

Peak District National Park Authority

design guide

FOREWORD

“The beauty of our English countryside is daily being disfigured, not only by the thoughtlessness of speculative builders, but also through the apathy and indifference of the public, for there are today great numbers of people, many in responsible positions, who think that the present has no obligations either to the past or the future, and that if a man wants to build a house he need consider only his own convenience and profit, and that it may be as ugly and out of place as he chooses to make it.”



This is fighting talk, written in 1933 as the Foreword to the very first Design Guide for the Peak District prepared by the Peak District Advisory Panel of the Council for the Protection of Rural England.

I am pleased to say that much has changed since those words were written. Successive Planning Acts and the designation of the area as the UK's first National Park have changed the situation dramatically. More importantly however, there has been a fundamental shift in public opinion towards valuing our heritage. Safeguarding our best landscapes, villages and buildings for future generations is now part of our national consciousness.

The importance of design quality in our built and natural environment has been fully endorsed by the National Government. This has been reflected in various National Planning Policy Statements and Regional Spatial Strategies to ensure Local Planning Authorities consider this policy guidance in their local decision making. The Peak District National Park Authority has decided to reflect national and regional aspirations on design quality in reviewing its own Design Guide to provide information and advice to owners, developers, professional agents and builders on the design standards appropriate to the special character of the Peak District.

Design embraces quality architecture, spaces, linkages, activity and people. The importance of design must be widely owned. It has the potential to reflect local hopes, aspirations, distinctiveness and quality of life. Consistent with the need to conserve and enhance the quality of our National Park an innovative and creative approach is required in our Design Guide to raise our aspirations and expectations in the 21 Century. It must therefore embrace the need for sustainable development and make a positive contribution to climate change. We need to learn from the past tradition and move forward in exciting new ways.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "N Bajaria". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Narendra Bajaria
Chair of Planning Committee



Longnor in the South West Peak

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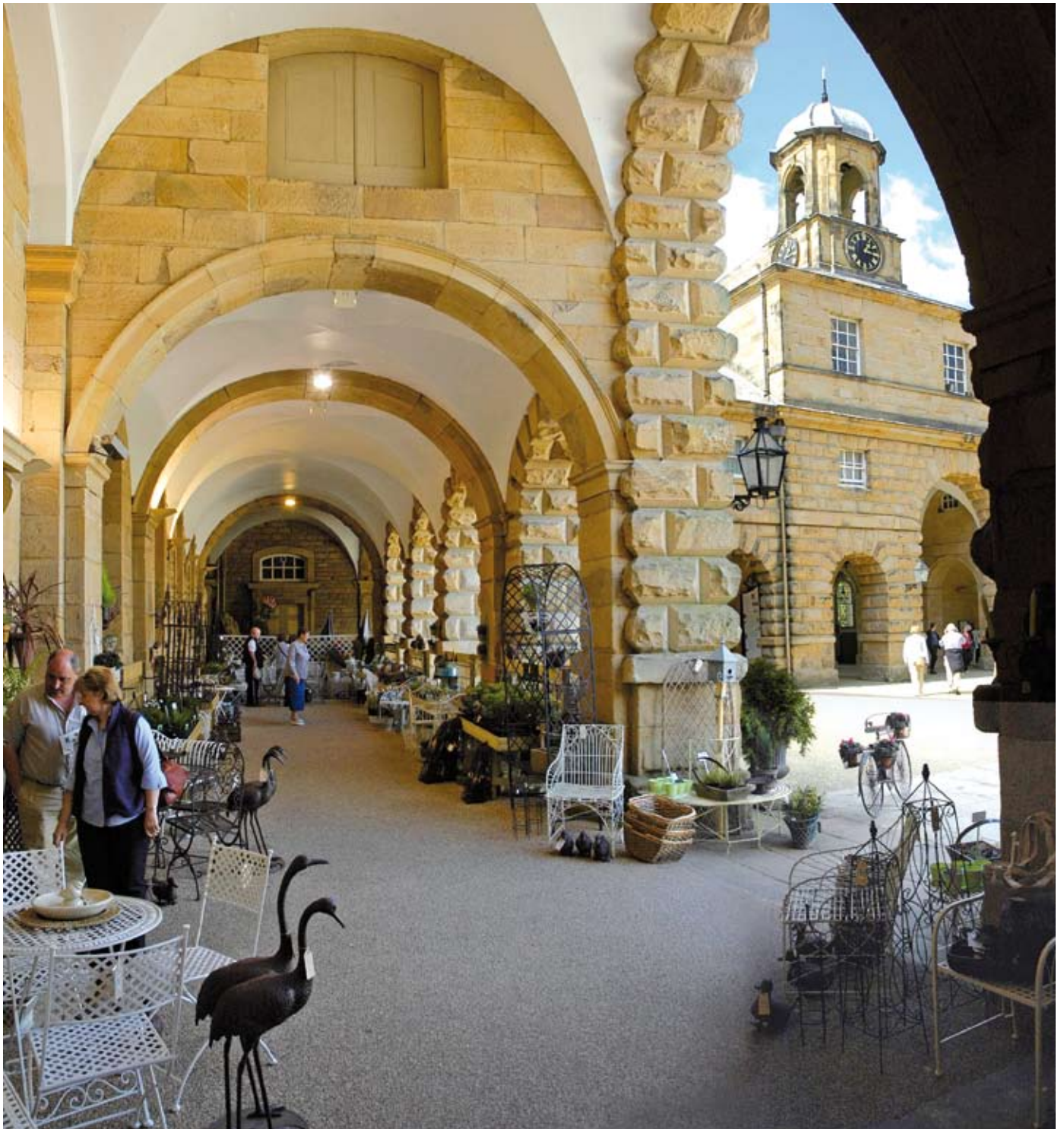
Photographs

Hopefully reading this guide will raise awareness of the Peak District, its buildings, settlements and landscapes. The photographs however may include some features which are less than ideal. Their inclusion does not imply approval of such features elsewhere.

Hyperlinks

Numbers in text refer to hyperlinks listed in Appendix 5

I. introduction



Former stables at Chatsworth converted to retail and restaurant use while retaining the character of this mid 18th century grade I listed building.

*Litton*

1.1 The new Design Guide for the Peak District National Park has a different scope and format from previous versions. Instead of a document focussed largely on residential development, the new guide covers a broader range of topics. The principles of good design and designing in harmony with the local building tradition are given more emphasis. The use of sustainable design principles as the basis for all development is also promoted.

1.2 Other considerations relevant to all development proposals, such as amenity and access issues, are also given prominence. Detailed Design Guidance Notes will expand on the information provided here and go into subject areas in greater detail. As both this document and Detailed Design Guidance Notes will

be available electronically, it will be easier to update and access the relevant information.

1.3 Taken as a whole, this overarching document builds on the policies of the saved Peak District Structure Plan (1994)¹ and the Peak District Local Plan (2001)² but also looks forward to issues emerging in the new style Core Strategy Development Plan Document of the Local Development Framework. Together with its subsequent Detailed Design Guidance Notes and the other relevant Supplementary Planning Documents referred to in the text, this document sets out all that we would expect in terms of good design in the Peak District.

The status of the design guide

1.4 Government has emphasised the role of good design in both Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development³ and its publication *By Design*⁴. It considers that good, high quality design is integral to sustainable development, making places attractive, usable and adaptable. Good design is indivisible from good planning and this is reflected in the new requirement for Design and Access Statements (Appendix 1). Planning Authorities are advised to prepare robust policies that do not accept designs inappropriate to their context or that fail to take opportunities to improve the character and quality of an area. These concerns are also echoed in The East Midlands Regional Plan (Regional Spatial Strategy: RSS 8)⁵, which sees good design as essential to achieving the vision for the region.

1.5 The Peak District National Park Design Guide is a Supplementary Planning Document, amplifying and illustrating the principles set out in the Development Plan. It should not be referred to in isolation or used selectively.

1.6 The Guide is a material consideration in all planning decisions which involve building work in the Park. It carries considerable weight in decision making, having been subject to scrutiny and amendment through wide public consultation. The advice is also relevant to developments that do not require the Authority's approval.

1.7 References are made in the text to policy documents. In the electronic version there are hyperlinks in Appendix 5 to relevant policy documents.

*Plague Cottages, Eyam**The Moorland Centre, Fieldhead, Edale*

How to Use this Guide

- 1.8 ● Section 2 describes the character of the Peak District landscape, the nature of the local building tradition and the role that new development can play.
- Section 3 looks in more detail at how new development can fit successfully into the area. It contains information relevant to anyone designing a new building.
 - Section 4 deals with materials.
 - Section 5 deals with development involving more than one building and covers urban design, amenity and access.
 - Section 6 on sustainability is applicable to all design proposals.
 - Section 7 relates specifically to altering or extending a house, including advice on garages and conservatories.
 - Section 8 deals with the conversion of buildings to a new use.
 - Section 9 summarises the approach to shop front design.
 - Sections 10 and 11 deal with the details of buildings and landscaping respectively, advice that relates to all proposals.
 - Section 12 refers to wildlife and protected species, advice that again applies to all proposals.

Appendix 1 refers to related topics not covered by this guide but advice on which is available from the National Park Authority.

Appendix 2 lists related topics not covered by the guide that are the responsibility of other Authorities or Agencies.

Appendix 3 covers adopted policies

Appendix 4 summarises the consultation process.

Appendix 5 gives website hyperlinks

1.9 **Detailed Design Guidance Notes**, which will follow in due course as Supplementary Planning Documents, will expand the advice on the following topics:

- New Housing
- Space Between Buildings
- Alterations and Extensions
- Conversions
- Shop Fronts
- Details
- Materials
- External Works.

1.10 Sustainable Design will be covered in a revised version of the SPG for Energy, Renewables and Conservation, which will be produced as a Supplementary Planning Document.

1.11 **Leaflets** on specific topics have been produced and more will follow:

- Building Regulations and Windows⁶
- Repointing your Building⁷
- Wildlife and Buildings⁸



New local needs affordable housing at Highfield Drive, Bakewell

NOTE

Listed buildings are not covered by this guide. Specialist staff at the Authority give advice on listed properties on a case by case basis.

Archaeology is an important consideration whenever development is proposed. Again specialist staff can advise. See Appendix 1 for more information.



The Challenge of Good Design

1.12 The Peak District is a special place of exceptional beauty. It is an area of national and international importance.

1.13 Buildings, either singly within the landscape or collectively in towns and villages, contribute greatly to that beauty. There are few places in the National Park where a building cannot be seen. The way they can appear to grow naturally out of the landscape contributes to the sense of delight. In adding new buildings we have the power to enhance or harm the special characteristics of the area.

1.14 The design quality of new development is perhaps the most obvious measure by which people judge the planning system. The public's expectations in this respect have been rising. Planning decisions taken now, result in development that will last well into the future. Future generations will judge us by the quality of what we build and how we adapt and convert existing buildings.

1.15 The challenge in PPS 1 is clear: "Good design should contribute positively to making places better for people. Design which is inappropriate in its context, or which fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, should not be accepted."



Interior of the David Mellor factory

1.16 This Design Guide has been produced to help applicants, agents and others, to inspire and to raise standards. It sets out to define what makes our traditional buildings seem 'right' in terms of their location, proportions and detailing. Without a thorough knowledge of the past, what we do today is unlikely to be successful or valued in the future. The guide promotes the opportunity for new approaches to design that respect the intrinsic qualities of the National Park.

1.17 The Environment Act 1995 sets out the purposes of the National Park Authority:

- Conserving and enhancing the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage.
- Promoting opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the Park's special qualities by the public.

1.18 Not only the National Park Authority, but also any relevant body must fulfil these purposes when carrying out its function or must have a well-substantiated justification for not doing so. If the two purposes conflict, precedence is given to conservation and enhancement. In pursuing both purposes, the Authority has a duty to foster the economic and social well being of local communities.



David Mellor Cutlery Factory, Hathersage

1.19 These statutory obligations are encapsulated in the Authority's vision statement:

- **A special environment**
- **A welcoming place at the heart of the nation**
- **Vibrant communities and a thriving economy.**

1.20 In conclusion, the objectives of this Design Guide SPD are:

- To contribute to National Park purposes, particularly to conserve and enhance the natural and built environment
- To amplify and illustrate principles set out in the Development Plan
- To help applicants, agents and others, to inspire, and to raise standards of design
- To promote the opportunity for new and sustainable approaches to design that respect the intrinsic qualities of the National Park.



New Riverside housing, Bakewell