

Barcombe Neighbourhood Plan.

Appendix: Site Analysis of Hillside and relationship to Hillside policy.

The approach to hillside from Southwest entrance to the village recognises the treeline adjacent to the old railway line, which presents itself as a visual village gateway, screen and border to the main development of Barcombe Cross (Policy 2).

The bridge over the former railway line is narrow and has a weight limit and needs considering in terms of its capacity. This entrance is noted as providing a 'welcoming' view to the High St that emerges as you continue towards the centre of Barcombe Cross.

The Old Station house was built in 1882 for the Lewes to East Grinstead railway line (also known as the Bluebell line). The line was closed in 1953, the tracks were lifted and the house was sold privately. The building is not listed, but is of high historic importance to the village and the railway line. It is a classic Victorian gothic design, with some elements of Arts and Crafts decoration such as the stucco relief panels in the eaves. The building has decorative vertical hung tiles referencing the vernacular of Sussex and Kent buildings from the late 17th century onwards. The style for shaped lower edges on the tiles was very popular in the 19th and 20th centuries, and many of the older buildings in Barcombe Cross have these tile designs. The building has tall, brick corbelled chimneys, painted stone window dressings and mullions, decorative ridge tiles and painted structural timber-work.

There are two historic buildings on the main road, opposite each other at the entrance to Bridgelands on the East side of the railway bridge. They are also the first buildings that appear after the Barcombe village sign. Both sit quite low to the road level, due to the formation of the bridge. They have slate roofs, which is a vernacular style from Lewes (not due to geology, but trade via boat with Devon and the West Country). The natural slate is also combined with dark grey ridge tiles to give a uniform tone to the roofs. The Willows (that sits at the base of the Hillside field) is timber clad, painted white with sash windows. It is single storey, which allows a view behind to the sloping field. Bridge Cottage is a symmetrical house with painted render (ashlar-struck to give the appearance of stonework), sash windows and 2 brick chimneys. This particular rendered finish is not common to the area, being mostly used on town houses especially in areas without a history of brick.

The Victorian railway bridge is constructed in red brick with inset panels. The large wall-capping bricks are bullnosed and made of a hard blue/grey fired clay from Staffordshire.

The large historic, brick house called Hillside is to the North of the Hillside field. It is visible from Bridgelands and the field, but not the main road. It is similar to the Old Station house with vertical hung-tile, large corbelled chimneys and painted woodwork.

The modern houses visible from Hillside mostly appear as brick and tile-hung reproductions of historic styles. There is also now a recently completed conversion (Vine Slead) at the top of Hillside field that references the slate roofs, but has new, machined, horizontal cedar cladding with dark window frames.

The 'Willows' house is recognisable as a property of significance (ref) that is single storey and situated at a low level that helps to enable a view of the grass covered hill. This property has distinctive, original slate roof (as does house on opposite side of road ref). (Policy 6).

The view from the entrance to village, of properties on the hillside beyond the paddock and facing the High St is not considered to be of amenity and sensitive development and design could enhance both aspects. However there is an opportunity to retain a 'green' sightline at the front of the paddock. Building heights can be determined via a projecting line from Willows cottage to the buildings adjacent to the access track which form the highest rooflines in area – thus heights would not exceed the natural sightline and current building precedent (Policy 6).

The site benefits from mature and feature trees (ref map). One is protected by formal tree protection order status (ref) but the BP sees the trees on the south-west side of the site as providing a natural border and visual amenity to village gateway and proximity to Old Station conservation area. (Policy 3)

The housing survey (BHS 2015) provides evidence of need for housing for families, young people and downsizing accommodation for older generation (ref). The Hillside site offers good proximity to village amenities such as the school and recreation ground, allotments and 'Wild About Barcombe' and potential for a safe route (ref) to school and recreational opportunities avoiding use of the road and potential to promote a reduction in vehicle movements. (Policy 4).

Hillside and adjacent land currently provide wildlife and biodiversity amenity (ref survey) and the site further benefits from proximity to current, informal wildlife designated areas (ref Wild About Barcombe and old railway track). This should be reflected in any development as a means to retain natural amenity and to support overall sustainability referencing the plan vision statement (Ref). (Policy 6)

The hillside gradient provides natural flow to Southern Water pond and drainage ditch, and waste water to mains sewer connections in Bridgelands. The hillside boundary drainage should also provide protection against excess surface water affecting properties in Bridgelands