



Ropley

VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT

Covering the Parish of Ropley: ■ Ropley Dean
■ Ropley Village
■ Monkwood
■ North Street

Acknowledgements

East Hampshire District Council Local Plan (2nd Revision) as adopted February 2006

Village Appraisal 2000

Submission for Inclusion into the South Downs National Park (Ropley Parish Council 2002)

Ropley Walks (The Ropley Walks Group, 1988)

East Hampshire District Council

Ropley Parish Council

Ropley Society

Ropley Village Design Statement Committee

- Graham Arnott
- Ron Beal
- George Brown
- Nick Cook
- Jim Culverwell
- John Hunt
- Michael Ludgate
- John Noble
- Jenny Nops
- Liz Wheeler
- Gerry Woolnough

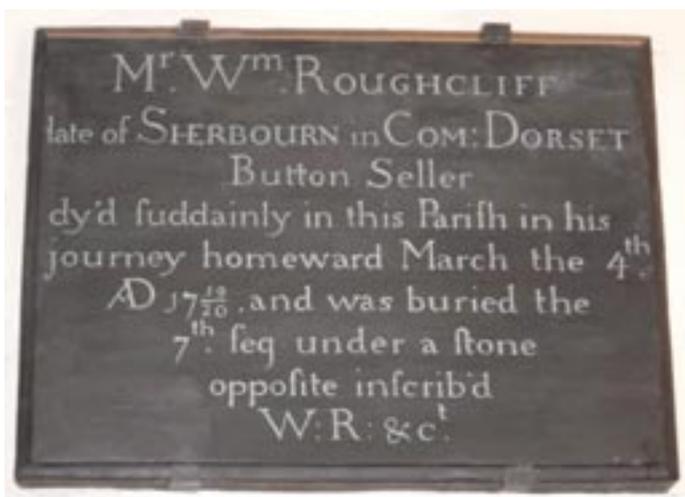


Photo Information

Front Cover (clockwise from top left): *St. Peter's Church, Ropley Station, The Old Farmhouse, Sports Pavilion.*

Inside Cover (from top): *The Chequers Pub, Ropley Station, memorial stone from inside St. Peter's Church.*

Contents (from top): *Lynch Gate — St. Peter's Churchyard, Ropley Station, Ropley Coffee Rooms, Court Lane Vineyard, Ropley House*



■ Contents

Introduction	2
1.0 The Parish of Ropley	4
2.0 Landscape & Setting	7
3.0 Highways & Byways	10
4.0 The Settlement pattern	13
5.0 Building Forms & Materials	16
6.0 Commerce & Industry	25
7.0 Sport & Recreation	27
Other Recommendations	30

■ Introduction

What is a village design statement?

- i VDSs are intended to provide design guidance for any proposed changes within the parish and an opportunity for the community to influence the quality of designs processed through the local planning system. These changes may be major and already subject to planning approval or minor ones such as changes to highway boundaries, accesses, management plans or small-scale items which may not require planning permission such as works under permitted development rights. It involves the community and represents its views to the local Parish Council and to the East Hants District Council planning authority. The VDS is produced by the community for use by developers, councils, residents and applicants in general to help to ensure that any new developments within the parish boundary are located and designed to reflect local characteristics and qualities that people of the village value. It is not a stand-alone document, it has to conform with government guidance and the Local Development Framework, but it aims to identify particular detailed characteristics of Ropley.
- ii New pressure for housing developments create a particular need for VDSs at the moment, and as Ropley will be just outside the proposed South Downs National Park boundary it is extremely relevant. Most inhabitants feel that Ropley is special in many ways, and would like to see any development being planned sympathetically, to protect its character.
- iii The VDS is not a statutory document, but is adopted by EHDC as Non-Statutory Planning Guidance and will

be considered alongside their Local Development Framework. As such it has a real influence. Development proposals must pay particular attention to the District Council's Countryside Design Summary and the VDS. This has been illustrated across the district, most significantly in Selborne where the VDS has been instrumental in the rejection of a developer promoted site at the Local Plan Inquiry. The Local Plan Inspector stated "*The VDS rightly identifies the open spaces in the village as important...*"

- iv It is not about preventing change, but managing it and even initiating it in the most constructive way for the community.

How the Ropley VDS was produced

- v The Ropley VDS was initiated at a public meeting attended by 40 people at the Coffee Rooms on 2nd October 2002.
- vi A steering committee was formed, first meeting on 6th November '02, when appointments were made of chair etc.. At the next meeting on 6th February '03 responsibility was divided amongst the committee for producing a draft document for each section of the Statement, which could be circulated for comment to interested villagers. The Village Appraisal, produced in April 2000, was used for background infor-

(1) *Village Fair Exhibition*



mation. 455 village households out of 605 filled in the Village Appraisal document, supplying 100,000 answers to the relevant questions. Duplication in this area was not thought necessary.

- vii An exhibition at the Village Fair in June '03 generated several hundred responses.
- viii Working groups were formed to gather the necessary information covering the various sections of the Design Statement, add in information from the Village Appraisal, and form draft conclusions.
- ix The next stage was to produce more finished working documents, which were collated into a draft report and presented to a public meeting.
- x Comments and suggestions were incorporated into a further revision. Views from members of 38 village groups and clubs were also taken into account.
- xi Consultation took place with the Parish Council, who have had representatives at every meeting, and with the District Council Planning Officers
- xii Supported by funding from the Parish Council, Ropley Society and East Hants District Council.

Planning Applications & the VDS

- xiii Whilst it is true that some minor alterations and extensions to residential dwellings will not need planning approval the vast majority will require the submission of detailed drawings as part of a formal application.
- xiv The Local Plan contains detailed planning guidance, but because it covers all of East Hampshire, it does not provide

the detailed needs of a parish as diverse as Ropley.

- xv In consultation with all who live in Ropley, the Village Design Statement has been prepared by a committee of local residents specifically to help anyone who needs to make a planning application.
- xvi The Ropley VDS has been broken down into 6 primary sections, all or some of which may need to be addressed in a planning application. The sections are:
 - *Landscape & Setting* — sets the scene for our local views and vistas
 - *Highways & Byways* — the local infrastructure and access routes
 - *The Settlement Pattern* — describes the existing distribution of developments and details the policies that pertain to these areas
 - *Building Form & Materials* — what architectural styles and material types suit your plan
 - *Commerce & Industry* — describes the scope of business property
 - *Sport & Recreation* — clubs and activity sites in the Ropley area

- xvii The VDS has been formally adopted by EHDC as a Non-Statutory Planning Guidance document and as such will be used to judge whether an application is in sympathy with the content and ethos specifically for Ropley and Monkwood as set down in the VDS

- xviii If you have any concerns or questions over an application, the VDS may assist you in the first instance but of course it would be wise to consult your neighbours and speak to a member of the Parish Council before going to see the relevant planning officer at EHDC.

■ The Parish of Ropley

Location

1.0 The Parish of Ropley in Hampshire covers an area of about 6 square miles on the western slopes of a ridge that runs south to north and divides the basin of the Wey and Meon rivers from the Arle and Itchen. It is one of the most attractive villages in the area around the market town of Alresford, itself generally seen as one of the finest Georgian towns in the South of England. In the parish there are approx.. 600 homes scattered widely around the lanes that meander through the rolling countryside. With its wide geographical spread (one of the largest by area in Hampshire, of 3700 acres) the settlement is unusually disparate.

1.1 The centre of the Ropley village has the particular good fortune to be off the main A31 trunk road, and half a mile from the Petersfield Road. The centre has one shop and Post Office, the Primary School, Ropley Pre-school & Playgroup, the Church, Parish Hall, Coffee Rooms and a Multi-sport Pavilion on the Recreation Ground. In Ropley Dean on the A31 there are two pubs, the Anchor and Chequers,

the Dene Stores, the Toyota garage and Shell petrol station, and the doctors' surgery. Further up the hill to the north are the sheds and station of the Mid-Hants Railway with its steam trains (also known as the "Watercress Line") which runs from Alton to Alresford. Other areas of the parish have their own character and sense of community, Monkwood in particular has a very rural feel and its own small mission church building. The very popular Ropley C.E. Primary school dates from 1826, updated with modern extensions, and currently caters for some 175 pupils. It achieves excellent Ofsted ratings.

(1) *The Chequers Pub*

(2) *Classic Village Thatched Property*

(3) *Mid Hants Railway (Watercress Line) Ropley Station*

(4) *Ropley Primary School*



History

- 1.2 Ropley has Anglo-Saxon origins, and in Domesday Book times was part of Bishops Sutton. It became a separate parish in 1882. Its soils are suitable for fine flowers, and so was known for its bee-keeping and honey since way back in Norman times. The first Church of St. Peter’s was built in the 11th century, extended at various times through the centuries and rebuilt in the 19th century. In the 19th century the area was famous for its smuggling activities.
- 1.3 At the time of the First World War the population was around 1000, with most cottages still “tied,” dependent on wells for water, and oil or gas lamps for lighting. Indeed this was still the case in most homes till the 1950s. Since then there has been a steady increase in the population to its current level of 1630. There has been an increase in the number of houses, particularly as ribbon development and in-filling along the lanes. It began with the “colonial” bungalows built after the First World War for returning service men, with 1 to 2 acre plots of land large enough to give a degree of self-sufficiency. These have increasingly been bought with a view to more substantial homes replacing them. Mains water came in 1945, and electricity in 1952, though it took till the 70s and even 90s for all houses to be connected. There is no mains drainage or gas in the parish. With the rise in standards of living over the last few generations and particularly that of house prices over the last few decades there has been an accelerating trend of people earning their living elsewhere, but moving into the village for its attractiveness. Compared to nearby Four Marks (half the size of Ropley a century ago) its essential character has remained substantially unaltered. It is

still more a “place of its own” with a strong village community rather than a dormitory village for the larger towns within easy driving distance. It reflects a wide mixture of the old and new, ranging from the 16th century or earlier to the modern buildings seen today, which vary from excellent to poor in the way they blend in with the parish.



1

(1) *The Anchor Pub — in earlier times.*



2

(2) *“Colonial” bungalows — almost all replaced with much larger dwellings.*



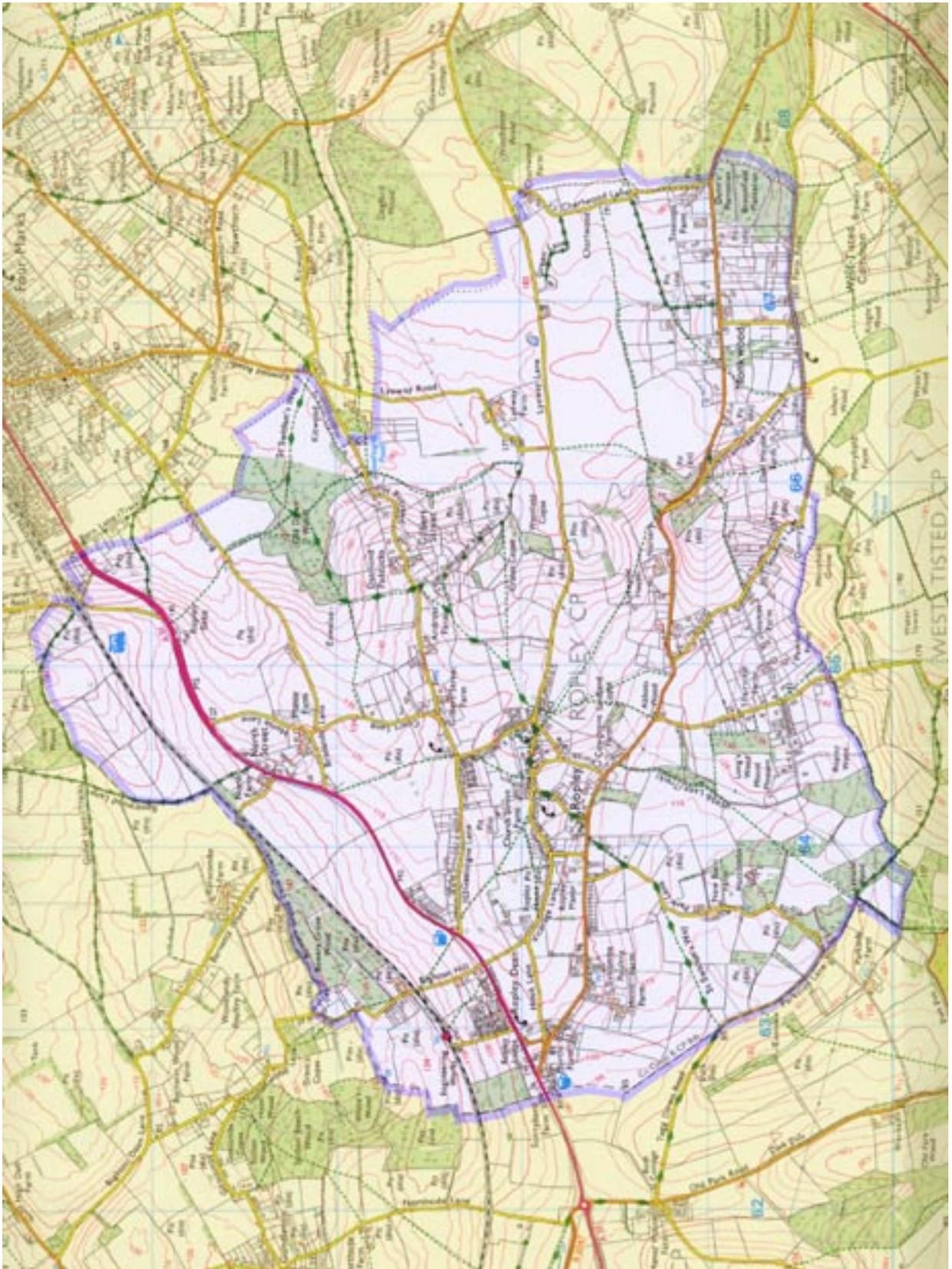
3

(3) *Dene Stores and original Garage — early 1900’s*



4

(4) *What a difference a century makes!*



Ropley Parish Boundary

Reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey © Crown Copyright

■ Landscape & Setting

2.1 90% of inhabitants in Ropley have moved into the parish rather than being born here, a clear indication that commerce and communications are now unable to sustain local employment for successive generations. People are attracted because of the beautiful countryside and the option of commuting to the towns and cities within a 20–50 mile radius. The landscape of Ropley is its major asset, and the most fragile. It was a former Area of Special Landscape Quality (Local Plan 1st review 1996) and there are acknowledged panoramic views over extensive pasture and arable fields dotted with woods and farmsteads. These views can be reached by an excellent network of 45 well used footpaths, making it attractive walking country. With ridges forming hills to all the borders of the parish, the village has the benefit of a tree-lined horizon in every quadrant.

EHDC has prepared a Landscape Character Assessment of the region and refers to the ‘Ropley Downland Mosaic’ in recognition of the uniqueness of the area

Though many hedges and trees have been lost in the process of farms merging into larger units there is a strengthening replanting trend and the parish is still well wooded overall, with many smaller copses and fields. Indeed comparing the village today with photographs at the turn of the 20th century



(1) Covered footpath at Lyeaway

(2) Arable farming is an important part of the local economy



(1) *Swelling Hill — a classic sunken lane*

it is striking how the overall appearance has improved, thanks to tree planting and preservation efforts by villagers through the century.



(2) *This area of Hampshire has a long tradition of sheep grazing*

- 2.2 The topography of the parish falls east to west, determining the direction of the several underground watercourses. There is an undulating level of deep chalk, with the predominant surface soil being clay. It varies from very thin to filling hollows of several metres. Level areas where the clay is deeper tend to waterlog. These factors have in turn determined the human land use, with agricultural practice varying from cattle and sheep rearing on the higher, heavier ground to arable cropping with short term rotational grass on the more easily cultivated lighter soils.



(3) *The Pond*

- 2.3 The hedgerows are varied, some out-grown, some trimmed, but most are old and contain a wide variety of species including hazel, holly and field maple (woodland species), spindle, dogwood, hawthorn, blackthorn and others. The larger hedgerow trees are a mixture of oak, ash, beech and silver birch. Some of the most impressive hedgerows exist around the sunken lanes of Ropley, eight in total, some with complete cover but all in danger of erosion from traffic and Highway policy.



(4) *Few hedgerows remain in some arable areas of the village*

- 2.4 Some of the paddocks are remnants of older grasslands that have not been improved for agriculture, and rich in flowers. These include sneezewort, ragged robin, greater and common bird's foot-trefoil, pepper saxifrage, cowslips, orchids (Lyeway Lane), burnet saxifrage, violet helleborine, white helleborine, polypody ferns, daphne laureda, bluebells. Over 200 species of wild flower have been identified in the area and unsurprisingly 28 species of butterfly dwell in these areas.



2.5 There is a good spread of wildlife, with badgers, foxes and numerous roe deer, hares, stoats, weasels, pheasant and duck. Around 100 different species of birds have been seen nesting within the parish, including kestrels, sparrow hawks, buzzards, lesser spotted and green woodpeckers.

2.6 There are 8 Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC's) in the parish and it is bordered on 3 sides by

the proposed South Downs National Park.



Design guidelines — 2A

- a) **The rural landscape of the parish must be maintained.**
- b) **New developments should be landscaped to blend into the rural character of the area.**
- c) **Property boundaries should be defined using hedges of native species, verges and ditches or low impact fencing in keeping with the style of the immediate area**
- d) **The rural character of the lanes should be respected particularly in retaining the hedgerows that define them.**
- e) **Important public vistas within the Parish should not be obstructed by new development.**
- f) **Existing mature trees, hedgerows and banks are a valued feature of the village and should be removed only in extreme circumstances. Any new planting should be in indigenous species.**
- g) **Where 'phone masts are permitted they should be encouraged to share sites and minimise the impact on the landscape.**

(1) Pumping Stations in Ropley augment the level of the River Arle

(2) A mountain of straw bales — a valuable by-product from arable farming

(3) Sweeping views looking south-east from near Ropley Station

Highways & Byways

- 3.1 The village of Ropley is served by the A31, Winchester Road (A class road), and the C18 Petersfield Road (C class road).
- 3.2 The remainder of the roads are narrow and often “sunken lanes”. They have a “country lane” appearance, being largely lined by native hedges, trees and banks. In the Village Appraisal a significant majority of residents wanted these features protected. As a part of the rural character of the village these roads do not have pavements or kerbs, at times leading to a conflict of interest for users.
- 3.3 The characteristic ‘sunken lanes’ have suffered material damage due to the need to improve highway access for new developments. Inappropriate passing bays, sight splays, fencing and gates are being inserted into the hedgerows and banks of lanes which can neither accommodate them without irreparable damage nor justify them without changing the character of the lane itself. New developments should not generally be permitted where the effect on the lanes is significantly detrimental. Additionally, planning requirements should respect and harmonise with the style of these unclassified roads.
- 3.4 The village has a number of problems relating to traffic and road safety. In the Village Appraisal it was the number one issue of concern amongst residents. Ropley has had an active Road Safety Group operating in the village in recent years. Current traffic problems within the village relate to the quantity, speed and size of vehicles using the roads and lanes. There have already been a number of serious and fatal accidents in recent years on the A31. Significant numbers of residents have supported the use of

speed restrictions on the A31, Petersfield Road, and in the village centre. Since the Village Appraisal the speed limit on the A31 has been reduced to 40mph with additional traffic calming measures, in the form of island bollards and white lining being sited at strategic points together with new speed operated warning signs. On the Petersfield Road a 40mph speed limit has been placed at the south-western end.

- 3.5 Residents have identified excess surface water on the highway as a problem in parts of Ropley, notably on the A31 at

(1) *The A31 at Ropley*



(2) *(four photos) —The rural character of Ropley’s roads*



(3) *Traffic Calming measures on A31*



the Shant, at the western end of the Petersfield Road and in Gascoigne Lane. This problem is in part due to the impermeable “clay cap” at Monkwood as well as a lack of ditch maintenance over the years.

3.6 Although the majority of houses in Ropley have been built with sufficient off-road parking some areas in the village were identified as being in need of additional parking. Areas include the village centre around the church, Dunsells Lane, Ropley Dean, Darvill Road and the area around Ropley Station and the Watercress Line.



(1) *Parking problem areas*

Signage and Furnishings

3.6 In the Village Appraisal many of the residents were against an increase in street lighting and were against additional road warning signs, as it was felt that these would change the rural character of the village.



(2) *Traditional waymarkers should be retained, or replaced with similar signs, when necessary*

Footpaths and Bridleways

3.7 There is a large network of footpaths, bridleways and green lanes surrounding the village. However not all the footpaths link up, thus leading to pedestrians, cyclists and riders all having to compete with traffic on the roads and narrow lanes. A majority of residents felt that improved signposting of footpaths and bridleways would be beneficial to the village and others who use the footpaths and bridleways.



(3) *A selection of Ropley footpaths and signage*

Design Guidelines — 3A

- a) **The layout and design of new developments should consider the implications for safety and convenience of highway users.**
- b) **A new development should allow vehicles to enter & leave in a forward gear.**
- c) **Speed limit and road signs should be erected in consultation with the Parish Council, in a consistent style and a design sympathetic with the rural character of the village.**
- d) **All new developments should ensure adequate off-road parking.**
- e) **Road improvements should be designed to minimise the speed and quantity of traffic.**
- f) **New development should not necessitate changes to the road network that would harm the rural character of the roads and lanes in the parish**

(1) *The busiest area of the A31 unusually quiet here.*

With the Petersfield Road junction, the Shell Garage, Pub and industrial access — a complex road layout exists.

(2) *Even the smallest lanes sometimes see the most unusual and unsuitable traffic!*

(3) *Devastated hedgerow in Park Lane to permit new development (see para 3.3).*

(4) *New speed-sensitive “Slow Down” signs in action*

Design guidelines — 3B

- a) Highway improvements should respect the rural nature of the village; for example unnecessary kerbs should be avoided.
- b) Street furniture should be erected only where necessary and in consultation with the Parish Council.
- c) The design and erection of signs for footpaths and bridleways should be sympathetic with the rural nature of the village.
- d) The layout and design of development should include sufficient provision of soakaways to prevent discharge of surface water onto the highway.
- e) Ditches form a natural part of the drainage system, contribute to the character of the village and should be maintained to prevent flooding.
- f) Unnecessary street lighting should be avoided.
- g) All new developments should be designed to conserve roadside hedges and banks.



The Settlement pattern

4.1 Over 90% of dwellings in Ropley are detached. This “open” characteristic stems from the historic growth of farms and small-holdings on which “colonial” type bungalows were erected after the First World War, to be replaced over the years by more modern dwellings. The newer dwellings are mainly of individual style, the majority on large plots and surrounded by trees and hedgerows

to give a spacious and rural aspect.

4.2 There are two Conservation Areas in the centre of the village where strict planning controls apply. Outside this area two small estates of newer terraced housing have been built off Dunsell’s Lane and Gascoigne Lane, and affordable housing off Church Street. However, most people live in scattered detached homes along Monkwood, Parkstone Lane, Stapley Lane, Soames Lane, Petersfield Road, Gascoigne Lane and the linking lanes.



(1) Conservation areas shown in blue



(2) Settlement boundaries shown in pink

(Maps reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey © Crown Copyright)

- 4.3 The application and frequent reviews of planning laws in the 80s and 90s have appeared inconsistent to the Parish. Garage conversions and dormer windows that overlook and affect nobody and are in keeping with the building can be turned down, while substantial dwellings go through on appeal seemingly irrespective of whether the positioning and materials are in keeping with the locality or not. As time goes on there is less of an obvious “local style” to conform to, and there is a danger of infilling, with the parish becoming indistinguishable from a suburban development.
- 4.4 The draft East Hampshire District Local Plan Second Review was first published in the autumn of 1999, and was adopted in March 2006. This is expected to considerably curtail the inappropriate development that took place before the plan was adopted.
- 4.5 Additional pressure is exerted by government guidance PPG3. When the policy boundary was drawn back in 1999, PPG3 did not exist and therefore the issues of backland tandem development were not considered, hence the settlement policy boundary encompasses gardens as well as houses. Now PPG3 is in place each site must be carefully considered on its merits, especially regarding the effect on the area and neighbouring properties. Piecemeal backland tandem development should be discouraged.
- 4.6 The Village Appraisal suggested the need for homes for local people was relatively low, and when asked what type of development would be acceptable the majority were in favour of converting redundant buildings. However, Hale Close is an example of new development of affordable housing (1–2 bedroom units) which has taken place since the Appraisal on ‘greenfield’ land as an exception site. For this development the community, the Parish Council and EHDC were all involved to ensure a sympathetic design for multiple dwellings and to meet the local need for 1 and 2 bedroom houses.
- 4.7 There is a history of developments occurring within the Winchester City Council area, but adjacent to the EHDC area — and almost within Ropley — without consultation within

(1) *Hale Close*
— a recent
example of
Parish-led
design



Ropley Parish. It appears necessary to create a formal notification and consultation procedure for property and land development adjoining the EHDC western boundary where it runs along the Ropley parish boundary.

Design guidelines — 4A

- a) Due consideration should be given to the East Hampshire Local Development Framework policies and the settlement policy boundaries which define what can and cannot be done inside and outside the boundaries.
- b) The predominantly linear form of the settlements should be maintained rather than building any new estates or other developments that change the shape of the village or result in the creation of new public roads. Small developments may be appropriate under the East Hampshire Local Plan 2nd Review for affordable housing, but these developments should not coalesce into one large development.
- c) New residential development within the settlement policy boundary will be confined to redevelopment of previously developed land and buildings, conversion, subdivision or change of use of buildings and infilling (EHDC Local Plan 2nd Review).
- d) The bulk, scale, form and use of materials of new development should be designed in a way that respects the quality and character of the local environment and neighbouring properties.
- e) The density of housing should always respect the surrounding properties to preserve the rural character of the parish.
- f) The linear nature of Ropley is characteristic of the parish. Piecemeal backland tandem development should be discouraged. It is essential that any possible tandem development complies with policy and does not risk overdevelopment, overlooking or overshadowing, loss of amenity or daylight to existing residents, harm to the character of the village, access and traffic problems or drainage issues.
- g) The gaps between the various defined settlement policy boundaries should be preserved and protected from inappropriate development.
- h) No industrial or commercial development that could lead to significant adverse impact on the rural character of the parish should be permitted.
- i) The “green gaps” between Ropley and adjacent settlements should be preserved and protected from inappropriate development.

■ Building Forms & Materials

- 5.1 Buildings in Ropley are mainly residential, stretching from the north of the A31, west to North street, then south to what might be considered to be the centre around the Church, Parish Hall and Recreation Ground, and on up the Petersfield Road to Monkwood. Along the way they take in several side roads where post-1st World War ribbon development has been permitted.
- 5.2 Development over the centuries has resulted in a varied mixture of building styles. From the 16th-19th centuries there are clusters of brick houses, some of which have been painted, with tiled or thatched roofs mainly in the Conservation Areas, and larger Georgian dwellings on substantial plots.

Interspersed with the above are terraces of smaller houses either of brick or flint

with slate or plain tiled roofs, including some with painted walls and tile hanging.

- 5.3 Most recent development has seen the replacement of modest size dwellings by larger properties of varying styles, some of which have paid no respect to the established character of their location. Some modern materials have been used which are quite inappropriate to a rural environment, such as large scale concrete interlocking roof tiles, plastic wall cladding and flat roofs, so that it is difficult to establish a common style in the architectural make-up of the village.

Throughout the area, however, there is a predominance of two storey dwellings, generally of facing brick construction having pitched roofs covered in slate or plain tiles. Some rendered and painted houses exist throughout the village.

(1 & 2)
*Larger 18th
and 19th
century
dwellings on
substantial
plots*



(3 & 4)
*Good examples
of a variety
of elevation
treatments in
harmony with
each other*





(1) *Example of Plastic Cladding*

(2) *Example of an inappropriate flat-roofed Porch*



(3) *Painted brickwork under tiled roof*

(4) *Modern facing brickwork under slated roof*

Photographs 3, 4 and 5 show some of the more modern houses which illustrate the above points and present modest well-designed features that have fitted well into the village:

5.6 There are examples of plastic cladding at first floor levels but this treatment is alien to the vast majority of houses and should be not be permitted in future. Timber cladding has been successfully used on a few properties and this form of treatment has blended in well with the rural environment.

(5) *Flintwork with brick quoins and dormer windows*

Building Forms and Materials

External Facing Materials

5.4 Whilst there is a profusion of materials in existence, the predominant theme is that of facing brickwork, sometimes relieved by brick and/or flint bandings and panels. In addition the upper floors of some dwellings have been clad in tile hanging, either plain or with patterns of decorative tiles worked into the design.

5.5 Some houses have been built in knapped flint work with brick quoins, sills and lintels and these properties have made a valuable contribution to the rural setting. A handsome example is shown in photograph 5.



- (1) Facing brickwork with well proportioned windows and porches
 (2) Good example of patterned tile hanging



- (3) Knapped flint with brick quoins



- (4) Hardwood cladding under half-hipped roof

- (5) Painted timber cladding over brick plinth

- (6) Painted timber cladding at first floor level



Design guidelines — 5A

External Facing Materials:

- a) Where facing brickwork is used in new developments traditional red/brown is preferred. In any case extremes of colouration when compared with other brickwork in the vicinity should be avoided.
- b) Traditional timber cladding and knapped flint are also excellent alternatives and should be encouraged.
- c) Tile Hanging can successfully be used on the upper storey of new dwellings to relieve the effect of large un-adorned single coloured brickwork.
- d) Plastic cladding on elevations should be strongly discouraged.

strongly discouraged in future. In addition, the patterning of different coloured roof tiles on one building should be avoided, as again this treatment is alien to the village as a whole.

5.9 There are a small number of flat roof extensions, generally over garages, but this form of roofing tends not to be visually harmonious and, where practical, it would be better to provide a sloping roof.



(1 & 2)
Typical thatched properties within the village

Roofs and Chimneys

5.7 Within the Conservation Areas or where a Listed Building is concerned, the existing roofing material may well be thatch. Whilst this is a most attractive and traditional rural material, it is unrealistic to expect new properties to adopt this form of covering, even supposing they were to be within the Conservation Areas.

5.8 For the majority of roofs, the use of slate or plain clay tiles has blended in well everywhere within the village but in recent times the use of large scale interlocking concrete tiles has become more common.

These tiles are not in keeping or in scale with the traditional roofing materials of the village and their use should be



(3) *This illustrates the over dominance of a low pitched roof with large concrete tiles*

(1) *Tastefully designed chimney*

5.10 The use of fully or half-hipped gable ends and dormers are common to both older and newly built properties and where the design is handled well, their use can reduce substantially the impact of a roofscape. This is illustrated below.



5.11 The design of chimneys should be considered to be in scale with the general roof scapes.

(2) *Good example of hipped gable end*



(3) *Good example of hipped dormer windows*



(4) *Careful design resulting in an interesting and varied roof impression*



Design guidelines — 5B

Roofs and Chimneys

- a) Roof sizes should not appear to dominate the development or the surrounding buildings and their pitches should be in keeping with those in the vicinity.
- b) The use of large-scale interlocking concrete roof tiles should be strongly avoided.
- c) The use of “velux” type units and solar panels should be carefully considered and should be avoided on frontages.
- d) Flat roofs are unlikely to blend in successfully and should therefore be discouraged.
- e) Dormers can be used to reduce the overall impact and appearance of height of any new building but care should be taken in the detailing and spacing of such elements.
- f) Extensions to existing properties should reflect the original building’s characteristics, be in proportion to the rest of the design and be of traditional design and format.

Doors and Windows

5.12 There is a very wide variation in the designs, colour and materials in which these elements have been incorporated into the newer dwellings.

5.13 Timber doors, either painted or stained, of solid construction, half-glazed or fully glazed are common, with the relatively new addition of white or dark wood-grained uPVC doors and side lights.

5.14 Windows are predominantly in timber, painted or dark stained, but the use of uPVC double glazed units in new buildings or for replacements is increasing, especially in order to meet the ever more energy saving requirements of the Building Regulations. The glazing varies from small pane leaded lights (genuine or fake) through the whole gamut to large plate glass windows uninhibited by glazing bars.



(1) Example of well proportioned windows with glazing bars and stone sills.



(2) Well designed cottage style window under arched lintel



(3) Timber window enhanced by lead flashing detail

Design guidelines — 5C

Doors and Windows:

- a) In Conservation Areas and on Listed Buildings, the style and materials used in any extensions or in replacements of doors and windows should be to the same design and in the same materials, using similar constructional techniques as the originals.
- b) Elsewhere, doors and windows should reflect the style in which the building is mainly constructed and materials and colours should harmonise accordingly. However it is recognised that more modern materials, such as uPVC and powder-coated aluminium sections cannot be precluded, but where possible should be confined to groups of dwellings so that a consistent “look” is achieved. The careful use of glazing bars can help to retain a well designed look to a new window.

Design guidelines — 5D

Porches:

- a) **The pitch of any new porch, whether to a new or existing dwelling should reflect that of the main roof or adjacent dormers.**
- b) **Porches should be in proportion to the overall main frontage of the house and reflect its character and style.**
- c) **Where in-filling of a porch is required, it should be done in a design that fits the rest of the house and in materials that are sympathetic to its location.**

(1) Successful flat roofed porch with lead finish

(2) Painted timber work with cantilevered brackets

(3) Natural oak supports to porch roof

**Porches**

5.15 Existing porch styles are mostly simple open sided structures, some with timber posts on brick dwarf walls and others on cantilever brackets. In an increasing number of cases, porches are being in-filled to provide a draught lobby and/or extra space. In most cases the materials used to roof the porch match those of the main house, but where the pitch is shallow, traditional materials such as lead have been used.

Garages and Car Ports



Conservatories



Design guidelines — 5E

Garages and Car Ports:

- a) Where a new garage or car port is to be constructed, it should not be sited so as to dominate the existing building or intrude too much on the plot. In general, the materials to be used should be similar to those employed for the main building.
- b) Where new garages are permitted they should be retained for that purpose only and not be sited in a prominent position or in front of the dwelling. Applications for change of use of an existing garage to additional habitable accommodation must include provision for parking.

(1) *Example of freestanding garage using natural oak boarding*

(2) *Example of conservatory designed integrally to modern dwelling*

Design guidelines — 5F

Conservatories:

- a) Conservatories should be sited with particular care since in the majority of cases the material to be used is likely to be uPVC which may not fit well if added to some of the older properties in the village.
- b) Consideration as to the rural character of the proposed location should be taken into account so as to minimise the impact on the environment and on any view of the property seen from the surrounding roads and/or public footpaths.

(3) *Example of conservatory added to period property*

(4) *Example of garage linked to house by conservatory*

(1) Well designed timber gates and entrance walling

(2) Entrance gateway using knapped flint infill panel

(3) Block pavings at entrance to private forecourt

(4) Matured boundary wall construction

(5) Brickwork blended with knapped flints used in a screen wall

(6-9) Details of some other carefully designed modern buildings

Boundary Walls, Gates & Pavings

5.16 Walls, gates and pavings should be designed to fit their surroundings. Outside of the Settlement Boundaries hedgerows and boundary treatments should be encouraged..



■ Commerce & Industry

- 6.1 There are over 100 businesses in the parish, but only a minority employ more than one person. The largest employer is the school, followed closely by the Toyota garage and the Dean surgery.
- 6.2 Farming is still a significant feature, though no longer a major employer. Most of the acreage is now farmed in large units of nearer 1000 acres rather than the 200 acres common a generation or so ago.
- 6.3 In terms of shops, there is one general shop (Dene Stores), the Village Post Office & Shop and the petrol station on the A31.
- 6.4 There are a number of specialist nursery growers, a winery and some light manufacture. 60% of the population are economically active, though only 20% work within Ropley. Two thirds travel more than 5 miles to work, with well over 80% travelling by car.
- 6.5 Most villagers either work away from the village, or, in increasing numbers, work from home. The businesses that currently exist largely employ people who live outside the village. Many villagers are retired and only leave to go shopping or on holiday.
- 6.6 While villagers do not wish to lose the industry we have, there is very little demand for expanded employment opportunities within the village, other than through home working, and so any future development is seen as being largely residential.
- 6.7 Modern farm buildings no longer required for agricultural purposes should be demolished. New agricultural build-

ings should not be permitted where existing buildings are suitable or have been changed to non-agricultural use. If the existing cannot be used then a replacement agricultural building should be built on the same site and footprint as the redundant structure. Older redundant farm buildings built in traditional style (e.g. brick & flint) could be used for offices or other suitable uses. Conversion to unsympathetic industrial uses in entirely rural (and often residential) landscapes is not appropriate. A good example of a conversion that is sympathetic to its landscape is that of the old agricultural buildings at Sutton Manor Farm in neighbouring Bishop's Sutton.



(1, 2 & 3)
Sutton Manor Farm, Bishop's Sutton



- 6.8 Coordination with neighbouring planning authorities such as Winchester City Council should be maintained to ensure that developments affecting Ropley are fully reviewed.

(1) *An unsympathetic development with hazardous access provision*



(2) *Ropley's Shell Filling Station on the A31*



(3) *Ropley Toyota, one of the largest employers in the village*



(4) *Opposite Ropley Church — the new village shop and Post-Office*



Design guidelines — 6A

When making decisions about new development or change of use of existing buildings;

- a) The scale and appearance of Commercial and Industrial properties should be in keeping with the rural character of Ropley.
- b) The effects of Commercial development on neighbouring residential properties should be given prime consideration.
- c) Where any commercial development is found to be appropriate, soft and hard screening should be provided to screen the site.
- d) Conservation of existing banks and hedges and landscaping should be fundamental in alterations of land for commercial and agricultural development.
- e) Any development should minimise impact on lanes, road junctions and existing traffic calming.
- f) Preservation of existing structures in Industrial and Commercial development need not be essential where a more sympathetic modern design can be shown to be preferable.

Sport & Recreation

7.1 Helped perhaps by the position of the centre away from the main roads, and the stalwart support of some long-term resident families, Ropley enjoys an unusually strong community spirit and life with approximately 24 local organizations contributing.



1

(1) Ropley Parish Hall

7.2 Current community groups and activities include; Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, Brownies, Guides, Junior Cricket, Ropley Amateur Dramatic Society, Junior Drama Groups, Family Drama Group, Junior Football (boys and girls), Ropley Cricket Club (6 teams fielded), Ropley Football Club, Ropley Lawn Tennis Club, Ropley Bowling Club, Ropley Society, Horticultural Society, Ropley annual Pram Race, Bi-annual Village Fayre, Boxing Day walk.



2

(2) Locomotive "Bodmin" in steam at Ropley Station

7.3 Venues available include: Ropley CofE School, St. Peter's Church, Anchor public house, Chequers public house, Ropley Coffee Rooms, Sports Pavilion, Scout Hut, Watercross Line Railway, Romps play area, recreation ground. Plans have been discussed to update and expand the Village Hall, this could be done and at the same time successfully reduce the impact of the Hall's dated style.



3

(3) Children's play area at the Recreation Ground

7.4 There was substantial support in the Village Appraisal for the idea of a new multi sports Pavilion, with 502 people suggesting applying for National Lottery Funding. This has been realised from Sport England, EHDC, Ropley Parish Council and others with the balance being met by the community to replace the existing pavilion with a modern structure which can accommodate multiple sports groups. Other sports already needing space are archery, ultimate frisbee, pop lacrosse



4

(4) A very rural look to the play area!

(1 & 2)

*The
Hampshire
Hunt*

and pétanque — others will follow in the next few years. The village therefore desperately needs more land to develop these sports, as approved by Sport England and EHDC who have given generous grants to help us fulfil the Government objective of increasing participation in sport.

(3) *Ropley
Pram Race*(4) *Ropley
Bowling Club*(5) *The new
Ropley Sports
Pavilion***Design Guidelines — 7A**

- a) The layout and design of new development should take account of mobile recreations such as cycling, horse riding and walking particularly with respect to road usage.
- b) New development should not encroach on existing open spaces so as to protect the character of the settlement and to preserve the recreational opportunities of the parish.



7.5 The Watercress Line is 10 miles long, running between Alresford and Alton, with its centre of activities in Ropley. It was once part of the British main-line network but is now operated as a heritage steam railway. The steeply-graded route means that large and powerful locomotives are the hallmark of the line, now a major tourist attraction.

(1) *Brave passengers and strong parents in the Wheelbarrow Race*



7.6 The annual Ropley Pram race is the main village feature, having been run since 1965. It is organised by a committee of local sporting organisations and other bodies. The Ropley 10K road race has become an established fixture, with up to 500 competitors. Various village walks, especially the annual Boxing Day walk, are well supported. The Hampshire Hunt, always known as the HH, dates from about 1745 and is sited discretely off the Petersfield Road.

(2) *Ropley Tennis Club*



(3) *Ropley Station on Mid Hants Railway*



(4) *St. Peter's Church*



(5) *Ropley Scout Hut*

Recommendations (sport related)

- Siting of sports-related floodlighting must be sympathetic to neighbouring properties. Appropriate shielding should be used to prevent light over-spill, and motion sensitive switching with timeouts used where possible.
- Parking for any expansion of facilities must be considered carefully so as not to dominate the area but provide adequate and realistic space for vehicles.
- Youth clubs and facilities should be nurtured.
- Extra space should be made available for the recreation ground to expand and permit rotation of pitches.
- Developers contributions should be put towards enhancing existing sport and recreational facilities.

Recommendations (general)

- Utility company masts and infrastructures should not impact on the views and vistas within the parish. Service cables should be buried wherever possible.
- Effort should be devoted to an assessment of the biodiversity of the parish.
- A record of visually significant trees & hedges should be established. This was previously carried out by the Parish Tree warden and there is support for this post to be continued.
- Trees and woodland areas should be maintained and safeguarded against development.
- New vehicle accesses made into unclassified roads such as Soames Lane, Park Lane and Webb Lane should be controlled to prevent destruction of hedge-rows and an increase in traffic.
- The Parish Hall should be enhanced to address the needs of the varied groups and activities within the parish.
- Where developments are close to or broach the boundaries of EHDC & Winchester wards, close liaison between the two councils must be encouraged to ensure Ropley's views are given sufficient weight. A recent example being the Commercial Units on the A31 opposite the Shell Garage — those fell into the Winchester ward — but have far more impact on Ropley, yet the Parish was insufficiently involved or consulted.

(1) *Glorious field of poppies seen from the A31 — unusual spring weather conditions in 2006 produced some rare and spectacular poppy displays*

