

Clearwell

Introduction

- 15.1 Clearwell is located on the edge of but outside the Statutory Forest about five kilometres south of Coleford in an attractive valley adjacent to the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The village lies in a small valley within the undulating plateau on the edge of the Wye Valley. The village has historical associations with the extraction of iron ore on the adjoining Clearwell Meend.
- 15.2 Clearwell has developed on a narrow valley floor with steeply rising land on either side. This topography has encouraged a strong linear form, with an almost continuous frontage of development following one of the two roads which pass through the village. At the junction of these roads is the Cross which forms a focus to the built form of the village.
- 15.3 Most of Clearwell lies within a Conservation Area and there are many fine buildings in the village, typically constructed of local red sandstone. Notable among these buildings are Clearwell Castle and the Church of St. Peter. There are many interesting groups of buildings of some architectural and historic merit in the village. Interspersed with these are a variety of newer buildings of various styles and materials. Considerable development in the form of infilling and small groups of dwellings has taken place in recent years.
- 15.4 Local services include a Post Office and shop, a village hall, and a school. There is a recreation ground on the western edge of the village. Clearwell has a variety of tourist accommodation including small hotels and inns. These are important employers in the locality. Close by are two important tourist attractions in Clearwell Caves and Puzzle Wood.
- 15.5 The population of Newland Parish (including Clearwell) declined considerably between 1951 and 1981. Since that date there has been a reversal of trends due to the significant number of housing completions in the village. There have been 46 dwelling completions since 1981, amounting to an increase of about 50% in the village housing stock. It is estimated that the village population was about 330 in 2001 with a housing stock of 129. On January 1st 2004, outstanding consents existed for 2 dwellings.

Development Strategy

- 15.6 Clearwell is an attractive village with a distinctive built form, containing many buildings of architectural merit and set in a very high quality landscape. This high quality built environment is reflected in the extensive Conservation Area which covers most of the village. The strategy of the Plan is to contain development within a tightly drawn settlement boundary in order to safeguard the attractive character of the landscape setting of the area.
- 15.7 The extent of services in Clearwell means that it is appropriate to provide for residential development in the form of small groups, single dwellings and infilling. However, the physical form of the village is such that very little opportunity exists for further development. Outward expansion of the village will be resisted as an incursion into the attractive surrounding open countryside, much of which is visually prominent.
- 15.8 Development behind the road frontage would be difficult to achieve and could be unduly prominent due to the rising land on the valley sides which form part of the landscape character. Development will be required to respect this setting.
- 15.9 Any further new building should employ a high standard of design and attention to detail. The use of appropriate materials will be required in all new developments to complement the overall quality of the

built environment of the village. New development proposals may need to be accompanied by archaeological assessments.

- 15.10 Tourism is an important local industry, supporting services and providing employment. Further development of the industry in an appropriate form will be supported.
- 15.11 There are two visually important open areas, around the burial ground and around the church. The village recreation ground is divorced from the main part of the settlement, but is an important open space on the valley floor at the periphery of the village.