

Introduction

What is a village design statement?

- It's about managing change, not preventing it.
-
- It gives the local community a chance to appraise the village and influence future development
-
- It should be compatible with statutory planning guidance, and be suitable for adoption as supplementary planning guidance.
-
- It allows local priorities to be identified and sets the issues that need to be addressed when developments take place.

For further information about the Village Design Statement

Contact the Longparish Village Design Statement Group
c/o the editor,
Mary Jo Darrah
Saddler's Cottage
Longparish
SP11 6QQ

Tel. 01264 720320

Also see the village website
www.longparish.org.uk



Residents comment on the first draft

This village design statement describes Longparish as it is today. By looking at issues like the evolution of the village, its patterns of settlement, landscape, wildlife, amenities, roads and buildings, we highlight the qualities that local residents value and would like to see in any future development. The intention is not to stop change in the village, but to encourage development that preserves and enhances the special character of the village.

Who is it for?

Village design statements are supported by the Government to allow local communities to help themselves, by participating in and influencing the way the planning system operates locally.

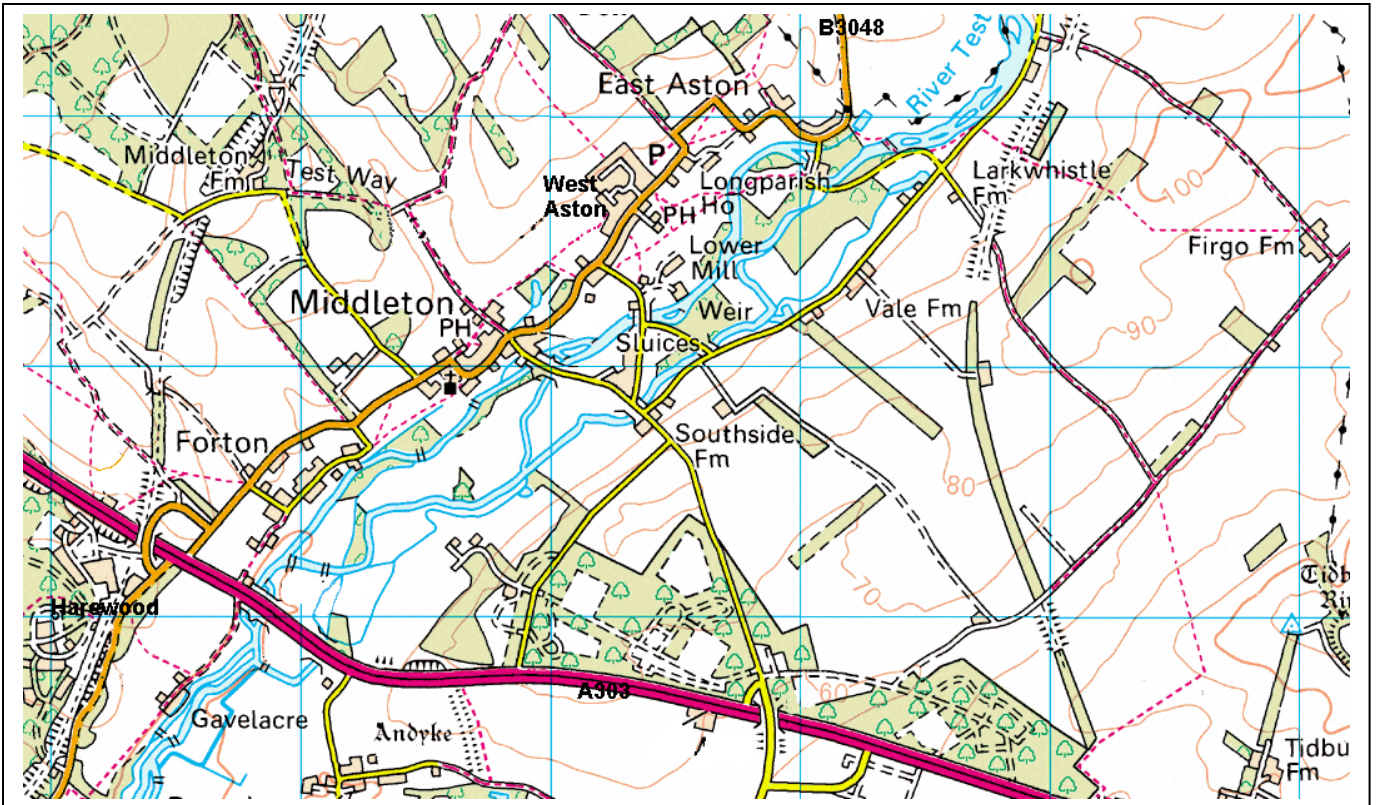
Changes to a village take place not only when new developments are allowed or buildings are constructed, but also in smaller adjustments made by existing residents. In a village where development is as tightly controlled as in Longparish these are particularly important. Changes to homes, gardens, open spaces, hedges and paths can affect the feel of the village as a whole. A village design statement that seeks to influence change positively must therefore be addressed to a wide audience, including

- Statutory bodies and public authorities
- Planners and developers
- Builders and architects
- Designers and engineers
- Local community groups
- Land owners
- Householders
- Businesses

How was it written?

The Longparish Village Design is the result of extensive local consultation over a period of five years. Starting with open meetings, a workshop and a survey of the village, the Village Design Group drew on the help of over 40 local residents. The draft was produced and then circulated to a wide number of interested villagers. An open meeting was held in January 2000 to debate the key issues raised in the Village Design Statement, and since that time it has been on the village website www.Longparish.org.uk for comment. It was submitted in January to Test Valley Borough Council, which in October 2000 suggested substantial redrafting to concentrate more on design details. The design group produced a revised brief in the autumn of 2001 but no one had the time to redraft it until the autumn of 2002. The subsequent draft will be available to all residents at an exhibition in the village and on the website for comment and formal approval in the winter of 2002. We aim to have it adopted as supplementary planning guidance by Test Valley Local Authority as soon as possible thereafter.

Village Context



Location and landscape

Longparish is a linear village in a parish of over 5,000 acres lying along the clear waters of the famous river Test, about 5 miles east of Andover. Here the valley of the Test is about a kilometre wide and the river is braided, running in several streams, fed by springs and small rivulets. Most of the village is on the west side of the river amid the small, flat grazing fields of the valley floor.

On either side of the valley are low ridges about 80 metres high, fairly continuous and open on the south side and more broken to the north and west, where the village is bounded by the remains of Harewood Forest. On the sloping sides of the valley arable crops are grown in large fields, mainly enclosed by hedges.

Viewed from the ridges, little can be seen of the village, which is lost in trees. Looking out from the village, views are bounded by the ridges, where not hidden by trees.

Approaches

The village is on the winding B3048 between Hurstbourne Priors and Wherwell, and the main access from the east is from the B3400 Whitchurch Andover road and from the west from the A303. One can also approach it from the A34 along the C165, Nuns' Walk, which runs on the opposite side of the valley to the B3048, and from the A303 by the C87 over Southside Hill which provides one of the most evocative views of the village. Another approach to the village and one of the most attractive is from the B3400 by the C87, the Middleway, through Harewood Forest.

There are three road crossings of the Test which take you from Nuns' Walk to the main village street: at Upper Mill bridge in East Aston, at Swan bridge by Lower Mill in West Aston and at Southside, Middle and Blacksmiths bridges on Southside Road.

Views

The village is not only attractive in itself, but its scattered character provides some memorable views of the old cottages, the landscape and, above all, of the river. These are marked on the map and should be preserved. The views from all the road and foot bridges over the river are important and should be preserved.

Guideline

Views marked on the map are important to the character of the village and should be preserved.

Existing designations

Design control is already strong in the village, which is protected by formal designations. Longparish Conservation Area was adopted in 1983. The Conservation Area covers almost the whole village: Forton, Middleton (except the Common), West Aston (except North Acre) and most of East Aston and all the open spaces between the settlements. The Borough Local Plan of 1996 designates most of the existing open areas of the village as important open spaces where development will not be allowed and restricts development to infilling in prescribed areas. Longparish contains about 70 listed buildings or monuments, including all of the thatched cottages. Alteration or demolition of listed buildings is an offence without listed building consent.

The landscape of Longparish is also protected by many designations. In 1997 the river Test was designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest in 1997, as was the Cleeves, the common land at East Aston, in 1987. Since 1990 the Valley of the River Test has been an Environmentally Sensitive Area where DEFRA makes grants to farmers who manage the land according to approved guidelines and the valley is also a Heritage Area under the Test Valley Borough Plan. Harewood Forest is a Hampshire County Council designated Countryside Heritage Area and a Test Valley Heritage Area.

History

Longparish evolved from four historical settlements: Forton, Middleton, West Aston and East Aston. In Domesday Book only "Middeltune" is mentioned, but there are references to the other settlements in medieval documents such as the cartulary of Wherwell Abbey which owned all the village until Henry VIII dissolved the Abbey in 1536. The name, Longparish, was not widely used to cover all these settlements until the middle of the 16th century, but it is appropriate since the village is over 3 miles long by road. The hamlets are still distinct, separated by important open spaces, which should be preserved to maintain the character of the village.

For most of its history, the economy of the village has been based on farming, fishing and milling. Two mills were mentioned in Domesday Book and today Upper Mill has been restored and part of another mill survives in Lower Mill House. Until the 1940s the majority of villagers were employed in the village, either on the many farms or by the large estates of Middleton or Longparish House or as craftsmen.

The railway came to Longparish in the 1880s, with one line running through the Forest to Longparish Station on the west side of the village and another along the chalk slope on the other side of the valley. Both were dismantled by the mid-1960s; the embankments, cuttings and bridges are still visible. During the First World War, an industrial estate was started near the station with a gunpowder factory at the edge of the Harewood Forest. In the Second World War the railway was used to support munitions storage in the Harewood Forest.

The village's association with the military continued with the establishment of an army camp at the top of Southside Hill. The camp was demolished in 1985, but the land is still regularly used for training exercises.

Current Employment

Opportunities for employment in the village are now limited. Over time, the mechanisation of farming has reduced jobs; many of the farms were amalgamated, and the cottages sold. There are still three farms and a working piggery and chicken farm near the old station at Harewood. Watercress beds are also a feature of the Test Valley, and Longparish has organic beds still being worked near Larkwhistle and Vale farms. Two public houses, the village shop and Harewood Industrial Estate, where additional units and a waste transfer station have been recently added provide some jobs. A turbine barn in Forton has been converted to office space. The leisure activities of fishing and game bird shooting provide some opportunities. Two private shoots exist at Longparish House and Middleton estates and there is a clay-pigeon shooting ground at Owls Lodge Farm. Fish have provided other business opportunities with trout rearing ponds and fishing lake at Mill Lane, and trout and coarse fishing lakes at Vale Farm.

Population

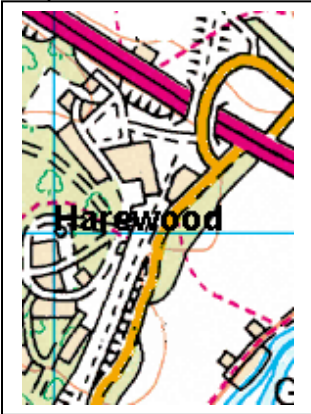
Longparish's position and its excellent road and transport connections have helped its transition to a dormitory community, with the majority of the working population in the village commuting elsewhere to work, although a recent trend is for more people to work from home for at least part of the week.

From a peak of 875 residents in the mid-18th century, the population had fallen in 1911 to 729- a figure that has remained remarkably stable over the century. In the 1991 census the population was 730, although this reflects more households than it did in the previous century.

Guidelines

Specific guidelines are given for each settlement in the village and at the end there are general guidelines which apply to the whole village.

The existing open spaces between settlements should be kept



The character of the Victorian buildings by the station should be retained in any further extensions or new building by the use of matching red brick and pitched slate roofs, and white-painted wooden windows and similar detailing. Any building should be restricted to 2 storeys

The green is an open space which should be kept.

New industrial units should be as unobtrusive as possible, camouflaged by neutral finishes. Care should be taken to avoid high buildings which will break the tree-line.

Lighting and signage should be kept to a necessary minimum.

Mobile phone masts should be screened by trees and shared use should be encouraged

Settlement & Buildings

The settlement pattern of the village has changed little over the last hundred years and the village remains a collection of hamlets with important open spaces between. The policy of allowing infilling only has restricted development in the village and there is now little scope for further infilling in the parts of Forton, Middleton and West Aston where it is permitted under the revised Borough Plan 2002

Because it is regarded as so important that any future development or alterations to existing houses should be sympathetic to the style in that location, each settlement is treated separately.

The Main Areas:

Harewood

The southernmost settlement is separated from the rest of the village by the dual carriageway A303, which was bridged in 1995. It lies on the edge of Harewood Forest and is well screened by recent planting.

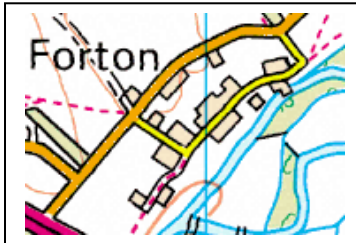
A small number of two-storied Victorian red brick homes surround the former rail station. Newer houses have been built in sympathy with the station architecture.

They are separated from the Harewood Industrial Estate by the line of the old railway. The industrial estate consists mainly of small units to the south of an open green. The visual impact of a large new waste transfer station which breaks the tree-line, has been camouflaged by the use of muted dark grey paint.

Around the green are some houses in very varied styles built to house those working on the estate. The green is therefore an important open space separating the industrial units from the residential accommodation.

Two mobile telephone aerial masts have been built - one successfully concealed in the Forest and the other an eyesore by the bridge. On the A303 is a service station and a restaurant. It is planned to re-route the Test Way long distance footpath past the station and over the bridge, which will make this area more important visually.

Guidelines



Larger houses to north or on periphery

Houses on village street are one and a half storey or two storey

Development on both sides of the road, with irregular gaps.

Low rounded roof line, mainly thatch, also plain clay tile or slate

Rich red brick with some details in blue brick predominant. Some painted render and painted brick.

Orientation varies – either facing road or side on

Small front gardens, or none

Low boundaries - picket fences, walls or hedges

Further development should not increase on –street parking

Forton

Forton has an intimate hidden quality. You can drive through the village and not know it is there. It lies south east side of the B3048 and the village street is close to the river. On the higher ground are large houses in large gardens, mostly brick with slate or plain tile roofs built in the 19th and 20th centuries, some set back from the road and facing away from it. Forton House on the main road is one of the rare 3 storey houses in the village.

Forton village street is one of the prettiest parts of the village with small cottages, some of them terraced, on both sides of the road, giving an enclosed feel. The Test Way follows the street, which is well used by walkers. It is a relatively densely settled hamlet with a high percentage of pre-1800 thatched timber-framed cottages. These are built in rich red brick with interesting detail, such as blue headers over the windows. The windows are small with white-painted wooden frames and doors are made of wood. The preponderance of long straw thatch gives a low, rounded silhouette to the roofline along the street.

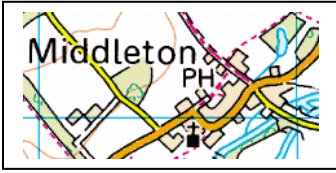
Some houses have small front gardens, softening the impact of the buildings, some are right on the street. Most houses on the southern side of the lane have long back gardens, some running down to the Test. On the northern side there is limited backland development.

Boundaries are defined by low picket fences or low hedges, and wooden gates allow a view of the houses. Most houses have off-road parking with gravel drives.

The lane is very narrow with sharp corners and poor visibility, without kerbs or lighting, and unsuitable for through traffic.

Despite the relative density of the settlement, Forton retains the paddocks for grazing animals that are a feature of Longparish. They define the edges of the settlement and are listed in the Borough Plan as important open spaces. The open parkland in front of Middleton House separates Forton from Middleton

Guidelines



View of Church and Church Farm from Forton should be preserved.

Existing landmarks should be preserved

Housing mix includes small terraces and groups of similar detached houses, all 2 storey

Varied materials

Walls: red brick, red brick and red tile, red brick and flint in equal bands, cob with slate roof,

Roofs: plain clay tiled roofs, thatch, slate on cob houses at very shallow pitch

Small or no front gardens – long narrow gardens at rear

Enclosure – low walls and fences in centre

School field an important open space and view to the river should be preserved.

View over grazing meadow from Sugar Lane crossroads should be



Cob houses with slate roofs on Southside Road, close to street

Middleton

Middleton House marks the southern end of this settlement, which is the historic centre of the village with many of the communal buildings. The view of St Nicholas Church and Church Farm on the road from Forton is perhaps the most painted and photographed in the village. Also in Middleton are the school, the Plough Inn, the village hall with its car parks, the village cemetery, the football field, sewage pumping station and the telephone exchange.. It contains most of the notable landmarks of the village: the stocks by the church, two lychgates, the memorial cross by the school, the war memorial in the cemetery, the grindstone and Ashburn Rest by the little stream along the village street. The school field is an important open space giving a view of the river from the road.

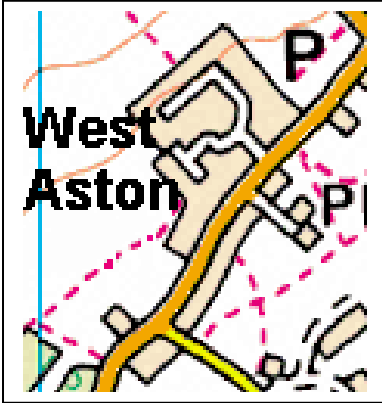
There is a greater diversity of housing styles and sizes here than elsewhere in the village. North of the road many houses are terraced or semi-detached, to the south mostly detached apart from a modern terrace. Nearly all houses are two-storey and mostly grouped according to type. There are some thatched cottages, some chalk cob houses with low pitched slate roofs and several of brick. The Plough, White Windows and the Cottage make a notable group of brick tile-hung houses with interesting rooflines and chimneys, and the 1970s terrace opposite has fitted in well. A few houses are right on the road, but most have front gardens with low hedges or walls, or simple open wooden fences, and have long, narrow gardens behind..

At the only crossroads in the village by Stream House, settlement spreads in four directions. Sugar Lane has a mix of modern cottages, a Victorian terrace, and barns associated with Lower Farm. Southside Road has a mix of detached medium density housing, including a converted chapel, two traditional brick and flint thatched cottages and several modern houses built in old coal yards.

Streams along the main and cross roads of Middleton give the area added character. The small stream by the spinney along the village street is much valued and regularly cleared by volunteers. Opposite are grazing fields, which include the village playground, and the cricket field with its thatched pavilion. These spaces and the allotments separate Middleton from West Aston along the main street.

The Common bounds one side of a triangle of land, separated by the river and grazing fields from the settlements on the B3048, where Mill Lane and Southside Road converge by Southside bridge. It features chalk cob cottages with slate roofs, with a bungalow and two modern houses at the end. There are older cottages, mostly cob with slate roofs, along Southside Road looking over grazing fields, and Southside barns have been recently converted into a large house. Mill Lane is characterised by more modern suburban-type housing facing a paddock and trout ponds. Lower Mill House is a large house hidden in trees, which was built in the 1920s set in substantial grounds including the river.

Guidelines



One to two storied houses on both sides of the road, but building line broken by open spaces

Walls; red brick, painted brick, timber frame with plaster

Roofs: Thatch, plain clay tile

Tile-capped chalk walls by the road should be preserved and maintained.

View over Newtons should be preserved.



Entrance to North Acre showing older houses to right and newer to left

Any further development should include enough parking spaces to avoid any further on-street Parking

Personalisation of the Council houses and use of soft landscaping is welcome.

West Aston and North Acre

West Aston includes two areas; the village street and the former Council housing estate at North Acre. Along the village street the housing is low to medium density, ranging from traditional thatched and timber framed or brick and flint cottages on both sides of the street to modern bungalows and some semi-detached former estate houses. There are a few substantial houses in red or painted brick, set back from the road with large gardens, mainly on the southern side. The shop with its post office is found here, as is the village's second pub, The Cricketers.

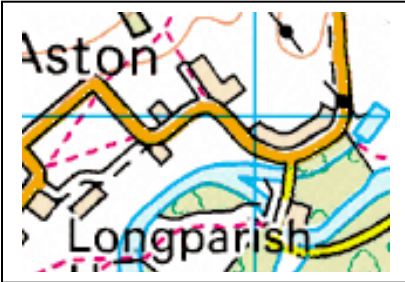
Infilling has taken place over a long period. Some back land development in the long gardens attached to housing along the main road) has occurred, in such a way that it does not detract from the settlement character. After the junction with the road into North Acre, West Aston continues with thatch and tile roofed houses, ending at the fields around Longparish House. A long tile-capped chalk wall along the road is a main feature of the end of this settlement. Houses are not continuous on both sides as grazing fields break the groups of houses on either side of the road, and one, the Newtons, gives important access to footpaths.

North Acre is the only recent large development in the village and is concealed from the village street by a line of mainly thatched cottages. It has one narrow access road branching into two cul de sacs, lined with houses on both sides. It is the only part of the village with pavements (apart from a short length by the school) and with street lighting, features that give it a suburban character. There are two garage blocks, but North Acre has the greatest concentration of on-street parking.

Originally it was a Council housing estate built in many stages. Started in 1936, housing was added twice during the 1940s and in 1956. These older houses are built in red brick with grey tiled roofs, mostly semi-detached, although there has been some infilling with buff brick. In 1968 bungalows for the elderly with a warden replaced the prefabs and in 1974 the estate was enlarged with another road added to the left with street lighting. These newer houses include a high proportion of bungalows, which are in buff brick with plain grey tiled roofs with no chimneys; two storey houses are in the same materials with white timber cladding on the second storey.

Since the right to buy Council houses was granted, improvements made to the housing stock are introducing greater variety of character and softening the estate style. Garages, small extensions and porches have been added and this is the only area of the village where picture windows and modern plastic windows are common. These are invariably white, as throughout the village. In the older areas there are wooden fences defining the plots; the new part is mainly open plan in front

Guidelines



Low density housing on one side of road, large gardens

Views of river and of attractive cottages need preserving.

Barns linked to houses should be preserved.

Materials – cob or render, brick, brick and flint or timber frame with brick or plaster

Roofs – thatch, tile or slate

New development should not be allowed to break the skyline on the ridges.

East Aston

This settlement is separated from West Aston by the open spaces around Longparish House, set in parkland, and has the lowest density in the village. Cottages line the higher left hand side of the road out of the village looking over grazing fields by the river. Some houses are cob with slate roofs and some picturesque timber-framed brick or brick and flint thatched cottages, one with distinctive geometric tiling on the gable walls. Some once had barns and a few remain, which should be preserved if possible. Gardens are medium to large. Woodwalk is a short unmade track off the main road on which there are two pairs of ex-estate houses, red brick with pantile roofs, recently sympathetically enlarged. East Aston House is an enlarged cob house with noteworthy neo-gothic windows. (captioned photo -a small house recently replacing a bungalow which is a good example of sensitive design. It has a pantile roof like the Woodwalk houses and an unassuming flat front with rendered walls to link it to East Aston.).

At the very end of the village, medium density infilling occurred in the 1960s with more modern houses. The south east side of the road is bounded by the river and East Aston Common where there is no building, apart from the attractive 19th century Upper Mill and House built in brick and cob, with its restored working mill astride the Test

Outlying Areas and Farms

Outside the main settlements, there are a number of farms with associated housing. Firgo Farm and buildings date from the 17th Century. On Nun's Walk there are a number of farms, watercress beds and associated cottages and barns, as well as fishing lakes. Britwell Priors is an historic red brick building, dismantled and moved from Oxfordshire in the 1920s to its present site with a good view over the river.

Guidelines

Trees and hedges On the more rural outskirts of the villages and in the grazing fields hedges and trees should be chosen from native species.

Appropriate tree species are poplar, willow, ash, alder, beech, hornbeam, oak, hazel, field maple, horse chestnut, hawthorn, lime

Important trees shown on the Conservation Area policy should be preserved and replacements considered

Anyone considering tree work should check with the Planning Department.

Tree Warden should survey the existing trees and advise.

Garden boundaries on the street should be low.

All householders should avoid fast growing conifer hedges at property boundaries.

Trees

Trees are important to the character of Longparish. They limit the views and frame the houses. Outside the forest, certain trees and woodlands in Longparish have been described in the Conservation Area as important for the character of the village. No tree within the Conservation Area may be felled, uprooted, lopped or topped without six weeks notification to the Planning department. There are also various trees which have Tree Preservation Orders placed upon them.

A wide range of tree species is found in the hedgerows, in fields, along the river or in small spinneys and in gardens. The main species are poplar, willow, ash, alder, beech, oak, hazel, field maple, hornbeam, horse chestnut, hawthorn, lime and blackthorn. A long line of the deciduous larch trees is visible to the north of the village, while to the south the ridge is marked by open farmland with the occasional spinney, such as Big Firs and Little Firs. A fine avenue of lime trees leads to Longparish House. Both it and Middleton Park have a wide variety of specimen trees in their parklands. There is a variety of conifers at Harewood Industrial estate and at Lower Mill. and a commercial Christmas tree plantation in West Aston.

Boundaries

Field boundaries in the village are increasingly post and rail fences. Native species hedges are the alternative – Hawthorn, blackthorn, holly, yew, elm, field maple, hazel.

Garden boundaries, especially on the street are mostly low, and this gives the village its friendly character. Open picket fences, natural or white, low walls in brick or brick and flint, low hedges in box, privet, yew, beech or hornbeam all fit in well. High close-boarded fences and fast-growing conifer hedges look unfriendly.

Owners are advised to ensure that hedges are not planted too close to the road as they grow inexorably outwards as they mature.

Gates, with their posts, should be of timber in an open style in keeping with the size and scale of the property through traffic, but the growing number of households with several cars results in a problem to which there is no clear solution.

Guidelines

Concrete kerbs, lighting inappropriate signs and other urban elements are not to be encouraged on the existing village streets.

Street furniture (signs etc) should be in keeping with the rural nature of the village.

Footpaths should be preserved and well-maintained.

Where possible wooden kissing gates should replace stiles.

Parked cars are a visual obstruction and care should be taken to ensure that sufficient on-site parking is provided in any new development.

Roads and Footpaths

There is no street lighting in Longparish (apart from North Acre). The only pavements are in North Acre and opposite the Plough Public House to the village school. Although verges are soft and sometimes border streams so that traffic does considerable damage to them, concrete kerbs, lighting inappropriate signs and other urban elements are not to be encouraged on the existing village streets, as they are not in keeping with the village character.

Longparish is served by an excellent network of footpaths, which are well used, including one long distance path, the Test Way. Some of the footpaths are thought to follow old roads and provide shorter routes linking the settlements, and attractive views of the village. Where possible wooden kissing gates should replace stiles to facilitate access.

Traffic and Parking

For the most part, off street parking is sufficient to avoid street parking by residents. Areas where this is not the case include Forton, Sugar Lane and North Acre. In all cases there is limited through traffic, but the growing number of households with several cars results in a problem to which there is no clear solution.

GENERAL PLANNING GUIDELINES:

Settlement

- Longparish is not a homogeneous village. All new development should respect the local characteristics of the settlements identified above and in particular the open spaces which separate the settlements.
- Most houses are simple and small-scale, or when larger broken into smaller elements.
- Small houses or terraces can fill the plot; large houses should have space around them.
- Contemporary architect–designed houses which reflect local materials and rural styles are to be welcomed.
- Inappropriate detailing not found traditionally in the village is to be avoided, for example mock-Tudor timbering and diamond paned windows
- vernacular styles should not be mixed in the same building: choose details that match local historical references in the vicinity and ensure that they are accurately followed. For instance the local style in brick and flint is in narrow equal bands, and tilehanging in the older houses is restricted to gable ends
- **Additions** to existing houses, such as extensions, garages and conservatories should respect the existing architectural style of the house. Weatherboard extensions can be appropriate on the old thatched cottages.
- **garages** should be discrete, to the side or rear of buildings, and large areas of hardstanding should be avoided
- **Barns** associated with houses are traditional features and should be retained.
- **television aerials and satellite dishes** should be sited unobtrusively.
- **Security lighting** should be low power and sited so that the light is restricted to the premises
- **Posts and overhead cables** currently obstruct many views along the village streets. It is desirable that cables should be buried, as soon as possible.
- **Views** marked on the map on page should be preserved.

GENERAL PLANNING GUIDELINES:

Building materials

- Each area has its range of traditional materials, which are listed. These are appropriate to new building and extensions..
- **Thatch** The Hampshire style of thatching has an integrated ridges flush with the rest of the roof. This traditional style has been supplanted on many cottages with curved and proud ridges, for cost reasons. TVBC policy is to support combed wheatstraw thatch done in the longstraw fashion traditional in Hampshire. Norfolk reed is not traditional and should not normally be used.
- “Eyebrow” rooflines frame windows in thatched properties,
- **Windows** – the most unifying factor in the village is the ubiquity of white window frames.
 - Larger houses have white painted sash windows.
 - Smaller ones have white painted wooden frames with three small vertical windows, or 4, 6 or 8 paned windows.
 - Velux windows are to be avoided in existing buildings and should never be used in thatch.
 - Dormers are not common in the older houses and where they do occur they are small. They should be used only to provide light, not living accommodation.
- **Rendering** should preferably be in white to suit the traditional chalk/lime-washed finishes.
- **Chimneys** – traditional houses have chimneys in red brick, either external on the end of the house or internal.
- **Porches** The older houses have simple tiled or slate open porches.

What comes next?

The guidance in this statement is intended to help house owners in decisions about changes to their property as well as helping planners to ensure that future development in Longparish enhances the village we love.

The Design Group, the Parish Council and all the people who helped in collecting material for this statement and commented on it were tempted to think more widely about the future of the village. The first draft was rejected by TVBC because it strayed into thinking about future development, rather than about design. We now intend that this statement should be the starting point for a Village Plan, which we hope will allow us to express our wish for some new development in the village, which will not spoil the existing settlements and particularly the village street.