

ROSS-ON-WYE CHARACTER AREA SURVEY

The Character Area surveyed (its number): Area 9 Archenfield and Duxmere

The survey team included: Helen Saunders and Caroline Utting

Date of survey: 6.12.16

General

1. What's the general pattern of the roads and blocks of buildings? If there are a few, can you show the different ones on the map?

(Regular, irregular, straight, curved, small blocks, large blocks, narrow, wide open, contained, spacious etc.)

- A main through road with culs-de-sac and minor roads branching off it. These have been developed at different times. There was a surge in the development of this area during the C19th and post WWII with odd infill occurring between times.
- There is one notable green space which is accessed from Falaise Close.

2. What's the general mix of buildings?

(All residential, some mixed, commercial, industrial, other? If you can, mark any non-residential uses on the map.)

- A residential area including a pre-school nursery and a primary school.

Houses

3. Are they all on one building line or does that vary?

(On pavement, with small front gardens, with large front gardens, well set back etc.?)

- The majority of houses are set back from the road with gardens.
- A few C19th cottages on Archenfield Rd are closer to the pavement.

4. Can you guess when all (or different ones) were built?

(Try: medieval, 19th century, inter-war -1918-1839, post war - 50s/60s, later 20th century - 70s/80s, more recent 90s to today.)

- The map indicates building ages (best guess, some maybe a decade out)
- The area was rural in the C19th with a few dispersed cottages, larger houses and a couple of farms, one probably dating from the C16th.
- The inter-war period saw a spurt in development and since WWII there has been gradual infilling.

5. What heights are they?

(All one height on each house or varying per house or in stretches, or are there extensions etc. that are different?)

- The majority are two storey with some single storey and one or two 3 storey houses.

6. Would you call the houses very small, small, medium-sized, large, very large (or a mixture)?

(Your guess!)

- A real mixture but mostly family sized homes.

7. What are the main building materials used?

(On walls, roofs, chimneys, windows etc.)

- Brick with one or two Old Red Sandstone (Morcombe Lodge). Some render.
- Most have chimneys
- Roofs are slate on several of the older buildings but otherwise tiled.
- Windows vary from wooden to metal to plastic.

8. Are front gardens open or closed in?

(If open, just grass or bushes etc.? If closed, low walls, high walls, hedges, full of greenery, paved etc.? Well maintained?)

- In Archenfield Road most of the properties have walls or fences or hedges.
- In the roads leading off some are open but most have walls, fences or hedges.
- Most are well maintained. The feel is less formal in some roads where as others are very well maintained. There is a semi-rural feel.
- Most gardens are well stocked with a mixture of trees, shrubs and herbaceous plants.

9. Any idea about back gardens (if you can see them)?

(Big, small, fenced, with walls - low/high, heavily greened or just grass, paving, decking? Well maintained?)

- Back gardens are fenced, hedged or walled.
- Back gardens are quite large.
- Its not possible to see much.

10. What are the parking arrangements?

(On the street, pull-off spaces, single garages, double garages & some of each? Any way to tell if the garages are actually used for cars & most aren't?)

- Most properties have driveways but there is some on street parking in Archenfield Road – C19th terraced cottages – and Middleton Avenue and Redhill Road.
- Some front gardens have been paved for parking.
- Workers use the town end of Archenfield Road and Ashfield Park Road for parking.

11. Are there major trees in front or back gardens?

(On their own or in lines? Do those lines of trees go off into the surrounding areas? If so, try to show those on the map.)

- There are a number of mature trees in the area. Most notably the row of Scots Pine in Firs Road (I guess the clue is in the name).

Roads and Public Areas

12. What are the roads like?

(Wide, narrow, about right? Is there on-street parking? Does that limit access/movement? Well maintained?)

- The adopted roads are mostly in good order. The occasional pot-hole.
- There are a number of unadopted roads in this area in a poor state of repair.
- The main road is wide enough to accommodate 2-way traffic, other roads are single track but have little traffic.

13. Are there always pavements to walk along? Well maintained?

- There are pavements on both sides of Archenfield Road as far as The Shrubbery where the pavement on the west side disappears.
- Pavements are in reasonable condition for the most part but some sections are poor (eastside of Archenfield Road from The Prince of Wales to Palmerston Road).
- There are no pavements in Hawthorn Lane, Chase View Road, Cleeve Lane, Firs Road, Ashfield Park Road, Ashfield Park Avenue.

14. Are there other footpaths that link through the area or into other areas?

(Try to use the map to show where.)

- Yes. See map.
- A path links Archenfield Road (near the junction with Cleeve Lane) to Roman Way. A path joins the end of Firs Road to Duxmere Drive and Juniper Place. A path links the end of Ashfield Park Road to Crossfields. There is a path from Abacus Nursery to Redhill House (approx'). A path links Archenfield Road to Bernard Hackett Court.

15. Are there street signs?

(Lots? Just a few? Necessary? Too many?)

- Just a few speed signs – arguably not enough. Apparently the speed limit signage at the Roman Way end of Archenfield Road is wrongly placed and, therefore, not currently enforceable. There is a TRO to correct this but I think it is at the bottom of a very long list.

16. Is there street lighting? Is it obtrusive or low key?

- There is new LED lighting on the main streets. The unadopted roads have one or two lamps.

17. Do you think it is entirely safe here? At night? Would children feel/be safe?

- It feels safe.

Now some Broader Judgements!

18. Are there any features, additions, oddities (from any covered above or others) that detract from or damage the character of the area?

- Some of the more modern properties are architecturally weak and stand out from the more interesting older buildings as such.
- The poor condition of the unadopted roads.
- On-street parking.
- One or two poorly maintained hedges.

19. Are there any features, additions, oddities (from any covered above or others) that help to create a clear and positive character for the area?

- The Scots Pine are a nice feature.
- It has a semi-rural feel, spacious and green.

20. If you had to pick just one or a few of all the aspects above that most help to shape the character of the area, what would they be?

- Red brick.
- Green – hedges, gardens.
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21. Any other comments, things we and the form have missed?

- Archenfield is a lightly sunken road with properties standing on banks.

22. Is this a distinct area? Are the boundaries sensible? Looking at the overall map, should it be combined with others? Should it be sub-divided?

- Yes this is a distinct area.

Archenfield Road CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

Street surveyed: Archenfield Road and surrounding streets

Surveyor(s): Helen Saunders and Caroline Utting

Date: 6 December 2016

(Please be sure to add the above information to your map!)

PART ONE: DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

1. Type of Street

main traffic route traffic cut-through local route cul-de-sac two-way one-way

Archenfield Road is a minor traffic route, which, as well as the houses and streets off it, is used to access the housing on Roman Way and the farms and businesses further south in Hom Green (Rehau, Drummonds, etc). It is the route taken by the 34 bus to Monmouth, before it proceeds down Roman Way.

The roads leading directly off Archenfield Road are for the most part cul-de-sacs, or one-way roads that lead to cul-de-sacs.

There is an informal one-way system that operates on Redhill Road and Middleton Avenue at school start and end times as there is not enough room on these roads for two-way traffic when cars are parked using the primary school.

A number of the roads in the Archenfield area are unadopted/unmade (Ashfield Park Avenue, Firs Road - part thereof, Chase View Road) or private (Redhill Road extension, Cleeve Lane, Castle Meadow).

2. Pavements

over-narrow over-wide decent width varying width dropped kerbs

From the junction with Palmerston Road heading north towards town, Archenfield Road has pavements on two sides. Both pavements are fairly narrow however, and the pavement on the east side is in particularly poor condition, with an uneven surface.

Between The Shrubbery and Palmerston Road, there is good quality, average width pavement on both sides of the road, with dropped kerb sections.

South of The Shrubbery, all the way to Cleeve Lane, there is pavement on the east side of the road only. This is average width, with a smooth surface and dropped kerbs. Sections of this pavement were renewed in 2013. There is no pavement at all on the west side of the road.

With the Archenfield side roads, The Shrubbery, Redhill Road and Middleton Avenue have pavements on both sides of the road. The majority of side roads have no pavement at all (Ashfield Park Road + extension, Castle Meadow, Hawthorn Lane, Firs Road, Chase View Road, Cleeve Lane, Redhill Road extension). Ashfield Park Avenue has a very patchy and poor quality pavement on one side only, and Firs Mead has a good pavement on one side only.

3. Lighting

street lamps wall lamps

Note quality/effectiveness:

There are street lamps all the way down Archenfield Road. However, because the light from these does not spread very far, exacerbated in certain areas where the light is obscured by foliage, there are poorly lit patches in between (such as along the pavement opposite Hawthorn Lane).

On the side roads (Ashfield Park Road, Middleton Avenue, Redhill Road, Firs Road and The Shrubbery), street lighting is present, if patchy, with some lighting 'gaps' similar to that described above.

On the other side roads there is no lighting at all (or, in places, a private lamppost presumably belonging to a specific property).

4. Signs

Note public signs (eg. traffic or pedestrians):

Note shopfront signs/hanging signs (if relevant):

Note visual impact (eg. intrusive, low key, out of context):

There are few signs, with the exception of street name signs and signs showing public footpaths. These are all appropriate/unobtrusive.

5. Street Furniture

seats planters noticeboards bollards bins other (note). Note condition/value:

There are some public bins, but nothing of note in this area.

6. Safety

safe to cross safe to walk along safe in daytime safe at night

The west side of Archenfield Road is generally safe to walk along during the day and at night as the pavement is good and the lighting just about adequate. However, the pavement on one side of the road comes to an end opposite The Shrubbery and you must therefore continue on the other side of the road; this particular section is poorly lit at night. Proceeding further south towards Cleeve Lane the lighting improves again and night safety is adequate, as long as you are walking on the side of the road which has the pavement.

A school crossing lady operates at school start and end times to assist children who are crossing Archenfield Road between Redhill Road and Palmerston Road. This section of road would be difficult to cross otherwise due to the confluence of streets and the width of the roads at this point.

Two crossing points on Archenfield Road are not safe, due to poor visibility and absence of pavement on one side. These are 1) crossing from Hawthorn Lane to the opposite pavement on Archenfield Road and 2) crossing from Cleeve Lane to the opposite pavement on Archenfield Road. Both of these lanes contain or lead to a public footpath (well used, particularly in the case of Cleeve Lane). Exiting both side roads is difficult, particularly Cleeve Lane, where the nearby bend in Archenfield Road means you must step out into the road to gain an adequate view of any oncoming traffic.

Of the side roads, most are safe to walk along during the day as wide grass verges compensate for any lack of pavement (e.g. Firs Road, Cleeve Lane) and, being cul de sacs, the traffic volume is very low. It is a different matter at night, with the poor road condition and/or lack of lighting on several of the roads making safety more of an issue (e.g. Firs Road, Ashfield Park Avenue).

7. Parking

on-street throughout on street in parts only none on-street
off-street for residents, businesses etc. car park

Archenfield Road- Redhill Road to tennis club: on-street parking on west side of road. Generally this is people using the tennis club or town centre (as parking here is unrestricted), or at certain times of day for school pick up.

Archenfield Road- Redhill Road to The Shrubbery: on-street parking on east side of road for residents.

Archenfield Road: The Shrubbery to Cleeve Lane- generally off-street parking for residents, although there is some on-street residents' parking where the road widens opposite Firs Mead.

On the Archenfield side roads, most streets have mainly off-street parking for residents (Ashfield Park Avenue, Castle Meadow, The Shrubbery, Hawthorn Lane, Firs Road, Chase View Road, Cleeve Lane). Ashfield Park Road has off-street parking for residents, but the opposite side of the road is used for parking by people using the tennis club and for the town centre. Middleton Avenue and Redhill Road have a mix of on- and off-street parking (for residents and for school users).

8. Proportion: *(This is about, in general, how wide the street is compared to its height, ie. the height of buildings along it. If very varied, add notes.)*

lot wider than high wider than high (roughly) same width as height
higher than wide lot higher than wide

A large proportion of the Archenfield Road area is characterised by wide streets with housing set back from the road, and pleasing, open proportions.

On several of the side streets, there is housing on one side of the road only (Ashfield Park Road + extension, Ashfield Park Avenue, Castle Meadow, Firs Mead, Cleeve Lane, half of Hawthorn Lane), the opposite side being lined with hedges, trees and shrubs, which increases the visual amenity of the street.

At the top end of Archenfield Road (between Redhill Road and Ashfield Park Road), the housing is built on ground that is elevated in height compared to the road.

9. Views

Take photos and annotate on the map for any interesting/significant views (a) out of the street at either end and (b) from anywhere along the street. Add any notes.

The views from the roads in the Archenfield area are typical street scenes and unexceptional for the most part, as the potential views are blocked by the houses and surrounding greenery. However, on certain streets in the area, the properties themselves will have very good views, particularly from upper storeys (Castle Meadow, Cleeve Lane, parts of Archenfield Road, Hawthorn Lane, Ashfield Park Road, particularly the extension thereof, and Chase View Road).

10. Building Heights

one storey two storey three storey four storey other (add notes)

Ashfield Park Road is characterised by grand three-storey semi-detached Victorian houses (with some more modern houses at either end). Most of the housing elsewhere in the Archenfield area is two

storey houses, with bungalows dotted throughout. On a few sections of Archenfield Road, the houses are on raised land compared to the street, thus raising the relative heights of these houses (especially the three-storey Victorian villas).

11: Building Frontages

flat/parapet front gable facing street hipped (sloping back)

Too much variety to comment.

12. Building Line (*This is about whether the buildings are right on pavement edge, set back, with front gardens etc.*)

on back of pavement set back from pavement with small open front

set back from pavement with enclosed front garden/space

set back from pavement with parking space in front

In general, houses in the area are set well back from the road, with good sized front gardens and/or parking spaces in front of the house.

The main exception to this are a small section of the houses along Archenfield Road (the Victorian cottages opposite Middleton Avenue and Redhill Road), which are set close to the road and have small enclosed front gardens. In addition, the red brick semi-detached houses along Middleton Road and half of Redhill Road are have a building line that is closer to the road than is typical in the area. They are still generally set back enough for the houses to have parking and/or a small garden in front.

Further down Archenfield Road (towards Cleeve Lane) there is a fair amount of variation in the building line; all houses here have off-street parking however.

13. Variety

In general here is a great deal of variety in style and age of housing throughout this area. Most houses are detached, with gardens on all sides, with some semi-detached houses and a small number of terraced houses.

In a few small areas, the housing has been built the same time, so there is consistency within those roads. These are The Shrubbery (ten 1- and 2-storey houses built in the same style), Middleton Avenue and south side of Redhill Road (all red brick inter-war semi-detached houses) and Castle Meadow (four large detached houses built at the same time in the same style). There are also some small in-fill developments with 3-5 similar style houses (e.g. Old Bakery Close and Ashfield Park Road extension).

In general though, the area is characterised by a variety of style of houses, where the land around the large Victorian and Edwardian properties in the area has been filled in with houses built mainly from the 1950s onwards.

14. Uses

residential shop office workshop store uncertain car park green space

The Archenfield area is mainly residential. The exceptions are the primary school on Redhill Road, the nursery on Ashfield Park Road extension and the tennis club opposite Ashfield Park Road. Other former business premises (a bakery, a veterinary surgery) have been demolished and replaced by residential housing in the past 15 years.

The area is bordered along the western side and part of the southern edge by fields and hedgerows and a number of public footpaths (including the John Kyrle Walk). The Roman Way recreation area/park borders the southern edge and there is a recreation field between Firs Road and the Shrubbery, which contains some trees and football goal posts.

The Ashfield Park school playing fields make up a significant chunk of the green space in the area, although these are not for public access, they add to the open, green feel of the immediate area as they are spacious and surrounded on three of the four sides by trees or hedges.

15: Buildings

Note range of wall, roof and window/door materials used:

Note condition, quality, how well kept etc.:

There is a variety of building materials used for the houses in this area. Old red brick houses with slate or tile roofs dominate; a good number of these are part rendered. There are also some houses built with modern light-coloured bricks and cladding or a mix of modern brick with painted render. A small number of the older houses are built with the local red sandstone, with boundary walls constructed from the same material.

16. Other spaces/features *(This is about any other features that do not fit above, eg. street trees, plaques, oddities over to you.)*

Along Archenfield Road there are several sections of wall made with the local red sandstone which borders the pavements or the road. Most of these would have been formed the boundaries of the large houses that were built in the area during the Victorian and Edwardian eras.

At the very end of Cleeve Lane is a wide, hedge-lined track which leads to an orchard, and on to the fields/playing fields near the river.

17: Ages *(It is difficult to be precise on this – not least because many current facades hide older main buildings. Do your best with the terms below, add if necessary. For shops, this is about the main building, not the shop or shopfront.)*

Medieval Georgian/regency Victorian Pre 1st World War

Inter-war 1950s-1970s 1970s-1990s 1990s-now

The area is characterised by a wide variety of house styles and ages. There are some large Victorian detached and semi-detached houses, a few Edwardian houses, with other houses built in between these during the last century. The oldest house in the area is almost certainly The Cleeve, at the very end of Cleeve Lane, a substantial 17th century timber-framed house with pantile roof.

In general, the houses that have been built in recent years have matched the character of the houses in their immediate vicinity (e.g. three houses on Ashfield Park Road, the new semi-detached houses on Archenfield Road).

18: Distinctive Features Positive

*Note any distinctive features that help to give a **positive** character to the street.*

These can be large (a major building) or tiny (a sculpted feature on a wall).

A large proportion of the side roads leading off Archenfield Road are characterised by their very open, spacious feel, with wider than average roads and houses set well back from the road, and generous space between the houses.

On Cleeve Lane, on the opposite side to the housing, is a substantial hedgerow which, from the variety of species therein, is likely to date back some time and is an attractive feature of the area.

There are mature trees and shrubs dotted throughout the area, mostly in residential gardens. Of note are the mature Corsican Firs on Firs Road and the pine trees along the Redhill Road extension (adjacent to Castle Meadow north side).

19. Distinctive Features Negative:

*Note any features that **detract from** the character to the street. These can be large (a poorly designed building) or small (a poor shop sign).*

As mentioned earlier, a few of the side roads (being private or unadopted) have a poor or unmade road surface, which give a slightly scruffy or rural feel (depending on your point of view). However, in utility terms this negative element is probably balanced by the natural traffic calming effect that these surfaces have.

20. And? Over to you – what else would you wish to comment on
See over for Summary and Guidance

PART TWO: SUMMARY

Try to write 3 or 4 sentences that sum up the key qualities and character of the street, both positive and negative. Although you have been asked in earlier sections to give your opinion on things, this is where we really need to know what the street 'feels' like and what you think about its overall character.

Archenfield could be characterised as a pleasant suburb of Ross developed from 19th century onwards with mainly wide spacious streets and roads of detached or semi-detached houses. There are some unadopted roads without street lighting. For the main part it is a safe area containing a primary school. The lack of pavements and uneven road surfaces make walking at night in some areas tricky.

Whereas Archenfield Road itself is the main 'artery' of the area, there are a large number of cul-de-sacs leading off it, which have a safe, quiet residential feel. Individuality is a key element of housing in the area, with the variety of ages in the housing lending an varied/eclectic feel. The good-sized front gardens, and established shrubs and trees throughout the area, add to the overall open, 'green' feel.

PART THREE: DESIGN GUIDANCE

Make some brief notes here about what you believe to be the key things that any future designer should be aware of and respond to in order to ensure that their design respects and enhances the street's character. (NB. Avoid saying 'make it look just like the others'!)

Being characterised by a spacious, open feel with largely detached or semi-detached houses, the area would not suit high-density housing, or large areas of housing that is all built in the same style.

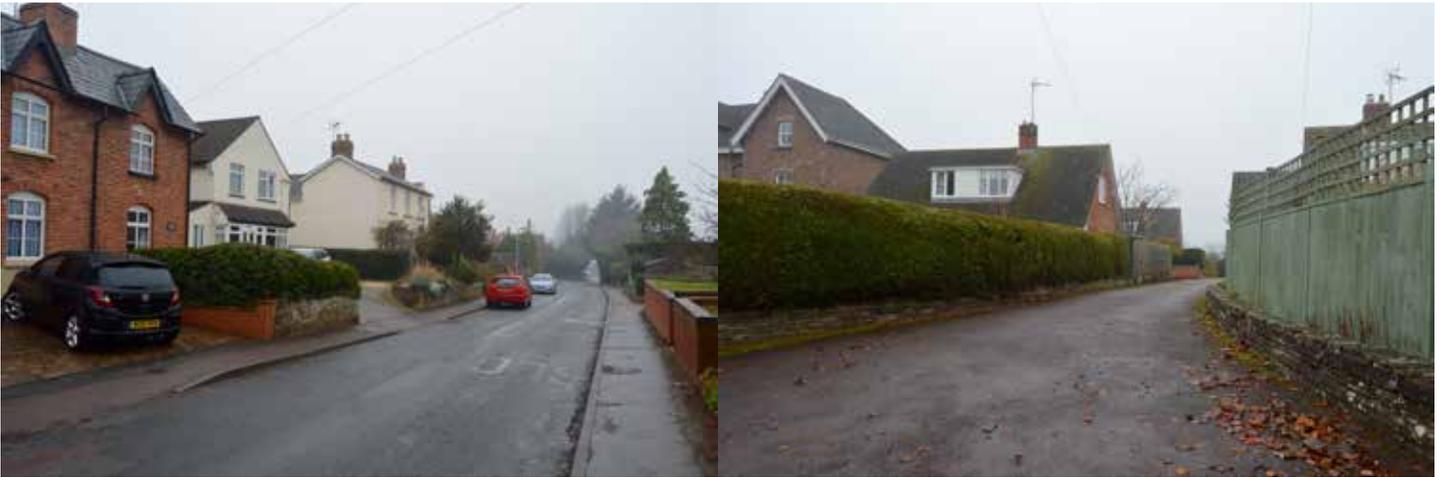
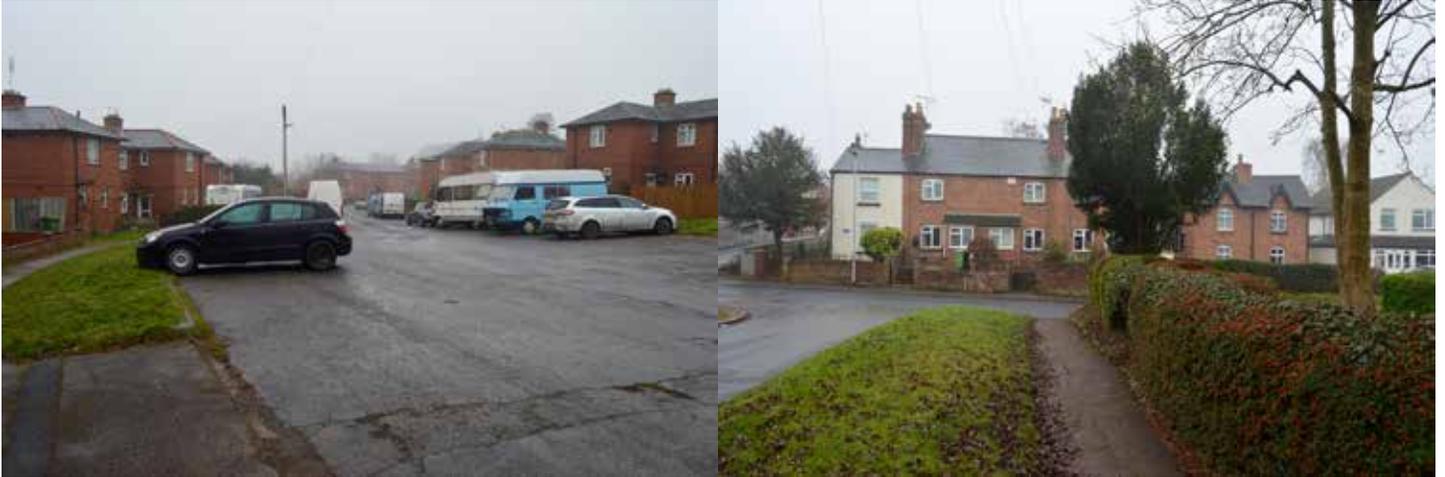
Ross-on-Wye NDP
Character Area 9 - Archenfield
Photos



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