

Map 10. Character Assessments of Coleford Parish

Larger scale map available at www.colefordtownplan.com/maps

5.5 Historic Environment

5.5.1 Coleford neighbourhood area has a wealth of historic assets. In addition to the Conservation Area in the town centre there are 42 statutorily listed buildings and scheduled monuments in the Parish including Whitecliff Furnace, Titanic Steelworks, scheduled Dark Hill Iron Works and 3 'Scowles' (features associated with early open cast iron ore mining) in Dingle Wood and Blake's Wood. The town of Coleford (first recorded as Colevorde in 1275) grew rapidly, with the War of the Roses leading to greater cohesion in the town centre. It went from a small market town to a thriving industrial centre by the late 17th century. The centre of the town has changed little since the 18th and 19th centuries and the Conservation Area contains many listed buildings. The use of local stone is conspicuous in many of the older buildings although orangey bricks manufactured locally are also evident as building materials.

See Map 11 and 12 for examples of heritage assets found in Coleford Parish. Many of these have an industrial link, but the number is notable (over 2,000 identified features within the Parish). Some assets are not designated e.g. Colour Works at Milkwall (for illustrated Valued Heritage Assets see Appendix G).

Character Assessments

5.5.2 Character Assessments of different character areas of Coleford (Appendix A) were prepared by members of the Steering Group and local volunteers to help identify the special features that are significant to the different character areas, in order to help protect them and ensure new development is

sympathetic in terms of design. The Coleford Character Assessment Overview summarises the key areas of interest and is set out below.

5.5.3 Although the topography of the Forest coalfield is essentially a dome, the geology is a syncline, so the deepest vertical pits are further in than Coleford. Most of the earlier mines were adits where the Freeminers worked into the hillsides where the Coleford High Delf seam outcropped in the Crease Limestone. The iron was mined, and stone was also quarried especially to the north and south east.

5.5.4 The Eastern Arc is a grouping of settlements where a variety of small mines at Mile End, Broadwell and Coalway led to the development of hamlets carved out of the Forest, with local shops, pubs, chapels and houses around the tram roads and railways. The character of these settlements still displays this, although now all the tram/railways are either footpaths or cycleways, most of the shops have gone, but many of the chapels, and some small industrial sites remain. The housing has expanded along the road which connects these 'satellite suburbs' along the ridge, and link roads act as the gateways into the town much like spokes on a wheel.

5.5.5 These arcs are separated from Coleford market town by a Green Ring of agricultural/leisure functions (designated by FoDDC as locally valued landscape (Map 7). They back onto the Statutory Forest, most of which only borders the Parish. However, at Gorsty Knoll there is a very valuable part of the Forest which is meend within which are found 2 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and 2 Scheduled Monuments (Appendix M) at Dark Hill where the Mushet iron works are of national importance: defined as the Heritage and Green area. This focuses on the iron



Figure 18
Tourism
and Heritage:
Initial
Consultation
Findings

being built, both in the town at Sunnybank and High Nash but also in the Eastern Arc at Wynols Estate, Broadwell and Wilkes Meadow, Mile End. Partly this related to the expansion of industrial and other employment, notably the factory of H Carter at High Nash (now Suntory). The soft drinks, (Ribena brand stems from here, Lucozade, orange juice and squash etc.) demanded good water, which was extracted (and still is) from the aquifer near the factory and also by the Colour Works at Milkwall. It also meant blackcurrants were grown locally (and elsewhere) and brought in.

5.5.9 In the 20th century the town expanded with the new road and a new industrial sector was built. Estates were built post war, and more in the 1960s and late 20th century and early 21st century as well as infill. Recently, there has been growth in administrative and tourism sectors, and the FoDDC office and tourist attractions have changed the use of space.

5.5.10 Nevertheless, the historical influence remains on the landscape, and some industries are still very active, such as the Whitecliff quarry which has an exit road by Robin Hood junction, named after the old mine. This area has much ecological value too, with SSSIs and indeed part of this is included in the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The Green West to the north and west is contiguous with the Green Ring and is mainly agricultural and forestry, around the west edge bordering the peri-Welsh landscape. Included in this area is another Scheduled Monument at Whitecliff Furnace where the Mushets started their iron empire. This routeway also leads to Newland and its church (The Cathedral of the Forest) which had a huge parish from which Coleford was later subdivided.

industry and the Forest, commons, and local cultural use.

5.5.6 The Southern Arc has a historical background in that this has a more industrial as well as residential presence focused along one of the two major rail lines, down the valley leading toward the old iron workings, colour works and route to the docks at Lydney via Parkend. However, this has been affected significantly by a new road, Old Station Way, constructed in the 1980s when a major industrial area was added (and the town centre extended).

5.5.7 Coleford town centre, including the Conservation Area, is located where a number of local streams, Thurstan's Brook, Sluts Brook and the Collier join together in the centre of the market town, flowing out south as Valley Brook. This flows near a fault, down into the Newland abandoned meander, and then into the Wye. The core is the Market Place and surrounding network of streets, often relating to mills and administration, and Coleford has been the centre for the administration of the Forest for many years. The earliest map to show the town in a similar form to now is dated 1608. Reprisals after the Battle of

Coleford in the Civil War and the increase in prosperity around the 18th century means mainly Georgian architecture shows in the Conservation Area today.

5.5.8 From the low point at the Clock Tower and Market Place, the residential areas developed up the surrounding hills between the brooks and along the main routeways. Two rail companies operated and had stations in the town, the Severn and Wye, and the GWR. Expansion in the 19th century was then increased in the early 20th century with some significant public housing estates

5.5.11 The Character Assessments indicated that there was no 'one' or defined group of design characteristics alone within each character area, and therefore design policy should reflect both the latest Forest of Dean Residential Design Guide, FoDDC policies AP4 and AP5, and respond positively to the Character Assessments (Appendix A).

Community Consultation

The extensive community consultation and engagement activity has provided a range of suggestions for improving the historic environment which have led to the policies following:

5.5.12 In the various consultations (Appendix B), people mentioned: the importance of maintaining, conserving and enhancing the historical and archaeological assets; concern about assets where an impact could be made in association with planning applications, e.g. for extension of quarrying, and where they are going into disrepair. Improvements: provide more information, e.g. published character assessment and local listings register, and a variety of locations were given special mention, which could be included in heritage trails (Scheduled Ancient Monuments [SAMs] at Whitecliff, Dark Hill and Titanic; Caradoc Stone).

In 2016 policies consultation, CHE1 Protecting and Enhancing Local Character gained 82% support; CHE2 Protecting Heritage Assets gained 79% support.

Protecting Heritage Assets

5.5.13 There is a need to provide support for the historic environment in sustainable development, as well as a holistic approach to heritage issues, covering built heritage assets, below ground or archaeological heritage assets and the historic landscape. There is a need and a public wish to protect key views of heritage assets.

5.5.14 Coleford's character and local distinctiveness is due as much to the numerous small, repetitive details as it is to individual historic assets (Appendix M for Listings and Scheduled Ancient Monuments, also Archaeology). The cumulative negative impact of small-scale development, such as extensions, window replacement, etc. can destroy the uniformity and commonality which makes the area more than a collection of individual buildings. The Neighbourhood Plan recognises the contribution which small elements make to the character of the area and seeks to protect them.

5.5.15 In addition to Coleford's many listed buildings and the Conservation Area, there are many heritage assets of local importance which are not designated. For examples of these, such as Newland Street Viaduct, see Appendix G.



Policy CHE1 Protecting and Enhancing Local Character

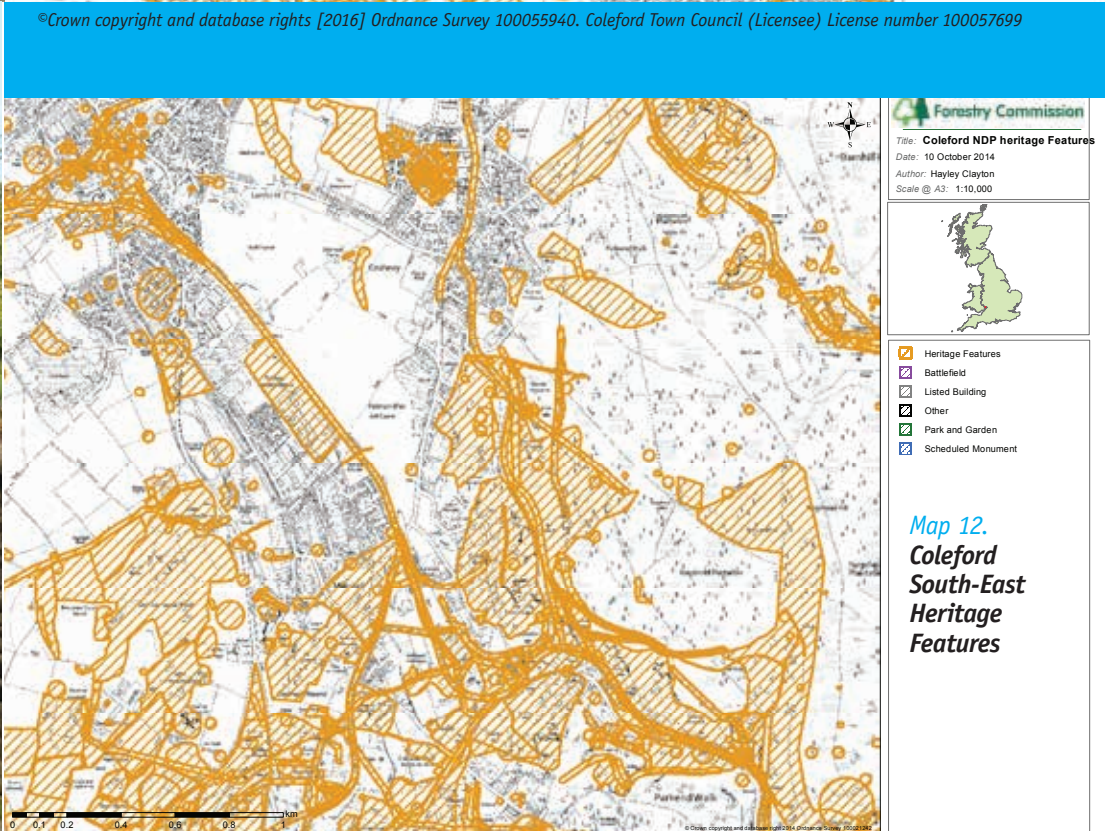
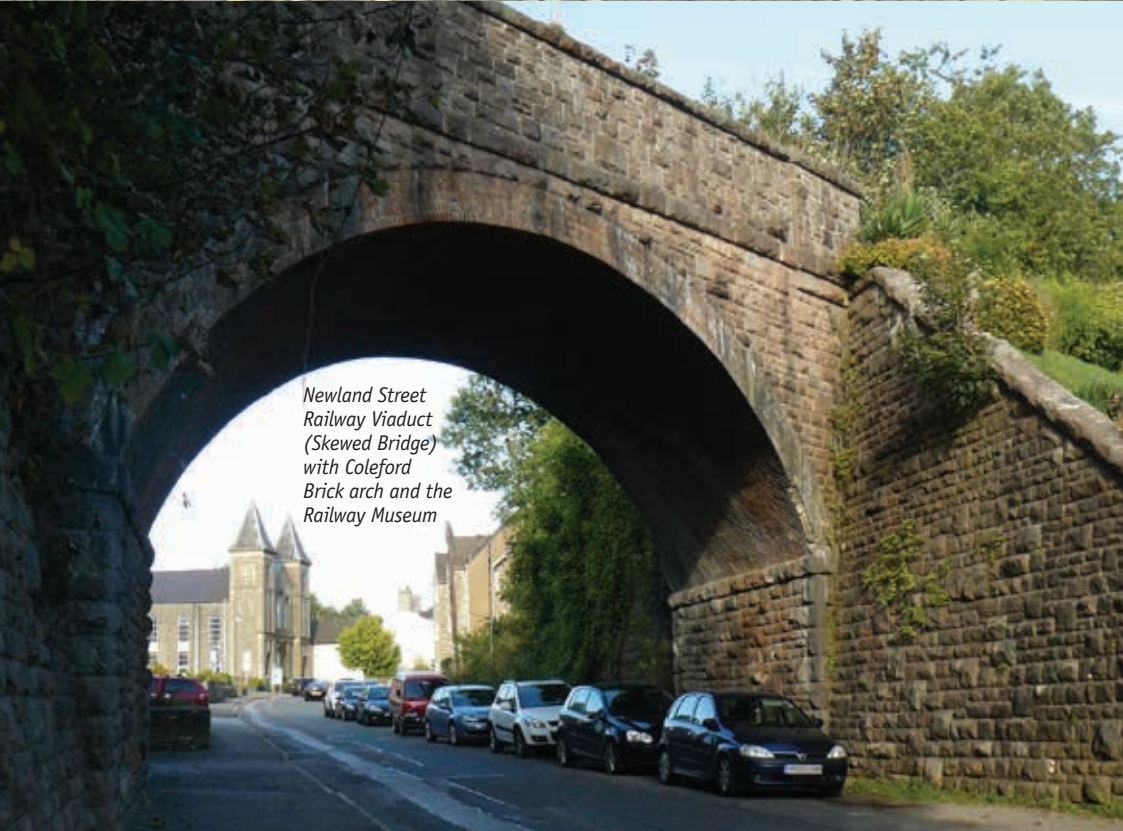
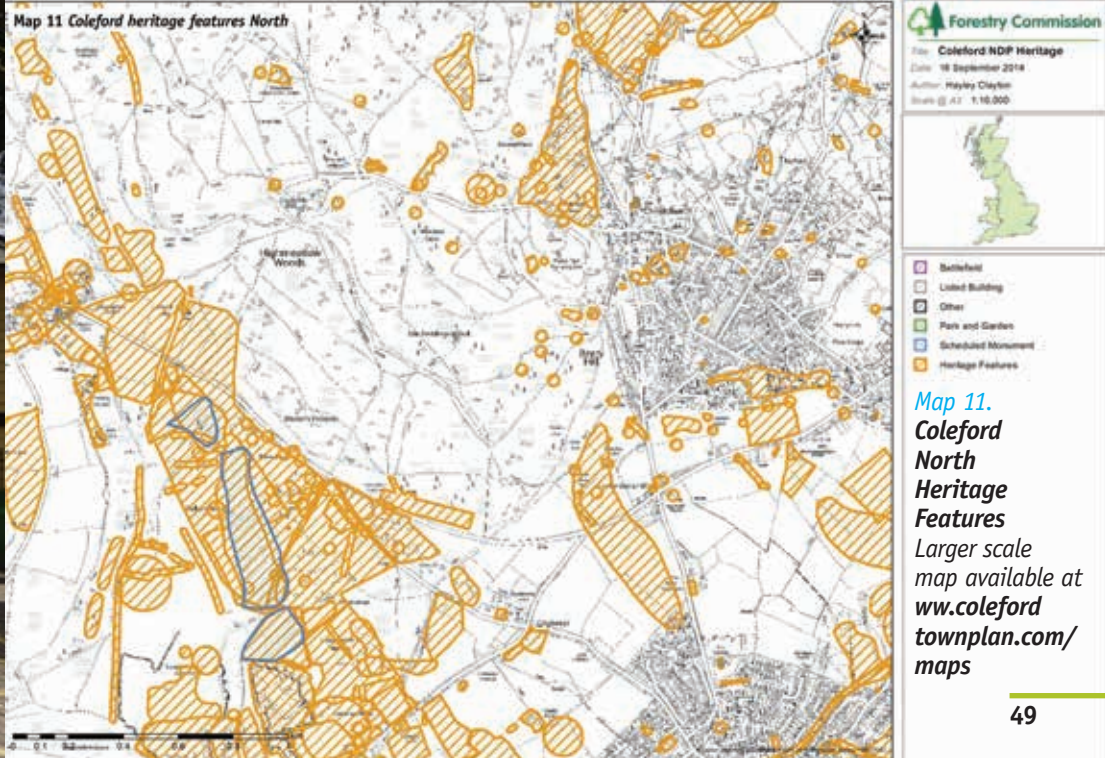
New development will be required to respond positively to the local context, be in conformity with the Forest of Dean District Council Residential Design Guide, Allocations Plan policies AP4 and AP5 and also demonstrate consideration of the Character Assessments for each Character Area identified.

New development should be of a scale, height, massing and design which is appropriate to its context. Innovative contemporary designs will be supported where appropriate but designs should be sensitive to the existing built heritage. Use of traditional local materials such as forest stone and local brick will be supported.

New development which protects and enhances existing trees, hedges and historic market town appearance of the Town Centre and Gateway routes in will be supported in particular (see Maps 2 and 3).

Development will have to be compatible with other NDP policies (NB design policies, open areas, local green spaces, key views as in Map 13, green areas protected by the NDP and on sites allocated for other purposes).







Whitecliff Furnace (SAM)

Proposed actions for the Town Council, partnerships and other interested parties (See projects section 7.5). Note improvements to:

- Develop and promote historic and heritage trails
- Murals to illustrate history and heritage
- Recognise valued heritage assets (as illustrated in Appendix G)

Policy CHE2 Protecting Heritage Assets

The Neighbourhood Plan identifies the following properties as non-designated assets. Development should protect and, where possible, enhance both designated and valued non-designated heritage assets*.

**See below for named Valued Non-designated Heritage Assets, and Appendix G for more detail and exact location.*

Coleford Town Centre	Railway museum on site of original station Milestone in Forest stone Market Place traffic lights Once independent cinema, now part of small group Mushet mural Gates and plaque to David and Robert Forester Mushet Market Hall mural
Coleford Town, residential Victorian	Angus Buchanan Gates 3 storey semis adjacent to St Johns Forest stone terrace, Bodbush Rd Coleford House note bell on top of old St John's Primary school
Coleford Town, residential	'Skew Bridge' railway viaduct, Newland St Rock House, along the Tram Rd, above Newland St
Eastern Arc	Broadwell Memorial Hall
The Gorse Gateway	The Gorse Almshouses
Coalway Road Gateway	Crown Inn Coalway Dressed Forest stone villa, built for quarry owner, Parkend
Perrygrove Gateway	Robert Forester Mushet Memorial plaque
Whitecliff Gateway	Whitecliff House and garden
Green Ring - zone 1	Poolway Farmhouse Tram way Poolway (map evidence & hedge boundary only)
Green Ring - zone 2	Oval red stone bridge, Whitecliff Burial Path Possibly medieval house, Whitecliff
Green Ring - zone 3	Colour Works building Gorsty Knoll Tram road leading from the old station site at Milkwall Local greystone cottage, Gorsty Knoll
Southern Arc	Tufthorn Inn Milkwall Hall
Whitecliff Gateway	Well/spout Whitecliff

Developments that would detrimentally affect the integrity and/or the setting of either designated or the identified non-designated heritage assets in the neighbourhood area will not be supported unless the harm to the significance of the heritage asset concerned is outweighed by the public benefits that would arise from the proposed development.