Development Guide
Port Street. Evesham Riverside.

Preface

This development guide for Port Street, Evesham, was adopted by Wychavon District Council on 24th January 2002.

It has been subject to a range of consultation techniques. The area was the subject of specific consideration as part of 2 Local Plan Review consultation events held in Evesham in January and June 2001. These were attended by 720 people and gained a high degree of publicity in the local press. A draft Guide was published for a six week consultation period with comments due by 25th January 2002 and, again, there was press coverage. In all 19 written comments were received – these are available for viewing at the Civic Centre, along with all Committee reports on the matter – ask to see file 8/32/5.

Along with a number of minor amendments, one significant change has been made following consultation - the suggestion for frontage development for Burford Rd Car Park has been omitted due to the concerns about loss of parking spaces, enhancement area of the site is now advocated instead.

This Development Guide is now formally adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance and will be used to guide decisions regarding land use, design, transportation and enhancements – including applications for any necessary decisions under the planning and related legislation under which it is a material consideration. It is one of five documents forming the Evesham Riverside Strategy.

Since adoption of the Guide, the Council has issued the First Deposit Version of the Wychavon District Local Plan Review. Where appropriate, the Relevant Review policies are identified in the text.

If you wish to discuss this Guide or the Riverside Strategy generally, please contact Denise Duggan on 01386 565267.
Port Street Development Guide

Introduction:

Evesham is a thriving market town on the River Avon. The river encloses the town on three sides and historically has influenced its development, and continues to do so. The riverside is integral to the setting of the town.

The District Council recognise that the riverside is a major economic and cultural asset for the town, the full potential of which is not currently achieved. For this reason, the Council have produced a strategy for the riverside area to define its role and contribution to the future of the town as a whole. Essentially it aims to improve the area's role as a focus for leisure, recreation and tourism whilst promoting opportunities for a range of new waterside development. The strategy (known as the Evesham Riverside Strategy: Development Framework) provides a “framework” for development, land use and landscape management throughout the riverside and includes information on materials, planting, architectural detailing, etc.

A number of development guides have been produced for individual sites within the riverside area. The guides complement the riverside strategy but set out in more detail the principles and design parameters which the Council would expect developers of individual sites to adhere to.

This development guide relates to the lower section of Port Street and its environs (refer figure one). The Council decided to produce a guide for Port Street because it is within the Conservation Area, includes several listed buildings, is a transitory area adjacent to the riverside and is the main route into town from the east. Port Street is classed as a secondary shopping frontage in the adopted local plan and in the local plan review first deposit. It has a number of vacant units, suffers from congestion and traffic pollution and several of its buildings were damaged during the 1998 flood. The Council considers that the area would benefit by encouraging a greater flexibility in the type of uses within the area.

Main objectives

The Council wishes to promote a sustainable mixed-use development in accordance with existing Structure and Local Plan policies (Appendix 1), Planning Policy Guidance notes and which:

- Encourages commercial, tourism and leisure uses within the riverside area
- Contributes to town centre living by utilising underused upper floors
- Enables the effective re-use of underused buildings and brownfield land
- Respects the floodplain and the natural river environment
- Enhances the economic opportunities of the area whilst respecting its conservation status
- Recognises that historic buildings are assets to the town and community
- Provides a draw to attract people from the town centre over Workman Bridge
- Promotes pedestrian linkages to and from the town centre
The Conservation Area: A large part of the area covered by this development guide is within a Conservation Area. The Council do not see this as a constraint on investment or regeneration. The Conservation Area status is not preservationist, but allows for evolution of the built form in the area to ensure that new development preserves or enhances the
Fig 1: The Site, Conservation Area, Floodplain, Bridleway & Footpath
area. The guide allows for a wide variety of land use options which can satisfactorily be accommodated within the Conservation Area. Positive and considered advice is available from the Council’s Conservation Officers in this respect.

**Site description and constraints**

Evesham is characterised by perimeter blocks formed by terraces in the older parts of the town, such as Bengeworth. These align their primary axis along the main transport routes. In general the blocks have a uniformity of design approach and materials (predominantly red brick and slate/tiles). Port Street contains a variety of uses, but predominantly retail at ground floor, and a greater variety of materials with an attractive combination of brick buildings and painted smooth rendered buildings. Port Street was originally part of a separate village on the outskirts of Evesham. Prior to the construction of the by-pass it formed part of the main A44 Worcester to Oxford road – it remains a busy primary route into Evesham from the east. It is a narrow street with buildings predominantly fronting directly onto the pavement. Proposals will demonstrate a land use and design approach in keeping with this character.

![View of Port Street](image)

The guide covers the area of Port Street between Workman Bridge and the cinema, and the land adjoining to the rear up to and including Burford Road car park. In this area, Port Street is within the Evesham Conservation Area and includes many listed buildings (all on its southern side with the notable exception of the recently listed Regal Cinema). Figure one shows the extent of the Conservation Area and highlights the listed buildings. Traditionally, retail units have existed on the ground floor with a combination of residential and commercial uses above. More recently there has been a growth in the number of restaurant and take-away uses. The majority of buildings are two storey in scale with the occasional three storey.

The guide also includes the northern part of Waterside (to the Northwick Hotel). This is an attractive part of the Conservation Area with predominantly three storey buildings overlooking Workman Gardens and the River Avon beyond. Virtually all of the buildings are listed (refer figure one) and most comprise hotels, restaurants and take-aways with a combination of uses above.

The area covered by the guide is shown on figure one.

**Constraints:**
Flooding: The floodplain encompasses Waterside and the lower part of Port Street up to, but not including, the former Kwiksave building. The floodplain boundary is shown on figure one. Development should not exacerbate flooding in the area or elsewhere. Additional residential units will not be acceptable within the floodplain to minimise the risk to residents and their property. Please refer to appendix two for further information on flooding. Developers are encouraged to discuss their proposals with the Environment Agency at an early stage.

Archaeology: People have lived and worked in this area for centuries and therefore there is likely to be a rich archaeological heritage. In accordance with PPG16 – Archaeology and Planning, any areas of new build or ground works will require an archaeological evaluation prior to permission being granted in order to determine the nature and extent of any archaeological deposits and their impact on the proposals. Developers are advised to make early contact with the County Council’s Archaeological Service (refer section 5 – Sources of Additional Information).

Conservation: Port Street and Waterside are within Evesham’s Conservation Area and include several listed buildings (please refer figure one). Red-orange brick, painted smooth finished render and clay tiles, natural slate are characteristic of this part of Evesham. The area is rich in traditional features such as chimneys, dentilled eaves, varying roof pitches and eaves heights, painted softwood windows and sash windows. The general theme of which is continued into the neighbouring residential areas. Early discussion with the Council’s Conservation Officers is recommended.

Highways: As explained above Port Street has a narrow carriageway and buildings fronting directly onto the pavement thus there is little opportunity to widen either the road or footpaths. Port Street accommodates two-way traffic and is used for on-street deliveries to shops and other businesses, many of which do not have rear service access.

Policy Background:

In the early 1990s Port Street and a large portion of Bengeworth was declared by the Council a Neighbourhood Renewal Area – the aims of which were to improve housing stock coupled with environmental improvements – policy EC6 in the adopted local plan refers. The scheme, which has now ceased, was successful in carrying out some improvements in the area.

Whilst Port Street is identified in the adopted local plan as a secondary shopping frontage under policy S4, the policy does allow for non-retail uses providing that the Council is satisfied of their appropriateness for a central area location. In addition, policy S4 explains that for proposals for take-aways particular regard will be had to the availability of on-site or safe on-street parking, and to environmental considerations. The Local Plan Review First Deposit also identifies Port street as a secondary shopping frontage – policy ECON16 refers.

The adopted local plan encourages proposals to increase the use of upper floors in Port Street through policy EC2, however, the Environment Agency has
indicated that they would object to schemes which introduce additional residential units into the floodplain – and this includes units on upper storeys.

Several policies, including policy EM1, refer to the problem of traffic congestion along Port Street along with the lack of adequate rear service access, and the accompanying text advises that proposals which require servicing from Port Street will not be allowed.

A mixed use allocation covers the area to the north of Port Street and policy EM1 advises that shopping and other related uses will be encouraged where they comply with the above and that the Council may allow frontage development onto Burford Road to replace existing industrial uses.
Fig 2: Rear of Port Street, Lower Leys & Castle Street
Land Use and Design Guidance:

Area One:

Along Waterside and the land to its rear there is little opportunity for redevelopment of sites because the area falls within the floodplain and the Conservation Area and it contains several listed buildings.

Similarly, along Port Street frontage there is little opportunity for redevelopment of sites for similar reasons – with the notable exception of the former Kwiksave building which for the purpose of this guidance is considered as part of Area Two. It is acknowledged that some of the buildings are in a poor state of repair, however, their removal would result in the unacceptable loss of historical fabric. It is also preferable from the local communities point of view to re-use existing buildings rather than wholesale clearance which removes the areas past and its historical points. The existing buildings contain a myriad of traditional features and detailing and should be considered as assets.

Area Two:

An opportunity exists for a more comprehensive redevelopment scheme of land between Port Street, Castle Street and Lower Leys (refer figure two), which comprises land within several ownerships and includes the former Kwiksave building, several buildings in commercial use and a number of outbuildings. It is considered appropriate to include the commercial buildings fronting onto Castle Street as part of the site because they detract from the appearance of the area, and their relocation to a more suitable site would be welcomed. Land immediately to the west of the Castle Street units has consent for the construction of eighteen flats (refer figure two), which was an amendment to a part implemented 1994 permission for a larger footprint. Additional new residential units will not be acceptable within the floodplain. Planning consent has recently been granted for improvements to the façade of the Kwiksave building. Notwithstanding the extant permissions it is desirable that the area should be looked at afresh to provide guidance on the land as a whole and to encourage its future comprehensive redevelopment as opposed to piecemeal.

Area Three:

All but the far eastern side of Burford Road car park (refer figure three) is within the area liable to flood and has previously been under-utilised
however, recently its usage has increased. Its retention as a car park is seen as vital to the regeneration of the area. However, it does afford the opportunity for some enhancement works to be carried out, which might include the introduction of trees to soften its current rather harsh appearance.

The above three areas will now be considered in turn:

**Area One: Port Street and Waterside:**

**Land Use Principles:**

- retail, food and drink, offices, professional services, community, leisure, tourism (but excluding tourism accommodation on ground floor) – ground floor and upper storeys
- residential on upper storeys only – but avoidance of the floodplain

The Retail Monitor (2001) indicates an increased number of pedestrians using Port Street following a steady decline in the preceding 5 years to a low during 1998 and 1999.

It is recognised that retailing is unlikely to be as extensive in Port Street as it has been historically. However, the area does continue to serve a large community, Bengeworth, and it has the potential to accommodate more specialist shops that cannot perhaps afford the higher costs associated with a town centre location. The Council is therefore keen for retailing to remain an important function of the area.

Nevertheless, the Council accepts that a flexible approach to the area is required in order to encourage the social, economic and environmental regeneration of the area. Several restaurants and take-aways have successfully established themselves, particularly along Waterside, and in general have positively contributed to the area. Such uses help stimulate the evening economy and although residential amenity issues need to be carefully assessed, it is considered that the two uses can successfully co-exist with the effective use of planning controls, such as restrictions on opening times.

To stimulate the vibrancy and vitality of the area, the Council would generally welcome other commercial or community uses on the ground floor, such as: community facilities, offices, professional services, youth centre, tourism, leisure facilities. Conversion of ground floors to residential use will be resisted because this would result in the gradual erosion of the economic heart of Bengeworth. The active use of upper storeys is also encouraged, but additional residential units within the floodplain will not be allowed.

In determining whether a particular use is acceptable the Council will also have to take into account the physical alterations required and the impact that this has on the appearance and character of the building itself and the surrounding area. If the building concerned is listed then the impact on both its exterior and interior will need to be considered. Further guidance on design is given below.
The Council considers that Port Street and its environs could benefit from the creation of a focal use which draws people to the area and aids regeneration. The recent listing of the 1930s Regal Cinema identifies the importance of the buildings interior which has been largely unaltered and consequently it is difficult to envisage an alternative use. However, Evesham does not have another cinema and therefore it offers an opportunity to become a focal point, and could help enhance the evening strategy for the area. The re-introduction of a food and drink types of use, such as restaurant, café or bar into to the part of the ground floor which was previously occupied as a restaurant would help encourage further customers to the area.

Some of the properties to the south of Port Street currently benefit from rear service access from Waterside – albeit restricted via an archway under buildings. Similarly, many of the units to the north of Port Street have rear access via Lower Leys which is a residential street with significant levels of on-street parking. Although further rear service access provision may initially seem desirable to lessen congestion along Port Street, it is considered that it is impractical to achieve and possibly even harmful to the character of the area. Highways have advised that to be effective a service road should have two access points thereby avoiding the need for a turning area, but in practice this would prove very difficult to achieve because of the nature of the surrounding development. Furthermore, a rear service access would be damaging to the urban fabric for example through the provision of visibility splays, turning areas, and the resultant development pressure that would arise from the new “road frontage”. The Council therefore accepts that, unless there is an existing access to the rear, units will have to be serviced from Port Street, which provides for a more flexible approach from that taken in local plan policy EM1.

In light of the recently published PPG13, the existence of the large local population living within walking distance and some, albeit fairly limited, on-street parking, it is considered that the provision of on-site parking or on-street parking within the immediate area should carry less weight than policies, such as S4, currently imply. However, it is considered that proposals should generally provide parking spaces for the disabled to the minimum standards.

**Urban Design Guidance:**

Applications for development will be expected to demonstrate that they have incorporated the following principles:

- retain existing buildings (with exception of former Kwiksave building)
- preserve and enhance listed buildings – interior and exterior - and their settings
- respect traditional street layout and burgage plots
- retention of traditional features, such as shopfronts, blind boxes, sash windows, dentilled eaves
- use of sympathetic materials, such as painted softwood windows
proposals should have a cohesive style and design that respects the scale, character and use of materials in locality
• active frontages and uses to streets and public areas
• promote pedestrian accessibility through area
• encourages external separate, secure access to upper floors from street
• provision of private amenity areas – normally private gardens for family housing and communal amenity areas for use by people living in apartments but not for general public use
• clear demarcation between public and private areas, but avoidance of stark, inactive boundaries
• provision of cycle infrastructure
• incorporate appropriate forms of traffic calming
• use of sustainable drainage systems
• encourage internal building design and use of materials to reduce the impact of flooding

Area Two: Land between Port Street and Lower Leys, to include former Kwiksave site:

The site includes a significant amount of land between Port Street, Castle Street and Lower Leys, much of which is within the floodplain. Notwithstanding the extant planning consent on part of the site, there is an opportunity to promote the comprehensive enhancement and redevelopment of this area providing that the amount of overall building footprint within the floodplain is not increased. There is a garage workshop within the site and any re-use of this area may require appropriate remediation works to be carried out.

The vacant former Kwiksave building provides a further opportunity to stimulate the local economy, and create a draw to the area for visitors and residents alike. Planning consent has been granted for alterations to the façade, however, the guide includes design guidance on a replacement building should this opportunity arise in the future.

Former Kwiksave Building

Land Use Principles:

• retail, food and drink, offices, professional services, community, leisure, tourism (but excluding tourism accommodation on ground floor) – ground floor and upper storeys
• residential on upper storeys only – but avoidance of the floodplain
Urban Design Guidance:

Applications for development will be expected to demonstrate that they have incorporated the following principles:

General:
- enhance character of Conservation Area and its setting
- proposals should respect the scale, character and use of materials in locality
- respect traditional street layout and burgage plots
- incorporate traditional features – chimneys, dentilled eaves, sash windows
- varied roofscape – variance in eaves and ridge heights, pitch
- provision of cycle infrastructure
- incorporate appropriate forms of traffic calming where feasible
- no increase in the total footprint within the floodplain
- two storey terraced buildings to front onto Lower Leys and Castle Street, with floor levels above highest recorded flood levels, in accordance with Environment Agency advice
- investigate potential for vehicular entrance from Castle Street and egress from Lower Leys
- capitalise on potential for linking the cinema to any redevelopment proposals, e.g. by maximising pedestrian linkages though site to cinema
- courtyard to contain parking, landscaping and appropriate feature trees
- clear demarcation between public and private areas, but avoidance of stark, inactive boundaries
- use of sustainable drainage systems including use of porous surfaces for hard landscaped areas
- encourage internal building design and use of materials to reduce the impact of flooding, and incorporate pedestrian access from any proposed residential development to higher ground

Replacement Kwiksave building:
- to front directly onto pavement with main pedestrian public access from Port Street
- use of sympathetic materials, such as painted softwood windows
- active frontages and uses to Port Street
- promote pedestrian accessibility through the site
- where appropriate, provides external separate, secure access to upper floors from street
- if residential at upper floors – provision of private communal area for residents

Area Three: Burford Road:

Land Use Principles:

- retention of car park area
Enhancement Guidance:

- use of porous surfaces for car park and other hard landscaped areas
- introduction of appropriate feature trees and planting
Implementation:

Transport:
All major applications will need to be accompanied by a transport assessment which comprehensively investigates the impact of development, and any cumulative effect, upon the local highway network within the town as a whole – financial contributions towards improvements to the transport system required as a result will need to be incorporated within a S106 Agreement and, for example, a sec. 278 Highways act 1980.

The layout of parking will adhere to the design criteria established in this brief – in terms of active frontages and streets; the definition of public and private areas; and security.

Cycling:
Cycling infrastructure should be incorporated within the schemes and early discussion with the planning department is recommended. The County Council would like to facilitate the provision of a cycle route linking Waterside to the by-pass at Knowle Hill, and the suggested route through the study area is indicated on figure one.

Sustainable Urban Drainage Schemes (SUDS):
Opportunities for the use of SUDS should be maximised, please refer the Environment Agency for further details.

Energy Efficient Designs:
Schemes should incorporate energy efficiency designs where possible.

Landscaping and Biodiversity:
The retention of existing hedgerows and trees will be encouraged. Developments alongside or nearby the river corridor should aim to enhance the nature conservation value of the area.

Schemes should be mindful of the Councils landscape strategy for the Riverside area which is contained in the document entitled Evesham Riverside Strategy: Development Framework.

Education:
A financial contribution to provide educational infrastructure will normally be required for residential development in accordance with County Educational Departments stipulations and the Council’s SPG on Developers Contributions.

Affordable Housing:
Evesham has a high need for affordable housing and therefore up to 30% of the residential units will be required to cater for this need and should normally be located on site areas identified for residential use. Tenure and type subject to consultation with the Council’s housing section. Provision should be in accordance with the Council’s Supplementary Guidance on Affordable Housing.

Public Open Space:
Generally, it is anticipated that any requirement will be met in the form of off-site contributions for enhancement of existing open space in the whole riverside area, rather than on-site provision. Contributions will be calculated in accordance with the Council’s SPG on Developers Contributions.

**Contamination:**
Any sites deemed to be contaminated due to previous activities will be developed subject to the condition outlined for dealing with contamination in Appendix 3.

**Planning Applications**
Port Street is within the Conservation Area and therefore planning applications must be in the form of full planning applications and include detailed landscaping schemes. They will be accompanied by a design statement in accordance with the Council’s adopted policy.

5. **Sources of additional information:**

Planning:
- Policy Planner, Denise Duggan 01386 565267
- Development Control, Caroline Ansell 01386 565329
- Mark Lynch 01386 565324
- Gill Collin 01386 565316
- Jim Burgin 01386 565366
- Sally Griffiths 01386 565308
- 01386 565385

Highways, Keith Hobbs 01386 565195

Economic Development & Tourism, Phil Merrick 01386 565588

Legal, Lisa Peakman-Short 01386 565472

County Archaeological Planning Officer, Mike Glyde 01905 855454

Rights of Way Officer, Richard Jones 01905 766736

Affordable Housing, Julia Day 01386 565352

Education (Worcs County Council), Sue Owen 01905 766278

Public Open Space, Brian Norfolk 01386 565320

Environment Agency, Lindsay Mann 01684 850951
APPENDIX ONE:

Structure and Local Plan Policy Context:

1: Worcestershire County Structure Plan Policies (adopted June 2001):

- SD3 – use of previously developed land
- SD4 – minimising the need to travel
- SD5 – achieving balanced communities
- SD7 – sequential approach to location of development
- CTC6 – green open spaces and corridors
- CTC8 – flood risk and surface water drainage
- D6 and D7 – affordable housing
- D9 - density of housing development
- T1 – transport and location of development
- T3 and T4 – managing car use and car parking
- T10 – cycling and walking
- RST9 – waterways and open water areas
- RST14 and RST15 – tourism development
- IMP1 – implementation of development


Evesham policies: EM1; EC2; EC6

- H8 – housing development on unallocated sites
- H10 – dwelling mix
- H16 – affordable housing (note forthcoming SPG on affordable housing)
- H19 – garden areas
- H22, H23 and H24 – provision of public open space
- H26 – provision for pedestrians and cyclists
• BC8 and BC9 – development and flooding
• BC15 – Contaminated land
• S4 – Secondary shopping frontage
• CB1A – demolition of unlisted buildings in Conservation Area
• CB3 and CB4 – development in or adjoining Conservation Area
• M5 – relaxation of car parking and servicing on developments
• M10 – meeting the needs of cyclists
• M11 – meeting the needs of pedestrians

3. Wychavon District Local Plan Review First Deposit:

• GD 1 – Location Strategy
• GD 2 – General Development Control
• GD 3 – Planning Obligations
• RES 8 – Conversion of upper floors
• ENV 13 – Conservation Areas
• ENV 14 – ENV 16 – Listed buildings
• ENV 17 & 18 – development in areas of flood risk
• ENV 19 – Surface water runoff
• ENV 21 – Contaminated and unstable land
• COM 3 – Affordable Housing
• COM 13 – Provision of open space
• SUR 1 – 5 – Design, landscaping and amenity
• SUR 7 – Shopfronts and signs

Full policy details are contained within the adopted Wychavon District Local Plan and the Local Plan Review First Deposit, which can be viewed at the following locations:

Civic Centre, Queen Elizabeth Drive Pershore
Evesham One Stop Shop, Market Place, Evesham
Evesham Library, Oat Street, Evesham

And on the Council’s web site: www.wychavon.gov.uk

APPENDIX TWO:

The Environment Agency has provided guidelines for sites within the floodplain, which is summarised below:

**Floodplain policy for development can be divided into four main types:**

1. **Greenfield development:**
   Here the principal function of the flood plain is to convey and store water, and development should be avoided. Uses should be restricted to agricultural, amenity, recreational and wildlife habitat.

2. **Flood Plain Compensation:**
   At the edges of the floodplain it may be possible to carry out a compensation scheme using the level for level principle. Any mitigation measures must not obstruct overland flood flow routes and must not reduce flood storage volume.
3. Redevelopment:
Where the redevelopment of existing sites is involved the extent of new buildings should not exceed, and where appropriate be less than, the existing built areas. Any development in these areas should have a means of escape at times of flooding, e.g. connection to high ground. The Environment Agency will object to buildings constructed on stilts as these can still cause obstruction to the flood flow routes and it is virtually impossible to ensure that the voids underneath remain open.

4. Change of use:
The use of existing buildings, which flood, is an important factor in the Evesham area; at present the commercial use of the ground floors of these premises is accepted by the Environment Agency, but the change of use to residential should be carefully assessed."

For further information, please contact the Environment Agency (01684 850951)

APPENDIX THREE:

Previous land uses may have caused contamination on the application site. In order to ascertain the degree of contamination, and to avoid the possibility of contaminants being released into the environment, groundwater or surface waters as the site is developed, the following condition (or similar) is suggested.

(1) The development hereby permitted shall not be commenced until the following measures have been undertaken:
(2) the submission of a scheme for the investigation of potential ground contamination;
(3) the approval of the scheme referred to in (1) above by the Local Planning Authority;
(4) the completion of a site investigation in accordance with any scheme as may be agreed;
(5) the submission to and written approval by the Local Planning Authority of the results of any such investigation;
(6) the submission to and written approval by the Local Planning Authority of a detailed action plan for remediation of the site;
(7) the full implementation of the agreed action plan on the site to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority

Reason: To ensure that any ground contamination is properly remediated in the interests of amenity and the environment.

APPENDIX FOUR:

Works Within the Confines of the Highway:

- Such works will need to be covered by a sec. 278 Highways Act, 1980.
• Any changes to existing loading and unloading restrictions will require new traffic regulation orders