Settlement:
Layout & Character

Open Spaces

The Tour of the Village illustrates how many open spaces there are in Teffont and how significantly they contribute to its unique character. Throughout the village these spaces afford the separation between buildings which is such a fundamental part of Teffont's identuty. They provide an essential contribution to the way in which the buildings largely intermingle harmoniously with the natural valley landscape.

Listed below are some of the views that villagers wish to see maintained.

- ◊ Views of the lake, manor and church in Evias
- ◊ Unspoilt views from the approach roads into and across the village
- ◊ Views of wooded areas on approach roads
- ◊ Views of countryside between and beyond buildings

Pattern and Layout

The settlement developed in a linear pattern, with buildings arranged in irregular clusters on either side of the road and following the flow of the stream, and many of the cottages hugging its banks. Small groups of buildings are interspersed with gardens, open fields and paddocks, which in the central and lower part of the village rise to tree-clad hillsides beyond.

There are still many of the larger defining open spaces in the upper part of Magna and in Evias, but few remain in central Magna.

Several dwellings have been built on the hillsides, but generally the development is only in the floor of the valley, leaving uninterrupted views to the countryside beyond. There is dense vegetation in many places and this overall "greenness" still prevails over the buildings.

Almost all dwellings face the road and have small gardens at the front with larger gardens behind or to the side and fields beyond. Many bridges span the stream, mostly enlarged to accommodate off-street parking.

There is a scattering of late 20th-century buildings on the B3089 approaches to Magna, mostly single dwellings with generous space and vegetation around them.

Until recently–and this was due to a quirk in the planning system (see New Building section–reference "… close adjacent to "Barnmead")–there has been little backfilling, or diversion from the linear pattern except for agricultural purposes. This quality has been upheld by planning inspectors and there is a strong wish amongst villagers for it to remain that way.

The remaining grass verges, without kerbstones or pavement, are integral to the rural character of the village.

Character and Materials

Fragments of earlier timber-framed cottages still exist, but the predominant vernacular style of building throughout Magna and Evias is characterful, modest, steeply pitched thatched stone cottages, one room deep and single-storey with attic. The small rectangular windows are randomly placed. They were built in the late 17th and early 18th centuries, probably by farm workers, during a boom in the wool trade, using the rubble or crudely hammered "Chilmark" stone carried from the fields and open quarries in the village. This is a glauconitic, sandy limestone – glauconite being the mineral which gives it the characteristic greenish-grey or brownish colour. This stone is referred to as the "local stone" or "Chilmark stone" throughout the document. (see Appendix for more details about the "local stone")

The coursed rubble-built walls, with squared quoins or corner stones, are often two feet thick, and many dwellings have flagstone floors and little or nothing in the way of foundations. A few of the cottages and larger buildings have a wider use of ashlar, or cut stone, at intervals through their walls, for their front walls or "public" face, quoins or corner stones, and around doors and windows. Simple carving was added for mullions and drip moulds over the windows and for the decorative kneelers which terminate the eaves.

Victorian buildings, mainly in Evias and described in the Tour, although not in the vernacular of the village, have settled comfortably into their surroundings partly because they have been constructed in the local stone and natural materials. Conversely, reconstituted or "artificial" stone, used for dwellings built in the latter part of the 20th century, has not weathered or become part of the landscape in the same way.

There is one red brick house and a few of the traditional buildings have small amounts of brick infill. There are only a few small examples of flint inclusions in walls.

The thatch, which would originally have been simple longstraw, an easily available by-product of farming that provided good insulation at the time, is now thick rounded wheat straw known as wheat reed. In the early 1900s several buildings had the thatch replaced with handmade clay peg tiles; many were probably made with the local clay at the nearby brick, tile and pottery works in Dinton, which was established earlier that century. Welsh slate became more easily available, via rail, in the mid 1800s, hence its appearance in the later Victorian buildings. There are a few Somerset pantiled roofs. More modern machine-made clay, composition and concrete tiles have also been used.

Other traditional "features" of the buildings are referred to in detail in the "Building & Design Guidance and materials" section.

Most traditional buildings have been extended and modernised.

ABOVE: Magna from the west
BELOW: Evias from the east

Guidelines for Development

Above: view of Teffont Evias from the north
Below: cottages in Teffont Magna

The mellow beauty, gentle spirit and simple proportions of the traditional buildings in the village should always be reflected in the design and materials of a new building. Before any building work is considered, it is important to emphasise that Teffont is one of few villages in Wiltshire to have a full complement of the statutory designations; all of which have been put in place to protect the settlement's unique heritage.

In 1973 most of the village was designated a Conservation Area (CA) (see map in Appendix) and is part of the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). In addition, both villages have extra protection under the Local Plan; Teffont Magna is a Housing Restraint Area (HRA) and Teffont Evias a Special Restraint Area (SRA). We are very fortunate to have nearly 50 Grade 2-listed buildings, fairly evenly distributed through the village; two Grade 2*-listed churches, two listed milestones and a red telephone box. All these are protected by law. (For full list see Appendix and Wiltshire Council's Planning website "Conservation and the environment" section for guidance re listed buildings,)

In order to help conserve the unique qualities which contribute to these designations, the following detailed guidelines have been compiled. They are intended for any new development or alterations to existing buildings, whether listed or otherwise. Where a building is listed, Listed Building Consent is required for any alteration – internal or external. It is advisable to speak to the planning department in all cases, as very limited development can be achieved without planning permission.

When any development takes place, we wish to encourage the best of the new, both in design and materials, and challenge architects and designers to create buildings which are not mere pastiches of the past or repetitive "executive" style buildings.

Good quality and interesting design really will enhance the surroundings. This does not mean the building need be more costly, just that attention is paid to detail such as placement, proportions and heights of buildings; their relationship to the size of the plot and their roof pitches and "features". They should also demonstrate sensitivity to the spirit of the entire village, the adjacent buildings and their occupants, and the environmental setting.

Materials should, if possible, be natural and of good quality so they will stand the test of time and harmonise with their surroundings; where possible they should also be environmentally friendly and sustainable. New materials and technologies may provide acceptable alternatives if they achieve the same high standards of design and appearance - the Conservation Officer should be consulted.

Small scale commercial enterprise is very welcome as long as it doesn't generate large amounts of traffic or noise and impact on neighbours.

New Building

Generally, the protection provided by the designations means that there is limited scope for new development in the village.

Teffont Evias is a Special Restraint Area. The upper part of Holt Lane, where it enters beautiful countryside, is outside this restraint, and over recent years there has been development here which has had a major impact on the views of and into the countryside.

In central Magna, there has been piecemeal development along the eastern side of the B3089 over the last 15 years. There is concern that further development here would compromise the important gaps, defining open spaces and the open views of the countryside and therefore the intrinsic character and special charm of the village. There is also concern that squeezing houses into small plots in the gardens of existing properties, especially in the street scene, creates a crowded feel which similarly compromises the character.

The village moves gently into the countryside at either end of the village and any large scale development here would damage these rural gateways which are a vital part of its identity.

The much acclaimed linear development of the village makes it unsuitable for closes, as this would constitute back building. The development adjacent to "Barnmead" was built in the late 1990s but owed its planning origin to a quirk in the system, which meant that a 1960s planning permission for three bungalows (granted long before present policies had evolved) had been kept alive by the construction of a bridge across the stream and nothing more. The houses were therefore not approved against the current criteria and cannot be taken as a template for what should be allowed in the future.

Where new development is proposed we recommend the following general guidelines:

- Any new development should sit comfortably within its immediate surroundings, be highly sensitive to the gentle spirit of the village, enhance its distinctiveness and contribute positively to the sense of place;
- All new building, extensions and conversions (including farm buildings) should respect, but not slavishly copy, the traditional and vernacular feel of the entire village, with high quality design and sensitive scale and proportions;
- The use of natural materials will be pleasing to the eye and enable the new building to weather, settle into and become a positive contribution to the landscape;
- Any new building should include ample ground to the sides and rear so the sense of space is maintained along with the views into and beyond the plot. Existing mature trees and hedgerows should be incorporated in a new development as wildlife habitats, and the rural feel will be protected if properties are enclosed by natural boundaries;
- New buildings should be of low environmental impact, energy efficient and use materials that are from responsible and sustainable resources such as FSC timber. However the visual qualities of a building should not be compromised;
- The use of muted paint colours for windows, doors and rainwater goods helps to maintain the visual beauty of the village;
- Contemporary design is welcome if it is imaginative, provides interest, reflects these guidelines and complements the surroundings;
- All planning applications should ideally be accompanied by clear details of the amount of ground excavation required and the elevations as measured from the road;
- The siting and colour of farm buildings needs consideration so they disappear into the landscape.

Building Proportions

- Building height should be limited to single or two storeys and a mix of roof heights and levels adds character to the settlement.
- The mass and bulk of any new building should be in sympathy with the traditional cottages, and not overwhelm the neighbouring properties. Ample space must remain around the building, especially on either side, in order to protect the special open quality of the village.

Building Line

Buildings in the village mainly follow a linear pattern and face the road although the building line is random. Most of the old cottages are close to the road/stream with very small strips of garden in front, but they are interspersed with other, mainly larger buildings set further back from the road. There should be careful consultation with the Parish Council where any excavation of the hillsides is proposed because of the nature of the sandy soils and the springlines. Consideration should be given where any interruption to landscape and skyline views are concerned.

Walls

Stone

Natural stone is the preferred building material for the walls of new dwellings.

- Locally quarried limestone is the appropriate stone, cut and laid in a style which is harmonious with the vernacular buildings in the village;
- The use of reconstituted or artificial stone, or similar artificial cladding to the outside of buildings is discouraged;
- The use of a traditional soft lime mortar, which is weaker than the stone, is recommended for re-pointing, and enhances the appearance of all walls. Careful attention should also be paid to the colour of the sand used. Repointing with mortar with a high cement content is liable to cause erosion in the stone from water ingress. The stone is unable to dry out behind the non-porous cement;
- If render is used, a soft lime render rather than a cementitious one is more appropriate, especially if applied over the stone masonry where it could have serious consequences to the performance of the wall, causing damp problems and damaging the underlying masonry.

Timber

Timber comes a close second in the questionnaire as a preferred building material. Where timber has been used for walls and weatherboarding, it is either hardwood such as oak or elm, or cedar–all of which when left to weather naturally have the same silver-grey appearance as the stone and thatch, or stained softwood.

- Unstained hardwood, such as oak or elm, or softwood, such as cedar is the preferred timber for walls and weatherboarding;
- Where stained softwood is used, consider a colour which is complementary to the stone and thatch surroundings;
- Painted timber walls are not a traditional feature of the village.

Brick

If brick is to be included it should be used sparingly as on a few of the older cottages and of a sympathetic colour and tone.

Roofs

The traditional cottages and barns have steeply pitched roofs and a great many are still thatched. In the 20th century several buildings had thatch replaced with either handmade plain clay peg tiles or pantiles, and in a few cases composition or concrete tiles. Welsh slate appears on 19th-century buildings, and the more recent houses from the latter part of the 20th century and beyond have an assortment of artificial, concrete and interlocking tiles. There is also asbestos (no longer permissible) and corrugated tin on outbuildings.

- Generally a steep pitch is preferred to complement the traditional thatched cottages;
- A roof is at least one third of

Below from left to right: reconstituted stone, brick nogging, lime pointing, reclaimed stone wall with squared quoins, Ashlar (hand cut stone). Opposite page above: View of the development adjacent to Barnmead. Opposite page below: mixed height roofs in Teffont Evias.

the bulk of the building when viewed from ground level so it is essential that any roofing material should be in sympathy with its surroundings, that is, in muted tones and of a material which gathers patina with time;

- Flat roofs are not a traditional feature of the village and are not encouraged.

Thatch

Thatch is the traditional roof covering and preferred by villagers in the survey. It is currently thick combed wheat straw, known as wheat reed, but would have been long straw until the mid-20th century. It is unlikely that water reed was used in this area and its visual appearance is much thinner than wheat reed, changing the character of buildings. Its reduced thickness at the eaves allows water to drip onto and penetrate the stone of the walls. Although re-thatching is now an expensive undertaking, the use of local organically grown wheat straw, as opposed to poor quality less costly imports grown with the use of chemicals, should give the roof a life expectancy of 20-30 years.

- Thick, combed wheat straw is the traditional thatch used through the village;
- The plain flush wrap-over style of ridge is traditional in this area and is also the most hard wearing. Typically ridges had minimal decorative work and the trend for "block cut" ridges was imported by thatchers from East Anglia in the mid 1900s;

- Swept dormers are used around windows at attic level.

Note: a change of thatch or ridge from one type to another, or a change of material, which alters the profile, and therefore the character, of a roof (for example, wheat reed to water reed, or flush wrap-over ridge to decorative block cut) will require planning permission on a listed building and within the Conservation Area

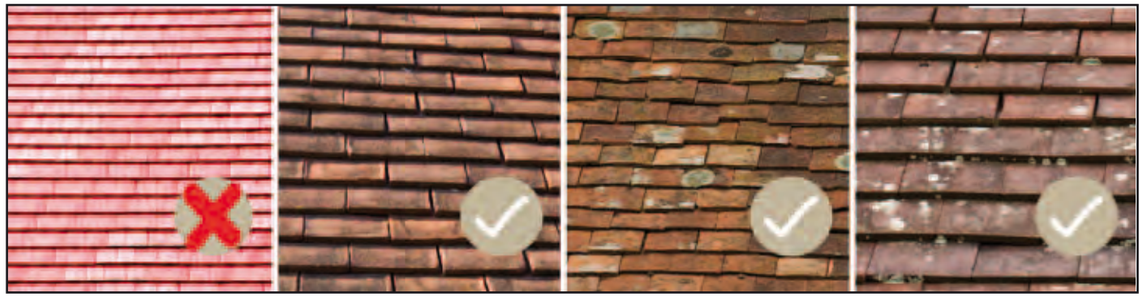
Tiles

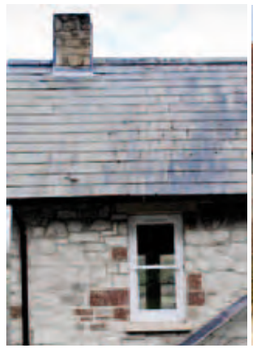
The traditional buildings were all thatched until the early 1900s, when several had thatch replaced, mainly with handmade clay peg tiles in soft terracotta colours. Each tile is slightly curved and the tones vary, which creates a natural "texture" in the appearance of the roof. Welsh slate has been used in places through the village, mainly on mid-to-late Victorian buildings. Both of these gather a patina with time, which helps to unify the "roofscape". Strong coloured artificial tiles have appeared on several of the more recent buildings; these and any with a plastic or resin coating tend not to weather and are discouraged.

- The use of good quality handmade or hand-finished machine-made, clay peg tiles in muted colours and mixed tones is the preferred choice in this setting and it also keeps that craft alive. Where repairing a roof of clay peg tiles, the original tiles should be reused if possible;
- Where slate is used, hand-cut Welsh slate (or one which gives a similar appearance) is the most appropriate. It has character and reflects the original slate roofs in the village. The colour and texture of many modern imported machine-cut slates are not empathic to these surroundings and artificial ones are to be discouraged;
- The use of any kind of artificial interlocking tile is considered inappropriate.

Solar Panels and Satellite Dishes

Please refer to the Planning Department for any proposals for solar equipment and satellite dishes as planning permission may be required.





Chimney Stacks

Chimney stacks on the traditional buildings in the village are mainly simple brick constructions, projecting from the gable end walls in order to keep heat clear of the thatch. They add interest to the roofline and stand out in the skyline. It is important that new houses have functional and substantial chimney stacks which are well-proportioned in relation to the building, and not too high.

Changes to the Building Regulations have introduced a minimum recommended height (of 1800mm) for chimney stacks in thatched buildings that is much higher than is currently seen on the majority of buildings, both modern and historic, and would be considered harmful to the traditional character of the village. The regulations are not retrospective. However there are situations where raising may be suggested. There is a defensible argument against this, as there is an exemption for historic/ listed buildings (with the building inspector's consent) where it is felt that the change of height would be damaging to their character. It has been widely demonstrated that fires in thatched buildings are seldom related to the stack height, as fires are nearly always due to lateral heat transfer from the stack, due to poor pointing or lining.

- Chimney stacks should be simple in appearance, built of matching local stone or mellow brick, and functional;
- Stainless steel flues should be sited as unobtrusively as possible.

Gutters and Rainwater Pipes

These are not a feature on the thatched buildings, where the thick thatch throws water well clear of the walls. Where used they are simple and many older ones are cast-iron.

- Gutters and rainwater pipes should ideally be cast-iron if they are replacements on listed buildings, and metal rather than plastic on new buildings;
- Rainwater goods can easily look harsh against the gentle colour of the local stone and its lichens. They are less intrusive when painted in a subtle colour which complements their surroundings.

Windows and Doors

Windows and doors are the "features" of any building, old or new, and give the building its character. Unsympathetic replacements of old doors and windows, particularly the use of "off the peg" standard designs, and materials such as UPVC, could seriously damage the character and charm of old properties and the village as a whole. The character of a new property is greatly enhanced if the doors and windows are custom made in wood (including glazing bars) and well proportioned in relation to the overall size of the building. Care should be taken to relate them to their surroundings.

Windows

The majority of traditional windows are two- or three-light, side-hung, opening casements, with chamfered stone mullion surrounds, and have a vertical emphasis. A few have leaded lights, including some with diamond panes. The frames are metal or painted wood. There is a mixture of glazing styles. Good natural lighting is important in this valley, which is often dark in the winter.

Sash windows appear on a few 19th-century buildings, but are not a common feature in the village.

- Where possible it is best to repair rather than replace traditional

Clockwise from above left: thatch with wrap ridge, clay pantile roof, welsh slate roof on a Pembroke cottage, handmade clay tiled roof, simple brick chimney of traditional height, a selection of windows, a selection of tiles.

windows. If a replacement is needed it should be like for like, retaining the traditional feel and proportions, even where a building is not listed. The original glass should be re-used where possible. This is often hand blown and the imperfections and irregularities give light-reflecting qualities which add a unique "texture" to the building. Replacement windows on more recent properties should reflect the period of the building;

- Chamfered stone mullion or painted wood window surrounds are preferred, set into the building by at least five centimetres in order to create a "shadow" line which creates a perspective to the face of the building; (Many new buildings– and some old–have windows flush with the wall.)
- Custom-made softwood painted in a muted colour, or natural hardwood casement windows are preferred, with well-proportioned panes and as slender glazing bars as it is possible to achieve with the existing double- and triple-glazed building regulations;
- Sash windows may be appropriate in some parts of the village;
- Replacing traditional windows with UPVC damages the character (and value) of the building. The glazing bars are coarser in appearance than traditional joinery and the lifespan of the window is not as long;
- Conservation roof lights, which are flush with the roof, are essential in the Conservation Area. Their use should be limited to the backs of buildings;
- Dormer windows may help to keep the overall height of a new building lower. However, they are not traditional in the village except where thatch is "swept" over attic floor windows. If used, they are more discreet when placed on the backs of buildings.

Doors

The majority of the traditional buildings have modern replacement doors. The traditional doors were simple, vertically planked and studded, with sills, and of either painted or natural hardwood. Some have Victorian replacements which are simple custom-made raised and fielded four- or six-panel type, of either painted softwood or natural hardwood and several include glass panels or fanlights at the top to let in natural daylight.

- If possible original traditional doors should be repaired rather than replaced. Where replaced, a custom-made like for like version with the same proportions is the most appropriate to maintain the character of the building;
- Doors on new buildings should follow the tradition of the village and be custom-made rather than an off the peg DIY, UPVC type, and of natural hardwood, or painted, rather than varnished, timber;
- French windows should reflect the tradition of the building.

Porches

These have mostly been added over the last 100 years. Generally, when designed to be complementary to the proportions and materials of the related building, they add character.

Examples include:

- Simple wooden painted rainhood;
- Rustic type – stone plinths with oak posts and a pitched thatched or tiled roof;
- Enclosed stone base with glazed/ wooden sides and pitched tiled roof;
- Enclosed stone, with side windows and pitched thatch or tiled roof.

Some porches on traditional cottages from the latter part of the 20th century were built solely for their utilitarian use and are unrelated in looks to their surroundings.

Garages and Outbuildings

Consideration should be given to the height of the roof of a garage and a lean-to carport is often a more appropriate option.

There are many good examples of garages and outbuildings in the village, all of which work well in the context of their surroundings. Examples include:

- Chilmark stone with pitched thatch or plain clay tile roof;
- Weatherboarding: overlapped oak planks left to weather naturally; cedar, or stained softwood feather edge, with pitched plain clay tile, pantile or simple corrugated tin roofs;

- Lime render walls with pitched plain clay tiled roof.
- Garage doors can dominate their setting. A simple design, such as vertically planked, wooden swing or up and over garage doors, will complement the surroundings.

Extensions and alterations

These should follow the building guidelines above using materials similar or complementary to the related house. It is important that extensions do not dominate the proportions, or upset the character of the original structure, and do not overwhelm the site or the neighbouring property.

Conservatories

The design of conservatories requires the same attention to detail to ensure that they sit comfortably against the building. They should be simple, built with quality materials and if possible placed on the back of buildings. The privacy of neighbours needs to be carefully considered.

Boundaries, hedges and trees

These are mainly low, local-stone walls, topped with an assortment of coping and a mixture of boundary hedges. (For streamside boundaries and banks refer to "Nature in the Parish" – Stream Management section.)

- Local stone walls or mixed native hedging, which also benefits wildlife, will maintain the rural character.

Drives

It is essential that drives and all areas surrounding a building should be permeable so as to absorb rainwater and stop runoff into the street and stream. Tarmac is not encouraged in off-street areas unless it is absolutely necessary.

Street Lighting and Security Lighting

The majority of the village is happy without street lighting. The unlit roads contribute to the rural character of the village and villagers value their views of the dark night skies.

- Any development should avoid high intensity external lighting which would detract from this and also be upsetting to wildlife.
- Security lighting should be movement sensitive and sited so as not to be intrusive to neighbours.

Clockwise from top left: selection of windows, thatched garage and woodstore, selection of porches, an award-winning studio, a characterful recent extension.