

Submission  
Appendix A  
*Coleford  
character  
assessments*

A1  
Town centre  
and  
conservation area



A1

## Town Centre and Conservation Area Character Assessment

### **Location**

When many people talk of Coleford, they often refer to the town of Coleford, not the parish which is much bigger. This lies to the west of the Forest of Dean, centred between Monmouth (WNW) Goodrich (N) Cinderford (E) and St Briavels to the south at a distance of approximately 7 miles. The Town Centre is often implied as well, for this is where the roads meet up and most of the administrative, commercial and shopping functions occur.

Coleford town centre is located in the shallow bowl towards which the gateways lead. This landform slopes from Market Place into Newland St from all directions and then down, out of town.

The bowl reflects the confluence of the various streams from east and north into the main culvert under the Market Place and down through into Valley Brook, Whitecliff, toward Newland and draining into the Wye. There are two main sewerage routes, one from east to west through the Market Place, and another from High Nash through the FODDC car park which joins and then proceeds to Newland sewage works.

The conservation area is largely but not totally included in the Town Centre, but has a specific planning status. The town centre includes areas to the east on Old Station Way which are not in the conservation area. Each boundary should be checked on Map 2.

The Clock Tower stands in the middle of both the conservation area and the town centre.

### **Landscape**

Gloucester Rd and Lords Hill slope down to the traffic lights, and then the bowl slopes gently through Market Place, with an amphitheatre effect on the Tump; Clock Tower to one side and the Cross on the other. The lower level, below the steps, facing west gives an open effect to link into St John St, whereas High St opens into Market Place at the higher level.

There is a significant height difference on the south edge of Newland St where the FODDC car park slopes steeply to the west into the start of Whitecliff valley.

Much of the town was razed to the ground following the Battle of Coleford February 20 1643 by Royalist forces, and it took some time to re-establish the economic centre (although the market charter was granted 1661). Hence, the dominant look of the architecture in the town centre is Georgian, with some modern infill.



1. Market Place



2. From High St down to Newland St, showing St John's church at similar height



3. Coleford Area Partnership opening the Market House (Town Hall) mural, painted by Tom Cousins when the Time for Coleford Plan was being completed in 2003

The Clock Tower and Cross indicate where the central octagonal church stood, and adjacent, where the tree with seat is found, was where the Market House or Town Hall once stood. The church was dismantled 1882, leaving the Tower behind, and the cross is located on the site of the altar. The Market House was pulled down and the centre altered in 1968 for highways improvements. This was redesigned to give that amphitheatre effect, but lost some key buildings.



4. Clock Tower and Cross

The older streetscape still harks back to the 1950s to the degree that when Dennis Potter's "Karaoke" was filmed in the Market Place, very little needed to be dressed differently.

Two and three storey buildings front onto the street with only a very few gaps between, not really seen in a landscape view. Many of these have shops on the ground floor, and it is only when looking at the first floor upwards that the Georgian design is clearly seen.



5. St John St

Looking diagonally across this view from High St over the Market Place into St John St, the narrowing of this Georgian street gives a more closed in routeway, with independent shops. (see photo 5)

Listed buildings stand out in the Town Centre and Conservation Area, such as Lloyds Bank and the Angel. There are two murals, the Mushet Walk gateway and blue signs to give some historical information. However there are some key buildings which are not listed as such, but are prominent in the view, for example the Kings Head is in both the Conservation Area and Town Centre, and Lawnstone House until recently was in the Town Centre, but demolished in 2016.



6. Lawnstone House (demolished)

Off Lords Hill and Old Station Way are modern industrial type supermarkets, a single storey shopping mall, Pyart Court, and car parks. The Police Hub (incorporating the old court) stand on the corner of Gloucester Rd

The condition of the Town Centre buildings is variable: with those which are empty suffering in particular. Many are somewhat shabby compared to others. Signage and paint varies, even within the Conservation Area.



7. Across site from Lords Hill/ Old Station Way

The main hard spaces in the Town Centre (other than the Tump) are car parks, which have some green planting of little species value: the overwhelming view is of tarmac. Only the tree and planting in the Market Place and the mature trees at the edge of the District Council car park show as positively green.



8. Car park toward Pyart Court with cycle track and picnic tables

The Spout and the Tram Road are included in here as historic routeways, which are now no through roads. These predate the motor car, and their use as, respectively, footpath/wagon access to water and railway line has ceased.



The Tram Road –north (9) and south (10 below)



In terms of wildlife and ecology, the one end of the tram road, and the FODDC car park on the south west edge are the main value, although the avenue of trees along the footway and cycle path from the Main Place into the car park gives a benefit for foxes, small mammals and a variety of birds. The pigeons and gulls which scavenge in the waste bins are evident in the centre.

**Settlement character**

There are effectively 5 subareas in the Town Centre. Those with all or part in the Conservation Area are marked with a star

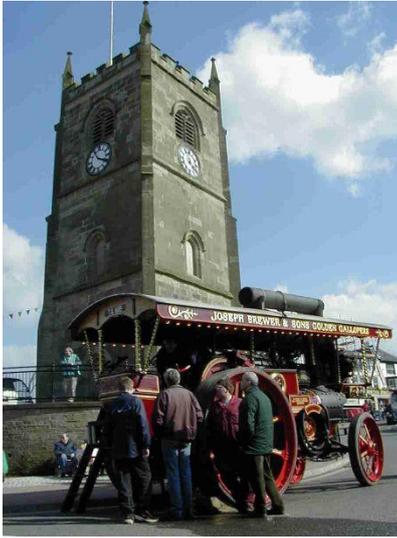
- I. Market Place\*
- II. St John St/Tram Rd/ bottom of Staunton Rd and Sparrow Hill\*
- III. High St\*
- IV. Lower Gloucester Rd/parts of Bank St/bottom of lords Hill\*
- V. Lords Hill to Old Station Way, The Main Place and Railway Drive, Museum, Pyart Court

**I. Market Place**

This is the central focus of the town, where the market was held up to the 1950s/60s. This was a sheep market as well as produce. Since the change in the landscape described above, a small country market has been held on occasions, and market festivals. The current layout works well for the staging of events such as the Carnival of Transport.

See Map 2 boundaries of Town Centre and Conservation Area

The Clock Tower is iconic, and can be seen from numerous places round the town, coming down Coalway Rd, from Bakers Hill, from Angelfield and High Nash. This makes it an obvious and vital part of Coleford’s Christmas Lights.



11 *Carnival of Transport*

At each of the main corner sites approaching the Market Place are key buildings either in their own right and/or as part of that central streetscape. Many are listed – see town centre Map 2.



12 *Christmas Lights*

The Angel, The Feathers, the White Hart are important pubs, harking back to the original coaching inns on the Gloucester-Monmouth route. However, others like the Kings Head, Red Lion and Vaults are either closed and standing empty or have changed use.



13 *Kings Head, Market Place and traffic roundabout*



14 *Angel hotel*

The main area of independent shops is here (with St John St also, later). Frequently these comprise single frontages especially on the west side, but around the northern and eastern sides are some larger stores including the former Elsmore and Trotters buildings. Many have been altered to the rear, including their rear access, but the frontages are mainly Georgian style. This is very noticeable above the ground floor, and includes steeply pitched, parapet or hipped slate roofs and chimneys, with defined architraves above the sash windows. Many are constructed of stone – both red sandstone as right and limestone – but frequently rendered due to porosity.

The whole Market Place has pavements and there are crossing points for pedestrians to the Tump, which has been designed to give pedestrian-friendly access.

Nevertheless it does function as a traffic roundabout with the associated noise and emissions. Buses leave from the west of



15 *Georgian style frontages*

the Market Place by the DIY shop and by The Angel. Some turn around the acute angle in 13, and delivery lorries also travel through here, which can put pressure on traffic movement. The pavement slopes round from High St into Newland St quite steeply, and has safety rails. It often needs salting in winter.

The tree in the centre with the seating around gives one of only four places to sit in the centre of town.

A number of blue plaques tell of more historic events, including the Assizes held in the Angel relating to Warren James, the Battle of Coleford in the Civil War.

Street furniture has a generic historic theme, but the Mushet Walk gateway gives a direct reference to Coleford's past using the appropriate materials and style. It links to Whitecliff Furnace (see Green Ring 1 (West)) Gorsty Knoll and Forest House (High St) which was their home. The mural here illustrates the importance of the family and their inventions & employment to Coleford.

**Key views**

- 1. Market Place toward High St
- 5. Market Place to St John St

**Key features**

- The Tump with Clock Tower and tree with seat
- Kings Head
- White Hart

**II. St John St/Tram Rd/ bottom of Staunton Rd and Sparrow Hill**

In the very early 21C St John St was landscaped (see 18) and made one-way, out of town. At that time, the sewers were upgraded, the culvert checked, and the traffic calming measures with pull-ins, setts and similarly styled shop signs were adopted. Most of St John St is 3 storey and Georgian style with high, 6 pot chimneys.

Flats over shops mean people live in the Town Centre.

The independent businesses included a bookshop until recently which closed in 2015. In 2017 are a gift shop, a small pub shop, phones, Chinese, Indian and fish and chip takeaways. Hairdressers are in numbers. Lloyds Bank on the corner is now the only bank in Coleford.



16 Sparse greenery in Market Place



17 Mushet Mural and Gateway to Mushet Walk

- 2. High St- Newland St
- Gloucester Rd – Market Place

- Mushet Mural and gates
- Market House mural



18. St John St landscaped with setts, pull-in, bollards. Note hipped roof, but flat to right..

On the corner of St John St, the Tram Rd and Boxbush Rd is Raymonds Stores, known for its proprietor, its sustainability, and the variety of goods for sale: from carpets to hosiery, drapery and shoes.

This has a seat outside, but it is on a busy junction by the Congregational Chapel (now flats). Bank St takes traffic from the lights toward Monmouth: including significant numbers of heavy goods vehicles. Completed in 2015 is Dora Matthews House, housing with care for 55+ age group and with extra care provision available to the community.



19 Raymonds Stores

Opposite and at the start of Boxbush Rd (one-way uphill) is an old pub (now residence) and some interesting town houses.



The constraints deliberately planned into St John St mean the Tram Rd now provides vehicular access to the rear for shops and the flats over.

The entrance to the Tram Rd is curved (see 9) and restricts speed of traffic by its architecture, and by the shared space at the end of the street. However, some of the original local limestone of these shops is eroding – see above. At some point, a wall was built across the old line, so there is no through route.



20 Back of St John St seen from Tram Rd

**Key views**

- Staunton Rd into St John St

**Key features**



21 Old Wine Vaults – now Housing Association

Dressed Forest grey (limestone) with arch entrance.

- Boxbush Rd down to chapel



22 Old White Hart Inn

**lii High St**

This section of the Town Centre provides commercial and professional services and a few shops.



23 Bristol Terrace and the old Waverley Hotel High St (Listed)

Three storey stone town houses with parapet roofs and pediments over doors



25 The HQ of the Forest of Dean District Council is found off a small roundabout leading opposite to the public

car park

## Key views

A key way into town (see Gateways) the Chepstow Rd splits as it enters, and this is where it reaches the centre. As the fire and ambulance stations are just past the FODDC and car park roundabout, there is a permanent requirement for emergency vehicles to pass. This is a main through route in the centre of town. The markings in 26 are the approach to a zebra crossing which is frequently in use between the top and bottom of Market Place via High St.

Cars parked in the background left are in spaces for those with disabilities to access local shops and services.

It also includes the cinema (one of the oldest in the country) past the car showroom on the right and the post and delivery office on the left. These have rear vehicular access.

### Key features

- Forest of Dean District Council (FODDC) Offices
- St John Ambulance Station
- Fire Station
- Ambulance Station

### 27 Cinema



### iv Lower Gloucester Rd/ parts of Bank St/Lords Hill

The B4208 meets with the Market Place and Bank St (continuation of Staunton Rd B4228) at the traffic lights by the Police Station. This is a 4 way set of lights used by most traffic going to, from or through Coleford town. It is a source of congestion and emissions hazard, much of the day.

It also links through to the industrial areas via Old Station Way. The Kings Head Hotel lies at an awkward right angle opposite the Police Station which affects the flow of traffic. Where Lords Hill meets the junction there is an entrance to the car park, and it has problems with a manhole lifting and flooding in intense rain.

This key junction has movement problems and traffic light timings are frequently monitored. Air quality is also monitored.

The Georgian style here is shown by the Kings Head and linked streetscape. It is reputed that the key arrow was shot from here which resulted in the Battle of Coleford. However, these buildings replaced those burnt down. The Kings Head has been empty for some years, and the ground floor is currently an emporium for Recycling, a charity. The 3 storey building at a key location is in significant disrepair.

- See 2 to Newland St
- Below 26 from Market Place



26 High St: mixed age, function and styles.

- Army Cadet hut
- Bristol Terrace
- Post Office  
and below.....Forest House



28 Forest House Hotel (home of David and his son Robert Forester Mushet)



29 Traffic lights at the Kings Head with Bank House (Forestry Commission) in background

There is a direct contrast between the area to the west of the junction (in the Conservation Area) and that opposite which is mainly modern ie in the Town Centre, but not in the Conservation Area.

This is illustrated by photos 29 (west of Gloucester Rd/Bank St and 30 the east, Police Station). The Police Station has been threatened with closure, and the Court was closed some time ago, but the whole is now a Police Hub.



30 Police Station with Court behind.

The services evident in Bank St, the Forestry Commission, garage and new extra care housing all generate traffic movements in addition to the through traffic. This is further complicated by The Spout, a lane leading up a narrow route to a dead end where once people came to find the spring/ stream for water. This is within the Conservation Area, and houses a number of small businesses and rear access to some Gloucester Rd properties



31 The Spout

#### Key features

**Bank House** (29) by contrast to the Kings Head is listed, a very good example of Georgian architecture.

It also houses the Deputy Gaveler's Office and is a resource for those studying the coal and iron mining industries in the Forest

It was at one time the solicitor's office for Angus Buchanan VC who is also remembered up at the Recreation Ground.



32 Milestone at the cross roads, reading London 123 miles.

In 33 is the Marshes once owned by Dr Battle in whose garden the Fete used to be held in the 1950s, and where the stream ran through and down toward town. That land is now beneath commercial buildings and car park, with culverted drainage.

#### Other features include

- The Spout
- Kings Head
- Police Hub
- Milestone
- Traffic lights



33 The Marshes at the bottom of Lords Hill, adjacent to car park entrance

#### v. Lords Hill to Old Station Way, The Main Place and Railway Drive, Museum, Pyart Court

This area is included within the Town Centre, but NOT the Conservation Area.

It is modern, and has commercial and administrative functions. It is the main focus for health with doctors, outpatient clinics, chemists and also vet provision (see 36) Most materials are red brick and tile, with gated walkways between.

The area in front of Pyart Court gives a little green picnic area.

Much of the development on the inside of Old Station Way was constructed at the same time, except for The Main Place and the site currently with permission for another supermarket.



34  
Pyart Court below the road level, with

embankment

Most of this area only came into being in the 1980s when Old Station Way was built to redirect some of the traffic, especially heavy goods, away from the Market Place (35)

Given the weight restrictions on High Nash, and the speed restriction (20mph) on Market Place, it still fulfils this purpose.



35

36 Health Centre (and 2 chemists in Pyart Court)



37 Cycle track and avenue past Pyart Court



Note the drain cut into the grass area to drain

toward Market Place into a culvert  
36a the Main Place:

The Main Place was constructed 2009/10 to integrate the functions noted above when Phase 1 of the Community Centre project took place following on from the Time for Coleford town plan. In this, the library and community centre in Bank St which was of 1960s flat roof construction and not DDA consistent was demolished after this facility was in place.

Coleford Area Partnership, County Council, District Council and RDA worked together to achieve a building in character with old and new. Since then the county youth and library provision has been greatly reduced, but both remain in Coleford.

The breast cancer mammogram caravan uses the car park temporarily to give a local service.



contains the Enterprise Centre; Library Adult Day Care; youth provision, community centre

The only older building in this area is the Great Western Museum which remains on its original site, one of the two stations once found in Coleford, and closed in Beeching's cuts.

The Museum has irregular hours, opening mainly in the tourist season.



37 GWR Museum

Finally the main car park, with its access off High St backs onto all these functions and the shopping centre.

There are no through routes connecting Railway Drive and Old Station Way

Modern public conveniences are found near to the supermarket in the main car park. These have a pedestrian link back into Market Place via Mushet Walk, past the Job Centre and the Town Council office and CAB.



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### Key views

Photos 34, 35, 37 from outside in.

### Key features:

Functions:

- supermarkets, Pyart Court mall
- car parks
- health facilities
- community centre at Main Place
- country market weekly

## **Positive features and special qualities**

- economic functions, shopping and professional services
- entertainment: cinema and pubs/cafes
- health and social functions
- emergency services
- heritage value in Conservation Area, especially Georgian
- Market Place focus
- amphitheatre event space in the middle
- cohesion of Georgian centre
- definite layout of roads , cycle access, and pedestrian ways
- flats over shops
- murals

## **Negative features and detracting elements**

- main through routes use Market Place as traffic island
- traffic lights with congestion
- traffic noise and emissions outweigh pedestrian-friendly design
- shabby shop fronts
- some key buildings in disrepair eg Kings Head,
- run-off with intense rain at car park and bottom of Lords Hill
- empty shops
- uncertainty on certain sites eg Kings Head
- limited range of shops

## **Looking ahead**

- match-funding scheme to improve the look of the Market Place/ Conservation Area
- find appropriate use for empty buildings especially Kings Head
- address pluvial flooding issues at Lords Hill
- set up Heritage Trail and information boards
- plan events to use Market Place amphitheatre space regularly
- market back in town centre
- monitor traffic and junctions and improve traffic flow
- increase access for pedestrians and cyclists (sign cycle racks)
- improve attraction for visitors and locals

## Character assessment: Industrial/commercial areas of Coleford (not shopping)

### **Location**

There are three main locations where industrial usage dominates the landscape. One is the Suntory Factory complex to the south-west of the town centre, accessed off Rock Lane, on the edge of the built up area and the Green West of Coleford. The other two are industrial estates, Crucible Close off Old Station Way and Stepbridge Road off Tufthorn Avenue, which are located next to each other to the south of the town centre.

The Suntory Factory and the Crucible Close Industrial Estate can be easily accessed from the south without traffic having to pass through the town centre. There is a weight restriction on Cinder Hill. Delivery vehicles approaching from other directions do have to pass through the town centre and/or residential areas. All traffic accessing the Stepbridge Road Industrial Estate has to use a residential road.

In addition to these three main industrial areas, there are also individual and small clusters of industrial/commercial premises scattered around Coleford parish, such as along Station Road, Milkwall, Ellwood Road, Broadwell and the northern end of Tufthorn Avenue.

### **Landscape**

The Suntory Factory is sited on a plateau with the land sloping down to the southeast, south, west and north-west. Consequently it is highly visible from a number of locations, most notably from the B4228 approaching Coleford and from the SE of the Buchanan Recreation Ground across the Whitecliff valley. There is housing on the north-eastern edge of the factory site. In other directions the factory site borders onto open fields of pasture, which contrasts with the factory and increases the visibility of the buildings.



*1Suntory in the background, viewed from the B4228 and the Green West of Coleford by Puzzle Wood*

The two modern planned industrial estates are less visible in the landscape, being lower than the adjoining areas of Coleford, although the Crucible/ Cupola Close site does have an obvious frontage onto the B4228 [Old Station Way]. Both it and Stepbridge Road are bounded on their eastern edge by a cycle path which follows the route of the old railway line.

Trees and hedgerows along this linear feature provide a green backcloth to the industrial estates and effective screening from the east. Crucible Close has cycle and pedestrian access onto the cycle path.

There is no direct access between the two industrial estates.



*2Industrial estate planned and constructed in same phase as Old Station Way in the 1980s*

### **Settlement character**

The Suntory Factory complex contains the largest buildings in Coleford. It is on a large but compact site which also contains ancillary buildings, storage tanks and large areas of tarmac for parking, loading and unloading. It is bounded by high wire fencing.

There has been a factory making drinks here since WWII but recently it has been extended. It is one of the largest employers in the town.



*3The 21C buildings of Suntory, viewed from Angus Buchanan Recreation Ground*

**Crucible/ Cupola** is the more recent of the two industrial estates. The industrial/commercial units are either accessed from the B4228 [mainly commercial services open to the public] or from a series of culs-de-sac. The units are modern, either one or two storeys and mainly with flat roofs. Most are built of brick and corrugated metal.

Some of the buildings along Old Station Way are commercial, notably garages along this through route. A number of the units have wholesale and retail functions.

Most buildings house an individual business, although there is one building subdivided into 8 small units. Each building has a substantial area of tarmac for parking and the boundaries between them are marked by grass banks or hedges giving the area an overall look of space and open-plan.

The roads are wide with grass verges and pavements and there are frequent turning areas. Some trees have been planted within the estate and along the B4228

**Stepbridge Road** industrial area is older and consists of a single no through road giving access to the units. The buildings are one or two storey and are built of a variety of materials including brick, pre-fabricated concrete and corrugated metal

The premises have large open areas of tarmac for storage and parking and are bounded by high metal fencing and lockable gates. Some of the fences also have hedges, but there is noticeably less greenery than on the Crucible Close estate. Some of the buildings are subdivided into several units. The road has a pavement. There is a substantial amount of on-road parking.



*4Modern purpose-built industrial unit with parking and easy access, green boundaries and verges*



*5Small units*



*6Old Station Way & commercial premises*



*7Wide roads and high street lighting indicate purpose-built access for HGVs, but onstreet parking is notable.*

The road ends in a 'hammer head' beyond which there is a large fenced area at present used for salvage, storage and lorry parking. It is not landscaped, nor is there any industrial building.



9 Note the new residential development overlooking this.



8 End of Stepbridge Rd, next to path connecting to Cycle track and footpath used by tourists and local people

This area mixes residential and commercial/ industrial uses.

Adjoining these areas are two earlier industrial plants which were also purpose-built. The appearance is in need of decoration, but they have a good location off the traffic lights just into the southern arc. This does mean they are at the junction, and the space opposite was given permission in 2016 for an Aldi supermarket, with entrance located next to the residential area. Issues of noise from traffic and manufacturing processes would need to be addressed.



10 Tufthorn industry left, potential Aldi supermarket right

Most of the industry and commerce in Coleford consists of small and medium enterprises ie they employ fewer than 250 people. These range from the small units/ sole traders which exist in homes and grouped units to the larger enterprises which are often manufacturing. Products vary tremendously from industrial pumps to soft drinks to pavers and wood flooring. In addition, ancillary services such as bottling plants, building supplies, supplement the commercial services like auto sales and repair, IT/website design, and the tourism-biased catering and accommodation.

Hotel accommodation may use listed buildings eg Forest House (High Nash Gateway) and Poolway (Gloucester Rd Gateway), and some are converted such as Bells Hotel (Coalway Rd Gateway). They are in easily located, and connected positions relative to the town.



11 Forest House (former home of the Mushet family)

Bed and breakfast accommodation is distributed widely, but is limited in provision.

Outside Coleford town, but in the rural Green west of the Parish is the Forestry Commission site, leased for camping, chalets and caravans. This is accessed via Christchurch in West Dean, but a cycle track has been proposed through the woods into Coleford using the burial path.

12 Poolway House



13 Bells Hotel (former school)

14 Christchurch Forest Holidays attracts thousands of visitors annually.



Grouped mainly in High St and parts of Market Place are professional services such as solicitors and estate agents, linked into the shopping in the town centre, and using noted buildings.



15 Bristol Terrace : use of listed buildings in a prominent position



16 Health services are found at the top of High St and Pyart Court.



17 Forest of Dean District Council looking toward High St Another major employer, located in a former railway

cutting off High St. Lawnstone House has been demolished and the site is to be redeveloped.(see site assessments and local Green Spaces)



18 The Fire Station (retained) is found at the top of High St. The ambulance station is next door, and St John Ambulance opposite.



19 The Police Hub is next to the traffic lights at Market Place.

#### Key views of industry/commercial areas

- Suntory from Buchanan Rec (3)
- Suntory from B4228(1)

#### Key features: see photos

- Suntory and industrial estates
- Railway line/ cycle track boundary
- Forest House
- Bells Hotel
- Poolway House
- Services eg Fire, Ambulance, Police
- FODDC and Lawnstone
- Bristol Terrace
- Route to Christchurch Forest Holidays

#### 20 Railway museum on site of original station: limited opening hours



### **Positive features and special qualities**

- Provides local employment
- The two industrial estates provide commercial services for the public as well as manufacturing
- The two main industrial estates are fairly well concealed/screened but accessible
- Much scope for tourism development: attractions nearby, heritage potential
- Use of valued (maybe listed) heritage buildings for appropriate commercial activity actively conserves
- Tourist Information Centre established at Market Place Lights, as desired by NDP consultation

### **Negative features and detracting elements**

- Noise and light pollution from some units
- Traffic problems especially along Tufthorn Avenue and High Nash: effect on roadway
- Some units not in the main industrial areas are unattractive and could be better screened
- Range of accommodation for tourism is limited
- Was no Tourist Information Centre in the middle of town ( but see above)
- Threat to emergency services in terms of local permanent headquarters.

### **Looking ahead**

- Maintain range of industry and commerce, and number of jobs in manufacturing
- Develop further local employment eg at Tufthorn/ Stepbridge Rd/ Suntory.
- Assess sites to widen range and increase number of local jobs, including potential health sites. (Note employment sites in NDP Map 7, also in FoDDC Allocations Plan)
- Aim to reduce out of area commuting
- Review training opportunities elsewhere in town if/when College moves
- Develop tourism employment: tour operator/ manage tourism
- Lawnstone site
- Magistrates Court/Police station to police hub

## Character Assessment Coleford Town Residential areas

*Includes all or parts of assessments undertaken in 3 Kings Meade, 4 Fairways, 5 High Nash, 21 Bells Place, 22 Newland Street, 23 Gloucester Road 25 Victoria Road, 26 Sunny Bank, 27 Coombs Park, 28 Poolway Place, 29 Bakers Hill, 36 Market Place/St John Street/Sparrow Hill, 38 Hampshire Gardens. Parts of the Conservation Area are included.*

### **Location**

Coleford town is the furthest west of the 4 Forest towns only 6 miles from Monmouth and only 3 miles from the Welsh border. It lies off the main A roads, no longer has the two railway stations, and is linked by B roads to the Forest. Bus services link to both Cinderford and Lydney, but also to Ross, Monmouth and Gloucester.

The minerals found in and around Coleford Parish along with the water courses were fundamental to the development of the town.

The water courses lead into town from north-west, north-east and east and out to the south-west. The areas draining into the culverts are often steep, and pluvial flooding is increasingly frequent along with flash response along the brooks. The sewer into Coleford was extended in the late 20C to include Staunton and feeds into Redbrook sewage works thence toward the Wye. Much of the system is dual purpose, so when the surface water increases, it mixes with sewage to flood in known places in the town and down Whitecliff. Welsh Water services the town.

### **Phases of development**

The town developed into a market town by the 17C but the existing residential areas date mainly from the 19C, with a major increase in size in phases from then to now. The residential areas of Coleford surround the town centre, rising up from the bowl, at which the tributary streams meet and then become Valley Brook, draining south via Whitecliff. Where the streams met, the main functions of the town grew up. This is reflected in the obvious layout, with routeways from approximately north, south, east and west leading into the central Market Place. The residential areas grew up around this.

The older residential areas are mainly Victorian and back onto, or link, the gateway routes into the town, and have a more linear or rectilinear shape. The exception to this is the development up the steeper valley sides on the Whitecliff and Newland Street gateway which slopes to the south. Part of this is in the Conservation Area.

Older residential areas in Victoria Rd, Boxbush Rd, Albert Rd, Sparrow Hill and Staunton Rd comprise 19C and early 20C buildings plus some later infill to the north and west of the Market Place. To the north and east Bakers Hill and Union Rd have some nineteenth and twentieth century villas, but also more modern infill. This is mirrored to the rear of Newland Street and Bowens Hill to the east south east. Twentieth century and later development is either infill in the older areas, or housing estates of varying size and mix.

In the mid twentieth century these areas were added to with significant estates of council housing at Sunny Bank, part of High Nash, Eastbourne Estate and Albert Rd. They extended housing up valley sides and separately in surrounding settlements, out of town.

More development at Coombs Park and Bells Place, Hampshire Gardens, Mushet Place and Rock Lane expanded the town considerably.

Toward the end of the twentieth century, additional housing further extended the coverage of the bowl when Old Station Way was constructed from Lords Hill as a through route towards Chepstow. This linked in with an extended infrastructure and planned industrial estates.

In the twenty-first century, Hampshire Gardens has been extended further and a new estate Thurstan's Rise has been constructed at Owens Farm off Staunton Road.

Green areas surround the residential focus of Coleford town, the green ring separating the town from the satellite settlements to south and east (except from the gateway routes) and the more wooded and agricultural Green Ring 2 (west) where the AONB boundary adjoins Whitecliff.

In addition, where residential development links to the main gateways, there are often breaks in the building lines which may/may not include green spaces. Mature trees and shrubs with grassland are found at some key junctions and on steeper slopes. Green is a key element in Coleford.

Within the main settlement are different settlement character areas, often reflecting the age of development, linked infrastructure and styles and types of dwelling. Plots vary in size, shape and character according to age and position. (Below is the settlement character for each different area within the town, its landscape and key views, its positive and negative features and looking ahead).

**Settlement character**

**A. Victoria Rd area** is mainly early 20C with some late 19C rectilinear streets with some sculptured development reflecting the shape of the hill to the west, from Newland Street up Bowens Hill, along Bowens Hill Road. This peaks at the Angus Buchanan Recreation Ground, with long straight streets including Boxbush and Albert Road, down to Staunton Road.



*A1 Victoria Rd from Angus Buchanan Recreational Ground & King George V field looks down to Staunton Rd and beyond to the Eastern Arc*

The housing is mixed, with some common patterns and streetscapes. Note the size and shape of plot, especially rectilinear along these roads, with larger plots and detached houses toward the top of the hill and thinner plots with semi-detached housing toward the foot. Usually the small front garden belies the much larger/longer garden to the rear.

Older terraces in Boxbush Rd using local stone stand out alongside rendered semis and detached. Two semis are 3 storey, constructed with sash windows, dressed stone and slate roofs. Most buildings show a solid presentation to the road, with regular features, in terms of windows, chimneys and slate/tile roofs.

The narrow frontages and relatively dense housing mean vehicular access to the rear is either not present or difficult to achieve.

In Albert Rd a later access road has been inserted by agreement and use of sections of rear garden to allow for rear access



*A2 On-street parking both sides of the one-way street up to the (closed) church detracts from older buildings*

**View** down Boxbush Rd toward town centre and the Congregational Chapel apartments

There are frequent gaps between buildings, especially on the south side of Boxbush Road, with large gaps between buildings (NB see Church below).



*A3 View of Clock Tower in the background, seen through the gap*

Further up the gradient at Bowen's Hill, Angelfield, a small cul de sac of detached houses of lower density and large gardens was built in the mid 20C. However, in the whole of the area, many properties have been extended or additional properties infilled on land/gardens.

At the bottom of Albert Rd are some council houses which were erected late 1920s.

In that same area, Oakfields and Meads Close comprise small semi bungalows designed as one for older residents.

*A4 Interwar council housing*



Within this area are three functional foci: a) at the top of the hill are the Angus Buchanan Rec gated entrance and the cemetery next door. The main part of their land can be seen as part of the green surroundings of Coleford, with just the entrances in the residential area.



A5 Memorial to Coleford's WWI VC

b) Key within this area is the primary school at St John's School and the Opportunity Centre as well as early years provision in Albert Rd. Children can walk from nearby, but many are brought by car, which can cause congestion at those times.



A6 Entrance gates to Angus Buchanan Recreation Ground, and Green West

c) St John's Church in Boxbush Rd has been closed for regular worship. This is on a large plot next to the old school known as Coleford House, which was the centre for the community based mental health service. This has moved to Cinderford leaving an empty site 2016. This also has a large plot linking into Bowen's Hill, so the two control a large portion of this hilltop, overlooking the town centre. The future of this site could be linked with that of the listed Church. This could be restored, given multi-functional community use, or ultimately be demolished. Viewed especially from High Nash, this is a key landmark, but also a potential development site.



A7 St John's Primary School at rear of site

Roads in the area are wide and straight, tarmac with tarmac pavements

A8 St John's Church



A9 Boxbush Rd here is steep and with terraced housing on the right. The church

roof is visible to the left background. Cars are often parked on the pavement left as this is near to the centre and few houses have garages/ onplot parking, given their construction pre the motor car.

**Key features Victoria Road area**

- Angus Buchanan Recreation Ground gates/entrance
- St Johns C of E Primary school and Early Years
- St John's Church

A10 Some houses in Boxbush Rd are 3 storey terraces and this is one semi-detached. Features are the dressed Forest stone, sash windows with bay window on the ground floor and entrance door. A small wall with hedge surrounds the front garden, and the large rear garden has a wall down Bowen's Hill. Chimneys here are



A10 Some houses in Boxbush Rd are 3 storey terraces and this is one semi-detached. Features are the dressed Forest stone, sash windows with bay window on the ground floor and entrance door. A small wall with hedge surrounds the front garden, and the large rear garden has a wall down Bowen's Hill. Chimneys here are

very tall and can contain 4-6 pots.

**Key views**

- From Angus Buchanan to Staunton Rd
- From Angus Buchanan toward High Nash (see industrial areas)

- Coleford Cemetery entrance
- Opportunity Centre
- Coleford House (ex Mental Health)



*A11 Burial path from Bowen's Hill Rd by the Church to the Cemetery and down to Newland eventually*

- Boxbush Rd into town centre toward Clock Tower and Congregational Chapel



*A12 Originally the Mason's Arms Pub, now residential, but in a key position on the way into town from Monmouth*

### Positive features and special qualities

- Part in Conservation Area: older, cohesive area with road pattern, with variety of type of dwellings
- Views over the town and across the valley
- Includes access to a number of services and community functions: church, cemetery. Rec Ground, St John's Primary Academy, Opportunity Centre
- Heritage features eg original funeral director's workshop; church; Rec Gates

### Negative features and detracting elements

- On=street parking is problematic especially in Boxbush Rd
- Masons Arms/Hands across the World ex pub and junction is busy and in need of attention
- St Johns Church is closed and members have been meeting at the Roman Catholic Church for more than a year.

### Looking ahead

- Site at St Johns Church; the building and its architecture; having a C of E church in Coleford all are of concern. Scope for partnership with PCC, Diocese and others to assess site, needs and potential.
- The Coleford House site alongside and at the rear is also important, including for housing/ mixed cultural use.
- Parking in Boxbush Rd and alternatives behind the streetscape could be investigated (as in Victoria Rd)
- Working with Highways re pavements/ crossings at Masons Arms junction (including Tram Rd access) given increased traffic with Owens Farm development

## **B Bakers Hill**

Between two of the northern gateways, B4028 and B4226 routes in from Gloucester, lies Bakers Hill, with Union Rd. This hill faces down Gloucester Rd and into the town centre with the clock tower clearly visible.

The mix of older housing is found within the triangle on the slope of the hill, and is surrounded by green, mainly fields, but also green leisure.

The Slopes dates back to 1610 as part of Mill Hill Farm, and this and 3 other villas have large gardens. However, they are interspersed with a variety of differently aged detached, and 2 semi-detached houses, and several bungalows. The later infill houses are brick, often rendered, while the older are of local stone construction but some of these are rendered too

Most houses are generally quite individual in design, all with gardens front and back, some quite large. Boundaries are walls, hedges, fences, often relating to the age of the property.

Some 21C development is found off the bottom of the junction. That is a mixed housing estate (20+) with cattle grid at entrance (against the sheep) and open plan.

Union Rd is a street which acts as access to housing rather than a link between the B4028 and B4226.

Some older houses have larger gateways onto the road, but it is a narrow road with no pavement, and a bend, more difficult for pedestrians.

The mature gardens and surrounding green area encourage wildlife. Parts of the area are almost secluded. Bats and foxes are evident, and a large variety of birds. Footpaths connect across fields into town and toward Berry Hill/Broadwell.



*B1  
View from Bakers Hill over the town centre showing the Clock Tower and Welsh hills in the background*



*B2 Panoramic aspect of triangle of houses/gardens from the Toll pike junction*



*B3  
Note this late 20C development very near the junction at Bakers Hill in the mid background and green ring behind*

*B4 Union Rd without pavements, but some older houses have frontage right on the narrow roadside*



The traffic on the B roads is quite heavy: this is the main route from the north into/out of town. At the junction, a triangle of green space with mature trees remains, which allows for easier vision at the turn. This also reflects the earlier presence of a pike house on the Poolway side of the road.



*B5  
Shrubs and green  
on the junction  
triangle. Taken  
next to access road  
into estate*

#### **Key views Bakers Hill area**

- Panoramic aspect of triangle of houses/gardens from the Pike junction B2

#### **Key features Bakers Hill area**

- Toll pike

- From Bakers Hill over whole of town including centre B1
- Junction at old Pike with trees and green B5

#### **Positive features and special qualities**

- Position at head of two valleys where B roads meet
- Views over to west and over town centre
- Mix of dwellings at low density on hill, but higher in estate at the bottom of the road
- Some heritage features, mainly obscured

#### **Negative features and detracting elements**

- Old mine site, mainly now built on
- Junction is key and layout affects traffic flow and look, as well as green area on the junction.

#### **Looking ahead**

- Impact of increasing traffic on junction; layout of junction itself
- Green ring 1 to east of B4028 and both sides of B4226 to be maintained

## **C Sunny Bank**

Much of this area was constructed immediately post war when there was an expansion of population and industries such as Carter's (now Suntory) became established. This council house style was used in a number of estates around Coleford including parts of the eastern arc Queensway, Broadwell.

The layout here reflects the Bank on which it was built, and the main access roads off Sunny Bank. Culs-de-sac off the central green area lead to short roads of semi-detached 2 storey houses with small front and larger rear gardens.

There is no formal play area here, and although the Rec. is only about half a mile away, it is across the main B road and up a steep hill, past St John's School.

The variety of styles are indicated by photos C1,2,4; They are 2 and 3 bedroomed semis in the main, and the estate is let by Two Rivers Housing although many tenants purchased their housing in the later 20C. This is next to the busy junction of the B4228 leading to Monmouth and the signed holiday route toward Symonds Yat and Christchurch (including to Forest Holidays). A red telephone box and post box add to this scene.

There are no through roads in the main estate, although the whole is split, with one cul de sac located to the east of Sunny Bank Rd alongside Sparrow Hill, which gives another pedestrian route to the town centre.

Wide grass verges and banks are evident, with standard width estate roads and tarmac pavements. On-street parking is very evident, and along some of the curving roads and central green, layby parking has been introduced. In addition, some houses now have on-plot parking. Both of these have decreased the extent of the green/garden areas. Many of the houses have been extended.

Some of these houses are "Cornish" style with mansard hipped roofs. Designed to particular specifications using precast concrete, they have been restored/rebuilt following the Housing Defects Act 1985.

The maturity of gardens, the grass verges and fields to the back of the estate give a rural feel to the estate. Hedge boundaries are common, but fences and walls are also found. A significant hedge follows round the estate road parallel to the hill and above the grassy bank. To the south is a wide, sloping green bank with some smaller trees and a specimen beech, giving an open aspect to the Gateway.



*C1 Central green space with open aspect and semis surrounding. Some parking bays.*



*C2 The telephone box has been retained with its original function. Many areas in Coleford have poor mobile phone reception*

*C3 Sparrow Hill pedestrian path into Town centre*



*C4 Cornish Houses along the green with layby parking, and some on plot taken out of front gardens*



*C5 The key road out of Coleford used to get to Berry Hill and Christchurch campsite with high, wide hedging is not classified*

Lark Rise is a cul-de-sac of bungalows at the top of Sunny Bank built at the end of 20C.

They are uniformly brick with stone facing, with a steep rise on the one side of the road.

The exit junction is on the steepest part of the hill, which frequently ices over in winter.



*C6 Bungalows in Lark Rise almost at the brow of Sunnybank*

#### **Key features and views Sunny Bank area**

- Central Green
- Beech tree and grassy bank by junction B4228



*C7 Green foreground of bank and Green West in background*



*C8 View into town coming down Sunny Bank, with bus route, including buses to Five Acres High School*

#### **Positive features and special qualities**

- Open and green approach to Coleford with grass, hedges and the very obvious Bank
- View over town
- Recent maintenance and upgrade of Housing Association stock as well as private housing
- Circular green in centre of estate gives open aspect
- Rural junction with beech, red telephone box and postbox

#### **Negative features and detracting elements**

- Main signed route to campsite and toward A4136 is not classified, although wide, busy and a bus route
- lack of play area
- known for icy road conditions on steep hill, and Coleford often has winter road closures

#### **Looking ahead**

- maintenance of mix of Housing Association stock for rent (not just in this area, but in terms of total stock in the parish)
- include small play area for younger age range (2-7)
- maintain green areas, grass, hedges and approach

## **D Coombs Park and Sparrow Hill**

To the east of Sunny Bank, on the slope down to the east and south, is the Coombs Residential Nursing home, with the Great Oaks Hospice sited up the hill. These provide accommodation with care for local people, not just from Coleford. They are sited in grounds of size offering a green environment. (See photos D8 and D10 )

Just down the hill, a mature housing estate was built in several phases from 1950s on: the earliest was accessed off Sparrow Hill to the south, and the later off Coombs Rd.

There is a mix of styles and types with mainly 3 & 4 bed roomed houses and bungalows aligned with similar streetscapes. A few are semi-detached. The dominant brick and tile roofs also vary in colour with the street. Plots are generally large, and all have front and rear gardens which vary in size.

There is an informal grid of estate roads, some curving, with tarmac pavements, and streetscapes differing with density and height. Gaps between dwellings are frequent, some with views glimpsed between, so some areas are more open than others.

Given the later development, most dwellings have garages/on plot parking. There are no through roads, so on street parking is limited.

The mature gardens add to the rural feel of the rural/urban mix. The green backcloth to the north at the field boundaries is most notable. There are footpaths at the edge which are green, but hard paths fenced off between houses to walk down toward to the town.

A range of wildlife pass through the area, using the gardens and some large hedge boundaries: fox, hedgehog, pheasant, woodpecker, birds of prey. Geese fly over occasionally to the pond on the neighbouring golf course.

To the south, the estate leads into the former “main road” of Sparrow Hill where terrace, semis and detached houses are found of varying ages, with some infill.

This is a narrower no through road, with steep gradient toward the town centre, and with some pavements being particularly narrow. This gives restricted and difficult access for pedestrians and, especially for people with motorised scooters into town, alongside Boxbush /St John Street/ junction and along Bank St

*D1 Newer bungalows*



*D2 Older mixed housing*



*D3 Low density with gaps between to show green surroundings*



*D4 Footpath from Coombs toward Poolway (potential housing site)*



*D5 Note some older housing fronting onto the pavement, with no front gardens on a steep hill, but mature trees in garden of Sunny Bank House as well.*

Estate traffic turning into Orchard Rd and Parkside use the lower part of Sparrow Hill for their main access.



*D6 Parkside overlooks this new extra care development here under construction on the old Community Centre site off Bank St.*



*D7 Increased access to older persons dwellings in Parkside, off Sparrow Hill*

**Key features and views Coombs Park, Sparrow Hill**



*D8 Coombs Nursing Home (listed)*

*D9 Congregational Chapel 1842 now apartments*



*D10 Great Oaks, with appropriate materials in a green environment with a green backcloth across the valley.*



*D11 From Coombs Rd bungalows across green skyline of the green ring between Coleford and Broadwell/ Coalway*

**Positive features and special qualities**

- quiet area with green views in and out, footpaths
- varied mix of housing
- number of alternative dwellings for older people, both sale, rental in private market and Housing Association (with care at different levels available)
- some notable older buildings well restored for alternative uses

**Negative features and detracting elements**

- access to south of Coombs Park via Sparrow Hill has difficult approach, especially with on street parking
- focus of health/care services affects perception of area

**Looking ahead**

- infill spaces limited, but extension of Coleford envelope into green ring would reduce its effectiveness and increase traffic down both Sunnybank and Sparrow Hill, and potentially increase flooding issues

## **E Estates off Gloucester Rd**

### **Poolway Place (area 28)**

Located on the side of the valley bordering Thurstan's Brook which drains via culvert into town, a modern housing estate was built in the 1970s. The rise of 210 metres to the W drops down into a cul-de sac behind the Spout.

There is a mix of dwellings from bungalows, semi-detached, detached houses and one set of terrace houses. They vary in size and plot, with a variety of style, mainly conventional shapes individualised on plots.

All are constructed of brick, in different colours by area - red and yellow. All have grey, pitched, tiled roofs.

Boundaries vary, some hedges and trees, some low brick walls and some wooden fences.

Gaps between buildings allow views out and give a rural, green surrounding.

Estate roads and pavements are of tarmac. Parking is mainly on plot but there are some parking courts.

The main access is via Gloucester Rd at the bottom of Bakers Hill with no through roads.

### **Positive features and special qualities**

- Green surroundings, view out to north
- Quiet and peaceful with no through roads and close to town.

### **Negative features and detracting elements**

- Lack of dominant features
- Awareness of original stream (culverted) leading to Spout

### **Looking ahead**

- Importance of green area to the north, but potential sites for housing: issue of balance provision with need and green breathing space.

### **Bells Place and Eastbourne Estate (area 21)**

These two housing estates are located on the east side of the valley leading into town. The grass area above the estates is known as Bells Field and reaches to the top of the plateau, but as it separates the town from the Eastern Arc it is classified in the Green Ring.

Both estates have access roads from Gloucester Rd, B4228, with culs de sac leading off them to mixed housing. Eastbourne Estate was built, 1960s, as social housing comprising of houses and bungalows aimed at the retired. Bells Place is a 1970's estate of mixed houses and bungalows.



*E1 Mix of bungalows and housing with the view of green ring of farmland/leisure seen in the background*



*E2 View over the estate showing hedging, mature gardens and rise toward the Coombs*



*E3 Coleford town and Gloucester Rd from part way up Bells Place*

There are several small green areas on the estates, and there is access from one estate to the other. One space is used as a car park by several residents.



*E4 Green space between the 2 estates*

Most of the built up area has edges of intense greenery on its boundary. Trees and bushes border the green area of Bells Field (fenced). The habitat is suitable for small mammals and a wide variety of birds

The roads are of two car widths with footpaths and some grass verges. There is mostly on-plot parking but one street in Eastbourne has on-street parking with a parking court nearby

Eastbourne estate follows a classic 1960s council house style, mainly semi-detached, 3 bedroomed 2 storey houses. The bungalows are mostly semi-detached, of consistent shape. The access road is part of a crescent with the local Mount of Olives church placed in the centre. This is well used, and houses community activities.

Predominant materials are brick and render with tiles. Most boundaries are fences, though walls and hedges can also be found between properties. Tarmac forms both roads and pavements.

Bells Place, the second and later estate (1970s) consists of brick, mostly detached and some semi-detached houses with one area of bungalows. Roofs are varied in pitch according to type, and front porches have been modified in later years as some properties have been extended. Windows and glass are more obvious in this style of house.



*E5 Significant gradient on footpaths, whether green or tarmac*

There are footpaths across the large green area, Bells Field and several footpaths through the estates to get into town. Some unmade paths become waterlogged in extreme weather.



*E6 View of green ring into Bells Field, with intense greenery on boundary*



*E7 Limited parking space in 1960s housing*

*E8 Bungalows at the top of the slope, with fences and mature gardens*



*E9 Mature gardens front and back are notable in both estates*



Benches (E10) are sited tactically on small green spaces, side of the road, due to the hilly nature and routes through to town.



E10

### **Views Eastbourne Estate and Bells Place**

The landscape into and across town can be seen from here, and the rural edge in both directions. Bells Club, the Fire Station, District Council Office are all visible from the southern edge.

There are views of the rural extremities of the parish eg Bakers Hill.



E11 This view shows Lower Lane and the Almshouses at the Gorse

### **Key features**



E12 The Mount of Olives Church, Eastbourne Estate

- remains of tramroads and other industrial heritage (mainly hidden)

### **Positive features and special qualities**

- Green surroundings, gardens and hedges
- Open character of access at Eastbourne Crescent
- Quiet and peaceful with no through roads and close to town.

### **Negative features and detracting elements**

- Limited parking on plot, and some streets with very close parking
- Steep slopes to areas of bungalows with elderly residents
- Lack of dominant features (except Mount of Olives Church)

### **Looking ahead**

- Importance of Bells Field as recreational land ( in Town Council ownership and planned for leisure use)
- Police Hub established on what was potential site in Gateway at Magistrates Court/Police Station



Front gardens are mainly open plan, much grass and often banked. There are gaps between buildings and benches at key points, especially en route to the community room next to the Warden's 2 storey house. Materials vary in 2 areas, with different shades of brown and red brick, with brown pantile roofs.

There are dropped kerbs and handrails to ease access along tarmac pavements, and gradients are low. The location means residents can cross the road to facilities (G6) – health services and community groups and the shops. However, the pelican crossing is some way down the road, nor by the exit from the cycle track.

*F5 the mature trees along the cycle track can be seen in the background, and a parking court is off to the right of the picture.*



*F6 Pyart Court is opposite Kings Meade, with access to shops including chemist. The Health Centre and Main Place are adjacent*



*F7 exit from the cycle path left to Main Place and into Pyart Court across Old Station Way. Kings Meade fronts the road with mature trees on the boundary.*

The intense green backcloth is comprised of a variety of native and non-native species on both boundaries. Mature trees and greened cycle path to Milkwall and route 42 is a wildlife corridor. It is also signed for heritage as a disused railway.



*F9 view from cycle path into town with Kings Meade right.*



*F8*

**Key views from Kings Meade**



*F10 Over town, with Clock Tower and Church on skyline*



*F11 Bells Hotel and golf course (former school) to rear.*

**Fairways**

A standard width access road off Old Station Way leads steeply uphill, winding and with several cul-de-sacs into a large 1980s estate with detached, semis, terraces and flats. Many roads are named after councillors and local people. Housing is very mixed in type and includes affordable housing

Density and style varies throughout, but with similar building materials- light brown brick and tile. Some are rendered.



*F12 main access to Fairways. Some on-street parking additional to on plot Porches used to add to variety of style*



*F13 smaller cul-de-sac with rumble strip in foreground grass verge, narrower road and varied mix of 2 and 3 bed houses and coach house flat.*

Plots are smaller, with varying widths and gardens trending to either front or back. Gaps between buildings are sporadic, often providing parking for residents cars, as many houses do not have garages. Some houses have altered garages to extend living accommodation.

The green landscape is limited mainly to garden shrubs and small trees with grass, including as verges or down pedestrian ways. Some green areas are used informally for play.

A few larger mature trees have been left in the south-east corner, around Sylvan Close. This area was allocated for self-build housing, and has a small play area.

There is also a walkway through into High Nash where a round GP surgery building has been erected.

This is a more typically modern suburban area with garden wildlife habitat. The variety of housing types, size, plot and layout on the valley side gives the estate some of its character.

**Key views of Fairways**



*F17 Small green areas can be found near footpaths, and on corners. This **view** shows the height difference into town. NB the fire station tower is only half way up the hill*



*F14 Blocks of 1 and 2 bed flats with parking courts, some of which are surfaced with pavers*



*F15 Terraced housing with parking court. Boundaries may be walls, fences, and some open plan at the front.*

*F16 play area for the younger age group erected to serve the 1980s estate, when many families moved in with young children. Little equipment for older children.*



*Note there is no wirescape on this modern estate, built when Old Station Way was constructed,*

*allowing for appropriate infrastructure.*



*F18 View to the east of southern end of the golf course / club house over the mature trees along the cycle path to the other side of the valley*

**Positive features and special qualities**

- Variety of mix of housing type and size, shape and layout, tenure.
- Kings Meade is an appropriate location and designed for people over 55, some of whom have increasing health and community needs. The community room is available, and regular coffee afternoons, as well as Warden presence.
- Each estate is accessed by one estate road, with no through routes. Culs-de-sac give the residential areas some interest.
- Close to the town centre amenities

- Off an easy commuter route out to Chepstow.

### **Negative features and detracting elements**

- Problem of noise of cars/lorries and crossing of very busy Old Station Way, especially for Kings Meade residents. Is the pedestrian crossing in the right location? The time taken for car in speed limit (30mph) to travel from the bend by Fairways to Kings Meade is 8 seconds: increased risk for older people/ cyclists trying to cross. Kings Meade residents say they feel isolated.
- garages to rear and site at Kings Meade left vacant for some years, but site now of more bungalows. Will decrease the openness of this area.
- despite the car parking areas available, the number of cars per household has now outgrown the provision, so the degree of on-street parking detracts from the character.

### **Looking ahead**

- provide controlled crossing on Old Station Way near to Kings Meade/ cycle crossing (may mean moving existing crossing.)
- junction at Lords Hill may need altering to take into consideration impact of supermarket traffic as/when site completed.
- Maintain and possibly increase the greenness of the access into town via cycle path as a draw for tourists.
- Restrict further extension of housing where garages are removed, in order to reduce expansion of on-street parking

## **G Rock Lane, High Nash, Mushet Place, Hampshire Gardens (Areas 5,6, 38)**

These areas are mainly estates based off the Chepstow gateway which leads to the Suntory factory and centre of town via the Forest of Dean District Council offices.

(The factory dominates the landscape on entry but is described in the gateway assessment. It is however the reason for much of the older development in the area: housing linked to jobs.)



*G1 The sharp bend by Suntory which leads to Rock Lane and becomes High Nash. A difficult entrance with HGVs, buses, and tourist traffic as well as local*

The housing along the culs-de-sac is older at the junctions with High Nash and Cinder Hill, but shows later additions, extending uphill mainly of later 20C construction. Trends of style and mix of types have changed significantly from interwar to 21C. Traditional council housing, newer affordable housing feature, along with a range of private housing.

The top of the ridge has some rise from the east, but is well above the Whitecliff Brook (Newland St) valley below on the west. This grassland/pastoral area backs onto the development, as part of the green west of Coleford town.

Fields are fairly regular in shape, sloping to the south east and south west. They are used for pasture including sheep, and with some cultivation toward the south.



*G2 Lawdler Rd development borders the green west*

In the gardens and around are squirrels, hedgehogs, birds of prey and a wide variety of garden birds. Within the fields deer and wild boar have been seen.

There are a number of footpaths especially Rock Lane which leads over the Whitecliff valley and links with the Burial Path from Newland past Coleford cemetery to St John's. On this side, the majority of the boundaries are ancient hedgerows with trees.



*G3 This view over the valley shows Whitecliff quarry to the west with the Burial Path to the right.*

### **Rock Lane**

This area is on the top of the ridge next to the factory which is surrounded by field, and the main entrance off High Nash via Rock Lane, used by articulated delivery lorries but also the access for this corner of housing. The factory land along the Lane has high metal fencing. A separate sewer runs from here down toward the District Council offices, through that old rail siding and into Newland St, thence to Newland.

Curved culs-de-sac lead off to mainly 3 bed detached and semi-detached houses with front and back gardens, varied designs. The standard width access roads show much on-street parking as mid 20C houses had small drives, and a limited number have garages. The 2 storey houses have differently-pitched roofs, some with tile facing or cladding, some with flat roofs. Its variety of design is part of the character. The boundaries are brick walls, hedges, fences leading onto tarmac pavements. Spaces between properties through mature gardens show views below



*G4 Bessemer Close*

### **Key views from Rock Lane**

- glimpses of Bells Place and Bells Golf Course G5
- Houses in Rock Lane have views towards Puzzlewood and Lambsquay. In winter it is possible to see the Welsh hills



G5

**Key features**

- Suntory Factory

**High Nash**

Noticeable rise up to S to SE from town centre along High Nash and gentler rise westwards into Mushet Place. High Nash is a two lane road, a key bus route, with a weight restriction in place. Pavements and kerbs are on both sides.

Problems are caused by considerable on-street parking as few houses have drives. This road also leads to the fire and ambulance stations.

The scene has great regularity along High Nash, with uniform streetscape of semi-detached 3 bed council housing set back from the road with gardens in front and back. Construction is of brick and tile, with some rendered. A few detached houses are at the southern end. Houses on western side of High Nash are substantially higher than road level. Garden walls are frequent, especially on the west side. Mature gardens provide some trees, and opportunities for wildlife. The large back gardens off High Nash give more space than the smaller suburban style ones of Mushet Place, although there is a line of trees giving a backcloth of greenery along the Rock Lane track to the rear.

Mushet Place is named after the inventor of the steel process who lived just downhill at Forest House. It is a regularly laid out estate with standard roads, tarmac pavements, and on plot parking. There are a number of recurring designs of housing including semi and detached, and one area of bungalows. Largely brick and tile, there are varying pitches of roof with those recurring designs.

**Key views**

- down Cinder Hill to High Street.

- Rock Lane ancient trackway



G6 Note the on-street parking on the left, with restrictions on the right. The no. 31 to Gloucester double-decker is an hourly service.

G7 Mature open plan front gardens give sense of space



- at the southern end there are short views down Perrygrove Rd. across fields.



G8 From the southern end of High Nash, where the old road exists as a cut-off, view over industrial estate.



G9 From Mushet Place occasional view east to industrial estates and golf course behind.

**Key features**

G10 St Margaret Mary's Roman Catholic church



and G11 church hall

### Hampshire Gardens

This slopes gently upwards to south along Cinder Hill and to SW. Here is the obvious difference in height with the Whitecliff valley below (G13)

Large gardens of properties parallel with the road provide gaps between buildings. Hampshire Gardens detached properties give small gaps. west of the area there is large, fenced grassland around and beyond Lawdler Rd (the 21C development up the hill). The zone of trees by Rock Lane trackway is significant and the fields behind have hedges/shrubs/ fences.

Cinder Hill, which comes from High Nash into town is a continuation of that busy road, but with parking restrictions.

The older more varied detached housing on Cinder Hill stems from its position on the way into town. These cottages and larger detached buildings are stone with slate roofs, some rendered and with stone garden walls. There is modern infill.

Hampshire Gardens has a mix of 2/3/4 bed, semis and detached houses, and bungalows. Constructed of brick and tile, boundaries tend to be walls & hedges. Roads and pavements are tarmac.

A more suburban style road on Hampshire Gardens (mid 20C), with onplot parking, pavements and curbs on both sides leads up to Lawdler Rd where the roads are narrower with parking courts (G15).

The layout of Lawdler Rd development, continued on from Hampshire Gardens, is very distinctive with changing road colours, housing style and outlook onto green fenced area.

Lawdler Rd consists of very modern town houses and semis. It is largely open plan, with differently coloured brick, paviors and a grass area as the estate is entered.

Footpaths link areas, and the density varies with distance from the main road. There is no through traffic.

**Key views** See G2 to the west; G13 toward Whitecliff valley and quarry G3



G12 Plaque on corner of Mushet Place reads "In a barn on this site, Robert Forester Mushet (1811-1891) | 1858 perfected the Bessemer process of steel manufacture and in 1868 discovered self-hardening steel"

manufacture and in 1868 discovered self-hardening steel"



G13

These provide a range of habitats, as will the large gardens. The area borders the Whitecliff valley and the FODDC car park (ex-railway cutting) gives a wildlife corridor into Newland St and down that valley.



G14 walls and more varied buildings along Cinder Hill, main route



G15

### Positive features and special qualities

- Each estate has no through routes therefore has only local residential traffic producing quiet residential areas close to town centre.
- Walkways connect different parts of developments and historic footpaths link to other areas of town.
- In Rock Lane there is a variety of shapes to the housing and roofs/ windows are very different. The fact that the area is not made up of uniform properties gives the area character.
- Mushet Place, Hampshire Gardens into Lawdler Rd changes density, mix of property type and size, style and tenure. outlook onto green area and trees over Whitecliff.
- Link of development to jobs.

#### **Negative features and detracting elements**

- Access issues managed by weight restriction and lorry route, but still issues around angle of bend at Rock Lane to traffic lights and onstreet parking High Nash, particularly as bus route. Busy entrance to town from local attractions.
- Loss of the field for the Fair to come still remembered.
- Proximity to Suntory factory may produce noise pollution and HGV effects on road surface.

#### **Looking ahead**

- Promotion of tourism will necessitate traffic management review, as impact here may be significant.
- Keep link of houses with jobs. Further expansion of Suntory?

**H Newland St, Bowen's Hill (area 22) much in Conservation Area\*** NB **Bold** indicates listed building, ancient monument

Newland St is a key gateway into and out of Coleford, both from the Wye Valley AONB and from the ancient parish of Newland. It has a very strong industrial history associated with the Mushet family noted in the Green Ring 2 (west) as associated with **Whitecliff Furnace**, a key scheduled ancient monument

The valley sides crowd most of the buildings onto the roadside along the floor of the valley. From the corner of Market Place down Newland St the Coleford conservation area extends past the **Baptist Church (H14)**. The Georgian buildings, include some which are shops (H1 and H15) which have flats over, some upper floors are used for storage.

The southern edge of the conservation area up Bowens Hill does not include any residences.

\*Please see the Conservation Area map.

**Rock Castle (H19)** is a listed building outside the conservation area with a crenellated parapet, and the **viaduct (skewed bridge) (H13)** is a key feature also outside the conservation area.

The valley of Valley Brook has a narrow, flat base close to the town centre but the shallow gradient steepens downhill to SW. The Brook is culverted under the road and some notable buildings as it leaves the town, and reappears well past the viaduct. It has been known to change course or disappear, which might be associated with the weather conditions and/or the faultline in the valley bottom. All the surface and foul water from the town drains through here to Newland, though the exact location of pipes is not always known. This means such drainage issues are always an important consideration in any planning applications in Coleford. Flooding is an issue in intense rain, when the combined sewer overflows. There is a water habitat and wildlife corridor which may not be reaching its potential (see Whitecliff in Green Ring 2).

Gaps in the frontage are narrow nearer the town, and show the burgage plots.



H1 From town centre out, past Caragh House on the left with cellar, over the road hump where the 20mph zone ends and parking

is restricted. Note the varied styles, roofs and the use of upper floors for residential purposes. The car is turning from Bowens Hill round a steep angle with walls either side into the through route.

H2 Some rear buildings still exist, at the end of the burgages, This one has been conserved through change of use to a nursery. The alleyway is next to a 3 storey building giving an enclosed feel



Steep slopes rise either side so many back gardens still extend along those plots.



H3 toward the District Council Offices on the east

Less obvious toward the Tram Rd on the west.

Within the town, the eastern valley side is mainly residential/ commercial, with less commercial toward the viaduct. On the western side settlement is less dense, with a car park included, and the Tram road evident. Further out of town, near the viaduct, the valley is less enclosed as there are larger gaps between the buildings although valley sides still limit openness.

Newland Street is a through route

Bowens Hill is steep, up to the Victoria Rd area, and with an access road leading into Angelfield.

The Tram road parallels the main road on the western side.

Past Bowens Hill, **the British Schoolroom** (H7) has been converted into flats/housing, maintaining its frontage.

Many of the older cottages are not of this status, but form a historic streetscape with variegated roofs. Porches, sash windows and archtraves are mainly still apparent in the conservation area. Though less so on smaller buildings.

The modern development at Marine Gardens (H11) for example, shows some contrasts, but is more easily maintained.



*H4 The buildings decrease in density leading toward Whitecliff, with the last building on the left being a modernised farmhouse.*



*H5 The steepness of the hill shows off the position of the villas and Church top right. Walled boundaries are prominent.*



*H6 Detail of door and window shows how restoration can work in the Conservation area*



*H7 The British Schoolroom was converted into housing along with the modern infill shown, to give a varried streetscape, maintaining the exterior of dressed Forest stone from 1887 and sash style*

windows

Angelfield lies above the Tram Road, a mid 20C small development with individual 2 storey brick and tile detached houses with access off Bowens Hill. Arranged in a cul-de-sac with mature front gardens, and often sited mid plot, some are rendered, some have different styles of windows/entrances.

Up the hill are a few Victorian/ Edwardian villas along or above the Tram Rd (H5). These face down the hill and add to the streetscape as well as the green effect with their large gardens.

Up the valley sides and in Angelfield the sense of being enclosed is not felt. There are some gaps between buildings which are provided by hard spaces nearer the town centre including the car park.



*industrial valley*

*H8 The engineering building next to viaduct has been constructed in keeping with the site in style, materials and as industry returning to an*



*H9 Angelfield shows individual detached properties with large gardens*

The green backdrop to the valley out of the town is behind ribbon development along the road. There are mature trees, bushes, tall hedges and walls.

The shape of the old tram route is obvious in the hedges and shrubbery south of Bowens Hill (H18), less so to the north.

Closer into the town the street is bare of trees except in some gardens which provide habitats closer to the town centre

Pavements and kerbs exist on both sides of the road as far as Marine Gardens (modern infill). Then only on N side as far as the viaduct (H13). In the extreme SW area there is no pavement at all.

There is some on road parking (H11) but also restricted parking in some places nearer town

There are a number of footpaths off the road, including the Burial Path approaching Whitecliff. Parallel to the road is the interrupted tramroad.

The public carpark next to the Chapel is surrounded by shrubs which are a notable habitat for small mammals and reptiles(H19). Trees from the FODDC car park are tall above the opposite side, and TV, mobile and broadband signals are poor at street level.



*H10 "Cut off" Tram Road behind the bins, north off Bowens Hill.*



*H11 Pavements and layby at Marine Gardens. In summer residents gather around a table on the open plan frontage, which increases feeling of community.*



*H12 The viaduct is red forest dressed sand stone, with Coleford bricks around the arch. Also known as the Skewed Bridge because of its shape.*



*H13 Viaduct is a prominent feature, leading toward the FODDC offices from the Angus Buchanan.*

Nearby the shape of the street has been altered with modern developments integrating layby and parking courts.

**Key features**

*It is often perceived as marking the edge of the town, though the Coleford sign is about 1/2 mile further.*

Baptist Church; British Schoolroom; Viaduct; Caragh flats; Newland St streetscape; Tram Road, Rock Castle



**H14 Baptist church,** has been modified internally with a mezzanine floor, to allow more functional use of space, but

*keeping all the key features including the tall windows to the side.*

**H15 Conservation area:**

*Georgian frontage with sash windows, sills and early shop frontage, but this shop is not now in use and the frontage needs some upkeep.*





**H16 Caragh House Flats**  
 3 storeys with a basement and parapet roof and once the home of James Teague, this is now flats. The pebble-dash does not cover the keystones on the corners, where evidence of the fixings to the original iron railings is still present. The front door with its architrave and pediment is a classic Georgian feature. The building is in need of some maintenance, using skills and materials appropriate for its listed status.



**H17**  
 Note the former Primary School building with its bell tower & steps up from Bowens Hill. (This is now vacant – Coleford House site, adjacent to the Church) Also, walls, hedges and 1 hour limited parking spaces.

**H17**  
 Note the former Primary School building with its bell tower & steps up from Bowens Hill. (This is now vacant –



**H18**  
 The Tram road going out of town across Bowens Hill, toward Rock Castle



**H19** Rock Castle(left) and Rock House, along the Tram Rd with the shrubbery at the rear of the car park

**Key views**



**H20** View out to town centre from Angelfield



**H21** View across the back of Newland St to District Council Offices from Bowens Hill, shows steepness of the valley

- From the High St to northern part of Newland St.(see Town centre 2)
- From Hampshire Gardens down into area (F18)
- From viaduct SW down the road (H4).

**Positive features and special qualities**

- Significant valued buildings listed and other, some within the conservation area, others not.
- Different building styles often related to function.
- Different slopes and angles give differing levels of view.
- Much greenery up valley sides.
- Tram road route
- Evidence of good restoration and development in keeping

**Negative features and detracting elements**

- Shabbiness of some significant buildings, including listed ones

- Culvert and flooding problems (including further toward Whitecliff)

#### **Looking ahead**

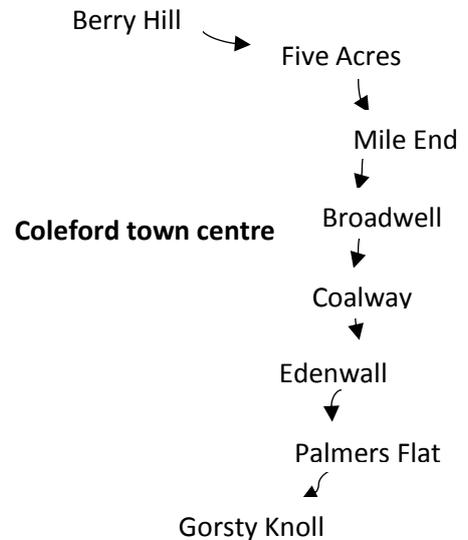
- Improvement to capacity of drains/ sewer to reduce flood issues
- Conservation of listed buildings by finding appropriate materials and skills locally which may be used.
- Conserve green areas and improve natural biodiversity when addressing flood issues.
- Potential to sign, explain, and excavate? Tram Rd as part of heritage.
- Review the extent of the conservation area.

## Character assessment of the Eastern Arc of settlement from Five Acres – Palmers Flat

### Location

Mile End is the furthest north of the series of linked settlements, where roads from Coleford cross with what was the B4432 from Five Acres round to Milkwall. (Five Acres and Berry Hill also follow this pattern, but are situated in West Dean parish, and in the adjoining Berry Hill/Christchurch NDP area). The settlements also relate to their past heritage ie to the mining of coal and iron, sheep badgers, and also to the edge of the statutory forest. They form an arc of settlement on the edge of Coleford parish, curving around the ridge above the town, and near to the outcropping of coal seams. The pattern can be compared to the rim of a wheel, where the spokes run from the outer settlement to the town centre at the hub. (see diagram 1).

Diagram 1



### Landscape

The ridge on which the arc of settlements is formed is the slightly undulating rim at the top, sloping quickly down into the shallow bowl where Coleford town is found. The outer edge, sometimes the eastern boundary of the parish, is usually steeper, eg down to the Cannop Valley, further south east at Channings Hill, thence to Gorsty Knoll and out of the parish to Fetter Hill. To the north the ridge continues fairly flat till the slope down at Long Hill. From the east and south east, whichever way Coleford is approached, it is uphill to about 220m, one of the higher parts of the Forest dome, mainly limestone. This is especially significant in snow, when small roads/houses can be cut off.

Each of the peripheral settlements has its own sense of place: none are perceived as part of the town of Coleford. Although they are not clearly divided on the ground within the arc, that settlement edge is separated in landscape terms on one side from Coleford town centre by valued green farmland, golf courses and grassland (Green Ring 1); and on the outer side by forest - trees and meend (mostly Forestry Commission land).

The green infrastructure is vital to the layout and feel of these communities: this might be important stands of mature oaks eg at Edenwall; the wilder meend toward Gorsty Knoll or the mown green/mesne at Prosper Lane, Coalway. The Forest proper forms an eastern boundary.

There are few accessible water bodies: Jugs Hole, the pond in the woods at Five Acres (just outside this NDP area) and the lakes on each golf course are notable. There is significant evidence of wet lingering underfoot after rainfall in the marginal woods, but no real streams, reflecting the (mainly) limestone beneath. This is the watershed for drainage either to the east toward the Severn, or west toward the Wye.

*1. Arc settlements signed at Broadwell Bridge*



The heritage landscape is varied: from the forest edge with old quarries and remnants of coal mining to the focus at route crossings with 19C older community buildings and ex-pubs. The green pathways and clustered cottages hark back to an industrial past, no longer active except in the shape of the settlements and landscape. This is a later link to the archaeological and green landscape to the immediate south at Gorsty Knoll.

## ***Settlement character***

### **Mile End:**

Mile End Cross is the centre: this road links to A4136 Gloucester-Monmouth, busy with commuting and HGVs and an uphill approach from Coleford, it has a history of accidents. Many of the functions there closed years ago, the chapel and pub included. Beeches Garage remains, and a local sawmills which continues the use of timber locally. Toward Coleford is Forest Hills golf course, which maintains the green infrastructure including some water management. Local agriculture is both arable and pastoral, with some diversification into car boot sales and small industrial/leisure units



*2. Mile End Cross, looking NE*

Housing is dominantly 2 storey, different sizes, semi and detached and of different ages in 20C. There are still the traditional early 20C houses, with small front garden and iron gate; some newer housing estates have replaced fields/paddocks, but retained some grass and the wall boundaries, whilst infill housing has varied boundaries, but gardens and porches are common features. Hedging, verges and tree/shrubs add to the important link and wildlife corridor into the forest edge. Informal green spaces are evident as well as formal play areas. Mile End cemetery has a significant position off the main road, on the edge of the Forest, and provides services for neighbouring parishes as well as Coleford.



*3. Early 20C forest stone house with porch*



*4. New housing: note mix of materials, porches, walls, green verge*



*5. Lane with forest behind, mixed housing, hedges*

## Key views



6. Forest Hills down toward Coleford

### Key features/landmarks:

- Forest edge
- Forest Hills golf course and hotel;
- Mile End cemetery;
- 8. Beeches garage



7. Forest Hills toward Lower Lane



9. Forest edge

## Broadwell:

Broadwell Bridge shows little evidence of being a bridge today, as the water is culverted; it is more a central crossroads with a very few services, and some interesting heritage. Poolway Rd and Wynols Hill clearly show the green break down the hill between Coleford town and here. The link road around the edge once the B4432) crosses at the Bridge. Subsidiary roads are narrower and residential, mainly with pavements, where development has taken place into the meend which separated Mile End and Broadwell into the 20C. Whilst there were once more functions locally, notably pubs and shops, they have all closed (but see key features/landmarks later). The numbers 30 & 31 buses to Gloucester pass roughly hourly, but at half-hourly intervals, and buses to Monmouth stop 4 times in the day. The main recycling point for the Forest is located in Speech House Road (the B4226 from Cannop to Coleford), where Concrete Utilities (the biggest employer in Broadwell) is also sited on the forest edge.

The green infrastructure is similar to that at Mile End, with the two green edges, but there is more use of tracks into the Forest by walkers and BMX bikes, although informal ways are not signed to Cannop and the main Cycle Trail. There is some camping/caravanning space off Speech House road. Mesne is still there, but sporadic as much of the coniferous plantations reach into the periphery, as well as housing extending out.





11 Mesne near old coal workings

Few buildings in Broadwell predate 1900: part of the earliest area is known as the Land Society (Machen /Howard /Campbell Roads) where members built on rectangular plots in a field they purchased. The plots are very regular, with late 19C early 20C houses showing some common features: small front and large back gardens (to feed a family); slate roofs, sash style windows, chimneys, porches. Many houses have been altered, rendered and extended, with some conversions.

13. Land Society: narrower roads, right angled junctions

**Ribbon development** along North and South Roads is a mixture of ages and styles of housing. The building line of the streetscape varies significantly as some houses have small front gardens, some none; some front the road, some are end on. Access – whether pedestrian or car – is varied or piecemeal, with some roads meeting with curved, differently angled egress to North or South Rd, others are right-angled with difficult visibility. Apart from North/South Road and the B4226 there are no through roads.

In the 1930s and 50/60s council housing took up much space in estates off North Rd. At the end of the 20C some smaller estates of market housing were built on the east side of South Rd. Green verges are evident in both, but gardens have shrunk.

Parking is on-street, on-plot, hard standing and informal use of forest waste.

10 Factory screened on forest edge



12 Jugs Hole pond



14 Part of the linking road around the arc



15 Verges remain with later council housing



16. late 20C terraces, downhill with parking courts



17. Older council housing on edge of forest, much now privately owned

**Key views**



18 Mesne, hedge, field, forest



19 Speech House Rd to Cannop steep winding road downhill past recycling centre



20 On the eastern side, separating the arc from Coleford town centre, mainly over grassland – agricultural and golf courses



21. Broadwell toward Berry Hill

## Key features

- Broadwell Memorial Hall
- Evergreen Hall
- Social Club
- Church of the Good Shepherd
- Broadwell AFC
- Salvation Army at the old Bird in Hand



22 Social Club



23 Broadwell Memorial Hall



24 Evergreen Hall – 3 community buildings within 50 yards of each other



25 Church of the Good Shepherd



26 Broadwell AFC

## Coalway

The north of Coalway, where it joins with South Rd Broadwell, is the highest point, and lands slopes down to the Cross and to east and west; from the Cross there is a minimal slope along the main road to Edenwall, but steepens to east and south toward Fetter Hill and into Palmers Flat. Pumping is required to take services over this watershed toward the Severn rather than the Wye.

Coalway Cross, formerly known as Coalway Lane End, gives a centre, and the majority of services are found within a short distance – shops (including a post office), schools, churches, recreation ground, but not all in the same cluster. The shop at Old Rd/New Rd junction is midway between the 2 churches, and harks back to a 19/20C cluster. The road narrows into a pinch point and the bus stop was moved slightly to help this. The 31 bus to Gloucester passes roughly hourly, and buses to Monmouth stop 4 times in the day. 100 yards along Coalway Rd are the 2 schools, afterschool club and playgroup, the recreation ground, changing rooms and hall. Edenwall Rd has a shop and coach firm and Parkend Rd the Crown Inn. Although functions have been lost

here over the years - shown by remnant place names - some have been gained, mainly from Broadwell. There is still a local tendency to give directions via places which no longer exist!

To the east approaching Edenwall and south at Parkend Walk is mesne and forest, with some significant stands of dominantly oak, but with other mainly native trees and shrubs eg birch, holly, some sycamore. The areas of mesne are sometimes rough, with some sheep, boar and rabbits in evidence, and some have been cared for informally, used for play, and parking, or just as green. There are green verges, even banks, linking in remnants of mine waste, huddled cottages and gardens. From most parts of Coalway, some sort of green space/trees can be seen, and access to forest is within 5-10 minutes walk.



27 Parkend Walk - community tree 28 Outhouse/garage



29 Mown meend with forest backcloth

Whilst the key roads are from Parkend to Coleford and around the edge, subsidiary roads are narrower, some with pavement one side, and some without, and tend not to be through roads (except for Old Rd). There is a real contrast between a. the unplanned lanes and historic growth associated with 19C mining and workers cottages, often around the forest edge, and b. the 20C housing along the main roads with some infill, and c. housing estates, where traffic was planned in.

- a) Unplanned lanes eg Prosper Lane give onto the west of the mesne/ forest edge. Although there has been some modern infill, much of this area consists of cottages – terraced/semi and detached - with gardens, porches, stone garden walls, and gates. Often houses have been combined into one, or extended. There are also “typical” houses of Forest stone – some rendered - of larger size, but all are 2 storey and usually front on to a lanes which are of differing standards and widths.

30 changed buildings around lane



Clusters of houses form microcommunities.

Some parking is accommodated on the plots, but there is also use of forest waste for informal parking. Frequently there are older outbuildings, sheds, former outside toilets and/or pig sties in various states of repair. Some plots are larger, or have a small “field” with hedges/fences where chickens/animals may be housed. Evidence of boar is pervasive.

31 extended cottages



- b) Along the 4 roads leading from the Cross are houses in rows, fronting onto the street. They are individual, but of similar design some 19C, most 20C with later infill. Many streetscapes show variation section by section. These tend to be larger 2 storey properties with larger gardens. They vary with brick or stone construction with tile or slate roof, dependent on age.

*32 Coalway Rd and golf course separating Coalway from the Town Centre*



- c) Council housing estates were built mainly immediately post war, and the Wynols estate in the 1970s completed building on the site of a POW camp. Many of the houses are now privately owned. In Wynols Court bungalows were built specifically for older people, once with a Warden on site (photo 33).



33

Birch Park is the largest modern estate in Coalway with 49 properties, but Forsdene Walk, Crown Meadow, all have roads leading into them which are no through roads. More recently smaller developments have been constructed around Old Rd and Prosper Lane. Each development is designed with a more urban look, except for Walnut Close which has retained the mature walnut tree in the central green space, and is grouped around it. Cattle grids are often found at the entrances to try and keep out the free ranging sheep.



*34 Walnut Close, a modern small estate*

**Key views**



*35 Parkend Walk to Coalway Cross*

- Coalway Rd toward Coleford (32)
- Parkend Walk to Coalway Cross 35

## Key features



36 shop and post office on the Cross

- Shops
- Churches
- Crown
- Schools
- Rec
- Trees - Walnut Close & Parkend Walk

37 Crown Inn



89 Infants School, Juniors, after school club, and playgroup



39 Coalway Rec

## Edenwall and Palmers Flat

Edenwall Road is at the top of the ridge, fairly flat, it links Coalway Cross to Channings Hill ( Palmers Flat) which is steep enough to cause problems approaching in icy conditions from the south. A second valley slopes off the ridge toward Fetter Hill and Lower Palmers Flat.

The main road dominates especially down the hill. Others are access roads only. Volume of traffic on the steep hill is significant, having to pass cars parked mainly on the e side To the east, at the back of the hill against the forest, a metalled lane weaves round and small green spaces eg behind Stoneleigh are used for informal play. Another access road leads from Edenwall near the stile behind the other housing inside the golf course boundary.

Edenwall is less densely built up than Palmers Flat with rows straddling the triangle of mature oaks, but houses stand back from the road, and also occur in clusters to the east. Small front, large back gardens dominate. Cottages and houses are often extended. To the east an unplanned cluster acts as a hamlet of two- storey detached, semi detached and some bungalows (1950s) Locks Row is obvious: a terrace of workers cottages on road. Stone sheds and outbuildings are frequent.



40 Green informal play area

There is continuous ribbon development down the hill at Palmers Flat (45). Regular and irregular styles, outhouses and buildings are set close to and well back from the road on long, thin, short and wide plots. Sash

style windows – originally – are often altered. Chimneys of varying size from 2 to 6 pots. Most have porches, but varied shapes.

The Coach firm next to the ranch style shop off the track at Edenwall, along with parking on forest waste give some employment, but in a mainly residential area. There is a dramatic wirescape at Edenwall (41).



41

The golf course forms the western edge, toward Coleford. Mature trees stand in the triangle at Edenwall (42). Mainly oak, these are valued locally but Forestry Commission are practising some management, and possibly replanting as needed. Holly, birch, are also mixed in with shrubs, foxgloves/gorse/wildflowers, tracks and mesne.

There is a green backcloth of trees behind buildings on the east, with areas of intense greenery and bushes. Meend and rough ground (old coal workings) lead into mature Forestry plantations. Gorse, bracken, oak, spruce, grass with evidence of boars, edge away to multiple animal routes into the forest.



42 Oaks at Edenwall



43 mesne, gap through trees to cluster of houses.

**Key views**



44 towards old colour works, ironworks and quarries  
Gorsty Knoll and Sling in background



45 Up Channings Hill, Palmers Flat

**Key features**

- Oaks at Edenwall
- Gibsons trading post
- Green at top of hill and behind Stoneleigh

## Eastern Arc

### Positive features and special qualities

- Forest and mesne edge - active green infrastructure; stands of oak
- wildlife corridors and informal leisure/play
- green infrastructure over Golf Courses and arable/pastoral land, views toward Coleford
- sports fields and play areas
- separate “village” identities, micro communities
- Coalway especially has local services
- Link to heritage but transitional

### Negative features and detracting elements

- Impact of traffic (including heavy traffic) at crucial junctions especially at Broadwell Bridge and near the recycling centre at the top of a steep and winding hill; Old Rd Coalway; Palmers Flat; Mile End Cross where accidents happen frequently (main route for traffic especially heavy goods through Coleford to Gloucester).
- loss of pubs, shops, services at every settlement: only Coalway has any now
- 3 Halls at Broadwell, 1 at Coalway all trying to give services to local people and trustees try to keep them in good repair
- Wirescape is intrusive

### Looking ahead –

- **Conserve** the identities of satellite settlements through keeping the green areas separating them from Coleford town centre and the transitional tree/mesne edge around the settlement next to the forest “proper”
- **Enhance** safe traffic movement at major junctions eg Mile End Cross/Broadwell Bridge/ Old Rd/ New Rd Coalway/ by schools/Coalway Rec
- **Create more cycle routes** – toward Coleford and Cannop, as much off road as possible
- **Create** a greener focus at Broadwell Bridge
- **Enhance** the triangle at Edenwall by careful husbandry of the stands at Edenwall and Parkend so that these mature trees last as long as possible, and give time to plant as they deteriorate;
- **Maintain** the heritage layout/buildings which make the area distinctive
- As services and employment in the arc decreases, **increase access to the town centre and to places of work**
- By upgrading lines and taking the electricity underground, minimise the impact and reduce concern about wires, power cuts and poor broadband;

## Gateways into Coleford

There are a number of roads which lead into the hub of Coleford [both the town and the parish]. As well as providing access to and from Coleford locally, they also act as important gateways, giving visitors a first impression of the town and its surroundings. They are also reflective of changes over time along a routeway, and perhaps update/reinforce views of local people. NB The main traffic lights at Gloucester Rd/Bank St/Lords Hill and Old Station Way can be found in the Town Centre part ii.

Each of these gateways will be considered separately. See Map 3 Gateways into Coleford.

Starting in the north and moving clockwise, the roads that meet in Coleford are:

1. The Gorse/Sunnybank Road
2. Gloucester Road [B4028] from A4136 Gloucester
3. Speech House Road passing through Broadwell [B4226] from Gloucester
4. Coalway Road from Parkend
5. Perrygrove Road [B4228] from Chepstow
6. Newland Street from Newland & Redbrook
7. Staunton Road [B4228] from Monmouth
8. Cyclepath from Parkend (along old railway line)

### Gateway 1 The Gorse

#### Location

#### 1. The Gorse/Sunnybank.

This enters Coleford from the north and provides a routeway for local traffic from the Berry Hill/Hillersland/English Bicknor area and for tourists from Christchurch, Forest Holidays and Symonds Yat area. The Gorse has a junction with the A4136 at Berry Hill Pike where Monmouth to Gloucester route crosses. However traffic wishing to access Coleford from this road is more likely to do so via the B4228 Staunton Road from the west and the B4028 Gloucester Road from the east.



*1 Berry Hill Pike is a key junction on the boundary of the parish. To the left is the route into Coleford, to the right is to Christchurch campsite, Monmouth is straight on and Gloucester*

*behind the photographer.*



*2. Fields both sides of the road, with a few detached houses on the south side within the parish boundary. Lower Lane filling*

*station on the skyline, green on south side.*



*3. A car sales and outdoor clothing outlet are situated opposite the filling station. Very high streetlights indicate the busy A road status and use by HGVs*

*(including quarry lorries).*

#### Landscape

From the A4136, and the Pike, at elevated location at the top of the rim of the Coleford bowl, there are rural, open views all around: shorter to the north, toward Berry Hill and long views to west, east and south.



4. Looking back to the Pike (named after the turnpike house once there).



5 View north toward Berry Hill over pasture, still in Coleford parish, but north of the A4136.



6 View west over arable land toward Crossways, Staunton Rd and the AONB



7 View over the Green Ring around and into Coleford town, toward Gloucester Rd

From this point The Gorse descends steeply (12) providing views of the town centre and the Victoria Road residential area

**Settlement character**

Within two minutes walking distance of Five Acres crossroads (in West Dean Parish) are:

- Gloucestershire College The relocation of this facility to Cinderford is scheduled for 2018. It provides Further Education but is unlikely to provide A levels at Cinderford. No evening Adult Education is offered here.
- Five Acres High School provides secondary education for children in the Coleford area
- Five Acres Leisure Centre and running track
- Gymnasium



8The crossroads (Five Acres) past the pub, lead to the College, Leisure Centre and Gymnasium and Lakers school

Travelling south from Berry Hill Pike, apart from the house shown right, there is open farmland bounded by fences and hedgerows on both sides of the road. This provides an open, rural approach to the town and is also an important green space separating Coleford from Berry Hill.



9This isolated house near the crossroads has never been occupied since it was built

The Gorse Bungalows, a row of 10 terraced almshouses, constructed in the 1880s are of typical late Victorian design. These are a key feature and landmark of the area, and brow the hill. They are smaller, single storey properties let to older local residents. The hill steepens significantly down into town.

Next door on the eastern side is a single large modern detached property set back from the road and screened by a hedge.



10. The Gorse Almshouses, with small layby, built of stone and slate with classic porches and short chimneys

Southwards, there are fields again on both sides of the road until on the western side there is a short cul-de-sac of late twentieth century bungalows.

This marks the start of the continuous residential development on the western side of the road, the rest of the route being lined by houses forming the edge of the Sunnybank Estate (see Coleford residential).

However, the gateway maintains a semi-rural feel as there is a high grassy bank topped by an old hedgerow and a service road between the houses and the road.

These houses maintain their elevation as the road descends steeply to meet Staunton Road. Consequently the grassy bank becomes steeper, higher and more extensive.

The view over the town is revealed



11. Looking back to the brow of the hill, with the entrance to the Hospice on the right behind the hedge



12 Reverse of 11 above, with green funnel view opening out to the town landscape. Bus route and route to Christchurch and Symonds Yat



On the eastern side of The Gorse the fields extend further south towards the town centre and before the area of continuous

housing is reached, there is the entrance to The Great Oaks Hospice (13) which is set back in a field and cannot be seen from the road.



Next to this is The Coombs Residential Care Home (14) housed in a converted mid-nineteenth century mansion set in its own

grounds with mature trees that screen it from the road.

South of the Coombs is the road accessing the Coombs Park residential area flanked by two detached properties dating from the 1960s. Beyond, there is a pedestrian route into the town centre down Sparrow Hill, now a no-through road but which used to be the road into Coleford.



15 Green edged pedestrian route into the centre, away from the busy junction below

Then as The Gorse approaches Staunton Road, there is another small development of early post-war former council houses.

Again they are separated from the road by a service road, an old hedgerow and a grass verge. On the western side, the houses are slightly below the level of The Gorse, unlike the east.



*16 Traditional, but still semirural look at the junction into the town, keeping the red telephone box.*

#### **Key features**

#### **Key views**

- From Berry Hill Pike across fields to Staunton Road (6)
- to Gloucester Road and Baker's Hill in the south-east.(7)
- Over Coleford town centre and the Victoria Road area while descending The Gorse(12)

- The Gorse Almshouses (10)
- Great Oaks Hospice (13)
- The Coombs Residential Care Home (14)

#### **Positive features and special qualities**

- A green approach, increasing in density, but still green toward the centre of Coleford
- Green signposted separate pedestrian footpath into town
- Views in all directions over the green ring, with changes in gradient

#### **Negative features and detracting elements**

- Steep way out of Coleford toward Christchurch, along a busy road, especially for cycles
- Icy in winter, although gritted as bus route

#### **Looking ahead**

- Potential cycle path alternative for construction from Christchurch

## Gateway 2 Mile End/ Gloucester Rd B4028

### **Location**

#### **2. Mile End Road/Gloucester Road [B4028]**

This route approaches Coleford from the north-east and is a major gateway bringing traffic into the parish from the A4136 which it joins at Edge End. Consequently this is one of the two main routes used to and from Gloucester, especially by HGVs.

It passes through Mile End before reaching the centre of Coleford. There have been serious accidents on this cross, speed limits have been adjusted and further methods to reduce problems are anticipated.

### **Landscape**

This gateway provides an approach to Coleford that gives the impression that it is "a town in the forest" as, before it reaches the parish boundary, it passes through a flat area of open deciduous woodland which hides denser coniferous plantations.

The woodland continues right up to the start of the residential area of Mile End, past the cemetery, the second in the parish.

Once past the Mile End crossroads, there are extensive views north-westwards across The Forest Hills Golf Course and farmland down a substantial valley then up to Lower Lane and Berry Hill Pike which are at a similar elevation.

This green space is important in maintaining the integrity of Mile End as a separate entity from Coleford.



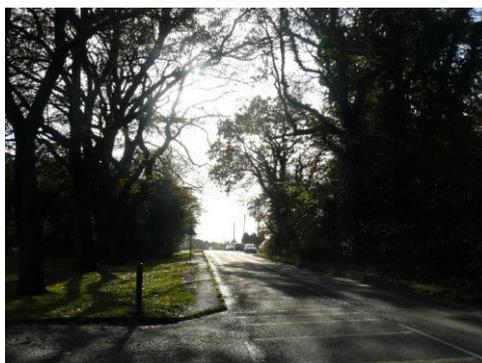
19 Forest Hills

From the golf course entrance the routeway descends fairly steeply, at one point with steep banks either side, to the junction with Poolway Road. At this point there are again views to the north-west across farmland towards Berry Hill. The routeway then follows a shallow slopes down from the south-east into the town centre. This was created by Thurstan's Brook.

### **Settlement character**



17. Mile End cross with main Gloucester route B4028 toward the back, and B4432 turning to Broadwell in the foreground. There is a right angled approach both sides.



18 Approach to Mile End shows mature deciduous trees.



20 Open green approach looking over the Green Ring toward Berry Hill



21 Flatter section past Golf Course then steep down Bakers Hill, flattening out again

The houses fronting the road at Mile End are low density, mainly cottage style properties on sizeable plots, and dating from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Some of the properties are separated by small fields and paddocks which add to the semi-rural feel of the area.

There is one commercial property [a garage repair workshop] fronting onto the road, as well as a former pub, now converted into a house. This is only one of a number of such pubs in Coleford.

There are two access roads off the B4028 leading to late 20C residential developments. One of these, Buckstone Close parallels the edge of the woodland and leads to a saw mill.

At the southern end of Mile End the road passes through an open green area with Forest Hills Golf Course to the west and small fields of pasture to the east.

Some of the farm buildings to the east of the road at Folly Farm have been converted for commercial use.

The entrance is almost opposite the entrance to the golf course, and part is adapted for health and fitness.

There is also a regular boot sale held alongside on part of the farm.

All of these functions show evidence of easy access and plenty of car parking.

Beyond the golf course the B4028 descends steeply and passes between steep grassy banks with just the occasional house fronting onto the road. It then levels out and meets the B4226 Poolway Rd (the other way in from Gloucester) at the bottom of Bakers Hill. A drive also leads to Poolway Farm which is the only building in the Green Ring on the west, but there will also be an access to a development site.

It is at this point that the road enters the increasingly dense residential area of Coleford, and the green surrounding is left behind.



22 Some spaces remain, some are infilled with individual properties



23 Garage and right, house formerly a pub, closed 2 years ago.



24 Access road to housing and saw mill shows the edge of the forest



25. Farm diversification, leisure and commercial use

On both sides of Gloucester Rd are lines of mid and late 20C housing with the occasional 19C cottage. On the east houses are mainly detached with larger front gardens set slightly above road level. On the western side are a number of bungalows with mature gardens and the junction giving access to Poolway Place estate.

26 Detached dwellings dominate, with traditional look, chimneys and porches. Parking is on plot.



Closer to the town centre on the eastern side of Gloucester Rd is an extensive grassy bank with occasional tree rising steeply to the edge of the 1960s Eastbourne estate (council house style) and the Mount of Olives church.



27 The height difference on the eastern side, with the bank, leads to a more open aspect

Following a shallowly sloping course along the side of the valley formed by Thurstan's Brook, the houses on the south-eastern side are at a slightly higher elevation than the road and buildings to the north-west are sometimes slightly lower.

Part of historical Coleford is hardly noticed along this traditional coaching route from Monmouth to Gloucester. Poolway House one of the oldest (and listed) buildings in Coleford, parts dating back to the 16C: now a small hotel. This is outside the Conservation Area.



28 Listed hotel, Poolway House dates back to the 16C..It sits on the side of the road, where modern houses mix with mid 20C.



Further in, gardens tend to become smaller, and an increasing number of properties front directly onto the pavement

29 The Lamb Inn closed in the 1970s and is now converted to flats.



One small late 20C development on the western side replaced a former garage brownfield site with housing, marked on 30 with an arrow.

30



Soon after, the road narrows as a traffic calming measure by the former Lamb pub, now flats. See 28. The tarmac pavement is extended and some bollards and railings installed. Traffic from Market Place lights backs up to here. Near here is a footpath toward Wynols Hill.

The Conservation Area starts here

Only the western side of the road is in the Conservation Area.

Buildings are closer together, forming a complete 18C streetscape. Many of these buildings are commercial, some storage, some shops but some of the shops/food outlets this far out of town have closed, and been converted to residential.

The mainly Georgian frontages vary greatly in their condition. They back onto The Spout, and although there have been some alterations, there is potential for real improvement with some extra attention.

The nearer the town, the less the buildings are in use. Some are boarded up, and the shops are no longer in business. The row ends with the side of the Kings Head.

The roofline and shape is a feature, yet is not noticed as the interest is focused on the ground floor, where more maintenance is needed on some of the buildings

Parking along the street and near to the lights can affect traffic flow. The nearby parking for food outlets is important to their business.

The Kings Head – another closed 3 storey Georgian pub – is empty, except for a Recycling charity on the ground floor and shows broken windows and lack of maintenance.

It is a key building in terms of the Battle of Coleford, and on entry to the town centre at the traffic lights.

The way into Market Place, the bike racks, and the mural are outweighed by the rundown Kings Head, the traffic at the lights and the 20C betting shop.

It is not a dynamic, looked-after approach to the town, yet it is a Conservation area.

On the eastern side several late 1960s houses are located on top of a steep grassy bank, part of the Bells Place estate also accessed from here.

That grassy bank continues to the traffic lights at the edge of the town centre. The Magistrates Court closed some years ago, It remained empty for about 5 years and has since been acquired by the Police too extend into the Police Hub which tops the bank around the junction and traffic lights.

31 Take-aways, café, vet and beauty functions in the



*middle of the row of the Georgian buildings.*



32 Conservation Area: some frontages are in need of careful restoration or just decoration. Empty shops and offices, Kings Head at traffic lights...



33 Parking along the street and near to the lights. Note the yellow lines in front of the Magistrates Court and Police Station opposite.



34 The mural is straight over the lights, but lost in this view.



35 The Court has been sold to the Police Authority to develop a Police Hub. It is up a bank: 18 steps up to its front door. See site assessment 4.

Vehicle access is from Lords Hill.

There was concern about the loss of a Police Station: the development of the Police Hub alleviates that. Any works involving re-alignment of the traffic lights might have an effect on this corner. Opposite is the Tourist Information Centre.



*36 The Police station and court were built together in the 1960s, and now work together as the Forest Police Hub.*

### **Key views**

Across the Golf Course north-west to Berry Hill (20)

### **Key features**

- Mile End Crossroads (17)
- Forest Hills Golf Course (19)
- Folly Farm commercial and industrial units and car boot sale
- Conservation Area
- Kings Head
- Police Hub and green bank



*37 Mile End Cemetery in a peaceful woodland situation.*

### **Positive features and special qualities**

- Green entry to the edge of the town
- Conservation Area for earlier and Georgian streetscape

### **Negative features and detracting elements**

- Some of the buildings in the Conservation area along the western side of Gloucester Rd are in poor condition, lending to a look of disrepair for that streetscape, an important entry to Coleford. Many have ceased trading commercially, some are still empty and some have been converted to residential use.
- Kings Head is noted in particular by local people as in need of attention. (Part of it is in operation by a charity recycling furniture)

### **Looking ahead**

- Kings Head needs to be occupied and restored. Alternative uses as accommodation eg as 1 bedroomed flats possibly for young people with disabilities to share and be supported to live independently, Youth Hostel
- Improve Conservation Area and Gateway into town centre.
- Site at Magistrates Court sold for Police Hub, This could include a green space. Should the site become available, this would be a key site, including considering re-alignment of traffic lights.
- Undertake a Housing Needs Survey to identify more specific needs.

### Gateway 3 Speech House Road [B4226] from Gloucester

#### Location

#### 3. Speech House Road/Poolway Road [B4226]

This gateway approaches Coleford from the east, via the A4151 above Littledean and the A48 at Elton Corner, it leads to Gloucester.

This is one of the two key routes in from the county town and the Cotswolds. This is a key tourist route, also linking Coleford with Beechenhurst, the Sculpture Trail and Speech House. It passes through Broadwell before reaching the centre of Coleford past the recycling centre.

#### Landscape

As it approaches the boundary of Coleford parish, this gateway ascends steeply from the floor of the narrow Cannop valley with steep, winding route, through mainly deciduous woodland. The road passes a small coal mine and several small former quarry sites, indicating the industrial heritage of the area. The largest of these, Oak Quarry, is now used as a council recycling centre, thus generating a large amount of additional traffic from the local Forest area. On occasions, queuing traffic occurs. It is also one route for cyclists to get to the bike hire centre and main circular cycle route in the Forest and vehicles may be trying to overtake cyclist or even walkers along this winding and steep road. It is also a bus route.

By Welsh Water's sewage pumping station, is a road leading to Worcester Lodge, where there is some camping space. On the other side of the road is the area under the trees where pits are used informally for BMX practice to give a bit of challenge for local youth.

As the road crosses the parish boundary, the gradient lessens and the valley sides disappear as the head of the valley is reached. The highest point on the road is at the Broadwell Bridge crossroads, a focal point where the routeway crosses the road that links the settlements of Coleford's eastern arc.

The road is then level until it begins a steep descent down Poolway Road to its junction with Gloucester Road. At the start of, and during this descent there are open views to the north and west across fields and Forest Hills Golf Course towards Berry Hill and Five Acres.



38 The Forestry Commission sign welcoming tourists on the edge of the parish



39 Oak Quarry recycling centre for the Forest



40 Previously old quarries



and pits: used now for leisure



41 View over to Berry Hill from Poolway Rd. Also shows Union Rd and the start of Bakers Hill

**Settlement character**

As this gateway enters Coleford parish it has open deciduous woodland on the southern side, signed for the Forest (38).

On the northern side the woodland gives way to the industrial site of Concrete Utilities and then to a row of four individually styled detached houses and bungalows dating from the mid twentieth century.



42 Concrete Utilities manufactures large concrete products eg streetlights which require heavy transport, so is sited off this main route.

Beyond these is a small paddock and an unsurfaced walkway through to North Road and the Church of the Good Shepherd, past the Evergreen Hall. This used to link into the former tramway junction which is one reason for Broadwell Bridge having its name.



43 Evergreen Hall and walkway through to the Church next to the tree.

The woodland ends abruptly on the southern side of the road at the junction with two minor residential roads. From here there is one house and three bungalows on wide plots and of varying styles, dating from the mid to late twentieth century

Broadwell Bridge crossroads still acts as a local focal point but has lost almost all the services that were located there. On the cross is a 19C property that is now a private house, but was formerly a shop and post office. Opposite is the original school yard stone wall, behind which are the gardens of a small housing development built in the late 20C on the site of Broadwell school (moved to Coalway). On the Coleford side of the cross is the former Rising Sun pub (now a house) with a large open area in front of it, originally the car park, but now fenced off and used as garden. The exceptions are the Social Club; the 2 halls – Evergreen and Memorial Hall (the latter recently refurbished) and the Church just down the road.



44 Approaching the cross, there are speed and traffic signs, and a short distance from the 30mph on the settlement edge with 2 access roads also coming in from the left

The cross still shows a 19C feel to the settlement, but not the activity it once had, although the traffic is significant, and flashing speed signs in place. Two bus routes stop at the cross at half hourly intervals, connecting Coleford with Gloucester, and another, much less frequent, connects with Monmouth.



45 The former school site right, now housing and the hall and Club next to the former pub opposite.

Beyond the crossroads, there is an area of low density residential land use on both sides of the road. Houses are of varying age and styles, several of them being nineteenth century cottages. The properties are at varying alignments to, and distances from, the road. Some gardens run parallel to the road increasing the distance between properties again giving a village atmosphere.

Where Foxes Lane meets the gateway, there is a small triangular area of open grassland, used for informal parking. There is still evidence of waste from mining here.

This is also the route to Broadwell FC which has a healthy following. Beyond this on either side of the road there are short rows of mid twentieth century individually styled detached houses with grass verges in front. Those on the northern side have very long front gardens, adding to the low density nature of the area.

The road, now Poolway Road, has reached the crest of the hill and begins to descend towards the centre of Coleford with fields of pasture on either side and with extensive views across farmland to the north and west. As the road continues to descend its level becomes lower than the surrounding fields and the grass verges become substantial banks, especially on the northern side. There are only three houses along this stretch of road, all on the southern side. Two of them are old cottage style properties with buildings and gardens parallel to the road.

Once the road passes the junction with Union Road the number of houses increases. To the north there are five detached properties on large plots overlooking the road from the slopes of Bakers Hill. To the south there is a row of late twentieth century detached and semi detached houses, marking the entrance to The Paddocks, a small estate constructed on a small brownfield site relating to the mine entrance (adit). At this point Poolway Road joins Gloucester Road, another gateway into Coleford. At the junction there is a triangular area of forest waste used for informal parking. This harks back to the local mine and the Pike house opposite (where just a wall remains). Poolway development site will exit onto the road here.

#### Key views

North and West across farmland and Golf Course to Five Acres and Berry Hill (4) and (11)

#### Key features

- Broadwell Bridge crossroads (45)
- Concrete Utilities site (42)
- Evergreen Hall (43)



46 Broadwell FC is to the right, and the waste triangle at Foxes Lane is also marked with an arrow



47 Arrow shows the mine waste – now grassed over – but still evident in the landscape



48 Waste triangle where gateways meet at the bottom of Bakers Hill. The broadband box is just to the right of the site of the former Pike house. Green Ring toward Berry Hill

48 Waste triangle where gateways meet at the bottom of Bakers Hill. The broadband box is just to the right of the site of the



49 Broadwell Memorial Hall

#### Positive features and special qualities

- Historic village of Broadwell with industrial heritage
- Rural woodland entrance on tourist route
- Gloucester and Monmouth bus routes cross, giving good service into Coleford

#### Negative features and detracting elements

- Traffic significant at awkward junction with difficult approaches to Broadwell Bridge

- Steep, winding approach to parish boundary from Cannop is picturesque but potentially difficult with large vehicles approaching in the middle of the road, and some cyclist traffic
- Loss of services very evident

#### **Looking ahead**

- Plan in an alternative, signposted route through the woods to Cannop and the cycle trail
- Consider traffic effect when Poolway Farm development happens
- Green spaces potential at several key sites

## Gateway 4 Coalway Rd from Parkend

### Location

#### 4. Parkend Road/Coalway Road/Lords Hill

This gateway approaches Coleford from the south-east from the direction of Parkend and Lydney and passes through Coalway. It is a minor road and is mainly used by local traffic and by tourists, especially from CSMA at Whitemead and from the Dean Forest Railway. The parish boundary starts near Dark Hill, with Nags Head plantation either side of the road.

### Landscape

The road is ascending through an area of open deciduous woodland and small hedged paddocks as it reaches Coalway.

The grass verges open out into small patches of meend, some containing one or more mature deciduous trees

It continues to rise gradually until it reaches Coalway crossroads, a focal point where the routeway crosses the road that links the settlements of Coleford's eastern arc.

The one shop/post office functions as a centre for Coalway: the other 3 shops have closed, and 2 are converted to houses.

From here the route descends gently down Coalway Road before dropping more steeply down Lords Hill to the town centre.

From Coalway Road there are glimpsed views to the south-west across the golf course towards High Nash and Milkwall but they are somewhat obscured by the trees on the golf course. From Lords Hill there are views north-westwards across the town centre and towards Scowles.

### Settlement character

On the western side of the road entering the parish there are a number of nineteenth century cottage style detached properties separated from the road by a grass verge and lane. On the eastern side of the road is a paddock bounded by a tall hedgerow.

At the north-western end of the paddock, where Parkend Walk joins the Parkend Road there is another small meend with nineteenth century cottage style properties clustered around it.

Opposite are the side walls and gardens of two late twentieth century semi-detached properties with a walkway between them leading to the Crown Meadow estate.

Next to this are the gardens and car park of The Crown Inn which side onto the road. Opposite is the end of the green space noted at Parkend Walk,



50 Approach from woods and meend



51 The shop on the corner is local Forest grey limestone with slate roof. Many surrounding older buildings are rendered. The bus is going toward Coleford



52 The view of the oak is somewhat marred by the electricity transformer. The meend has been part mown and the paddock is to the right. A valuable green space.



53 Crown Inn. The field adjoining has been developed for modern housing

Next to the Crown Inn, as the road curves towards the west, is one detached dwelling with a large garden parallel to the road behind an old stone wall. There is then a terrace of four 18C cottages and, at the Coalway crossroads, the former Britannia public house which is now subdivided into flats.



54 Yellow lines assist visibility at a busy crossroads

Opposite the Crown Inn is the entrance to a small development of late 20C detached houses sited surrounding a walnut tree in a cul-de-sac. Several of these houses front or side onto Parkend Road, but the original stone boundary wall has been kept.



55 The cattle grid is to stop the roaming

Forest sheep as noted by the sign



This stone wall continues to the crossroads, fronting a substantial villa style property constructed of forest stone for the quarry owner which stands out. It shows some stone mullion windows, dressed grey Forest stone, stone architrave and porch and neatly cut stone for the boundary wall into which the railings are set. Note the roof is now tiled.



56 Built for Mr Immins from his own quarry, this is a notable example of skilled local stone masonry.

The gateway now becomes Coalway Road and begins a gentle descent towards Coleford town centre. There is a greater mix of land use and building age.



57 Both schools use the same entrance, not far from the crossroads, and it can be very busy. A crossing patrol person is evident at start and close of school

On the north-eastern side of the road, there are three 19C cottage style properties before the entrance to Coalway Infants and Junior Schools.

On the north side there is a linear, but mixed age set of dwellings (mid-20C and 19C) including yet another former pub subdivided into flats; substantial individually styled detached properties set well back on their plots and dating from the late 19C/early 20C. (These are stone, some rendered). After the junction with Holcot Road, is a late 20C two storey block of flats built on a brownfield site. The housing density then increases with a row of nine individually designed detached houses (mid 20C) followed by 11 individually styled detached bungalows dating from the 1960s. All these are brick, often rendered. All are a similar distance from the road with front gardens and walls.



58 The development is one side of the road only, leaving an open vista over the Golf Course.



On the south-western side of Coalway Road there is far less residential development giving the road as a whole a semi-rural open aspect – not suburban. Off the crossroads there are just three properties this side, then the entrance to Coalway Recreation Field and Mushet United’s pitch.



59The Rec. has a fenced carpark parallel with the road which is used to help with schools start and finish times, when the road is very busy. The layby is often full.

Beyond this the road follows the boundary of the Forest of Dean/Bells Golf Course and has a grass verge rather than a pavement on this side of the road. There are only four properties built along this boundary before the road becomes Lords Hill, a cluster of two bungalows and a house dating from the mid-twentieth century and an individual nineteenth century cottage (with 4 semis being constructed adjacent 2017)



60View of High Nash through the gap in the cluster of houses on the southern side of the road

On the north-eastern side, when Coalway Road becomes Lords Hill at Whitehall Farm (listed), the descent starts and there are more, older, properties as the edge of the town centre is approached. Further down the hill there are 2 properties, one older and one modern. This one is now used as a care home. Both properties have large plots.



61Whitehall Farm (listed) where the road name changes, to Lords Hill. It is Georgian and three storey, stone and slate roofed with sash windows Note step for churns on the roadside.

Next is Bells Field, an open space/ playing field accessed off Lords Hill and bounded by a high old stone wall. Owned by the Town Council, it is planned for leisure/community use. There is a short distance here when there is no housing either side of the road. The green separation from Coleford is seen as important by local people.



62Although green either side of the road, the high stone walls give an impression of being closed in.

Beyond Bells Field the road narrows and the housing density increases again. There are two detached houses with gardens set slightly above road level, one of these is late 20C infill. The remaining houses along the road date mainly from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. They have very small front gardens and no garages. One property has three storeys. A small cul-de-sac development of 20C detached houses with garages stretches off Lords Hill to the north



63 19C properties rise up the steepest part of Lords Hill. The pavement is narrow, and pedestrians with large pushchairs/ wheelchairs/ scooters are forced to go into the road as it narrows

Just before Lords Hill reaches the Old Station Way junction there is a terrace of very small cottages dating from the 18C originally with an open back garden accessed via a path at the lower end of the row.



64Modern housing behind the 18C terraced cottages. Note the alterations to the slate roofs and variety of porches.

These are opposite another modern development of town houses, the Parish Room (Old School House) and the listed Old Vicarage. All are outside the Conservation Area.

On the south-western side of Lords Hill, opposite Bells Field (65 left) is the entrance to Bells Hotel and Golf Course (right) the former school and below this the steepest part of Lords Hill.



66The steep hill and curve is picked out with red road markings as HGVs and buses may be in the middle of the road. The restored stone house is right on the road

There is a small modern red brick cul-de-sac development of detached and semi-detached town houses some of which are three storeys.

Below the Old School House, now converted into single storey apartments, at the junction with Old Station Way is a late 20C court of two storey houses.



67Old School House

From that junction, the road leads to Gloucester Rd traffic lights and congestion is significant, including well back past the junction. The manhole in Lords Hill by the lights, can lift when intensive rain occurs, with flood effect. The development site "The Marshes" on the junction is vacant and not beautifully fenced off.

### Key views

Across Bells Golf Course towards High Nash and Milkwall.

From Lords Hill across Coleford town centre



68The construction site for a supermarket, currently stalled, just at the entry to the town centre from Lords Hill.

### Key features

- The Crown Inn
- Eskimarket, corner shop
- Coalway Infants and Junior Schools
- Coalway Recreation Ground
- Bells Field
- Bells Golf Course and Hotel



69Boundary stone on the outskirts of the parish

### Positive features and special qualities

- Approach alongside Green Ring and golf course
- Taste of the forest with woods, meend, Forest stone buildings
- Georgian architecture
- Functions at Coalway
- Valued small green spaces

### Negative features and detracting elements

- Busy Coalway Cross
- Narrow section of road down Lords Hill
- Stalled supermarket site

### Looking ahead

- Develop supermarket site appropriately and remove fencing

- **Community leisure use of Bells Field**

## Gateway 5 Perrygrove, High Nash and Old Station Way

### Location

#### 5. B4228 Perrygrove Road/Old Station Way/High Nash

This gateway approaches Coleford from the south from the direction of Lydney , St Briavels and Chepstow. It is a very rural approach to Coleford, although once the town is entered the main industrial areas are clearly visible. Consequently this route carries a high volume of commercial vehicles and lorries as the Suntory factory and the main industrial estates are easily accessible from this direction. (Although there is a weight restriction at High Nash on the final stage into the Town Centre.) It is also used by visitors as two main tourist attractions, Puzzle Wood and Perrygrove Railway, are accessed directly off the road.

### Landscape

The road passes through open deciduous woodland as it reaches the boundary of Coleford parish at the Lambsquay crossroads. From here it descends gently to the junction with Pingry Lane, before rising again to the traffic lights at the crossroads with High Nash and Tufthorn Avenue which is also the start of Coleford's main settlement area. For much of the route there is a ridge of higher land to the east.



70 Rural woodland entrance to Coleford by Lambsquay

Between the Lambsquay crossroads and the Tufthorn Avenue traffic lights there are very few buildings. The road passes through farmland, mainly pasture. The field boundaries are mainly hedgerows, but there is some fencing. The road has grass verges, and close to Lambsquay, where the verges are wider, there are mature deciduous trees along the roadside (70).

At the traffic lights the route then splits into two, one descending to the town centre via High Nash, and the other descending to the east of the town centre via Old Station Way.



71 Approaching the traffic lights at Tufthorn where the route splits, up a rise.

There are views across fields to the Suntory factory from Pingry.

### Settlement character

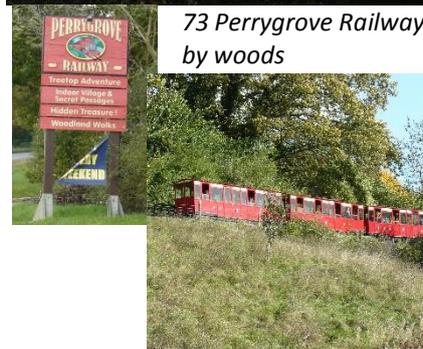
Near Lambsquay, on the eastern side of the road is the fenced boundary of a garden centre. Next to this is a large nineteenth century, three storey villa style property set back in its own grounds, approached by a long drive and screened from the road by mature trees and a tall evergreen hedge.



72 Individual 19C dwelling

A footpath from Milkwall reaches the road next to a pond at the northern edge of the grounds.

The only other buildings on the eastern side of the road before the Tufthorn traffic lights are reached are those associated with Perrygrove Farm. These are largely screened by a hedge, but the traditional style 19C farmhouse is partly visible. Beyond the farm is the entrance to the Perrygrove Railway visitor attraction. Apart from these, to the east of the road are hedgerows bounding small fields that rise away from the road to a line of trees at the crest of the ridge.



73 Perrygrove Railway runs through fields and by woods

Next to the Tufthorn Lights are allocated employment sites (FoDDC Allocations Plan noted by NDP). This will increase traffic movements at the lights.

To the west of the road, the land use is again predominantly pasture. The hedged fields are larger and the landscape flatter with deciduous woodland in the background. Within these fields, parallel to the road, is the grassed car park for Puzzle Wood and the house and out buildings of Lower Perrygrove Farm which is part of the visitor attraction.



74 Suntory Ribena factory viewed over Puzzle Wood car park

Here the road narrows with a curve and small hump in the road, consequently road markings are evident to warn traffic. North of the Puzzle Wood complex is the road junction with Pingry Lane and the driveway to Pingry Farm, the outbuildings of which form a small business park.



75 Road markings by Perrygrove Railway

The sign is the most visible from the road due to tall hedges. Until this gateway reaches the traffic lights there are grass verges rather than pavement.



76 Pingry business park

At the traffic lights the urban zone of Coleford begins, and this gateway splits into two. a)The eastern branch remains the B4228 and descends into the town as Old Station Way. It is a modern road dating from the 1980s and bypasses the town centre. It became the focus for development on former greenfield sites and has late 20C commercial and industrial units on its eastern side as well as two entrances to small industrial estates. These are largely screened by trees.



77 Garages and green verges : modern industrial and commercial units accessed by a purpose-built road avoiding the town centre.

On the western side of the road are 1980s residential estates. No houses front on to the road. There are walls and fences marking the boundaries of gardens and green play areas, the side walls of houses and two roads that lead into the estates. Both sides of the road have pavements and grass verges. Further into town, to the west, the road passes the Main Place and the Pyart Court shopping development both with associated parking.



78 Pyart Court below Old Station Way, and with parking. The cycle path crosses in the background

On its eastern side the road passes a small area of grass and mature trees which marks the entrance to the cycle path to Milkwall along the old railway line.



79The cycle path crosses by the Main Place

It then passes a development of warden assisted bungalows and a short row of terraced town houses before it reaches its junction with Lords Hill.

b) The western branch from the traffic lights is the original route into Coleford town centre from this direction. The road swings sharply westwards for a short distance, fringed by tall dense bushes and grass verges before turning northwards again, passing a fenced field and the access road to the Suntory factory. It rises slightly before beginning a continuous descent through the residential area of High Nash into Coleford town centre.



*80 Suntory is the turning right, and the car is approaching from the traffic lights around the sharp bend. HGVs have to proceed slowly in the centre of the road.*

For much of the route, the houses are of uniform design, semi detached and short terraces of former council houses, dating from the early 1920s. They have short front gardens and no garages, leading to a large amount of on street parking which can cause traffic issues as this road is a bus route and is used by large commercial vehicles. The houses on the western side are set slightly above the road level. There are pavements on both sides of the road but no grass verges.



*81 The double decker No 31 to Gloucester passes on street parking. The weight restriction prevents HGVs using this gateway*

Part way down the hill, on the western side, is the Roman Catholic Church with its accompanying hall and vicarage. These date from 1933. Beyond this point the road name changes from High Nash to Cinderhill and the style and age of the houses become more varied. There are some cottage style houses dating from the nineteenth century interspersed with both early and late twentieth century housing. Most of the properties are very close to the road, some having no front gardens. However, some of the houses have gardens to the side of the property running parallel to the road and giving a greater sense of space. The gardens tend to be fronted by walls of varying heights, many of them constructed of forest stone.



*82 St Margaret Mary's RC Church*

On the western side of the road there are two roads leading to mid and later twentieth century housing developments.



*83 David Mushet lived at Forest House, and perfected the Besemer process. His son Robert discovered self-hardening steel. It is listed and a hotel and restaurant.*

Close to the town centre the road passes the Forest House Hotel, a substantial three storey property dating from the 18C and associated with the Mushet family.

On the eastern side of the road, just before the town centre is reached, housing gives way to services. There is a doctor's surgery, fire and ambulance station and a cadet hut immediately before the entrance to the main car park, the presence of which again makes this an important gateway into Coleford.



*84 View of the Clock tower and Coleford with the main car park just on the right past the white cadet hut*

The Forest of Dean District Council offices are off this roundabout too. Lawnstone Development site abuts the roundabout.

### **Key views**

- Across fields from Pingry northwest to Suntory factory (74)



85 From top of Old Station Way/ High Nash, glimpsed views of Bells Golf Course beyond industrial estate.



86 From Cinderhill north to Coleford town centre. Fire Station on the right.

### Key features

- Lambsquay crossroads
- Puzzle Wood (74)
- Perrygrove railway (73)
- Tufthorn Avenue/Old Station Way lights (71)



87 Robert Forester Mushet commemorated

- a)
  - Suntory Factory (74)
  - Fire and Ambulance Station (86)
  - Surgery
  - Cadet Hut (84)
  - Forest House Hotel (83)
  - Mushet plaque at corner of Mushet Place (87)
- b)
  - Petrol Station in Old Station Way (77)
  - The Main Place (79)
  - Pyart Court (78)

### Positive features and special qualities

- Woodland entry with views
- Major attractions at Puzzle Wood and Perrygrove on main route in
- Old Station Way designed appropriately to take HGVs, restricted on other High Nash route
- Fire, Ambulance, St John Ambulance and Doctors' surgeries all off this Gateway

### Negative features and detracting elements

- High Nash narrows with on street parking
- Impact of HGVs

### Looking ahead

- Aldi permission at traffic lights
- Adjacent land to existing factory could be site for further expansion

## Gateway 6 Newland St, Whitecliff

### Location

#### 6. Whitecliff/Newland Street

This gateway approaches Coleford from the southwest. It is a minor road carrying mainly local traffic from villages such as Newland and Redbrook. Scenically this is considered to be one of the most attractive approaches to Coleford, adjacent to the AONB. As the road system eventually connects with the Wye Valley, this is a gateway that could be used by visitors to the area.

### Landscape

The road approaches Coleford along the floor of the valley occupied by Valley Brook. There is an upward gradient as the road approaches the urban area of Coleford. The valley is fairly narrow with steeply sloping sides to both the north and the south. Consequently there are no long views from within this gateway.



88 The Whitecliff valley is wooded, steep sided and green, belying its industrial past. It is "down in".

For most of its route through Coleford Parish, this road passes through an area of dispersed housing along the roadside, separated by small paddocks, woodland and large garden plots running parallel to the road. The road is narrow and quite busy at times



89 Lorries use the middle of the road at certain pinch points.

There is only one short pavement section until the built up area of Coleford is approached and stone walls are the most common form of property boundary.

### Settlement character

The entrance to a disused quarry and the remains of the Whitecliff Furnace give testament to the industrial past of this area. Most of the properties date from the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. There is very little modern development until the road passes under the old railway bridge close to the town centre. Travelling towards Coleford town centre from the junction with the Highmeadow road, on the southern side of the road there are four widely spaced cottage style properties, set in their own grounds and dating from the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. All are recently renovated.



90 Junction with Highmeadow Rd and entry from Newland. Wye Valley AONB woodland is behind the photographer

On the northern side there is an area of deciduous woodland. When this woodland ends there is an open area with buildings currently used as garage specialising in vehicle repair. Opposite this is a small cluster of attached cottages which front directly onto the road, This cluster is added to by a substantial house set in its own grounds including an orchard; four detached, individually styled and well spaced properties set close to the road including one mid 20C development. All are backed by woodland and small paddocks rising up the valley sides.

*91 Gardens alongside the road and near to Whitecliff Brook, culverted here.*



Continuing towards Coleford, on the southern side, the road is lined by trees and bushes preventing any view of the hill slope beyond. On the northern side of the road is the entrance to a large former quarry, now used as an off road driving centre and sometimes locomotive refit, with a mid twentieth century bungalow, next door.



*92 The old quarry entrance*

On a flat platform of land are the remains of Whitecliff Furnace and an eighteenth century cottage. These are backed by a steep slope leading to the flat course of a former tramway. Beyond this is an area of trees and bushes obscuring any view of the slope.



*93 Whitecliff Furnace (scheduled ancient monument) where Mushet perfected the Bessemer process*

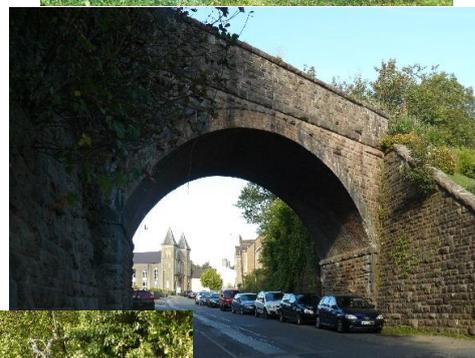
This then gives way to long narrow fields of pasture running parallel to the road and sloping up to the old tramway and a line of deciduous trees. These fields are bounded by hedges, stone walls and wire fences. A footpath crosses the road from north to south.



*94 Rock Lane and the Burial Path cross the road*

It is from this point that there is a narrow pavement on the northern side of the road. A holiday chalet development site is located here. Until the old railway bridge is reached, only one residence, an eighteenth century cottage style property, fronts the road in this section. On the southern side there are three residences, two 3storey 18C houses with no front gardens, one being Whitecliff House, and a mid 20C bungalow.

*95 Railway Viaduct*



They are separated from each other by their gardens which run parallel to the road and have walls and tall mixed species hedges. There is then an area of pasture before there are two detached properties and two pairs of semi detached houses, all dating from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. All are very close to the road with very small or no front gardens.



Once the old railway viaduct (Skewed Bridge) is reached there is a sudden change in the settlement pattern. The urban area of Coleford begins, with a continuous line of buildings on both sides of the road apart from one small car park and a road junction with Bowen's Hill, both on the northern side.

There are pavements on both sides of the road except under the viaduct where there is some on street parking.

On the northern side there is a three storey late twentieth century industrial unit. Next to this are two short rows of late twentieth century terraced houses with very small front gardens and parking behind. Beyond this is a small car park, the Baptist Church, and then a small development of apartments, with parking behind, dating from the late twentieth century, before the junction with Bowen's Hill.

On the southern side, after the railway bridge, there is a late 20C three storey development of apartments, with a small area of lawn in front of them and access to parking behind.

There is then a line of detached and semi-detached properties built very close together and with very small or no front gardens, but access to long steeply sloping gardens behind. They mainly date from the 18 and 19C but with some 20C infill

The narrower road enters the Conservation Area by the 20mph sign, with some (listed) properties in need of repair/restoration. See Old Guardian Office site Map 7.



96 Newland St looking toward the Baptist Church; engineering firm on the left in the modern building



97 listed Baptist Church dating from 1858 and converted to 2 storeys



98 Gaps in linear settlement showing long uphill steep gardens

### Key views

No real views except when right into the town centre: just a short view up Newland Street from the Bowen's Hill junction to the Clock Tower.

### Key features

- Baptist Church (97)
- Old Railway viaduct (95)
- Whitecliff Furnace (93)
- Off Road Centre in former quarry(92)
- Listed buildings at entrance to Conservation Area



99 Whitecliff House 18C

### Positive features and special qualities

- Green entrance from Wye Valley AONB and Green West
- Heritage features eg Whitecliff Furnace

### Negative features and detracting elements

- Minor road in winding and steep sided valley floor – lacks sun for much of the winter

### Looking ahead

- Maintain the best green gateway into Coleford
- Maintain/conserves/ sensitively develop around key listed buildings

## Gateway 7 Staunton Rd

### Location

#### 7. B4228 Staunton Road

This gateway approaches Coleford from the north-west. The B4228 joins the A4136 at the Robin Hood Junction and is therefore the main routeway for traffic to and from Monmouth, the Wye Valley and South Wales via the A40. As well as local and tourist traffic, this route is also used by a large amount of commercial traffic including heavy goods vehicles.

### Landscape

The road enters the Parish of Coleford through an area of open deciduous woodland (in AONB). It then descends very gradually towards the built up area of Coleford through farm land. The land to the south of the road is largely flat, but the land to the north of the road rises significantly to the north-east, giving views up to the skyline. There is a small stream that parallels the road as it approaches the built up area.

For most of its route through Coleford Parish, this gateway passes through open countryside, mainly farmland. As the B4228 leaves the A4136 at Robin Hood Junction, there is woodland on both sides of the road largely hidden by tall bushes.

To the north of the road, the woodland is deciduous, classed as ancient woodland while to the south it is mainly coniferous. Off route is an SSSI.

A short distance from the junction a metalled road leads into the woods on the southern side. This is a private road constructed to allow lorries to access Stowfield Quarry with the minimum of disruption to the public.

### Settlement character

The only other break in the woodland is on the northern side of the road where there is a large cleared area containing industrial buildings and workshops. This brownfield site (ex-sawmills) is currently part used for highways storage, but is an allocated employment site (FoDDC Allocations Plan and NDP see Map 7). The woodland gives way to fields of pasture at the same point north and south of the road. At this point on the southern side is a single bungalow set back from the road on a large plot. The bungalow and fields are only glimpsed as there are tall mixed species hedgerows on both sides of the road.



*100 Approach from Monmouth, past Longstone through the AONB toward the junction with deciduous amenity belt evident*



*101 Lorry route to Stowfield Quarry.*



*102 Sawmills well shielded by the deciduous trees*

As the road approaches the Crossways crossroads, there is a small cluster of buildings. The first, on the north side, is Rushmere House. This is a three storey house, built in 1908, set back from the road and largely hidden by a tall hedge. Next to this are the house and buildings of Rushmere Farm, now primarily functioning as a riding stables and campsite with the entrance being off the road running north from the crossroads. On the southern side of the junction there is a dwelling either side of the Scowles Road: One is a 19C cottage bordered along the roadside by a wooden fence, and the other a mid 20C bungalow bordered by a rendered concrete wall. Beyond the crossroads the character of the gateway changes.

On the northern side of the road the hedgerows are much lower, giving wider views of the large arable fields beyond. The land now begins to slope up to the north-east so that there are views in that direction to the Gorse Bungalows on the skyline.

On the southern side, a pavement now begins which continues into the town centre and there is a line of dwellings along the road side, with no front gardens, but widely separated from each other by large side gardens running parallel to the road and with fields behind. All of these properties have built garages on their land to allow on plot parking and alleviate parking issues along this busy road. The properties are of varied cottage or farmhouse style design and largely date from the 19C. The properties are usually bounded by stone walls.

Closer to the town centre, opposite where the fields end on the northern side of the road, this line of low density properties is interrupted by the access road to a new development of mixed housing (including affordable) on farmland behind. Construction of Thurstan's Rise has led to a change to the main road at the access point. The impact of this traffic will be found here, and at the Bank St/ St John St/ Boxbush Rd junction on the edge of the Town Centre. Drainage issues have been evident and the watercourse has been accommodated at a much lower level than housing.



*103 Cluster around Crossways is still very green*

*104 Rushmere farm and stables also has a campsite*



*105 View to the skyline in the north over arable fields to the Gorse*

*106 Solid 19C house with stone garden wall, pavement on one side in the 40mph limit*



*107 New development under construction at Owens Farm 156 dwellings*

Where the fields end on the northern side of the road, a wide grassy bank, with occasional trees, begins which gets steeper towards the town centre. Beyond this bank, looking down onto the road is a row of 1940s and 1950s semi-detached former council houses with a service road in front, marking the edge of the Sunnybank housing estate. These continue until The Gorse road junction. The grassy bank continues beyond this junction but it is then topped by three mid 20C detached bungalows.

The grass bank ends at the Sparrow Hill junction, giving an open approach on the one side, narrowing to the junction.

On the southern side of the road the line of low density 19C cottages ends when the junctions with, first Albert Road, and then Victoria Road are reached. Mixed 19 and 20C housing, some now semi-detached and with smaller gardens line the street. Closer to the town centre there are two 18C buildings linked together, one of which is subdivided into a pair of small cottages. Finally there is a row of attached late 18C cottages fronting directly onto the pavement before the side wall of the former Masons Arms public house and the junction with Boxbush Road.

On the northern side the houses are considerably older as the town centre is reached. The road passes three early 19C attached cottages fronting directly onto the pavement and the former Independent Chapel dating from 1842 and now converted into apartments.

*110 This junction is complex in layout with the Chapel centre, old Masons Arms left and new extra care apartments then under construction right. It is in the Conservation Area*

Pavements here are narrow and this is a busy and obvious route for residents and visitors into town. There will be additional traffic from the new development at Owens Farm.

Some of the historic (and some listed) buildings are in need of maintenance.

**Key views**

- **From Crossways northeast across fields to The Gorse Bungalows on the skyline (105)**

**Key features**

- Crossways crossroads (103)
- Rushmere Stables(104)



*along the road. The wide bank on the north rises to traditional council style housing then bungalows.*

*108 linear development in the 19C mainly shows end on properties with gardens following the line*



*109 The turn to the Gorse and Christchurch campsite is signed with a brown symbol. Note the mature if small gardens on the right*



*110 there are 5 roads joining at this point (including the Tram Road) as well as traffic backing up from*



*Market Place lights. This is difficult for motorists and especially pedestrians to manoeuvre*



*111 View over Owen Farm from Bells Place, where Thurstan's Rise has been built.*

- Former saw mill Robin Hood(102)

**Positive features and special qualities**

- Access through the Green West and AONB
- Green approach into town by Sunnybank

**Negative features and detracting elements**

- Boxbush/Bank St junction is busy and difficult for traffic and pedestrians, and in the Conservation area

**Looking ahead**

- Improve the appearance and pedestrian/traffic movement at Boxbush/Bank St junction
- Investigate traffic management and parking re Market Place lights

## Gateway 8 Cycle Path from Parkend

### Location

#### Cycle and footpath along disused railway

This gateway enters Coleford from the south, bringing in many visitors to the town, who like to be active participants in the countryside and local heritage. They come into the Parish from the main Forest cycle path which links into Cannop, Beechenhurst by the junction at Fetter Hill with the Ellwood Rd. Hence it is a useful off-road route to connect with public transport by rail from Lydney (and Parkend Station of the Dean Forest Railway). A number of attractions are nearby this route.

### Landscape

Open deciduous woodland at the entry into the Parish is dotted with old quarries – fenced off for safety. There is a short ascent towards a series of Scheduled Ancient Monuments, including Dark Hill Ironworks (see 112 below).

112 Dark Hill from cycle path (Scheduled Ancient Monument)



113 Aaron's Pond by Dark Hill



Going between quarries, drift mines, colour works, this is a feast of high level industrial archaeology, all within the Forest and with a gentle gradient as it uses old narrow gauge rail routes very gradually towards the built up area of Coleford. This national route 49 is well-used by both local people and tourists

114 Cycle path en route to Gorsty Knoll and Milkwall



The industrial heritage is still evident either side of the route within ancient woodland or interspersed with meend, wild flowers and heavy with bracken in season.

There is evidence of wild boar activity on the grass verges eg onto the road at Milkwall.

At Milkwall Bridge the road is crossed by the industrial zone of the southern arc, where the Colour Works used to be (although one building remains, it is covered in ivy and needs conservation, see Appendix G).

116 Crossing of cycle path at Milkwall Bridge, by industrial cluster in bottom of valley, signed left 118

115

Just past here the old railway line goes into a cutting, which precludes much view for about half a mile.



117 To the south the more urban landscape is screened from the cycle path by shrubs. Narrow entries using bridges cross a minor stream to gain the



118 Trees and shrubs fill the sides of the track



However, as the valley opens out there is an open green feel to the north in particular, over the Bells Golf Course. This includes a lake and minor watercourse, with swell of the hill toward the hotel. Mature deciduous trees are evident both on and around some edges of the course, especially at the skyline.

Photo 119 Lower part of Bells Golf Course showing mature trees and reeds;



Photo 120 shows lake alongside cycle track, used for watering if needed, but in the previous field called "The Damps" as it was wetland and fed by the small stream. Looking north east the copse on Edenwall edge of course links into the wildlife corridor.



### Settlement character



From the edge of the parish it is some distance to Milkwall where dispersed settlement on Gorsty Knoll (Green Ring 3) can be seen occasionally. The edge of the Southern Arc is where the path crosses the road by the small industrial units on the old Colour Works site. These are valued for their employment, but could benefit from some improvement to layout/appearance.

121 Old Colour Works and related site

The crossing at Old Station Way is offset to the pelican crossing, further east than the Main Place. Many people use the library and community facilities, and walk dogs along the cycle path. There is a dog waste bin by the south

side of Old Station Way. Kings Meade accommodates people over 55 who would appreciate easier access. There is a development site alongside existing bungalows and the cycle path.

*122 entry into town from Old Station Way, alongside The Main Place, by cycle racks, then into car park*



**Key views**

- Over Dark Hill *photo 112*
- Over golf course *photo 118*

**Key features**

- Dark Hill Ironworks (SAM)
- Titanic
- Disused railway route
- Colour Works (Valued Heritage Asset, not designated)
- Gorsty Knoll meend and Milkwall Enclosure
- Cycle racks

*123 Stone to mark start of cycle path at Milkwall*



**Positive features and special qualities**

- Access through trees and the Green South,
- Off road, prepared trail with some signage
- Heritage entrance to industrial archaeology
- Natural value in landscape and species, by Gorsty Knoll
- Views over Bells Golf Course and lake

**Negative features and detracting elements**

- Follows cutting into town, past modern industrial estates

**Looking ahead**

- Improve the appearance of Milkwall Bridge industrial area, possible cycle centre along route?
- Add on Scarr to Clearwell Iron Mine and Puzzlewood cycle/footpath loop
- Investigate and address better location for crossing at Old Station Way



*124 Town entry by Pyart Court, next to GWR museum, then into large car park with public conveniences. Lacks attractive features*

**Character assessment: the Green Ring 1** (includes area 32 Lower Lane Berry Hill - North Coleford; parts of 29 Bakers Hill, 24 Foxs Lane/Poolway Road, 21 Bells Place, 19 Lords Hill/Coalway Road.)

**Location**

The Green Ring 1 lies around the town of Coleford to the north and east: it is the green area which separates settlements surrounding from the town centre. The bowl within which the town is sited rises to the north, adjoining Berry Hill (in West Dean) and the eastern arc in Coleford parish.

To the south, Gorsty Knoll has its own green character, and Milkwall enclosure is also part of Green Ring 3 which completes the circuit of green round the town. (see map of character assessments)

**Views to show its rural nature, the trees, and differing uses, follow the numbers round the ring**



1. Sunny Bank over the north west toward Highmeadow Woods and the AONB



2. The Gorse to Lower Lane in the north



4. From the rough, view down the valley toward the Welsh Hills from further south



3. From Broadwell looking to the rim above Coleford, with green below the skyline

**Landscape**

This whole area is either agricultural or grassland, either used for pasture/ crops, or for leisure – with two golf courses taking up a large proportion. Some fields are arable, mainly toward the top of the northern rim of the bowl, joining to Five Acres/ Mile End/ Broadwell.

Toward the centre, the bowl is shallower, with lower slopes; toward the outer settlements, the steepness increases, and the skyline is abrupt to the north to north-east in particular. There is a wide sweep of green behind Poolway toward Lower Lane through the Forest Hills Golf Course and some agricultural land, with only one farmhouse evident.



5. The view from Poolway (edge of Coleford Town) toward Lower Lane, with skyline.



6. The view from Lower Lane over Forest Hills Golf Course toward Poolway and Coleford town in the background

The ring varies in width, and reaches to its rim at the north before buildings can be seen (5). At other points it narrows where the settlement has grown, and brims the rise, such as at Broadwell (7)



7 At Broadwell the edge of the settlement is just on the ridge, as seen here from a footpath crossing by an old tram road from Bakers Hill

Bells Field, which is now owned by Coleford Town Council, is the narrowest green space between Coleford and Coalway, on the signposted holiday route. It is planned for leisure/recreational use.

To the extreme east of Bells Field is Poppyfield a site for 46 dwellings recently constructed. This adjoins Wynols estate, and adds to the eastern arc.



8. Bells Field behind a high wall on Coalway Rd with the town to the rear. Its name derives from the closed school, where it comprised some of the playing field

The golf courses which are marked on the map and their hotels/ clubhouses give leisure facilities as well as keeping the green ring, green. There are lakes on both, and water is managed: stored and attenuated. In both cases historic streams flowed toward the town, meeting near the traffic lights at Gloucester Road. While they are evident in places on the course, they are culverted before they reach the centre. ( In times of intense rain, the manhole in Lords Hill rises where the water backs up.)



9 Water is managed as a feature, and for use on the golf courses, adding to the habitat



Where there are fields, they are large and bounded by hedges with trees, or some fenced: some have both. There are historic hedges, with different species: blackthorn and holly, elder and hawthorn are evident. Bramble, nettles, and wildflowers like king cups are present to a greater or lesser extent depending on the farming use. In places, hedges have been removed (see 3 above) leaving individual trees. Much wildlife uses the edges/ boundaries of the fields.

The key roads from Gloucester run through the Green Ring acting as gateways to the centre.



10 Coalway to Broadwell, with house on B4226 gateway in



11 Coalway Rd gateway in the background (holiday route), golf course to the fore



12 Lower Lane where the parish boundary is north of the A4136, the other side of this field, adjoining Berry Hill



13 Stiles and footpaths cross the green ring, and are often signposted rights of way leading around and into the town.

### Key views

As above

### Key features:

- *Forest Hills Golf Course*
- *Bell's Golf Course*
- *Bells Field*
- *the green-ness itself*
- *number of footpaths*

### Positive features and special qualities

- Separating Berry Hill, Mile End, Broadwell, Coalway and Palmers Flat from the town centre
- Completing the green circuit around Coleford
- Grassland managed for leisure (significantly golf) and agriculture
- Breathing space of rural surroundings appreciated by residents and visitors

### Negative features and detracting elements

- Narrowing of the green space through development eg Coalway Rd

### Looking ahead

- Maintaining the separateness of Eastern Arc and Berry Hill from Coleford Town
- Enhancing the green area with relevant uses eg for leisure
- Potential for further water management

**Character assessment: the Green Ring 2 West** (includes areas 12 Milkwall Enclosure, part of 20 Perrygrove, 34 West Coleford, 37 Scowles) and thus the following hamlets: **Whitecliff, Mill End, The Scowles, Crossways**

### **Location**

The Green Ring 2 lies off the A4136 Gloucester to Monmouth road, and to the west of Coleford town. It links into the Wye Valley AONB which crosses into Coleford Parish in this area. The Dean Edge Limestone Hills management zone borders just south of Whitecliff Furnace, circles to the north by Stowfield, and includes Highmeadow Woods to the north of the parish.

**Geology and relief** are important. The Forest is a steep-sided, deeply dissected plateau, forming a dome, and Coleford parish forms the western edge. The geology however is virtually reversed – a syncline- so the older rocks are in the middle, and some Old Red Sandstone is quarried just outside the boundary of the parish to the south east. In this west is the younger Carboniferous limestone, currently quarried for road metalling (see later) and there is some coal, ochre, iron of great importance historically, but no longer produced in the parish.

Relief and geology are very significant in the Green Ring 2 in terms of functions –past and present, vegetation and the relative isolation of the dispersed settlement. It also influences the location of the 3 hamlets which are strongly related to the minerals and industrial heritage.

### **Landscape**

This Green Ring 2 is the edge of the valleys in which Coleford town sits, and gives a natural end to the settlement. The green is the dominant feature, with a little dispersed or hamlet settlement, but little new building. Mineral working or ex-working is strong, alongside agriculture.

There are three sub areas within this landscape:

- a. in the south, adjacent to the southern arc , there is a shallow valley which lies to the east of the southern arc, this slopes away from the town down to the south-east, then rises again at Lambsquay. Much of this is woods, meend, some pasture.
- b. behind Puzzle Wood and adjacent to Newland parish (near Clearwell) are a series of steep valleys stemming from interlocking spurs. Those trend down to the abandoned incised meander at Newland. In these valleys small brooks run, including the Whitecliff Brook which feeds down from much of Coleford. The land rises steeply to the west and north from there.
- c. The rise plateaus around the top of Scowles, to Crossways, then rises slowly again over the A4136 to Highmeadow Woods.

**a.Milkwall Enclosure:** adjacent to Gorsty Knoll and Milkwall, the green-ness dominates. Woodlands are on the rise toward Lambsquay and Ellwood, meend links to Milkwall and Sling, this is an old landscape, matured since the heavy industrial times. The large areas of woodland lie next to, or are penetrated by the many tracks which were once tram roads and footpaths to work. All these functions have ceased, but the undergrowth and pattern of the trees still show a maze of paths. The few fields are small but mainly regular, carved out of the forest as smallholders extended their space.

The Ellwood Road crosses the area, and the main tram road crosses that from the old Colour Works toward the disused rail line and Gorsty Knoll. The B42228 Chepstow gateway goes through this sub area on the edge with b). Sheep tracks and footpaths are evident linking Sling, Clearwell and Coleford, Milkwall.



*1. Green and rural. Note the grass path/ sheep track leading toward the lone house on the meend edge with the forest, deep green backcloth.*

The woods are mainly deciduous: oak, ash, beech with holly and elder as understorey. (NB from Nelson's time at least 25% of all trees in Dean is oak). Some conifers are found centrally away from the road.

Bracken and foxgloves, rose-bay willow herb and the like follow the lines of forest paths/ tram roads. Meend is crossed by paths, with grass, gorse, bracken.

Small, regular fields with walls and hedge/fences were probably where miners and others worked the sheep which lived in the forest most of the year. Some of them still have sheep but many house horses today.

Very diverse habitats here for a wide variety of wildlife: squirrel, rabbits, sheep, deer, wild boar and woodland birds of all sorts

Houses are few, older, mainly pre20C, individual styles and 2 storey. They often relate to the forest, or to industrial functions, now gone, so their layout is historic eg by the rail crossings. Around them forest waste is often used for informal parking. The local stone houses and buildings are often rendered, with varied pitches of roofs and walled gardens.

There are very few buildings for the size of the area; an irregular layout with some clustering. Most dwellings are away from the roads and are surrounded by woodland, bracken or grassland. The only area where dwellings are close together is at the St James caravan park, next to the tramway crossing. Here there are stretches of kerb and pavement, otherwise grass verges are characteristic.

The **Colour Works** can be picked out by its edged slate roof. Here the ochre was worked, and underground water was tapped in that process. (Clearwell caves, in Newland parish, half a mile away the other side of the hill, still produces some ochre, from below the iron caves, though it is mainly a tourist attraction.)

Some buildings are adapted for engineering and commercial units, but small scale, and mainly off the Ellwood Rd eg a garage and some units on a Forestry Commission site.

The impression is of informal, squatter nature of the settlement, dominated by the forest. Smallholdings are immersed in woods, on commons. There is a timeless, quality to an old landscape.

**b) Steeper valleys including Whitecliff**



2. Tram road leading from the old station site at Milkwall toward the colour works, old quarries and pits toward Sling.



3. One of the few 20C houses with a small field, hedged and with a stable for horses, seen from the tram road at the edge of the forest and looking toward Gorsty Knoll



4. This local stone shows keys which are irregular, and differently sized blocks, possibly built by a quarryman for their family. The forest shed on the right and the

plot shows practicality as well as ownership.



5. Green backdrop behind the Park



6. The arrow shows the position of the Colour Works against the view of Milkwall enclosure looking into the area

and toward Sling

On the east side of the B4228, from Perrygrove and Pingry toward Whitecliff and up to Scowles are a series of small, steep and interlocking valleys with streams which flow via Newland into the Wye.

The limestone here has been quarried in the past, with steep faces still exposed (8). Whitecliff quarry is now used for off-road driving training and sometimes for refitting locomotives, rather than for its stone.

The limestone landscape shows craggy exposures where the rock tends to be worked along its cleavage. Water drains through its cracks, so erosion can emphasise the look, and underground caves are a feature locally. Some of these extend for miles. Minerals such as ochre -3 different colours – are still mined at Clearwell Caves, just over the boundary in Newland parish.

Much of the flow of water into the Coleford bowl is culverted, and it all continues via Valley Brook or drains via Whitecliff route toward Newland. The brook itself has a tendency to disappear/change position, believed to be partly due to faulting in that part of the valley. The flow is strong at times of intense rain and drains back up so flooding is a frequent problem here.

The main drains run along the roads in a combined sewer. Welsh Water have responsibility for the sewer, whilst Severn Trent deal with surface water. The issue of the stream, drain size, collapsed culverts have contributed to the problems.

Given the steepness of slopes, landslips can occur, and water runs from the banks either side into the road.

On the steeper slopes, woods dominate the grassland. Where the coniferous stands are being worked just to the north of this oval bridge, there is little undergrowth and deeply rutted paths. However, this steep cutting (12) crossed by the former railway shows tongue ferns, moss, algae, consistent with a deep, wet valley where little sun enters much of the year.



7. The view toward Mill End showing the interlocking spurs in subarea b toward Newland



8. Whitecliff quarry face exposed behind the steep slopes with coniferous at the base and deciduous at the top (policy now changed by Forestry Commission).

Note the white chimney (centre) seen peering over the grass.



9 Whitecliff brook runs alongside the furnace, but is culverted for much of its way to the end of Whitecliff

10. Culvert collapse (since repaired) near to the quarry entrance.



11 Land slip near the Burial Path



12. The dressed red Forest stone is used for the retaining walls and Whitecliff bridge, but Coleford bricks form the arch and this is carried right underneath.

This ecology is found especially in the local scowles, of debatable origin. They could be due to mining practices in pre-historic or Roman times, or due to the fault lines. It is possible people worked along the seams using the faults and digging out the iron to form these holes. It is also likely that the water eroded some of the weaknesses. Puzzle Wood on the outskirts of Coleford is known for these features, and often used for film scenes as well as being a tourist attraction.

Industrial archaeology is very important in the Whitecliff valley in particular. The stream and local coal as well as the iron led to the perfection by David Mushet of the Bessemer process. That made it a more profitable enterprise, employing many local people either in the works, or mining (see Gorsty Knoll Green Ring 3).

This first furnace is now a Scheduled Ancient Monument.

There are few roads, and only small ones in the area. Many hark back to previous industrial workings/ functions or sheep farming. The lanes run mostly in valley bottoms.

Grassland for grazing is evident alongside the routes, part of the former mining culture, where local people often own some sheep. These may be farmed on a smallholding or released into the Forest proper for much of the time. All the houses have large gardens to produce their own food, often to the rear, but some alongside the road where the gradient is very steep.

There is some commercial activity, and down Whitecliff is a site with permission for holiday chalets but it has not yet been developed, and has been for sale for some time.



14 Old orchards in the foreground against the wooded hillside, with a typical Forest stone boundary wall

Dispersed houses are older, stone built, and some are barn conversions

10 Scowles vary in form from this well developed one, deep and hollow to many less developed, or collapsed which give an industrial pocked look to the landscape. The Scowles hamlet is named after them.



11 Whitecliff Furnace is undergoing restoration, and is included in a Forest wide Heritage Lottery Fund project



12 Houses fit into the roadside, and cluster around the stream/ iron workings. The adit form of mining – digging into hillsides to gain minerals- was practised here before deep mining.



13 Steep paths, like this **Burial Path** cross the valleys, often through grazing land with irregular fields and hedges, walls and trees on boundaries



15 Narrow, winding roads, used by HGVs including some quarry lorries

In the hamlets, individual houses are grouped into a communities of their own, but the functions have now disappeared



16 Older possibly medieval house to the rear, with buttresses, raised floor above the flood level, and a barn conversion



17 Whitecliff cluster borders the AONB. The weight restriction indicates the steep, narrow road, and the nearness of the bridge shown above

**Views**

- **Newland Church is visible from the south, and in hearing of the bells.**
- **Mill End (18) and (7)**
- **Whitecliff quarry from Clearwell Rd (8)**



18 Mill End, with the Georgian House obscured by its mature trees on the right. The cluster is near to the mill.

**c) Plateau, the Scowles and Highmeadow**

Around Highmeadow Farm, by The Scowles and toward Crossways, the landscape becomes less hilly, plateaus by Robin Hood lights, then rises again, but slowly, toward Highmeadow Woods in the north.

The land opens out here, and where the grassland dominates there are long distance views.



19 View from Highmeadow Farm toward the Welsh Mountains (shown by arrow). Note the hummock in middle left, a local reservoir.

The woodlands, including Highmeadow, comprise mainly mixed deciduous forest, most of which is managed by the Forestry Commission. Some is in the AONB. The Highmeadow enclosure is evident on the skyline of the hills to the north, the highest point of the Green West. This is still limestone country, but the vegetation is more farmland (still mainly grassland) and deciduous woods.



20 The approach via the A4136 from Monmouth looking over toward Highmeadow Wood and the Forest Holidays at Christchurch.



21 AONB with green verge, amenity belt and mature deciduous trees, with undergrowth. Old Man's Beard in the right foreground.



22. Note the coniferous trees are planted to emphasise the gradient (modern Forestry Commission policy) and deciduous trees also form an amenity belt along the main road

Woods in the north have minimum 25% oak (Dean requirement) but chestnut and hazel coppices, beech and a variety of mainly deciduous trees with undergrowth are also found. The leaf litter is very deep here, and small mammals are evident, making use of the variety of nuts and masts.



23 Coppicing and deep litter giving a rich habitat for mammals, insects and birds.



24. Cameras positioned as part of the data collection for a study of wild boar in the Forest of Dean (H Clayton).

In addition, larger mammals are around, including an increase in the number of wild boar. A study of these creatures in their habitat is being carried out (24)

Near Stowfield (see later) there are many Protected & Priority Species: dormouse, lesser horseshoe bat, pretty chalk carpet moth, lesser butterfly orchid, great crested newt, polecat, wood white, small heath butterfly, small pearl-bordered butterfly and cinnabar moth. The grass to almost heath border to the woods gives a variety of habitats, and an SSSI is located here too.

Paddocks are frequent as well as sheep grazing, and these larger fields are bounded with mature trees left in tall hedgerows. Some hedges are traditionally laid, and then much shorter.

Underlying the limestone there is a principal aquifer, a layer of clay, which is critical to the drainage and ecology in the area. There is a well right in the north by Beeches Farm, and a lake at the sawmills by Robin Hood (artificially created).



25 Lake at disused sawmills at Robin Hood traffic lights. Now stocked and fished.

In season warning signs are used to warn motorists on the B4228, A4136 as important toad crossing points.

In geological terms, the carboniferous limestone is quarried on a large scale for road metalling at Stowfield near the Scowles. In the draft Minerals Local Plan (which was out for consultation 2014) it is noted that the current productive capacity is 800,000 tpa and that HGVs use their specific lorry route through the woods onto the B4228 and thence the A4136. Most of Gloucestershire's road metalling comes from the Forest.



26 Quarry lorries use own road through woods then onto B then A road.



Assuming a similar level and the existing reserves, quarrying is estimated to continue until approx. 2030 based on the existing area. (See also Looking Ahead for proposals under this Draft Minerals Plan.)

With the scowles, ironworking and iron pits the archaeological evidence is significant and some designated.

The woodland enclosures themselves are of historical note, although the working forest is not original.

Housing in this area is mainly dispersed and older, reflecting a more agricultural landscape. In The



27 Scowles Farm with its carved pediment and stone mullion windows. These are unusual, given the, irregular, not dressed, stones. The slate roof and chimney look newer.

Scowles, the original functions which were part of a village have disappeared, though eg the old schoolhouse is recognisable.

Now a hamlet, it is on a no through road, though the footpath goes straight through to Coleford. A new cycle path is being debated from Christchurch Forest Holidays via Mary's Lane to Angus Buchanan Recreation Ground and into Coleford town centre.

Forest tracks, bridlepaths and footpaths are frequent in the wooded areas especially, and many are signed.

There is a permanent orienteering course in Highmeadow Wood, near to the Forest Holidays, an important tourist destination.



28 The post box remains at Scowles, the last function...



29 Path through The Scowles to Angus Buchanan Rec in Coleford



29 Way marked paths are well used by visitors in early spring and autumn as well as summer. They link through to Christchurch.



30 Forest Holidays have chalets in the woods near Christchurch. The campsite has places for tents, mobile caravans and fixed caravans.



31 The shop is the focus for sporting and leisure opportunities. It is reached through Berry Hill by metalled roads, but is situated in Coleford parish.

Tourism and leisure is an important part of diversification of farming too, with Highmeadow Farm, Rushmere, (and Greenways at Scowles) both catering for caravans and tents. Bed and breakfast is also available in Green Ring 2.

#### Key views

- Highmeadow Farm to Welsh mountains (19)
- A4136 from Staunton across to Highmeadow woods(20)

#### Key features of Green West : natural biodiversity and green rural surroundings

- **Whitecliff furnace (scheduled ancient monument)**
- **Whitecliff quarry.**
- **Railway bridge on Scowles road near Whitecliff**
- **Stowfield quarry**
- **Highmeadow Woods**
- **Christchurch: Forest Holidays**
- **Scowles**
- **Lake & old sawmills near Robin Hood traffic lights**
- **SSSI Dingle Wood**

#### Positive features and special qualities

- Varied landscape
- Feels tranquil and much more rural and “natural” than other parts of the parish.
- Biodiverse and accessible to nature. AONB and SSSI; bat sites
- No intrusive modern buildings.
- Industrial archaeology: brown field gone to green.

- Mineral workings provide jobs
- Scowles

### **Negative features and detracting elements**

- Steeper slopes mean some buildings (often farms) are isolated
- Narrow roads restrict traffic
- Flooding at Whitecliff unresolved
- Impact of HGV traffic and dust/noise at Stowfield

### **Looking ahead**

- Depending on the resultant published Minerals Plan, 3 hectares of woodland could be additionally quarried, but existing reserves are estimated to allow Stowfield quarry to continue until c2030
- New cycle path to connect tourism at Christchurch to Coleford town: others could follow
- **Increase tourism:**
  - scope for walking holidays immense: link into Walkers are Welcome;
  - boars attract and put off tourists: using boar study, manage animals accordingly, perhaps restricting extent of cover.
  - increased facilities and thus more local jobs

## Green Ring 3 south Character Assessment

### ***Location***

In the south-east of the parish, much of this area is known as Gorsty Knoll: an open area of meend with scattered houses, leading to both sharp and less sharp transitions into forest on the east and valleys to south and east. Situated on the carboniferous limestone, it has springs and wells which reach down to the aquifer. All of which made it a key location for the development of mining, quarrying, railways and ironworks. All such activity has ceased, but the industrial archaeology of the area is of national importance.



*GRS1 Cycle track to Parkend via old railway line*

Otherwise, the Green Ring 3 lies off the main circular road from Edenwall and Coalway linking to Milkwall. Narrow lanes with grass verges have drainage ditches alongside. Unmetalled Forestry tracks, cycle tracks and walking tracks take irregular routes, often based on heritage. The Forestry Commission manages much of the area.



*GRS2 Open meend leading to circular road to Milkwall*

### **Landscape**

Gorsty Knoll is hilly with several valleys, some sloping steeply and with steep dips into old quarries/mines and workings. The slopes trend to the south, into woods and trees interwoven with tracks and green spaces.

*GRS3. Most is open, accessible heathland with forest tracks and paths.*

In the north, this is predominantly a green open space based on an early mining/quarrying landscape, with very little current human influence. Significantly this ancient heavy industrial heritage has grown into one of the greenest and most valuable habitats in the parish.



The tranquil diversity of landscape shows a range of interesting historic, archaeological features., alongside a wide range of flora and fauna

Much is meend with gorse, bracken, rough grasses and amongst it harebells, orchids and more.

To the east and south, trees and forest form an intense green backcloth: that might be coniferous larch/ spruce or mixed, deciduous and shrub.



GRS4 Hummocks of past workings covered by meend



GRS6 Beeches in the south, on the valley side



GRS5. The look of the landscape changes radically with season: the colour of trees and ferns, wild garlic and some bluebells give groundcover in spring& summer in deciduous woodlands. Sheep

roam freely in Forest fashion.

One specific area of meend is designated the Gorsty Knoll Conservation Area, where the Forestry Commission selectively cut the undergrowth and have constructed hurdles for moths and butterflies as well as adder hides. Glow worms have frequented this area for many years. There are a range of birds, both linked to woodland and open grassland, deer, boar, lizards and more in the vicinity.



GRS7 Conservation Area

There are a couple of fields with the odd barn, fences, walls and hedges, but they are small and irregularly placed, mainly used for horses or some sheep grazing.

A stream runs alongside the cycle track; there are some lower ponds and wet ditches. Aaron's Pond is a constructed source for the old ironworks. There now, bullrushes thrive with yellow flags and more water-loving plants, dragonflies and other pond life.

Some of this area is over the watershed so that trend is toward the Severn, but pumping takes it to the Wye.

## Heritage

There are key sites of national industrial archaeological importance in this area (some Scheduled Ancient Monuments). The early iron industry in the Forest is considered to date back to the Romans, but **these** sites are linked to the Mushet family. These early developers in the iron industry benefited from both the local forest and its use for charcoal, and the local iron ore found among the coal measures. Given the lay of the land, coal here was mined through levels dug into the hillsides (only later were vertical shafts used).



*GRS8. Entrance to coal level, centre left, now disused and made safe*

David Mushet built a brickworks here, of which sections still exist. The tram road further down the slope is also linked to this.

Dark Hill, with Aaron's pond was where Robert Forester Mushet developed the process of smelting to gain steel from iron. The Bear is considered to be a good example of the furnace residue. Later he built the Titanic Steel works.



*GRS9. Tram Road, showing stone settings for the rails*



*GRS 10. Sculpture and Dark Hill ironworks*

## Settlement character

Most buildings lie on or close to the metalled access lanes which are winding and interlinked. This results in a scattered, irregular layout mainly of 19/earlier 20C generally traditional cottages with porches and chimneys. These often have both front and back gardens. The more modern properties have smaller gardens. There is no obvious centre. The road joining the Arcs is the main routeway into and out of the area.

Styles vary, as do materials, but older buildings tend to be semi and detached houses using stone and slate (though often rendered) whereas the more modern infill tend to brick and have varied designs and especially roof shapes.

Some of these are bungalows; one house is 3 storey.

Parking is frequently on plot, although there is some on forest waste. That on the higher meend is used in winter snow as many houses are lower than the entrance road

Pylons, masts and wires intrude on the edge of settlement



GRS11. Conservation bottom left; hummocks of old workings, detached cottages to rear and one example of modern individual design



GRS12. Winding lane with older houses

Boundaries vary with walls, hedges and fences evident  
A small mobile home site is on the boundary with Milkwall

A number of footpaths and tracks are used by walkers and cyclists to link into longer distance routes as well as for a short journey. It is an attractive and peaceful valley route out of the area toward the Severn/ A48

**Key views**

- **In from Ellwood road**
- from cycle track and Ellwood Rd toward Dark Hill
- out over Milkwall
- out over golf course toward Coleford



GRS13. view In from Ellwood Rd



GRS14. Out toward Ellwood, Yorkley,



GRS15 Over the golf course toward Coleford

**Key features**

- **Archaeology: see below**
- **Open meend and priority habitat**



*GRS16. SAM Dark Hill ironworks*



*GRS17 Colour works to right of centre and view over Sling*



*GRS18. Titanic Iron and Steel*



*GRS19. Aaron's Pond: formerly used for the ironworks*

## Green Ring 3 South

### Positive features and special qualities

- high quality natural landscape
- high status heritage
- predominantly green area, based on past mining/quarrying landscape, with little current human influence
- much Forestry Commission land and management
- quiet rural gateway to Coleford by cycle/walking and a varied approach to services

### Negative features and detracting elements

- litter left by visitors and thoughtless dog walkers
- Fragility of landscape to change

### Looking ahead

Links into numerous themes:

- archaeology and restoration; NB of national/ world status
- tourism;
- education
- green infrastructure and ecological conservation

**The issue here is how to balance the potential conflicts between heritage tourism and its potential for the economy and the industrial heritage and nature conservation.**

It is likely that carefully controlled and monitored, low-level encouragement of local tourism through themed trails and/or markets is the way forward. One possible method might be through developing walking routes with local partners or entering into **Walkers are Welcome**.

## Character Assessment: Southern arc- Milkwall and Tufthorn

### Location

Milkwall and Tufthorn are contiguous areas of settlement located in the southernmost extremity of Coleford parish.

To the south, Milkwall is separated from the eastern arc of Coleford by the Forest of Dean Golf Course and by Gorsty Knoll. To the north of this southern arc, Tufthorn adjoins the rest of Coleford at the Old Station Way/High Nash traffic lights. Tufthorn is also adjacent to the Stepbridge Road Industrial Estate

### Landscape

Tufthorn occupies a low ridge running from north to south. Consequently there is a drop on either side of the road, to the Stepbridge Industrial Estate in the east and to the B4228 in the west.

From the Tufthorn Road/Station Road junction there is a slope down to the north and north-east to the floor of a distinct valley which acts as a natural boundary between Milkwall and Gorsty Knoll and the southern end of the eastern arc of settlement.

This valley floor was once utilised by a railway line, linking the industries to Lydney for transport out. This way now is used as a cycle path and footpath connecting Milkwall to the town centre: a significant routeway also for walking/cycling visitors (see SA3).

To the south the 200m elevation is maintained through the focus of Milkwall at the Tufthorn Road/Station Road junction and along Lambsquay Road (SA2) to the junction with the B4228 at the Lambsquay Hotel.

Tufthorn Road/Avenue has little in the way of green and natural features apart from gardens, but a belt of deciduous woodland exists behind the houses on the western side of the road. This woodland is only glimpsed from the area but is a very obvious feature when viewed from the B4228 (see SA2).

There is a small field of pasture at the northern end of Tufthorn where it meets Old Station Way.

Milkwall is predominantly a residential area showing a variety of streetscape, with 19C and very recent housing development. Gardens vary too from large mature gardens to open plan and virtually on street frontage.

The southern part of Milkwall, along and between the Lambsquay and Ellwood Roads has a much lower density of settlement and the residential area eventually merges into meend and dense mixed woodland with ponds, drainage ditches and disused quarries.

On the western and southern edges, the meend, forest and fields are populated with a variety of birds and small mammals. The cycle path forming the eastern boundary provides a line of trees and bushes. It is a definite wildlife corridor, bordered with banks and crossed with linking footpaths.

In the north-eastern area of Milkwall there is a small paddock and a football ground.

### Settlement character



SA1. Milkwall, across the golf course toward the east, Palmers Flat & forest, the other side of the valley



SA2 view across to Lambsquay



SA3 Cycle track approaching Station Rd Milkwall

Tufthorn Road/Avenue area consists of a mainly straight road with three culs-de-sac off.

Predominantly residential, there is a cluster of several factories at the northern end and at the entrance to the Stepbridge Industrial Estate halfway along the road (see SA4).

The linear pattern of housing, generally shows small front gardens and much longer back gardens. To the north a short row of late twentieth century detached housing faces the industrial units on the eastern side of Tufthorn Avenue.

The southern end of Tufthorn, beyond Edenwall Road, has mainly individually designed detached and semi-detached houses dating from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

These properties link Tufthorn to Milkwall and their style is more contemporary with Milkwall.

The majority of houses in Tufthorn Avenue are of a uniform design, semi-detached mid-twentieth century former council houses, now either privately owned or administered by Two Rivers Housing Authority. Many of these properties have been recently refurbished.

There is little vegetation visible along Tufthorn Avenue.

As most of the houses do not have garages there is a large amount of on-street parking, although a few houses have used part of their front garden.

There are two developments off Tufthorn Avenue. One is a small close of bungalows with elderly residents. The other is a recent development of mainly semi-detached houses, but also containing some short rows of terraced housing.

The focus of Milkwall is around the Tufthorn Road/Station Road/ Lamsquay Road junction where there is a corner shop, public house and, until recently, Milkwall Club [now a soft furnishing manufacturing and retail unit]. There is a First World War hut which is the village hall located to the east 200m along Station Road (SA7)

SA7. Looking uphill along Station Road with Milkwall Hall on the left in middle distance



SA4 Note the straight linear look of housing and the poor condition of Tufthorn Ave near the junction with Stepbridge Road, the industrial area. The bungalows, right, are for older people



SA5 Older individual properties facing onto the street



SA6 Refurbished council house style properties with limited on plot parking





SA8. Shop and Inn at key junction



SA9. Former social club now a soft furnishing company, moved out from Coleford town centre

The largest area of housing in Milkwall is in the zone bounded by Tufthorn Road in the west, Edenwall Road to the north, Station Road to the south and the cycle path/former railway line to the east with Forest Road cutting through the area. There are two pedestrian access points to the cycle path along this stretch.

The majority of the houses are of individual design but largely stone or rendered cottage or villa style. They are detached or semi-detached, dating from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries but with some more recent infill. The houses follow the road pattern and front on to it closely, but most are on large plots with substantial back gardens. As miners were issued with coal, chimneys are the norm for 19C houses.

Some roads have been altered with recent developments and infill to allow for parking and easier access(SA11).

Within this area there is also a late twentieth century estate development numbering approximately 100 houses This estate is accessed from Station Road and has no through routes.

There are a number of closes off Primrose Drive. There is also a pedestrian access from Forest Road through a grassed area with trees. Within this estate there are several other green areas including a designated children's play area with equipment. Some mature trees have been retained.



SA10. Use of local stone and brick in 19C construction, with chimneys as local coal was used for fires; larger back than front gardens to provide for vegetable plots.



(SA11)



SA12 Play area off Primrose Drive; open plan frontages

There are several house designs and a mix of short terraces, detached and semi-detached houses. They are of brick and tile construction. The front gardens are mainly open plan and in some cases converted into additional parking (SA13).



(SA13)

To the south of the Station Road/ Tufthorn Road junction, along Lambsquay Road and Ellwood Road, the settlement varies. The density is lower with most of the properties fronting the roads on substantial plots or with open land/meend between properties. Most properties have ample off-road parking or informal parking on the meend. Along Lambsquay Road almost all of the properties are detached bungalows dating from the early to mid-twentieth century. They are predominantly brick or render with tiled roofs

Along Ellwood Road and the southern side of Station Road, the properties are mainly substantial detached houses dating from the early to mid-twentieth century, again of brick or render with tile roofs. This part of Milkwall borders onto woodland, with small fields and meend (see Green Ring 3 south).



SA14 toward Scarr

There is a mobile home park at the eastern end of Station Road, next to the cycle path.

The main area of commerce and industry is adjacent, on the Stepbridge Road Industrial Estate, with associated traffic, along the 31 bus route.



SA15 Garden Centre located in a former quarry

However, there are some other commercial properties in Milkwall: along Lambsquay Rd; on the Station Road/ Tufthorn Road junction by the public house and corner shop.



SA16 &17 Station Rd industrial/commercial cluster at junction

There is also a small cluster of commercial enterprises along Station Road, close to the junction with Primrose Drive and the crossing of the cycle track.



SA18



SA19 Cattle grid to prevent the Forest sheep entering Primrose Drive estate

### Key views

- SA20 Westwards to Milkwall from the Golf Course over the football ground



- See 1 valley and hill up Station Rd
- See 2 flatter ridge to Lambsquay

### Key features

- Public House & Corner Shop (8)
- Former social club, now soft furnishing business (9)
- Garden Centre(15)
- Cycle path(3 &18)
- Football Ground(22)
- Milkwall Hall (23)
- Plaque (SA21) notes Ellwood road constructed at Crown's expense



SA21



SA22 Football ground Milkwall AFC



SA23 Milkwall Hall: a WW1 hut

### Positive features and special qualities

- **Mix of house ages and styles gives interest and character.**
- **Southern area is not on a main access route into Coleford town centre**
- **Corner shop and Public House : services for local people**
- **Hall and football ground; cycle path leisure and recreation**
- **Close proximity and easy access to open land and green areas.**

#### **Negative features and detracting elements**

- **Heavy vehicles number and impact:**
  - **Noise and poor road surface along Tufthorn Avenue/Road**
  - **Traffic congestion due to access/egress from industrial estates, on-street parking, and**
  - **Traffic lights Tufthorn Avenue.**
- **Poor condition of road surface in residential areas e.g. near football pitch.**
- **Layout and look of industrial cluster at bottom of Station Rd**

#### **Looking ahead**

- **Need to maintain local services, especially corner shop**
- **Maintain small commercial/industrial businesses, but assess traffic movements and screening at current sites.**
- **Assess need to upgrade village hall premises: link with village hall committee**
- **Potential for small scale increase in tourism, focus on heritage and walking – see Green Ring 3 South**