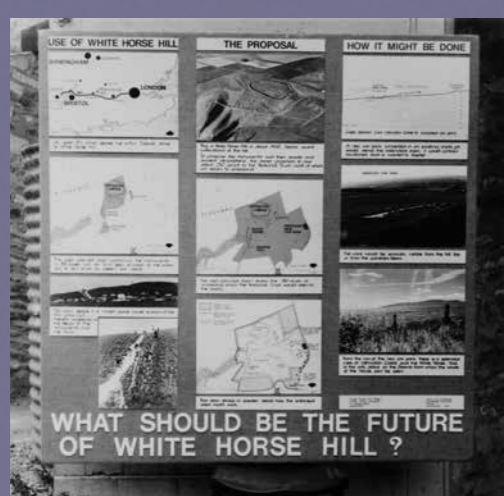




Rural Recreation



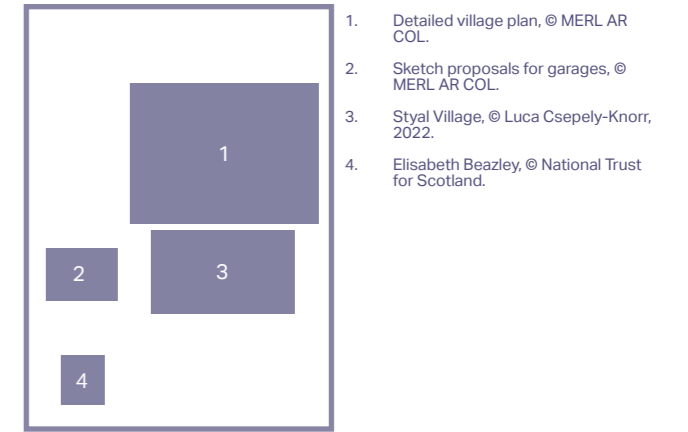
Recreational patterns changed after the end of the Second World War, as increased car ownership and leisure time coupled with reduced working time led to a growing demand on access to the countryside. Charities such as the National Trust (established in 1895) aimed to 'promote the permanent preservation

for the benefit of the Nation of lands and tenements (including buildings) of beauty or historic interest', whilst associations such as the Youth Hostel Association or the Ramblers Association, both established in the 1930s aimed to facilitate and advocate for open-air leisure and the right to visit the countryside.

The 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act and later the 1968 Countryside Act defined a legal framework to confer powers to local authorities and conservation bodies to create sufficient spaces for rural recreation.

A Village for the Nation

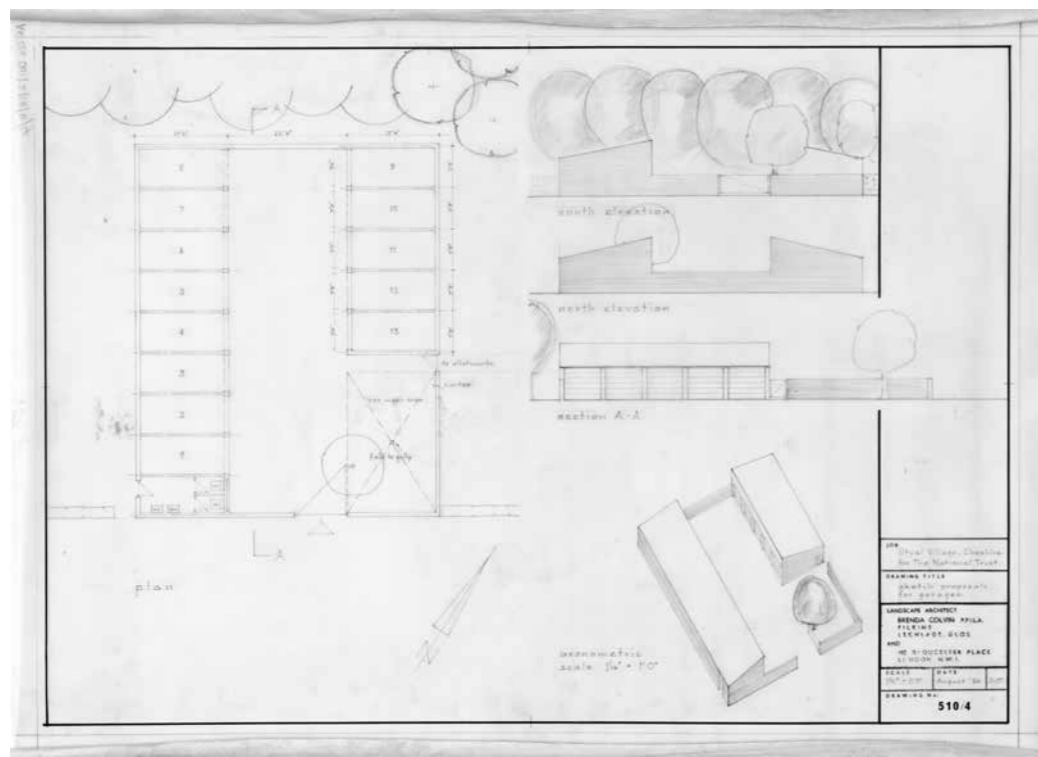
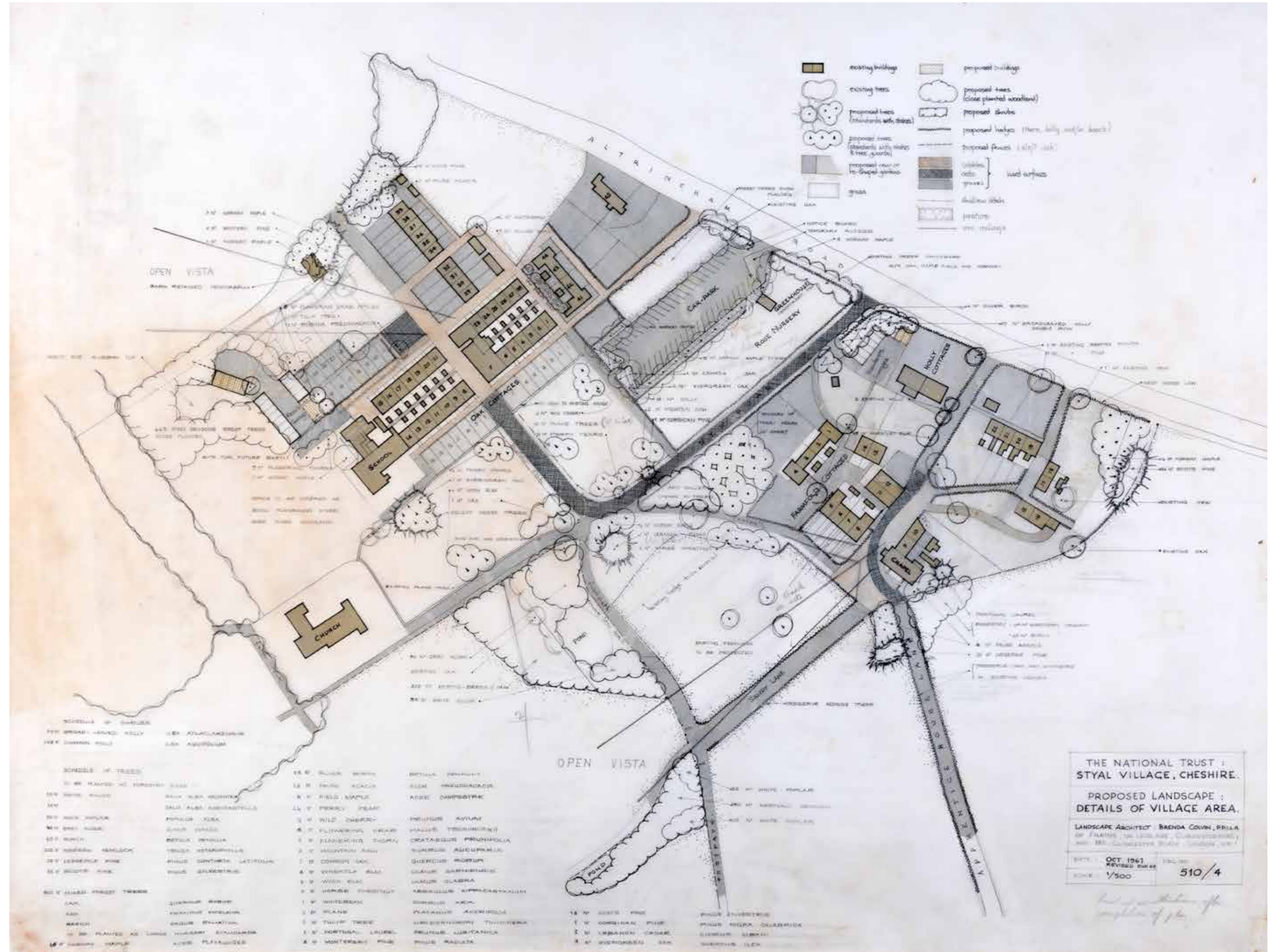
STYAL VILLAGE, CHESHIRE



Styal village, together with Quarry Bank Mill, the Apprentice House and more than 200 acres of farmland and woodland in Cheshire were given to the National Trust in 1939 by the Greg family, who had owned the estate for centuries. It was the first time that the Trust had been given a site of major industrial archaeological importance and presented an opportunity to 'preserve on the edge of the capital of the cotton industry a most valuable part of the history of that industry'. The name Styal means 'the place of the secret', and the woods and the local countryside were popular countryside locations already in the late 1930s, described as 'perhaps the best of the natural beauty spots within easy reach of Manchester'.

In the 1960s, as a general need for rural recreation was growing, the Trust invested in a large-scale development on the estate, including – as the Guardian reported in 1968 – a plan to landscape the village. Brenda Colvin created a series of proposals between 1966 and 1968. Her plans proposed an extensive new planting around the village, remodelled gardens for the cottages, pavements and car parks to provide for both visitors and residents, and the design of a new set of garages.

Her planting plan combined the species that would be familiar in a traditional village setting, such as an orchard of pear trees with densely planted mixed deciduous woodlands. She carefully considered open vistas towards the countryside as well as creating shelters for the village. The matured lush green landscape linking the village to the wider countryside, proves her masterful skills in creating a beautiful setting that serves both residents and visitors



ELISABETH BEAZLEY



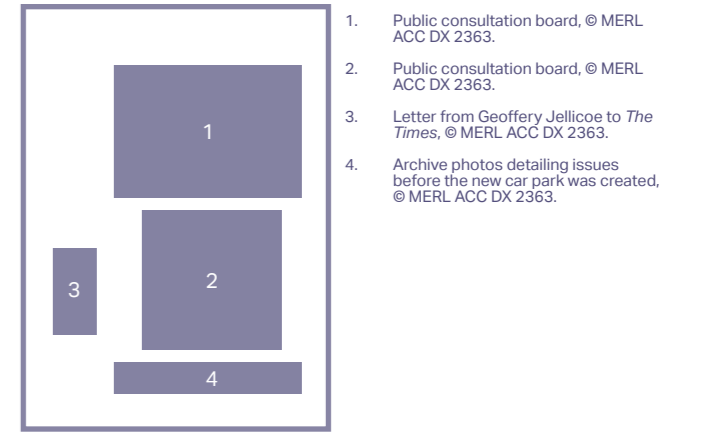
Elisabeth Beazley (1923–2018) played a major role in developing hands-on guidelines to create spaces for rural recreation. Her books responded to the growing interest in visits to the countryside whether in the form of country parks or to National Trust properties. Her books, *Designed for Recreation* (1969) and *The Countryside on View* (1971) were practical guidebooks for spaces that could cater for an

increasing number of visitors. She was key in devising visitor management plans for many National Trust properties both in England, Wales and Scotland, and was member of the Trust's Executive Committee between 1965 and 1991. Beazley was trained as an architect at the Architectural Association, at the time when Colvin was teaching there. She defined herself as an 'architect with an interest in landscape', and beyond being

a prolific writer and a major contributor to professional journalism, she also maintained her architectural practice. The repurposing of the Home Farm Complex in Culzean, in Scotland for a visitor centre proves her sensitive design approach to historic buildings and environments. In 1973 the project was awarded a European Architectural Heritage Year Award.

The Future of Heritage

UFFINGTON WHITE HORSE



Today, White Horse Hill is also cared for by National Trust, however in their decision to take over the estate the creation of an effective landscape and management plan played a crucial role. When David Astor offered White Horse Hill and Uffington Castle to the Trust it was only accepted on the basis that Colvin & Mogggridge's landscape plan would be implemented.

Uffington Castle and White Horse Hill are prominent landmarks and internationally renowned Bronze Age monuments of the Upper Thames Valley. They are at the highest point on the Berkshire Downs, and therefore the chalk hill figure of the White Horse can be seen miles away and was described by Geoffrey Jellicoe as 'an indigenous work of landscape art that must surely be unique, for its roots seem to extend more universally beyond our island than anything before or since. It cannot be moved to a museum, but at least it can have the care and attention due to a national monument that is beyond price'.

Due to its popularity and scenic locations, by the early 1960s, the monuments were becoming overused, leading to erosion, the monument being damaged, and the growing visitors number combined with the inadequate parking facilities led to congestions on the roads, especially during harvest times. The owner of the Compton Beauchamp Estate, and editor of the Observer, David Astor wished to preserve the monument, and asked Colvin & Mogggridge to redesign the setting to suit the growing number of visitors and their needs, ahead of giving it to the National Trust. Astor knew the designers well, as Colvin, and latterly her office, have been working on Astor's garden - Sutton Courtenay Manor - since the 1950s.

A new car park was designed in an old chalk pit, and the area open to the public was increased to allow the integration of agriculture and recreation. To ease erosion, downland grassland grazed by sheep was created instead of arable land, and a special seed mix was designed to match the colour of the old turf.

