

Village Design Statement Validation Checklist

Village Design Statement for:	West Dean
<p>(i) Does the VDS describe the distinctive character of the village and the surrounding countryside?</p>	<p>Yes. The village is described to be set in exceptional landscape. The History chapter in the VDS describes that West Dean is an ancient rural village, seven miles from Salisbury and the same distance from Romsey. Situated in a broad valley of the River Dun, the village developed below the chalk escarpment of Dean Hill, with the predominant chalk bedrock of the area giving rise to well drained turf, woodland vegetation and arable fields bordered with hedgerows and wooded outcrops. There are two Sites of Special Scientific Interest and a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (Bentley Wood and Dean Hill, and Dean Hill Park). The River Dun runs through the centre of the village bounded by flora rich banks. There is an abundance of species recorded in and around the village based on the work of volunteers.</p> <p>The development and planning section describes the character of the village in connection with its designation as a conservation area. It lies in its environmental quality and features that contribute towards its unique identity. The tradition of red brick as a local building Material is stressed in the Development and planning section, and the importance of local landmarks formed by St Mary’s Church and Red Lion House. The clustered nature of the settlement core, outlying elements linked to the core by hedges, tree belts and attractive open spaces is mentioned also. The chapter also stresses the important open areas and views out of the village on its fringes. The focal point formed by the village green area is in front of the former Red Lion public house beside the River Dun.</p>
<p>(ii) Does the VDS show how character can be identified at three levels:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The landscape setting of the village 	

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The shape of the settlement 	<p>Key elements of the settlement are described in the Development and Planning section:</p> <p>The village and its surrounding area have evolved in a way which gives it a unique character, particularly as ribbon development is largely absent. Residents are determined to preserve this, but at the same time recognise that a limited degree of new building for housing and employment will help to sustain village life. A number of amenities exist such as the village hall; however, the only shop, the post office and the public house have closed over the years. The extensive footpath network is very important to local residents. There is an anxiety about the presence of HGVs in the village as pedestrians are using the roads due to the lack of footpaths in certain sections. The centre of the village hosts the rail station which is well used and valued by residents. Roadside parking has led to further problems in terms of accessibility and traffic flow.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The nature of the buildings themselves 	<p>The Design of Buildings section describes the nature of the buildings in the village, different building styles and ages. There is rich photographic evidence. This section also provides details on building materials, designs and specific items such as walls, windows and roofs. All listed buildings, sites of archaeological interest and open areas in the village are identified on the map on page 5 of the VDS.</p>
(iii) Does the VDS draw up design principles based on the distinctive local character?	<p>Yes. Each of the VDS sections, particularly the Design section, provides succinct principles and recommendations in the form of guidelines for developers/builders to ensure that development is in keeping with the character of the settlement.</p>
(iv) Does the VDS work in partnership with the local planning authority in the context of existing local planning policy and influence future policies.	<p>The Development and Planning section extensively refers to local planning policies in the (now superseded) Salisbury DLP.</p>

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(v) Has the VDS been developed, researched, written and edited by local people? Is it representative of the views of the village as a whole? Has the process involved a wide section of the village community in its production?	<p>The process began at the West Dean Annual Parish Meeting in April 2008 when it was decided that a VDS should be prepared. A working group was formed and a residents and stakeholder survey was undertaken in October 2008. A questionnaire was distributed to all 145 households. A public meeting was held in December 2008 to share the results with the village and to discuss the issues raised. The information gained from the survey and the subsequent meeting, together with planning guidance, formed the basis of the VDS.</p>
Other comments:	<p>This VDS represents a point in time and so there may be some references in it that are now superseded. An addendum with the following wording should therefore be added to this VDS to reflect the current situation:</p> <p><i>This VDS was produced at a point in time. Therefore, there may be references in it that are now superseded. This includes references to the former Salisbury District Council and the Salisbury District Local Plan. The Salisbury District Local Plan has been superseded by the South Wiltshire Core Strategy, albeit a number of Local Plan policies are saved in the Core Strategy. Similarly, there may be references to policies in the South Wiltshire Core Strategy that at the time of writing were still emerging. However, the VDS is still considered to be compliant with local policy on design matters. Finally, any references to the VDSs being adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance or as a Supplementary Planning Document are also now superseded, as all VDSs are now approved as material planning considerations by the Council instead.</i></p> <p><i>The VDS has been subject to a recent review by officers and considered up-to-date and relevant, and has subsequently been approved at the Southern Area Planning Committee on 24 January 2013 as a material planning consideration.</i></p>

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	<p>West Dean falls within both Test Valley Borough and Wiltshire. Test Valley Borough Council adopted the West Dean Village Design Statement as a Supplementary Planning Document in February 2012. The fact that the New Forest National Park Authority and Test Valley Borough have chosen to adopt this VDS as a Supplementary Planning Document has no implications on Wiltshire Council approving this VDS as a material planning consideration.</p>
Overall Conclusions:	<p>The West Dean VDS seeks to influence the design of future development within the village. It identifies the key characteristics of the village and highlights what residents consider to be important consideration for the design of future development proposals. It provides clear guidance to developers as to what should be respected and acknowledged by new buildings in order to help preserve the local scene.</p> <p>The VDS has been assessed by officers and considered to meet the objectives set out in this validation checklist.</p>
Recommendation:	<p>It is recommended that, subject to the addition of the proposed addendum, the VDS for West Dean be approved as a material planning consideration for the purposes of development management.</p>