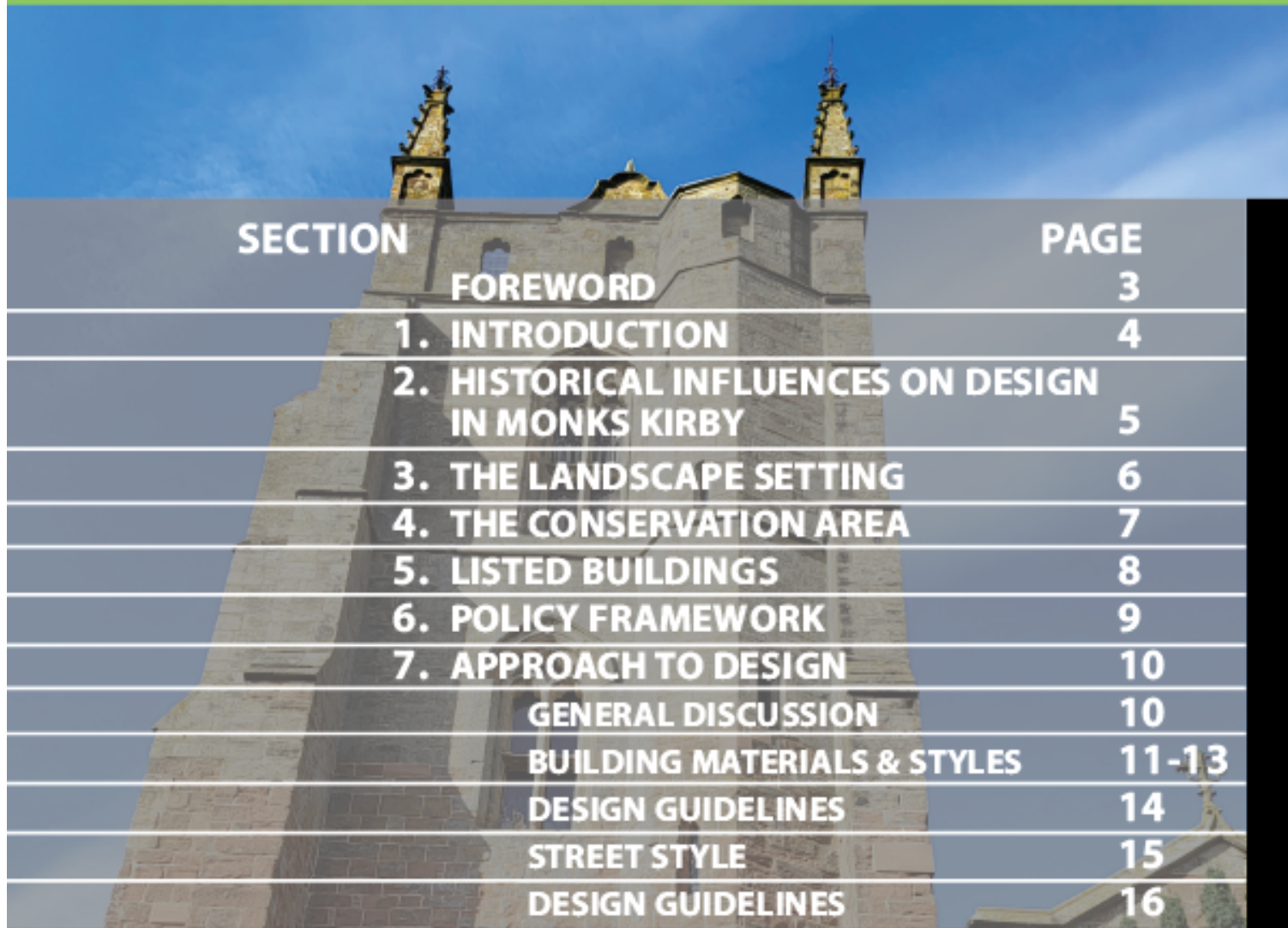




# MONKS KIRBY DESIGN GUIDE



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In 2020, Monks Kirby Parish Council took the decision to prepare a neighbourhood plan for the parish.

A Parish Plan, updated in 2015, incorporated the Parish Council's Village Design Statement, originally written in 1999 and subsequently updated and adopted by Rugby Borough Council.

The Village Design Statement was well received and remains relevant to this day.

The opportunity has been taken to refresh the Village Design Statement and to incorporate it within the Neighbourhood Plan to add weight to the design features which must be taken into account with new development in the parish.

Once the neighbourhood plan process was underway, an Advisory Committee operating under the authority of the Parish Council was established to drive the delivery of the Plan forward and over time, Theme Groups made up of community volunteers and some Parish Councillors were established to look into the detail of the Neighbourhood Plan and to consider policies for inclusion in the Plan with support from the community and with a robust and proportionate evidence base to underpin it.

This Design Guide is a full part of the Neighbourhood Plan, to which it is integrally linked and where related matters of landscape and development are addressed.



- 1.1 This Design Guide has been prepared on behalf of Monks Kirby Parish Council, with support from consultants Yourlocale. Its preparation and content has been produced by the Monks Kirby Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Committee through its Housing Theme Group, and based on the Adopted Village Design Statement, update in 2015. It forms part of the Monks Kirby Neighbourhood Plan.
- 1.2 The Design Guide describes the Parish of Monks Kirby in terms of its history, its context in the local landscape and the character of its built environment.
- 1.3 All planning applications must take account of this guidance. Although this Guide can be read as a stand-alone document, it is an integral part of the Monks Kirby Neighbourhood Plan and its associated documents. It contains guidance which applicants to the local planning authority are encouraged to take into account in their applications; and to which planning authorities should refer in their decision-making about new development in the parish, including alterations to existing buildings.
- 1.4 The whole of the village of Monks Kirby is within a Conservation Area which was designated in 1970. A formal Conservation Area appraisal was undertaken in 2010. This Design Guide seeks to take appropriate and proportionate account of the Conservation Area but it does not in itself constitute an appraisal. There are 14 listed buildings within the Parish.
- 1.5 This Guidance supplements the design requirements of the 2011-2031 Rugby Local Plan.
- 1.6 In view of the special qualities which make up the architectural and historic character of Monks Kirby Parish, the purpose of this Design Guide is to:
- (a) provide design guidance for all new development, extension or alteration to existing properties; and
  - (b) ensure that future change in the built environment respects the character of the parish while encouraging modern standards, sustainability and appropriate innovation.
- 1.7 Reference to, and assessment against, this guidance is required in framing planning applications and in making development decisions. The Design Guide is a key point of reference for designers, developers and planning professionals (including the local planning authority) involved with new-build developments or extensions; and for parish residents, businesses and landowners who may wish to improve or add to their home, or business premises. It does not discuss where development should happen but is about conditioning the design of future development.
- 1.8 This Design Guide relates directly to Policy HBE 5 in the Neighbourhood Plan, which requires that all planning applications must demonstrate how its principles and guidance have been incorporated in their applications; and to which planning authorities should refer in their decision-making about new development in the parish, including alterations to existing buildings.
- 1.9 A Design Guide alone cannot ensure high-quality design. Delivery of high-quality design also requires meetings and discussion among those proposing development and the community, at a sufficiently early stage to ensure a shared understanding of the Design Guide in this particular context and a due influence over the development outcome.

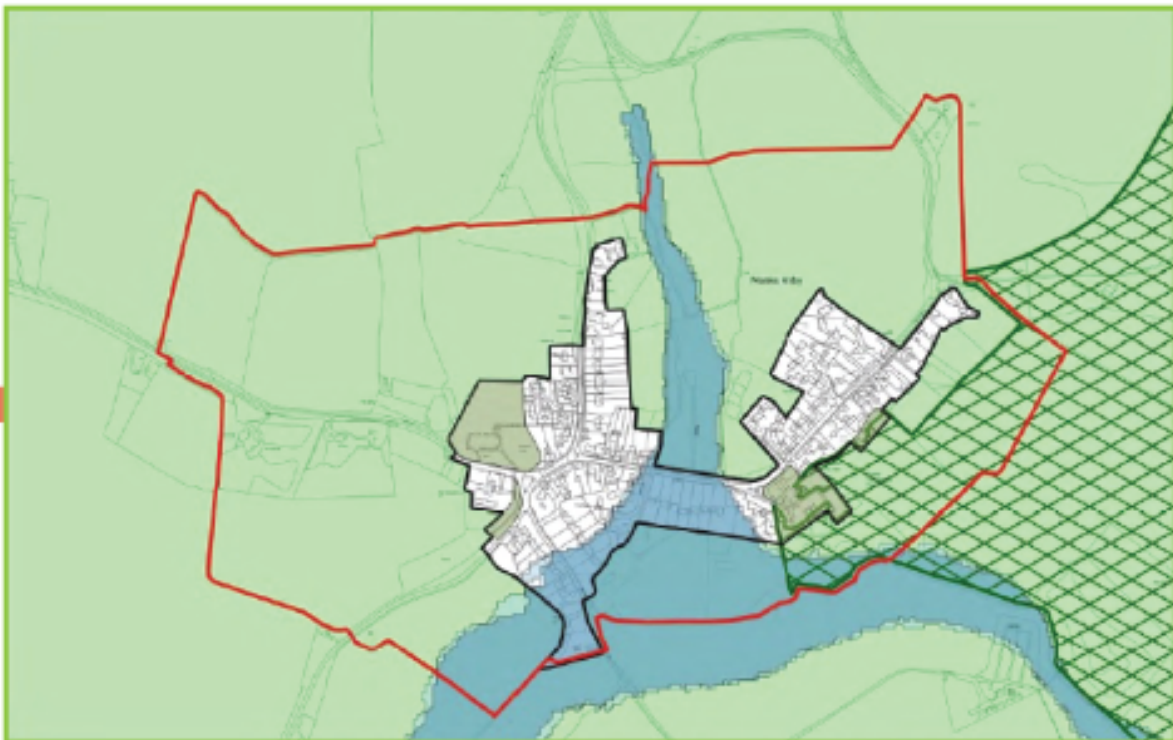
- 2.1 There was Christian church on the site of St Edith's in Saxon times when Monks Kirby was on the very edge of Dane Law. After the Norman Conquest Geoffrey de Wirce became the owner, he rebuilt the church and gave it with a considerable amount of land to the monks of Angers. During the thirteenth century the priory prospered and held a weekly market. Henry III granted them a Midsummer Fair which survives, albeit in a rather different form, to this day.
- 2.2 At the Dissolution the priory passed to the king while the manor was granted to the Bishop of Ipswich. The benefice (an ecclesiastical office to which the revenue from an endowment is attached) was given to Trinity College, Cambridge, who still maintain it, while the land passed eventually to Mary, Countess of Buckingham. She settled it on her relative, Basil, who was created Earl of Denbigh in 1622. The Feilding family had owned Newnham Paddox since 1433.
- 2.3 Monks Kirby buildings tell the story of what purpose the village served at each stage of its development. St Edith's now seems inappropriately large for what is now a very modest village. But until the nineteenth century Monks Kirby was the administrative and economic centre of the district. The Village Hall, for instance was the grammar school with its attached house the home of the schoolmaster where he boarded pupils. There were numerous half-timbered houses only a few of which now survive and only one is thatched. It was only when the railway bypassed the village that it lost its pre-eminence. During the nineteenth century Monks Kirby became a service village for the Denbigh family at Newnham Paddox. There were two tenanted farms in the village, Brockhurst and Gate Farms, which survived as working establishments to the 1970's, and a variety of houses, some more substantial than others, to be let to the variety of servants of the estate. The pairs of semi-detached cottages date from this time, as do The Almshouses (1845) built for retired estate workers. In the middle of the Century the Earl became a Catholic: that is the origin of the family cemetery with its chapel listed grade 2, and the convent.
- 2.4 With the punitive taxation following World War II it became impossible for the estate to maintain Newnham Paddox so it was demolished leaving only the stable block and the magnificent grade I listed gates, nor to maintain many of the village houses. So most of the half timbered houses in Bond End, Bell Lane, and Millers Lane were demolished and the land sold for residential development.
- 2.5 Thus began the modern era for Monks Kirby. In the past 70 years new developments from Bell Lane to Busby's Piece have completely altered the balance of the housing stock. In addition there have been several infill developments and, most recently, the conversion of the convent into five dwellings. No 40 Brockhust Lane was built as the presbytery for the chaplain of the Convent, and now St Joseph's Church is still a reminder of the strong Roman Catholic presence in the neighbourhood.
- 2.6 The modern developments did not happen all at once, so each batch of newcomers was easily and happily assimilated into the village. Today the village has a strong sense of community. Most of those of working age now commute to Rugby, Leicester, Coventry and further afield. We are situated at the heart of the English motorway network and have good rail and air communications. Within the village there remain one pub, two churches, a village hall and children's play area, and the primary school for the whole of the surrounding area.
- 2.7 Today the history of the village can be read in the eclectic mix of architectural styles, because, inevitably, each generation builds in the style of its era. Each represents the different functions the village has served in its period.





- 3.1 Monks Kirby is situated two miles south of the watershed that separates the Trent and Severn catchment areas. The high ground to the north is comparatively flat with large open fields now mainly arable, punctuated by occasional stands of timber. The mantle of the plateau is of thick glacial drift, comprising clays, gravels and sands. The village lies in a south facing shallow valley where until recently the heavy soil gave impeded drainage. Recent agricultural policy has removed many of the eighteenth century field boundaries and has installed modern land drainage systems.
- 3.2 Originally Monks Kirby and its neighbour Brockhurst were distinct settlements separated by low lying marshland. The road that now connects them is in fact built on a causeway. The village is drained by the Smite Brook which rises two or three miles to the north-east and forms the southern boundary of the village. Originally this meandered through boggy water meadows but it has now been straightened and excavated. A small tributary flows southwards down the Monks Kirby valley and separates the twin villages.
- 3.3 Monks Kirby lies at a crossroads. Twin lanes lead northwards from Brockhurst and Monks Kirby to the High Cross plateau giving access to Lutterworth, the M1 North and the A5. Westwards Millers Lane leads up to the Fosse Way and across to Withybrook and Nuneaton. Southwards the main exit from the village is through Street Ashton where the B4027 accesses Coventry, Rugby, the Fosse Way south and the M6 to the west. There is also a well used bridleway which continues the line of Bell Lane over to the neighbouring village of Pailton. In spite of this easy egress in every direction there is very little through traffic.
- 3.4 The twin settlements nestle in the valley folds, almost invisible from every direction from more than a couple of hundred yards. Only the Church, built on a knoll projecting out from the rising ground on the west, indicates the presence of the village. Most of the other village buildings are sited with respect for the gentle contours, and are anyway screened by the surrounding fields' hedgerows and the surviving forest trees.

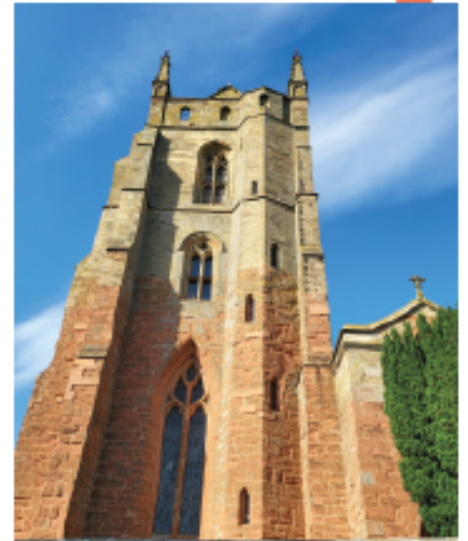
- 4.1 The village was designated a Conservation Area in 1970. The Area is considerably larger than the village boundary adopted in the Local Plan and includes many of the fields surrounding the village itself.
- 4.2 The aim of a Conservation Area is to protect the area as a whole, not merely the individual buildings. Planning controls on works to properties in a Conservation Area are more restrictive than elsewhere. In addition to normal planning controls permission is required for the following:
- Demolition of all or part of a building; demolition of a wall, gate or fence greater than 1m high fronting a highway or greater than 2m elsewhere;
  - Extensions to a dwelling;
  - Dormer windows or alterations to a roofline; most forms of cladding; outbuildings greater than 10 m3; erection of fences or walls greater than certain heights; erection of satellite dishes or aerials where they affect the roofline;
  - Lopping or felling any tree more than 7.5 cm diameter at a height of 1.5 m. The Authority may issue Tree Preservation Order if they consider it has amenity value. (Since all trees in the Conservation Area are protected there are presently no TPO's in the village.)



Map Key	
Green Area	Green Belt
Red Line	Conservation Area
Black Line	Settlement Boundary
Hatched Area	Registered Park & Garden

5.1 There are 14 buildings in the parish with statutory protection. They are:

- II 12-20, Main Street
- II 8, Main Street
- II Chapel of the Sacred Heart
- I Church of St Edith
- II Four Winds
- II Honysockle Cottage kingsley Cottage
- II Icehouse at Sp 4819 8389
- II Lodge Farmhouse
- II Manor Farmhouse
- I Screen, Gates and Gatepiers
- II Streetfield Farmhouse and Attached Farmbuildings
- II The Cottage, Monks Kirby, Rugby, Warwickshire, CV23
- II The Old Post Office
- II The Walled Garden C160 Metres North-West of the Stables at Newnham Paddox



Church of St Edith



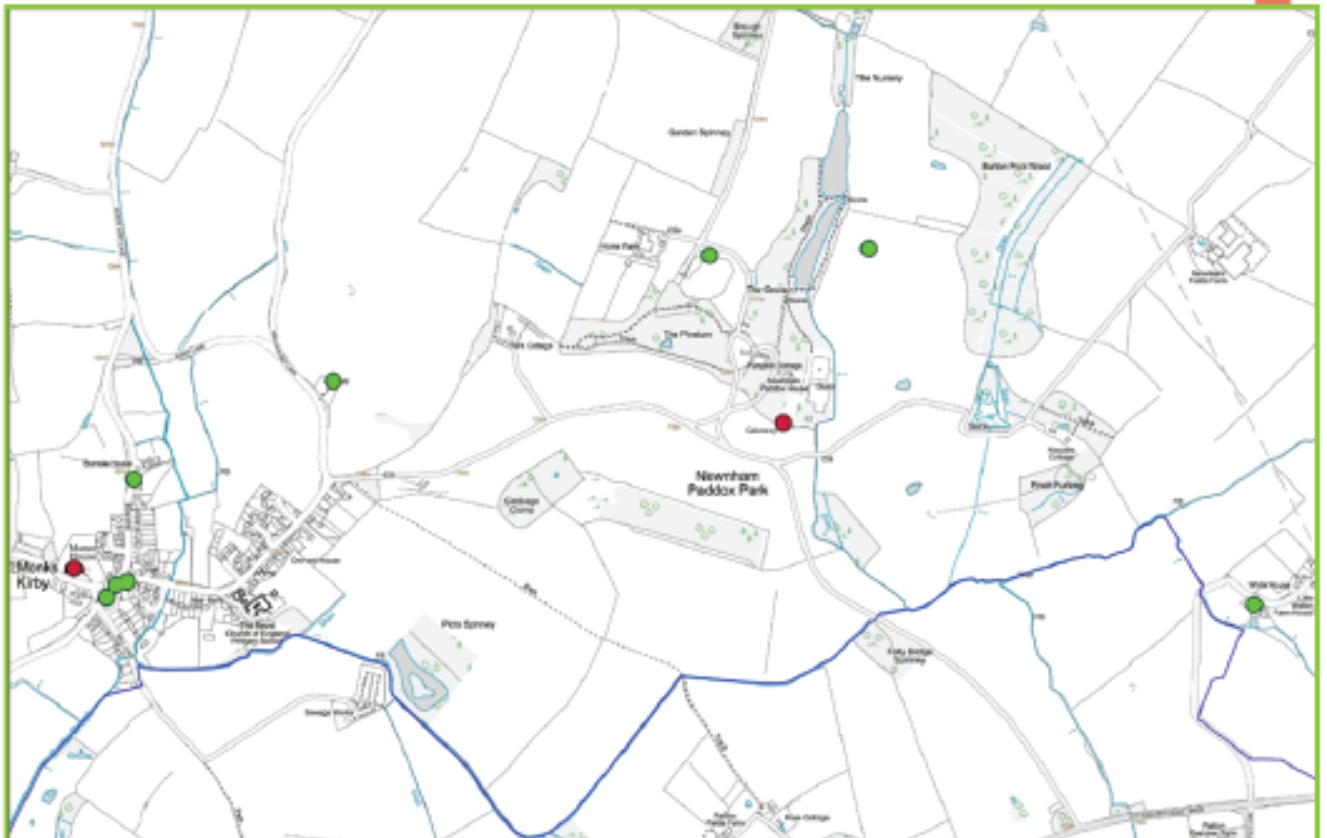
12 to 20 Main Street



8 Main Street



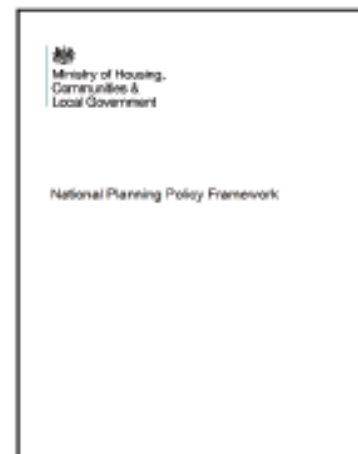
The Old Post Office





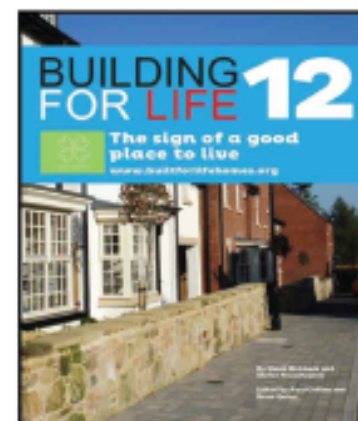
## July 2021 National Planning Policy Framework

- 6.1 Section 12 is dedicated to 'Achieving well-designed places' and reinforces the role high-quality buildings play in achieving sustainable development. It says 'good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities'.
- 6.2 It suggests that design policies should be developed alongside local communities and recognises the role that neighbourhood plans can play in identifying the special qualities of each area.



## Building for Life 12

- 6.3 This is a national standard that seeks to achieve well designed buildings and neighbourhoods. It focusses around 12 considerations including Connections; Facilities and services; Public transport; Meeting local housing requirements; Character; Working with the site and its context; Creating well defined streets and spaces; Easy to find your way around; Streets for all; Car parking; Public & private spaces and External storage and amenity space.



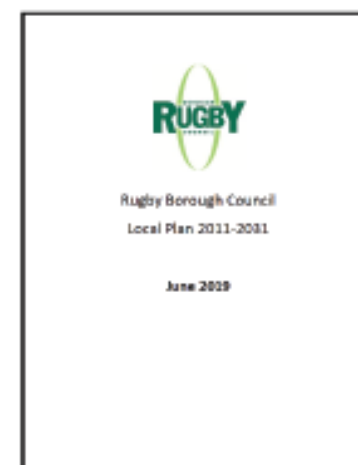
## Planning White Paper

- 6.4 The White Paper, published in August 2020, had as a key objective the need to bring a new focus to design and sustainability, suggesting that local residents should have a genuine say in the design of new development, and ensure that codes have real 'bite' by making them more binding on planning decisions. The White Paper sees neighbourhoods (through Neighbourhood Plans) playing 'a crucial role in producing required design guides and codes to provide certainty and reflect local character and preferences about the form and appearance of development'.



## Rugby Local Plan

- 6.5 The Rugby Local Plan makes the point that 'Parish Plans and Design Guides do not hold as much weight in decision making as a Neighbourhood Plan'. (Paragraph 3.29). This is a key reason that Monks Kirby parish Council has taken the decision to prepare a neighbourhood plan.
- 6.6 Chapter 10 on Sustainable Design and Construction states that 'All development will demonstrate high quality, inclusive and sustainable design and new development will only be supported where the proposals are of a scale, density and design that responds to the character of the areas in which they are situated. All developments should aim to add to the overall quality of the areas in which they are situated'.



### General Discussion

- 7.1 The Parish of Monks Kirby has a long and interesting history, resulting in a wide array of heritage assets, attractive landscapes and a distinctive local character.
- 7.2 The biggest challenge facing the future of Monks Kirby is to balance the desire to protect the character of the village with the need for it to grow and evolve in a sensitive and proportionate manner in order to sustain the community and its facilities. There are very limited opportunities for growth within the village, and any development proposal must address the issues raised within this Design Guide.
- 7.3 There are a number of general design principles and guidelines which flow from the policy framework when applied at a local context. All development must take these into account and they are described below.
- 7.4 They are drawn from what the local community see as the design features that encapsulate building style in Monks Kirby and wish to see reflected in new development.

### Building Materials & Styles

- 7.5 Very varied building styles are represented in the village. Monks Kirby has accumulated over the centuries and there is little homogeneity. There are sixteenth century half-timbered houses, but only one of these is now thatched. There are two surviving eighteenth century farmhouses but whereas one is a quite imposing edifice the other is very much in the cottage style. There is a sprinkling of nineteenth century cottages, several in the gothic style but the remainder in the rural vernacular.

• Locally produced brick predominates. (1) It gives a mellow, variegated texture often with the stretchers and headers alternating in the English style. Several houses have thin delicate lime mortar pointing. (2) Window and door lintels are of brick, often arched (3) and there are some good examples of squint brickwork around window and door reveals. One pair of cottages has excellent examples of rubbed brick lintels. Windows do not dominate; rather they add texture to the brick facades (4). Window frames are set within the window reveals giving an impression of depth (5). Lights are divided into small panes (6). There are good examples of brick dentil work on gable-ends avoiding the need for wooden barge-boards (7). The barn gable end at Brockhurst Farm has a splendid dovecote feature (8). Some houses have been painted in stone texture paint. This at least has the advantage that the outline of the brick courses can still be identified (9).



- Roofs are tiled or slated. Most are steeply pitched but to avoid height first floor windows on many of the cottages are dormered (10) (this idiom has been copied in some of the post-war developments, most notably in Stocking Meadow). There are several houses with decorative – even elaborate – bargeboards. Some have turned finials. Roof verges and eaves often broadly overhang the walls giving depth and texture (11). Chimneys are important features, breaking the regularity of the roofline and adding interest to the silhouette.



- Building technology limitations meant that many of the pre-twentieth century houses were comparatively shallow in depth; and to provide extensive accommodation it was necessary to build gabled wings at right angles to the main axis. Recent owners have continued this approach in modern extensions. They have successfully imitated the original design features, sometimes by stepping the roofline to avoid unbalancing the mass of the original structure (12) and sometimes by constructing a gabled extension to the rear (13).



• Many of the older properties have porches to their front doors. There are some nicely balanced tiled examples supported by gallows brackets; and there are several gracefully glazed enclosed porches under slate roofs. These were presumably nineteenth century additions (14).



• The patterning of the houses is also important – and varied. In Brockhurst, for example, many of the houses are pairs of semi-detached with broad open gardens separating each pair. There are two former farmhouses and two dwellings have been converted from former agricultural buildings. None is greater than two storeys high and the scale is therefore restricted and informal. Nonetheless, each is built directly on to the road – or with a narrow strip of front garden behind a low wall – and this gives a sense of intimacy and community (15).



• However, at the centre of the village in Main Street and the entrance to Brockhurst Lane the texture is denser with fewer, smaller gaps between the buildings. The houses here are themselves more compact; they too are built directly on to the road. There is here a more enclosed feel with even a sense of busy-ness (and of course parking problems).

• The ancient pattern of roads and footpaths remains very strongly the basic structure of the village. The fact that there is very little through traffic coupled with the fact that so many houses open directly on to the streets have immense influence on the lifestyle of the village as a whole. All the roads lead somewhere and there is a variety of circuits available for recreational walks. Neighbours therefore meet each other regularly to chat and pass the time of day. Children can safely be allowed to play out. Social life is to a major extent defined by what is in effect a street village.

**7.6 It is however the mixture of styles that characterises the village scene. What coherence there is derives from the way each group of buildings contribute their own distinctive features to the whole composition.**

## Design Guidelines

- Avoid too many houses of **one style** which will swamp the variety of the village. Seek always to avoid **standardisation**.
- Maintain the **building line**. Seek to preserve gaps between buildings as these are a feature of the village.
- Avoid any building work that requires the **demolition** of pre-twentieth century brickwork.
- Avoid over **dominant houses** which will dwarf earlier cottages. Seek ways to break up large masses into smaller sections; use dormer windows or projecting gables to avoid excessive height.
- New buildings must have adequate **off-road parking**.
- Avoid thick **mortar courses**. Much of the village's early brickwork has tooled or bucket-handle pointing.
- Seek to provide **interest in brickwork**, possibly by the occasional projecting brick course, perhaps by brick lintels, possibly by coloured patterning where this is appropriate.
- Avoid **concrete roof tiles** (except for extensions where these are the original roofing medium).
- Seek to add variety to **roof lines**; where appropriate make a feature of chimneys.
- Avoid **over dominant picture windows** on to the road. Avoid the use of large panes. Recess window frames into window reveals.
- Avoid the use of **boxed-in verges** and eaves; seek alternatives such as plain bargeboards perhaps with simple moulding; or extended rafter feet; or brick dentil work.
- Plan **extensions** imaginatively, seeking to preserve the mass of the existing building and using appropriate materials and design features.
- **Cul de sacs** are not appropriate planning devices in that they can tend to form inward looking groupings separate from the more open social intercourse of the village as a whole.
- Contemporary design which respects the character of the Conservation Area will be welcomed.
- **Buildings should seek to harmonise in siting, design and materials with the vernacular of the village. The height and mass of new buildings must respect the one/two storey nature of most of the existing buildings.**



## Street Styles

- 7.7 • 1920's photographs of Monks Kirby show a rural settlement with metalled roads set between grass verges. There were no kerbs or footpaths.
- 7.8 • All the lanes leading into the village are still like this with the verges being roughly mown. Within the village itself, however, there are now kerbs and, generally, footpaths beside the roads. Until recently the kerbstones were of granite but many of these have unfortunately now been replaced, sometimes with a composition stone (which is quite effective), but more generally with concrete (which is not).
- 7.9 • In the older parts of the village the building line fronts on the highway, although a few houses do have small front gardens. Many of these are fronted by a low wall or hedge which give the impression of continuing the building line along the line of the street. This sense of enclosure is an important feature of the village. One very important wall surrounds the churchyard. Here the dull red, nineteenth century brickwork topped with stone cappings contributes strongly to the village's rural atmosphere.
- 7.10 • Elsewhere there are no footpaths: this is the case, for instance, on the inside of the bend opposite the war memorial. Here the grass verge is kept roughly mown. In some of the new developments (Bell Lane, Smite Close, St Edith's Close, Stocking Meadow) there are also no footpaths; but here homeowners keep the lawns closely mown and neatly tend their front gardens. This open plan effect contrasts with the enclosed building lines of the older parts of the village.
- 7.11 • The footpaths themselves are of asphalt; there is a merciful absence of urban flagstones.
- 7.12 • The lighting of Monks Kirby is not designed to meet official street lighting standards. It is described as "footpath lighting" to enable pedestrians to find their way. Some of the lights are mounted on convenient buildings and some on wooden poles. There are only a few modern aluminium lampposts. Most telephone wires run overhead from distribution poles. Improvements to public realm design including street furniture and material specifications appropriate to the historic nature of the village and the Conservation Area will be supported. The provision of waste bins and dog waste bins will also be supported.
- 7.13 • The newly built roads have modern aluminium street name signs, and the old red telephone box has been replaced by an inappropriate modern design of glass and steel. There are, however, some good examples of traditionally designed street furniture: there is a splendid early twentieth century finger post on the village green, and the new signs for Brockhurst Lane have an appropriate look.
- 7.14 • Road markings have been kept to a minimum compatible with road safety.
- 7.15 • There are some important communal open spaces within and near the village: the Village Green, the triangle with its oak trees (doctored after wide consultation in 1997-8), the churchyard itself, the wide verges with the recent tree planting beyond Bond End, the birches planted on the causeway of Brockhurst Lane to celebrate the jubilee of the WI, the refurbished war memorial, the triangle island at the top of Brockhurst Lane, the limetrees in front of the Catholic cemetery and the cemetery itself with the Victorian chapel, the Revel School's playing fields with their designated conservation area – all these are important features of the village street scene.

### Design Guidelines

- Maintain the rough mown verges of the lanes leading into the village. Avoid the installation of kerbstones; or, if these are required for reasons of safety, install flush kerbs which will allow the grass to creep over the road edge.
- Within the village preserve the surviving granite setts.
- New footpaths should reflect a variety of style such as a pea gravel finish to break up too wide an expanse of asphalt.
- Where the building line is close to the highway seek to maintain the sense of enclosure by the use of walls, hedges, gates, etc. Where housing is set well back seek to preserve the sense of space by leaving the front gardens open.
- Street furniture should avoid aluminium signs and lampposts in favour of more appropriate designs.
- Security lighting should seek to minimise its impact on surrounding property and on passers by.
- The open spaces of the village do not need to be closely mown or gardened. This is not the village style. But all should receive occasional maintenance to prevent them becoming overgrown.

