significant impact on this VDS has been the change in planning laws and guidance. This document is written with this in mind.

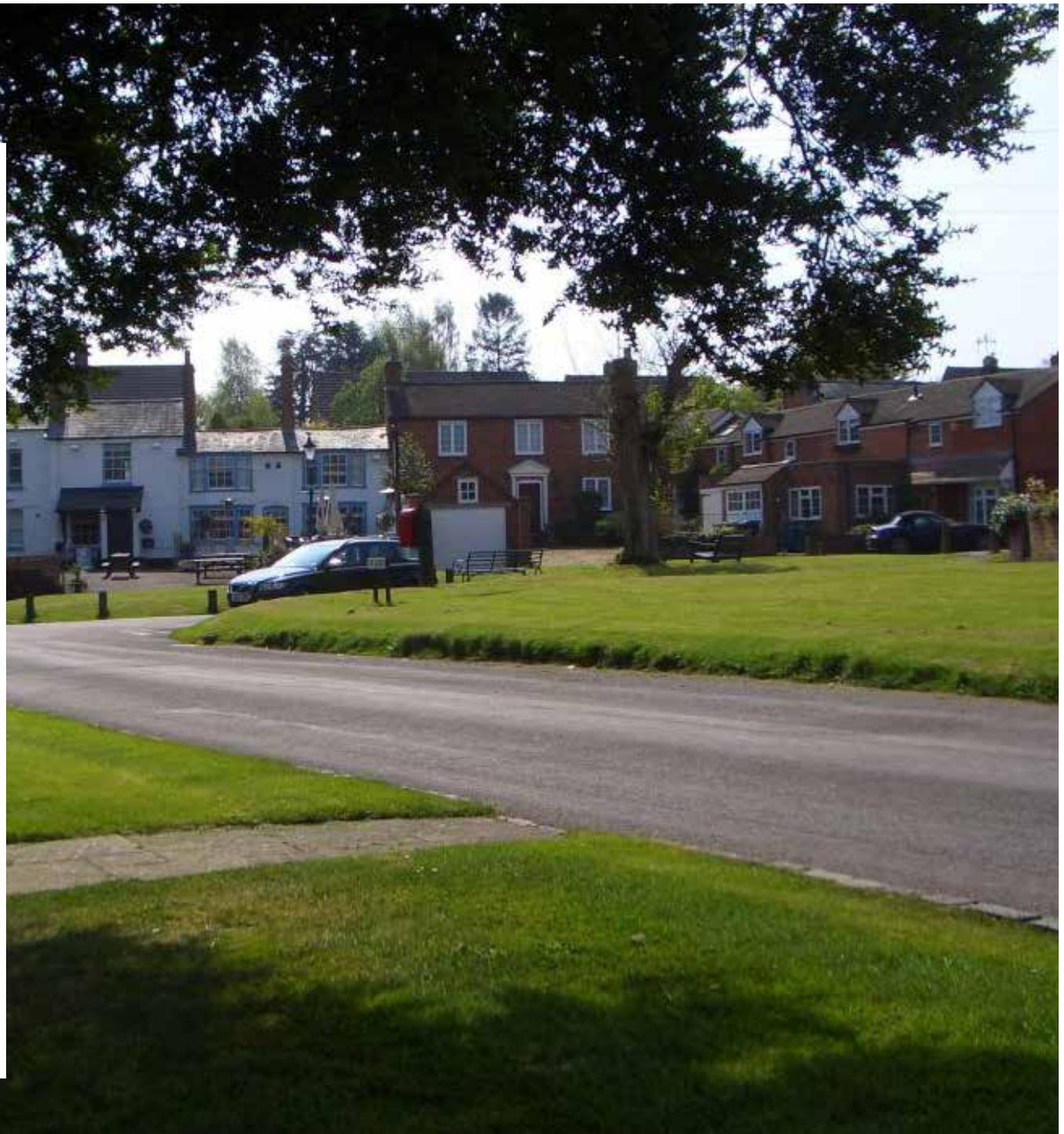


Retaining the rural character

In 2015, the overriding issue for villagers continues to be the desire to retain the open character of the fields surrounding the village that create an important rural edge to the south side of the settlement. These include the Memorial Field, the parkland between St. James Church and Kissing Tree House and the field to the east of Kissing Tree Lane. Villagers feel that the loss of this open green space would detrimentally impact on the character of the village. The outcome of the 2009 consultation process and the 2013 survey fully endorses this view.

Consultation 2014: The views of the villagers

In October 2012 a village survey was conducted where 97% of the villagers responded. Following this two amendments to the VDS were discussed and unanimously agreed at a village special meeting in November 2014.





Church Close

Church Close was built after the original 2001 VDS was adopted as supplementary planning guidance. The consensus was that the VDS helped frame the villagers' views on design guidelines with the developer and the planning authorities.

Church Close was constructed between 2005 and 2007 by Banner Homes following extensive consultation with the AVA. It was this partnership that contributed to the successful integration of Church Close, creating another important sub-area of the village.

Church Close has a mix of brick and white rendered houses, giving it a character of its own within the village setting.

The houses along Church Lane have views towards St James Church. A small green within the development complements the greens throughout the village. Just off Church Close is an unusual courtyard surrounded by five of the dwellings.



Conservation Area

A linked, yet separate point of view to the desire to retain fields around the village is that the Memorial Field, Hemmingford House and Church Close be returned to within the Alveston Conservation Area boundary. The conservation area document of 1992 removed the Youth Hostel (Hemmingford House), a listed building, the Memorial Field and Young Plants from the village conservation area. The reason being: “The development of the glass houses... has sufficiently affected the character of the area to warrant its omission from the Conservation Area.”

The glass houses have been replaced by a new sub-area which has significantly improved upon the character and appearance of this part of Alveston. The villagers encourage Stratford-on-Avon District Council to assess the potential of including this area in the conservation area boundary when the 1992 Alveston Conservation Area document is next reviewed.





Design guidelines

Following the consultation process, the Alveston Villagers' Association has the following design guidelines.

Landscape setting & character

- The eyeline towards the village from the B4086 should continue as it is and not be disturbed by any new high roofs. The buildings height line should be restricted near all entrances to the village.
- Villagers expressed the view that landscape screening between the built edge of the village and the B4086 should be improved.
- The open spaces surrounding the entrance to the village should remain intact in order to keep the rural view, clearly distinguish the boundaries of the village and to maintain Alveston's concealed setting. This will help to prevent creeping urbanisation.



Highways and footpaths

- There should be no yellow lines as they are out of character both with the rural nature of the village and its conservation area status. Any new development should have off-street parking. In addition, any planning application must give full consideration to commercial vehicle access during development and on completion.
- Footpaths on village lanes should be sympathetic with the rural character of the village.
- Grass verges and greens must be protected. Appropriate aesthetic solutions should be encouraged to prevent vehicles driving over and parking on verges and greens.
- A country footpath connecting Charlote Park and Swiffen Bank would enhance greatly village amenities, including hiking access to the Youth Hostel. Similarly a path going west from Swiffen Bank to Kissing Tree Lane would be a major benefit.
- Lighting in the village should be sympathetic to its rural character. New housing developments should not increase the average density of lighting.
- The design of the lighting should be sensitive to and without detriment to the character and appearance of the village setting.





Overall village layout & design

- The retention of open areas is essential to the character of the village, acting as a buffer zone along the southern edge of the village.
- The high proportion of large private gardens contributes to the character of the village. Any sub-division of these properties into smaller plots should fully respect the rural character of the village as well as its conservation area status and must not dominate or erode the character of the sub-areas as defined in the VDS.
- Street scenes must be preserved or enhanced.
- Any new development should be accompanied by extensive planting of trees and shrubs compatible with those already in existence, so maintaining the privacy. Non-compatible fast growing conifers should be avoided.



Building styles and layout

- Retain the distinct sub areas of the village. Any development must retain the character of each sub-area. This means that extensions or new buildings must take account of the character set by neighbouring significant and listed buildings.
- The scale and proportion of new buildings and extensions should harmonise with their direct neighbours. Plans should be accompanied by a perspective drawing showing this relationship.
- Any alteration or improvements to a property need to be in sympathy with its neighbours in addition to maintaining its own character.
- All developments must be in keeping with the rural nature of the village. Urban characteristics should be discouraged.
- Alveston Leys is an established part of the village. Further large-scale development (nb. minor extensions/alterations to buildings on this site may be acceptable) should be discouraged to avoid overdevelopment of this site and associated loss of amenity.
- Church Close is now an integral part of the village and the villagers would like to see this development, Hemmingford House and the Memorial Field considered for inclusion within the Alveston Conservation Area.
- Any development must take account of the flood plain of the Avon.



Flora and Fauna

- Any future development should ensure the preservation of present wildlife habitats.
- Responsible farming and recreation close to the river is needed in order to maintain its special environment.

River

- Village residents have debated the future of river navigation fully at Village Association AGMs and also at specially convened meetings.
- There is a consensus against making the river navigable, as it would change forever the character of the village and the nature of the community as described in this document.
- During the 2009 consultation process for the update to the village design statement, villagers again reached a consensus that there should be no river navigation at Alveston.

Church Close

- Church Close has an open aspect to Church Lane and this should be retained.



This Statement has been adopted by Stratford-on-Avon District Council as Supplementary Planning Guidance. It is applicable to all involved in the planning process and serves to raise awareness of smaller cumulative changes that can often erode local distinctiveness. This does not mean preserving in aspic, but managing evolutionary changes to maintain and reflect local identity and character.

This statement is for the use of residents, businesses, architects, builders, planning departments and those elected to approve applications at local and regional level. We seek to raise everyone's awareness so that we retain the distinctive characteristics of Alveston.