



# Charlecote

## Village Design Statement





*River Dene, Charlecote Park*

# Village Design Statement

## ✦ Introduction ✦

Village Design Statements (VDSs) have been produced for several years by villages through their own choice and are not a compulsory piece of planning guidance. When completed they complement and add detail to the local plan, other design guidance and local publications (see References). VDSs are sponsored and promoted by the Countryside Agency through the local council, in Charlecote's case, Stratford-on-Avon District Council.

The VDS aims to provide a positive thinking guide to the design principles of any developments in Charlecote Parish. Charlecote VDS will look at the design features that create the village character and seek to preserve them in the face of development. This will be done through recommendations on how development can respect the existing character. These recommendations will take the form of design principles drawing on the descriptive element of the VDS.

It is hoped that our VDS, as Supplementary Planning Guidance, will help maintain and enhance local distinctiveness in Charlecote: a quality that is under threat. The VDS will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications in Charlecote Parish.

### How it was produced

During the participation process every person in the parish was consulted and given the opportunity to become involved in the production. A Steering Group led the process and initially sent out questionnaires asking parishioners for their views. A workshop day was organised when people were invited to photograph aspects of the village that they felt helped to give it character. Some of these photographs are shown in the margins. Opinions were then considered by the Steering Group in preparing drafts which were exhibited at every stage. In this way it was possible to achieve maximum community participation in order to build a consensus view on the design principles Charlecote needed. The implementation team took the following structure, with consultation occurring between the levels:

STRATFORD-ON-AVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

and

VILLAGE COMMUNITY produces  
VDS through a STEERING GROUP

### Location

Charlecote is situated in Warwickshire, between Warwick and Stratford. It lies in open countryside and the parish has a population of just over 200 people.



## + Village Context +

### Charlecote's History

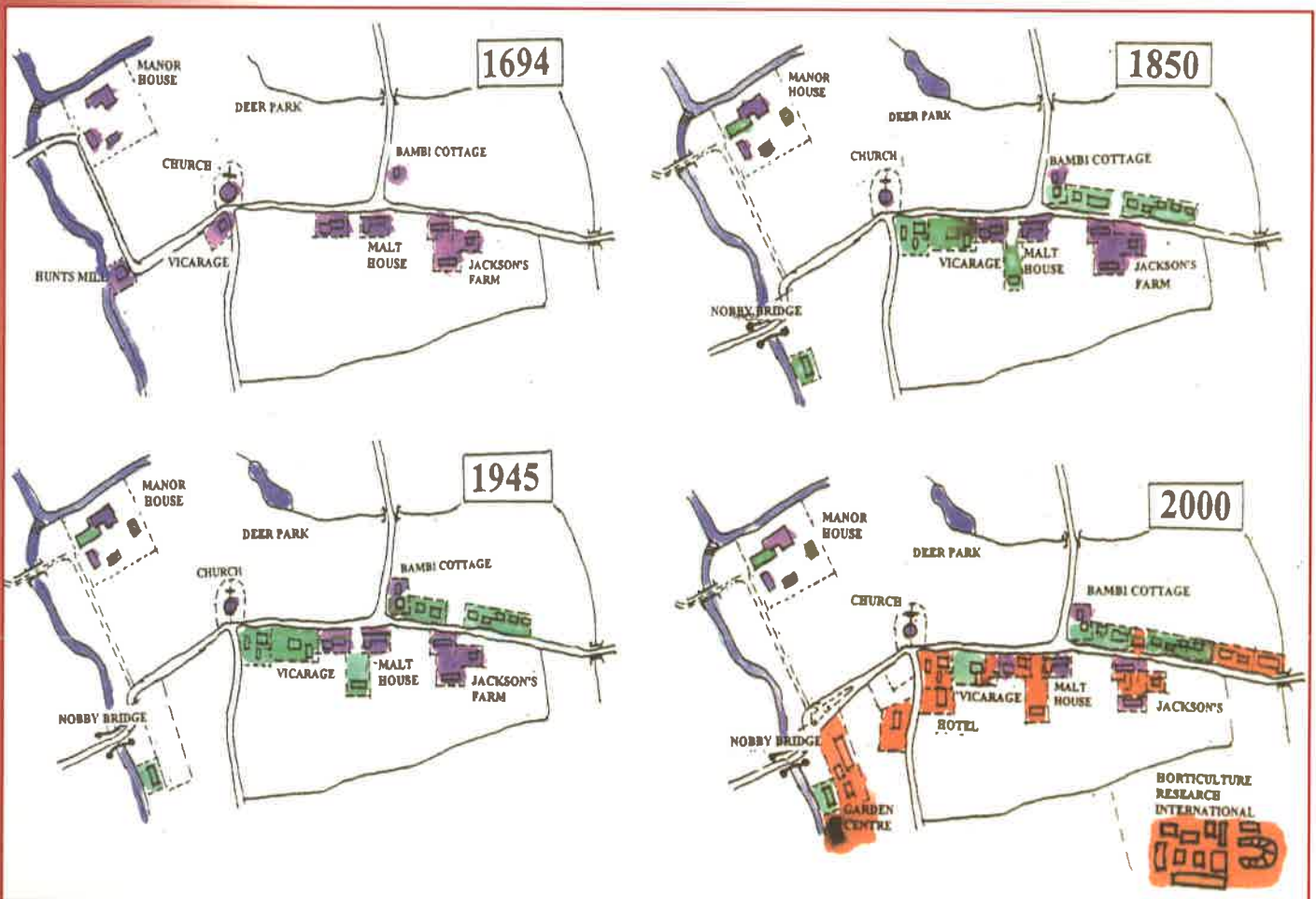
The village can be traced to the Domesday Book under the Saxon name Cerlecote. Buildings at that time comprised a stone manor house surrounded by tithe barns, a mill and outhouses near the River Avon. The Manor house was re-built in 1558 by Sir Thomas Lucy, whose family can be traced to 1189. Over the centuries the property and parkland passed from one generation of Lucys to the next, with the inhabitants of the village being dependent on the big house, parsonage and farms for their employment. Between 1836-1840 alterations were made to the house and estate properties by George and Mary Elizabeth Lucy. The village still contains the red brick cottages, which were erected alongside the old timbered buildings. During this period many agricultural buildings were built throughout the parish.

The decline in the rural and estate work of the village since 1945 has enabled the properties to become privately owned. Charlecote Park and the village itself, apart from a few additions, have retained their charm of 150 years ago. The presence of two important landowners (Horticulture Research International / HRI and the National Trust / NT) in the parish have acted as buffers and prevented further development of a residential nature.

This document takes 'the parish' to encompass the entire area including trees, farms and outlying fields, whereas 'the village' refers only to the central built up area and park.

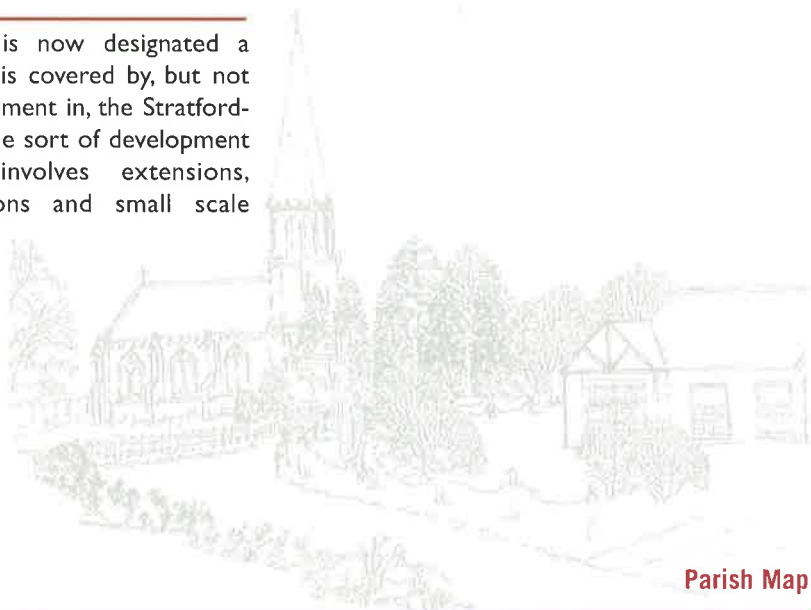


### Village Development Maps

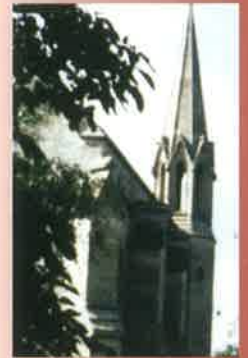
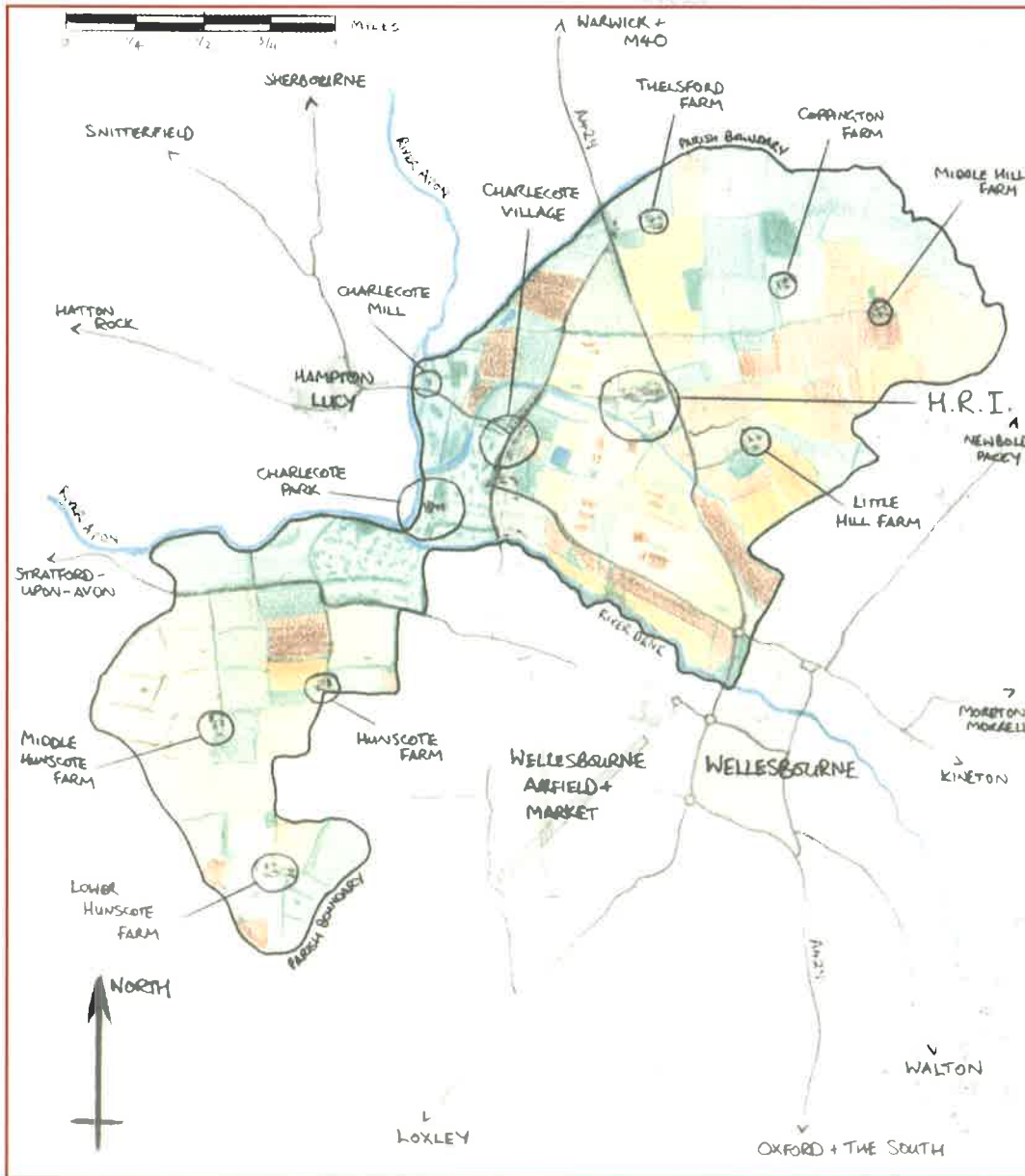


**Present Status**

Most of the village is now designated a Conservation Area. It is covered by, but not earmarked for development in, the Stratford-on-Avon Local Plan. The sort of development usually permitted involves extensions, alterations, conversions and small scale development.



Parish Map



## ‡ Landscape Setting & Character ‡

### Charlecote's Geology

The geology is one of broad flat gravel terraces on the south east side of the River Avon. Charlecote sits on this rich alluvial plain, where the River Avon meets the River Dene.

### Village Evolution and Size

Charlecote evolved as an estate village closely attached to Charlecote Park. It remains of a modest size and does not impose on the landscape.

### Charlecote and its Landscape

The agricultural land surrounding the village is flat, so only rooftops, trees and the church spire are visible on an approach to Charlecote. The estate cottages are rural in character thus relating to the countryside while at the same time breaking it's monotony.



This section should be used in conjunction with the Stratford-on-Avon District Council Character Map, 1998 Design Guide, 2001 and Countryside Design Summary, 1998.

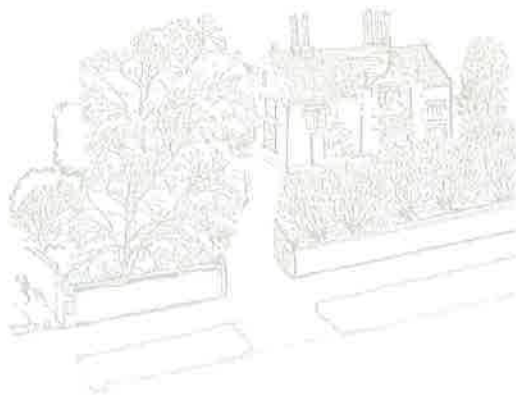


### The Four road approaches to the Village

- The road from Warwick to the North is through flat agricultural land, although the wooded bank above the Avon is visible. The hedges are high and the village begins with a spinney. The village is only apparent once you are in it.
- Arriving from the West there are meadows, interspersed with streams, which epitomise the wooded Hampton Lane close to the Avon.
- From the South the road from Stratford is dominated by Capability Brown's parkland, which it skirts. The humpback 'Nobby Bridge' over the River Dene is a clear feature at this village entrance.
- The route from the East and Wellesbourne provides a clear view of the village trees, roof tops and the church spire, with the Hampton Lucy church tower beyond. It has a few trees, but mainly flat cultivated land linked to the Horticulture Research International Station. The recent introduction of extensive glasshouses has altered this approach.

## The Village Edge

Charlecote village meets the surrounding countryside abruptly. It is unique in having every garden backing onto farmland. This contrast between gardens and fields cannot be seen from the roads, but it is an important contrast that affects the setting of the rear of buildings.



*The rear of village houses from the west*

### KEY PRINCIPLES

1. Any changes should reflect the **rural landscape, setting and character, as shown in this section.**
2. The village should retain its present **modest size and density of buildings**. This would be complemented by its continued status in the Local Plan, as a location for minimal development.
3. Major alterations and changes would be alien to the present **linear nature** of the village and the individual character of its buildings.
4. **Landscape planning** and good **landscape design** are an integral part of any new development. Boundary treatment and planting should reinforce Charlecote's landscape character.



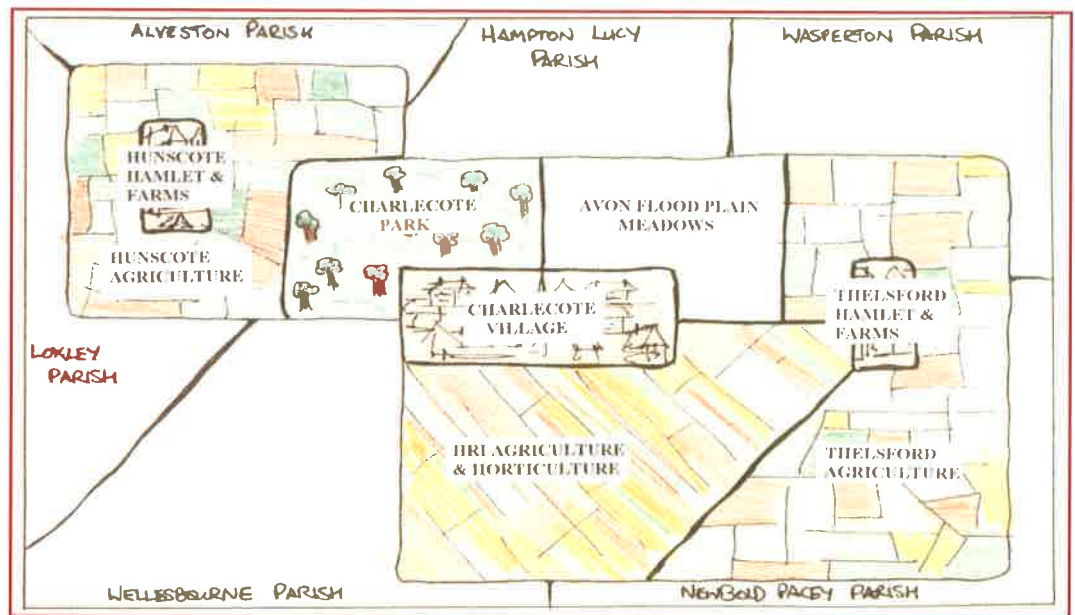
## ✦ Settlement Pattern & Spaces ✦

### Settlement Pattern

As stated previously, Charlecote is a former estate village of a linear pattern. The houses almost all have frontages onto the main road (Kingsmead - Thelsford). The houses do not extend along either the Wellesbourne Lane or Hampton Lucy Lane. Even the Manor House lies on the main road, although it is set in its own parkland. This pattern can be traced back many centuries, as shown on the 1694 painting at Charlecote House (NT). The Charlecote Pheasant Hotel and the two nurseries also lie on the main road. In addition to this linear centre there are several outlying farms,

Charlecote Mill on the Avon and the HRI buildings to the North East. The built centre is the focus for all the community activity in Charlecote as it contains the church, the Village Hall, most of the population and the hotel. There are a number of general character areas within the parish, as shown.

### Character Areas Map



### Village Spaces

Spaces within the village are governed by how far the houses are set back from the road and the presence of infill buildings: the village was originally designed with no two houses opposite, thus giving all properties a clear view to their front. The character of the village relies heavily on the informality of the cottage groupings and further infilling development could damage the contribution spaces make to this.

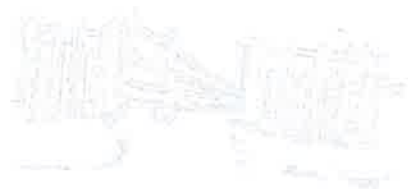
The large number of mature trees, lack of gaps between houses and proximity of gardens to the road gives the village a feeling of enclosure to the north of the Hampton Lane. Here where the spaces formed by the 'paddock' and land to the north of Jackson's Barn, are important in providing a link with the fields behind the houses.

To the south there are fewer trees and here the properties are set well back behind their boundary walls. This, together with the parkland stretching to the west of the road, gives this part of the village a very open nature, similar to the character given by a village green, a feature Charlecote does not have.



### Village Roads and Paths

Most of the roads in the village are flanked by low grass verges, important in contributing to the rural nature of Charlecote. The roadside footpaths by the churchyard to the west, and from the Pheasant Hotel to the bus shelter to the east have well-worn gravel surfaces, although sections have recently been treated with an asphalt base. At the other end of the village, to west of the main road, is a strongly constructed footpath of asphalt where the sett block retaining kerbs are much more sympathetic than concrete kerbs.



The main road through the village has a slight curve but the side lanes from it to Hampton Lucy and Wellesbourne are more winding. There are no cul de sacs.

Street lighting has been resisted, a feature, which if introduced, would spoil the village's rural character. The parish recently reconfirmed that it does not want streetlights.

There are many footpath rights of way in all directions out of the village. These have recently become the subject of a new initiative in partnership with Warwickshire County Council, which will continue to respect their rural location.



View from the north



View out towards Hampton Lucy across parkland

### Trees

Since World War II and the Elm losses of the 1970s the remaining trees have become even more important. Trees in the parish are generally confined to the village, creating an 'island' of trees and parkland in an agricultural landscape containing far fewer. A tunnelling effect is produced by the mature trees along the main road. Notable trees are the lime avenue in Charlecote Park and the oaks and limes along the length of the village, the rhythm of which is broken by the large row of leylandii.

### Views Out of the Village

There are few views from the village street, due to the enclosing effect of the buildings and the lack of high ground around Charlecote. The views out are from rear gardens across agricultural land and where the roads leave the built centre. In some parts of the village there are pleasant views out over the parkland. The exits to the north and west are topographically dominated by 'Scar Bank' above the Avon, although Moreton Morrell and Loxley Hills are also apparent.

### Views Into the Village

The low-lying land around Charlecote means little of the village can be seen. The skyline is dominated by the church spire and mature oaks.



## KEY PRINCIPLES

1. Development should respect the overall hierarchy of **dispersed and varied space**.
2. If highway changes are made - appropriate and **sympathetic highway materials** would be preferable
3. The **retaining kerbs** should preferably be sett blocks and not concrete.
4. Development should be designed with the **views** mentioned in mind.

## ✦ Buildings ✦



### Building Character Areas

Charlecote contains some specific building character areas. The cluster of Tudor dwellings around the village centre is an example of how distinct groups of buildings date from specific periods. These groups developed in a linear pattern until the re-building of the village was completed in 1838. Since this date new houses have taken the form of 'stand-alone' developments in remaining spaces or conversions from existing cottages.

Since Charlecote Park went over to National Trust stewardship in 1946, tourism has been encouraged and several businesses have evolved to serve this. In the centre of this area the Pheasant Hotel is the most dominant set of buildings.

### Building Mass and Spaces Between

Nearly all of the village falls within the Conservation Area. This has been an important extension to the protection afforded to the village by bringing spaces and trees under protection, as well as the buildings themselves. The cottages and buildings reciprocate each others form and scale and the modest extensions have combined to respect this, such as the conversion at the Malt House from the old stable buildings (shown opposite).



The Vicarage



St. Leonard's Church



Jackson's Farmhouse



Charlecote Park



The Malt house



Bambi Cottage

### Parish list of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic interest

**Grade 1**  
Charlecote Park main house, gatehouse, wash house, brewhouse, stables & coach house.

**Grade 11**  
Charlecote Park Orangery, west gate, artefacts & walls within the parkland.  
St. Leonard's Church  
Charlecote Mill, Mill House & outbuildings, The Vicarage & Glebe House, Nos. 20-23, The Malt House, Jackson's Farmhouse, Wayside & Willow's End, Charlecote Gardens, Bambi Cottage, Hiorns (Nobby) Bridge, K6 Telephone Kiosk.

### Focal Buildings

The key buildings that act as focal points are the Manor House, St Leonard's Church, the early Victorian Vicarage, the three sets of Tudor buildings and Bambi Cottage. These buildings are important in highlighting details that recur on other village properties. The dwellings adjacent to these play a role that is arguably equally important in setting off their unique character. They create an interesting arrangement of Tudor and Nineteenth century cottages. It is fair to say, every house in the village is unique. There is an example of

virtually every English architectural style since Tudor times, which in itself is remarkable for such a small village. The church is quite different in style from rest of the village and dates from 1850, being of grey sandstone (as is Warwick Castle), formed into ashlar blocks. The village has a large number of listed buildings in proportion to its size.



Malt House conversion

### Building Form

Nearly all village buildings are two storey and of a generally rectangular plan. The building heights are low due to the age of dwellings, as are the eaves heights. Village houses are a mixture of semi-detached and detached cottages. Many buildings are irregular in shape due to the various extensions and conversions that have been added, over the years, since construction, such as the Malt House conversion (*above*). Some of the older timbered cottages are experiencing warping to their beams, a feature that adds real character to these buildings. All village buildings have pitched roofs of varying degrees, with chimneys varying in style and usually being quite prominent. The abundance of pitched roofs, some at quite steep angles, creates many gables and these are an important feature of the form of many properties.

Facades are restrained relative to the rears, which have many protrusions. Characteristic details are found on all parts of houses, taking the form of dormer windows, porches of varying sizes and styles, doors and windows (*examples appear in the margin*). Despite this plethora of styles there is some continuity from building to building, such as the latticed windows or recurring gable angles on the Victorian cottages. Outlying farms also make an important contribution, many of the shapes found in the village are echoed here. The farm at Thelsford provides an interesting arrangement of Victorian bargeboards on an Elizabethan gable. It is important that new agricultural buildings are sympathetic to the farm buildings and out-houses.

Proportions and detail vary from building to building, as has been seen. The parish is still, however, pervaded by the 'Lucy Estate' rhythms and it is crucial that these remain intact.

### Orientation and Layout

Nearly all village properties have a north-western or south-eastern aspect, showing how the main road has affected building alignments. This also means that village gardens receive a great deal of light all year round as none are north facing. Gardens vary throughout the village, but it is most common to find a modest walled or fenced front garden with a larger private garden at the rear. Properties to the west of the main road have generally larger front gardens to those on the east. The outlying farms are still located in agricultural surrounds, preserving the estate feel, which Charlecote has and is keen to retain.





## Building Materials

Despite the diverse forms and proportions evident, the materials found here are also important. Materials and the way they are employed are quite eclectic, but the warm red brick and brown-red tiles of the Lucy estate cottages are still widely apparent. There are some interesting materials used. The thatched roof on Bambi Cottage is the only one in the village. The stone-coping and rounded tiles

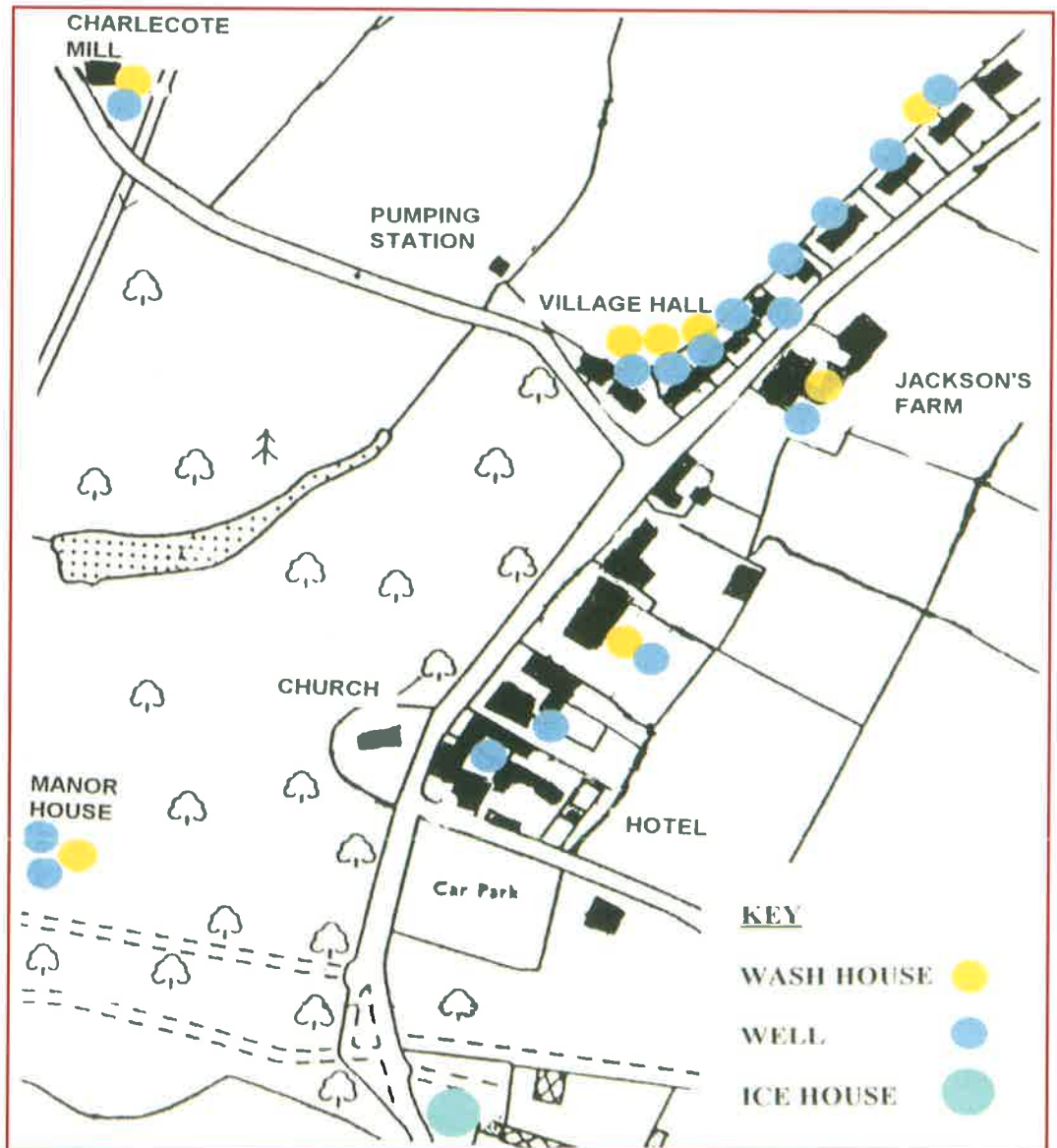
found on The Vicarage are also unusual.

There is a variety of fences and walls. The red brick wall (second down margin) style runs in varying lengths and heights throughout the village, with the wooden fence (third down margin) found around the park.



## Map of Privies, Wells and Wash-houses

(other artefacts and items of interest are shown on the back page)

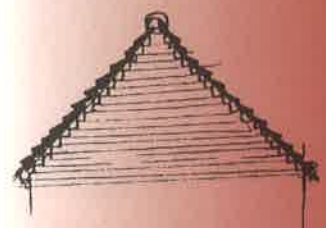
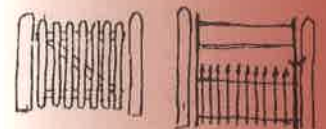
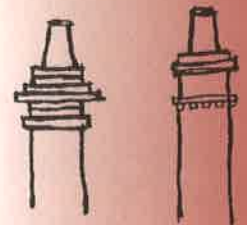
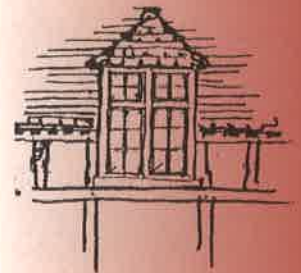
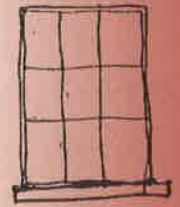




1830's Kitchen Garden House with blue brick herringbone design. 1980's Garden Centre property incorporating herringbone brickwork and window detail

### KEY PRINCIPLES

1. Any changes should respect and enhance the Character Area they are in (as shown on page 6)
2. Views of Focal Buildings in their settings should be retained and new development should not dominate or detract from them.
3. Residential Development should have pitched roofs of the appropriate angle, two storeys and chimneys. Modern architectural styles along the main road would destroy the village charm. Varied eaves heights and characteristic features borrowed from existing buildings would be both acceptable and desirable.
4. Indigenous Materials, preferably reclaimed as in the Malt House Extension and Nursery House, should be used as far as possible. New buildings should be largely red brick with flat clay roof tiles. Using recycled materials is desirable in order to improve the sustainability of new development.
5. Any new buildings should not be an exact copy of existing ones but should seek to employ the already successful design principles used in Charlecote in the design of new houses. (examples already built can be seen above and below)
6. Extensions should be sympathetic to the original building's character, form and scale.
7. Commercial Development should not encroach on the parish further than its existing location in the south of the village. It too should respect village styles.
8. It is important that the siting and materials of new Agricultural Buildings are sympathetic to the farm buildings and out-houses they might affect. They should respect and enhance their design qualities.
9. Old-style signposts and street furniture of a rustic nature should be encouraged. Street lighting should not be installed as this would damage the rural qualities of Charlecote.
10. New house designs will be preferable where they actively seek to reduce heat use and heat loss.



Late 1990's summer house within the curtilage of Bambi Cottage, which has employed some of the original design details found on the house



## ✦ Recommendations ✦

- The existing settlement pattern and space hierarchy should not be compromised by new development.
- Development should not damage the quality of wildlife habitats. Existing hedges trees and water features should be maintained.
- Any residential development should follow the guidelines set out in the key principles from the building chapter.
- Commercial and agricultural development should respect the high quality character found elsewhere in the village.
- The natural and built environment should be respected in any development in order to retain Charlecote's rural and unique character.



*Large verges in the centre of the village*

## ✦ The Future ✦

This Village Design Statement has taken the policies of Stratford-on-Avon District Local Plan into account. In doing so it has reflected County, Regional and National planning policies.

The statement does not serve in order to preserve Charlecote as a museum, but in order to manage inevitable future development and to minimise any detrimental effects of this on the attractive environment that has developed here.

The Parish Meeting and its Planning Committee will seek to uphold the principles of this statement in their role as statutory consultees. It is hoped that this will be an essential reference for those implementing change in Charlecote, be they villagers, architects, developers, businesses, planners or most importantly those making decisions on planning applications.



### REFERENCES

#### Existing Supplementary Planning Guidance

Stratford-on-Avon District Design Guide  
*Stratford-on-Avon District Council, 1999*

#### Other Publications

Stratford-on-Avon District Character Map  
*Stratford-on-Avon District Council, 1998*

Countryside Design Summary  
*Stratford-on-Avon District Council, 1998*

Charlecote Parish Appraisal 1997

Walks Around Charlecote 2000

## ✦ Acknowledgements ✦



Workshop day August 1999

The VDS Steering Group wish to thank:

- The many residents of Charlecote who attended meetings, workshops and exhibitions giving time to offer their opinions and read drafts. Their local knowledge has been invaluable. It should be noted that all the margin photos were taken by them at their first workshop in August 1999.
- Andrew Wharton, VDS Project Officer to Stratford District Council whose professional expertise gave the team a sound basis upon which to launch the statement.
- Richard Gardner, a Charlecote resident, who whilst undertaking his master's degree in Town and Country Planning was able to give sufficient time to chair the working parties and guide the project to a successful document.
- David Nelson of the BBC, who considered this project of sufficient interest to film each meeting with a view to a possible documentary upon it.
- Stratford-on-Avon District Council, without whose generous financial help this project would not have been possible.

- Charlecote VDS Steering Group:

*Chris Aylett - Chairman of Charlecote Parish Meeting*

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*Kath Gardner - Historical Researcher*

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Hampton Lucy Lane

Village Hall  
(The Old School)

Victorian Estate Cottages

Bambi Cottage

Jackson's Farmhouse

Charlecote Park

Bus shelter &  
Telephone box

Letterbox

The Malt House

The Vicarage

St Leonard's Church

Charlecote Pheasant Hotel

Charlecote  
2000