



CONSULTATION DRAFT DEC 2021

B R I M S C O M B E A N D T H R U P P
NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN
PART 2: COMMUNITY DESIGN STATEMENT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The parish of Brimscombe and Thrupp has great interest and character in both its built and natural environment. This Community Design Statement (CDS) provides guidance on aspects of that character which are valued and will be encouraged in local developments.

While the parish is dissected by the busy A419 road, there are numerous views to the hills on both sides of the valley and it is important that any new development retains or enhances these as well as providing or retaining access to river, canal and green spaces where biodiversity can flourish. The eclectic mix of historic and modern buildings form an integral part of the landscape and this diversity is encouraged for future developments.

Crucial in the development of new buildings, or additions to existing ones, is the adoption of sustainable design and building. This applies to both residential, industrial and commercial properties.

Specific guidance on developments are shown on pages 26-30.



1. INTRODUCTION

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

What is it that makes up the unique character of the environment of the Parish of Brimscombe and Thrupp? How can the local distinctiveness of the Parish be protected and enhanced as development proposals come forward?

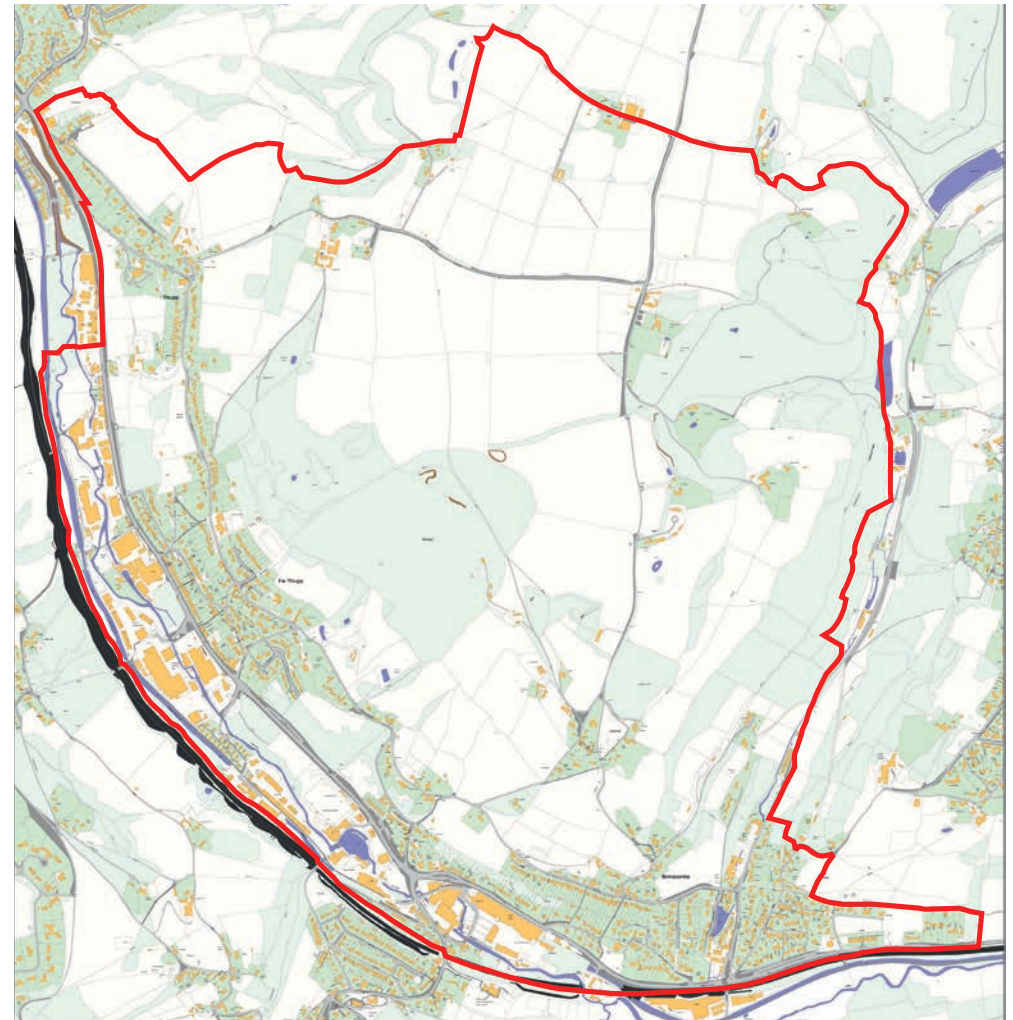
The elements which create the distinctive character of a place – streets, buildings, open spaces, trees and landscape, and how they fit together - are important to understand. They provide an evidence base to enable any future development to contribute to a distinct sense of place and sensitive integration, avoiding 'anywhere' development that would detract from the unique character of the Parish.

Community Design Statements are documents most commonly produced by and for the local community, and which describe the distinctive character of an area. They identify the landscape setting, the shape of the settlements and the nature of the buildings. They also draw together design principles based on that distinctive local character, sense of place and community approach. Design Statements cannot be used to determine what development happens where but they can be used to help inform such decisions.

In recent years, the need has arisen for new buildings, conversions and even minor adaptations to buildings to take account of climate change in terms of issues such as materials, orientation, renewable energy, insulation, water management, heating and so forth. Some of these have no impact on the external appearance of buildings but those that do can raise challenges about design in relation to local character – for example the use of photovoltaic cells on historic buildings. Climate change is a key issue for the local community in Brimscombe and Thrupp (and it is addressed in some depth in the Local Plan Review), so the main Neighbourhood Plan features policies to address such issues. Applicants should note that appropriate consideration must be given to this plan's climate change policies when considering design choices.

This Community Design Statement (CDS) has been prepared on behalf of Brimscombe and Thrupp Parish Council with support from Stroud District Council and consultants Place Studio. It follows a format for Design Statements used by other communities in Gloucestershire and elsewhere in the UK.

This Community Design Statement is Part 2 of the Brimscombe and Thrupp Neighbourhood Plan.



The CDS addresses the entire area of Brimscombe and Thrupp Parish as shown in Map 1. This is also the designated Neighbourhood Plan area.

THE CHARACTER OF BRIMSCOMBE AND THRUPP IN BRIEF

The main sections of this document provide a detailed analysis and description of the character of Brimscombe and Thrupp Parish. What follows here is an overall summary.

Our parish is one of several along the valley extending south east from Stroud into the Cotswolds and including Stroud Parish itself. They all share three basic characteristics:

- A clear, slowly winding valley bottom where transport routes are located (canal then railway then road), linked in previous times mainly to employment uses, now focusing more on leisure.
- Housing from many different periods on the slopes up from the valley bottom, predominantly to the east and north of the transport corridor, stopping where hills became too steep.
- Green slopes leading up the scarp face of the Cotswolds to the plateau.

Given the narrowness of the valley, the slopes and the plateau form the majority of the land in each parish – even Stroud; development forming just a small strip. With development mainly on one side of the valley, this creates stunning views for our residents across the valley to almost completely green slopes – in our case

to Rodborough and Minchinhampton parishes.

The balance between these three main characteristics varies along the valley – Stroud being more urban, Sapperton more rural, while Brimscombe and Thrupp, being more central in the valley, displays these characteristics very clearly.

There are several distinct settlements along the almost 3km length of the main road – London Road – through our parish; Thrupp, Far Thrupp and Brimscombe being the main ones but local people often subdivide these (see later). Though each area is distinct and some important green gaps remain, development is fairly continuous on both sides of the road, especially on the canal and river side. Unlike some of the other parishes along the valley, our parish has a secondary road – Thrupp Lane/Bourne Lane - up the valley side and forming almost the edge of housing development against the scarp face, going from the north west of the parish almost to the very south east.

The strip west and south west of the canal, railway and road currently includes a remarkable variety of employment buildings from those linked originally to the canal – notably

Brimscombe Port – to more recent and generally not attractive ones linked more to the road (and the related jumble of signs and advertising hoardings). This has changed over time, for example with the infilling of the port basin after the closure of the canal and the construction of large twentieth century sheds, but is now changing again as industrial uses decline and housing and leisure uses are being introduced.

There is little consistency to the style and character of the buildings on either side of the London Road. Some older buildings - mills, houses, chapels etc. - remain but are scattered throughout the parish with mainly twentieth century buildings in between. There is stone, brick, tile, slate, render and some metal cladding on employment buildings, but it is the pattern of development, the relationship with the slope and the views across the valley that make the housing areas in particular so distinctive. Because of the historic 'ribbon' development along the two main roads, there is not however any clear centre to the parish; the only small centre being the group of shops at what is known locally as Brimscombe Corner. Other facilities are spread around.



USING THE CDS

A CDS enables parishioners to learn more about their area and enables planners and developers to understand what is valued by local people about the character of their area and buildings. It also provides guidance on which aspects should be conserved or enhanced, so that the special character can continue to be enjoyed by future generations. It establishes the context in which to help manage the design elements of changes in terms of land use and development, ensuring that any such changes reflect the distinct character of any site and its context.

The latest [National Planning Policy Framework \(NPPF\)](#) states that “Development that is not well designed should be refused” and “significant weight should be given to local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides ...”. This is now supported by the [National Design Guide](#) and the [National Model Design Code](#). The latter encourages and supports local communities to produce local Design Guides and, where relevant, Design Codes.

It is expected that all of those preparing planning applications will look at and draw ideas from this CDS, and they are also encouraged to show in their applications how their design proposals

relate to the content of the CDS. It is also expected that the CDS will be used by planning officers in determining applications in terms of how designs relate to and enhance local character.

This CDS alone cannot ensure the best quality design. That can only come through meeting and talking with those proposing changes or developments, doing this early enough to have a constructive influence and basing discussions on how best to meet the guidance in this CDS. To that end, the CDS is linked to the Pre-Application Community Involvement Protocol which strongly encourages very early contact with the Parish Council. (Part 1 of this Plan provides details of the Protocol, including who to contact if it is to be used.)

This approach is also supported in the NPPF which states that “applications that can demonstrate early, proactive and effective engagement with the community should be looked on more favourably than those that cannot”.

One key way to use the CDS on a major or significant project is to produce some form of a Design Code for the site and project. The production of a Design Code can be led by the District Council, our Parish Council or site owner/applicant but, whoever takes the lead, all three



parties need to work together and agree the result. Any such codes must reference this CDS and highlight the specific features of the character of their site’s surroundings to be drawn upon in shaping the design. Codes of this sort are now strongly encouraged by government.

Recent changes to Permitted Development Rights allow more people to make changes not just to the use but often also to the design of their premises,

including significant house extensions. While such changes are unlikely to require planning permission (though this must be checked), it is hoped that those proposing Permitted Development changes will also respect the guidance in this Statement and therefore respect our community.

PRODUCTION OF THE CDS

Design issues had been highlighted by the local community well before work started on the Neighbourhood Plan, mainly as a result of concern about major developments proposed on sites along the Stroudwater Canal. Once work on the plan was underway, three events generated the baseline information for this CDS:

- At the first Steering Group meeting for the plan (14th December 2016), aspects of design were given the highest rating of importance by all present.
- Wider public concern then surfaced at the first open, drop-in event held for the Neighbourhood Plan (22nd January 2017), during which people were able to undertake one or more of a series of tasks related to design and distinctiveness.
- A specific Design Day, open to all, was held (21st April 2017) during which participants went out to undertake focused surveys, take photos, produce analysis maps and so forth.
- Three local people* then agreed to produce draft text for three of the core sections of this CDS – Landscape, Settlement Pattern and Buildings.

- Place Studio used the locally produced text and photos to develop a first draft of the graphic format CDS, which was then shared back with the three local text authors for their comments.

**Particular thanks due to local authors:*

- *Martin Phelps*
- *Rob Tyler*
- *David Yarham*



PLANNING CONTEXT

Details of relevant policies are set out in Appendix 1, drawing from:

- The National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance.
- The Cotswolds National Landscape* Management Plan and Position Statements.
- The Stroud District Local Plan and related guidance.
- The Industrial Heritage Conservation Area Strategy.
- Historic England Guidance and the Historic Environment Record.

(* This is the new name for the AONB. Later references refer to it by its name at the time.)

As of now (April 2021) the Draft Stroud Local Plan Review has been consulted on. It may be adopted or close to adoption before this Neighbourhood Plan is submitted. The Neighbourhood Plan, including this CDS, would then, if appropriate, be reviewed. The same is true for the National Model Design Code and any other changes to national or local policy and guidance that emerge before this Plan is submitted

2. DEVELOPMENT UP UNTIL TODAY

The Stroud valleys have long been a focus of development because they provided such a clear route through the area from the east of Stroud, a pattern reinforced by the deep, steep-sided and narrow topography of the valleys.

Significant development started with the growth of the wool industry, serving well beyond the Cotswolds, even internationally and hence dependent on good transport links. Early records indicate that there was a cloth mill at Thrupp dating back as far as 1381. Though much of the industry over several centuries was built around wool, the industrial revolution brought many different engineering concerns, for example the Phoenix Iron Works, established by 1828. The early industrial revolution period brought the Thames and Severn Canal and that then brought the large and important development of Brimscombe Port in particular. In later years, the river and canal were added to by the railway line which then brought further and different industries and, slowly, the main road through the Parish – now the A419 – was improved until that too became a major link for local industry.

All of these developments took place in a strip alongside the river, canal, rail line and road in what was at that

point a very narrow valley. While some housing developed immediately in and around the industrial areas, the majority developed across the main road up the slope to the north and west, also including some other uses such as shops and chapels. Because the hill sloped so steeply, development took the form of a relatively narrow strip with just one road towards the top running parallel with the main road. The only developments up the hill were more agriculturally related, as in and around the hamlets of Lyppiatt and Upper Bourne.

Since the decline of canal use, many of the original industries have declined with it and been lost. Some of the earlier, canal-related buildings have been retained and re-used, sometimes with major refurbishment, sometimes very minimally. Many buildings were lost and 20th century development brought a large number of ad hoc and undistinguished industrial, commercial and employment buildings and uses, even some retail. In parallel, housing developments, mostly small, filled in spaces mainly between the London Road and the upper roads.



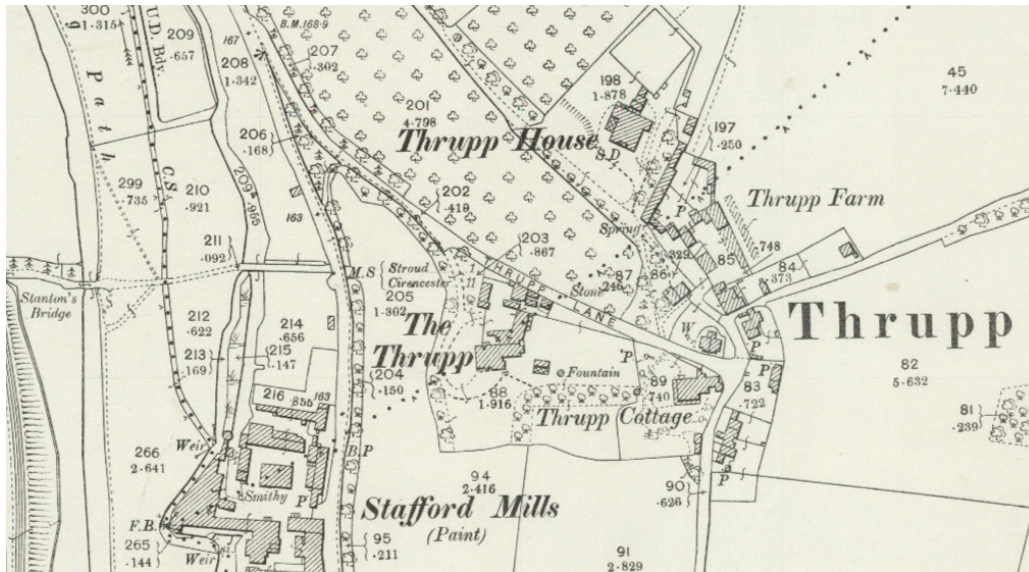
Historic Brimscombe Canal (Date unknown)



King and Castle (Date unknown)



Brimscombe Port c.1920



Map 2.1: Historic Map Bimscombe and Thrupp



Map 2.2: Historic Map Bimscombe and Thrupp



Map 2.3: Historic Map Bimscombe and Thrupp

KEY POINTS AND ISSUES TODAY

The A419 is the main transport route serving the parish; the railway simply passes through. (The rail line does, however, cause some local problems with what are regarded as unsafe crossing points.) Workshops, garages, shops and so forth now front onto the main road along most of its length through the parish, if mainly on the south east side linked back to earlier periods of industrial development. The amount, speed and type of traffic along the A419 has a significant negative impact on the character of the parish, both for local people and those just passing through - important if canal-based tourism is to develop. Some of this traffic is not just from nearby or adjacent areas; the A419 links beyond Stroud to the M5 and east to the M4 at Swindon.

The canal is coming back into recreational use, in particular under the auspices of a very long term regeneration programme. That includes a specific project to restore at least some of the now filled-in Brimscombe Port, and some of its original buildings, for canal users and for homes and community facilities. Other mill regeneration projects are also underway. Some old mills and associated buildings have, however, now been demolished leaving open land, if often badly polluted, as on the old Hope Mill site.

The areas north east of the main road up to the start of the steep hill and the Cotswolds National Landscape (AONB)* are now mostly filled with housing with little obvious space for further development. The AONB starts again to the south east, immediately across the strip of river, canal, rail and road so any development in that strip, though not in the AONB itself, could be considered to have a potential impact on the setting of the AONB.

The development boundaries are currently very clear, but pressures on the viability of agricultural land are leading elsewhere to attempts by farmers to sell land for development along such boundaries. If that were to happen here it would have a damaging effect on overall character.

*The Cotswolds National Landscape was formerly known as the Cotswolds AONB. Future references to it in this document may refer to it as it was known at the time of the production of the document being referenced.



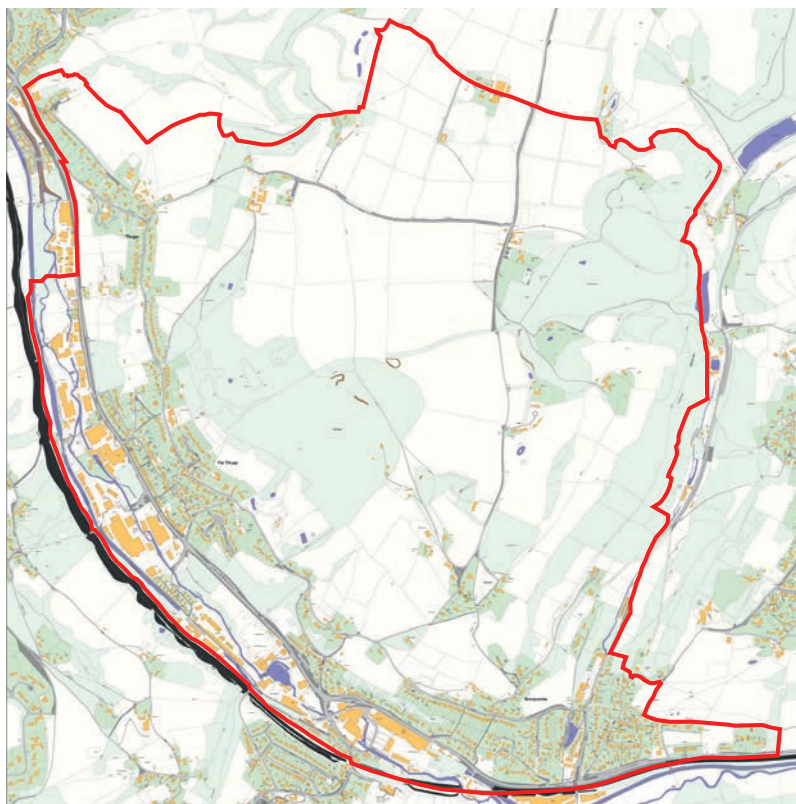
3. LANDSCAPE SETTING

LANDSCAPE SETTING

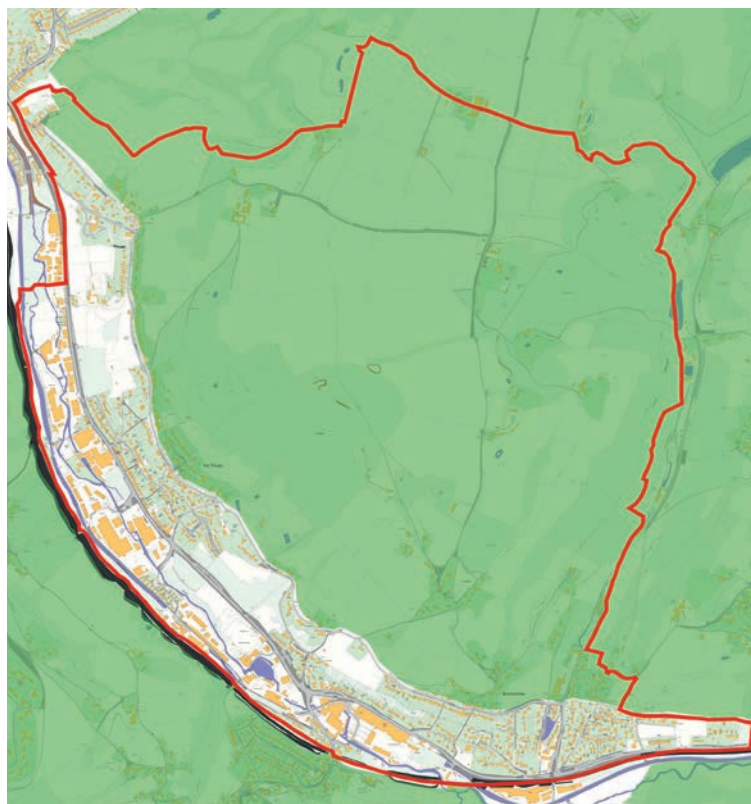
In landscape terms, as outlined in the Cotswold (AONB) Partnership “Landscape Character Assessment” (see Appendix 1), Brimscombe and Thrupp is in the ‘Settled Valley’ area. But, although the slopes at the top part of the Parish are within the AONB, it is important to note that the built area of the Parish, down in the valley, is not actually in the AONB. At the same time, as noted above, the valley is an important part of the setting of the AONB. See map 3 below:

The following text from the Landscape Character Assessment highlights (selectively) those characteristics relevant to the Parish:

“Although limited, there are scattered areas of calcareous and mesotrophic grassland mainly along the valley tops with a number of areas on lower slopes. Fields are enclosed by both hedgerow and stonewall boundaries. Moderately sized deciduous woodland blocks, a significant number of which are ancient, such as those at Far Thrupp, are scattered along the valley, both on the upper slopes and along the course of the river. Development within the valley is extensive, although it is partially absorbed in areas by scattered trees and woodland. The valley sides below Rodborough Common are dominated by modern housing development connected by meandering minor roads. At Brimscombe, development can also be seen to extend up the valley sides onto areas of the High Wold, and again is connected by a significant number of minor roads cutting across the valley sides. A combination of both modern and Victorian development dominates settlement on the valley sides.”



Map 1: Parish Map



Map 3: Cotswolds National Landscape (AONB) Map



Looking more locally, the valley containing the parish is steep-sided, giving magnificent views from both the hilltops (on both sides of the valley) into the valley and from the valley bottom towards the hills (again on both sides).

The river and canal along the valley bottom are important features shaping the landscape character of the parish. Animal life, in particular a variety of water birds, is abundant because the canal and canal path form green pathways. In this area in particular the blend of river, canal, green space and historic buildings form an integral part of the landscape.

Farming in the valley and on the hill is on a very small (artisan) scale with sheep, goats and horses as the main livestock. There are a number of small roads running from the valley bottom up the hillsides. There are numerous springs arising in the hills that flow down to the valley bottom to feed either the river or the canal. To the north of the parish there are substantial open areas as well as wooded areas, with only occasional dwellings and pastures.



The old mill buildings, predominantly situated along the valley bottom, are an important part of the landscape. There are a variety of factories along the valley bottom in both Brimscombe and Thrupp, largely hidden by trees, and this cover is important because some of the factory buildings are of poor quality finish (for example old corrugated roofs) or in poor condition, while others are more modern with quite stark, lighter coloured materials and very simple forms.

Finally the landscape of the Brimscombe and Thrupp valley is a shared landscape with neighbouring parishes (Chalford, Minchinhampton, Rodborough, etc.) as well as with Stroud Town. It is therefore important that consideration is given to creating a shared vision of current and future landscapes.

This is all summed up in the diagram below (Figure 1):

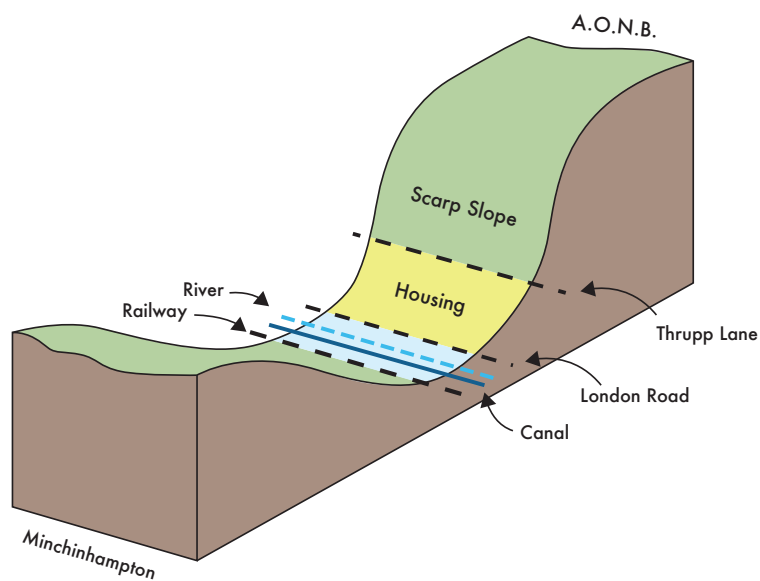


Figure 1. Landscape diagram



4. VIEWS

The final point in the previous section highlights how the main valley makes it essential to consider Brimscombe and Thrupp in relation to other settlements. This applies in particular to views out from the parish across to Minchinhampton and Rodborough, and from those parishes back across to Brimscombe and Thrupp.

There are many occasions along public roads and paths running along the contours of the hill in the parish when views across the valley can be glimpsed. These cannot be called 'Key' views so a policy cannot be put in place to protect them. All such views – as on the right – are, however, very important to local people and care should be taken with the location, heights, colours and roofing materials for new buildings that might affect those views. Appropriate respect should also be given, in terms of colour in particular to views across the valley from the neighbouring parish.



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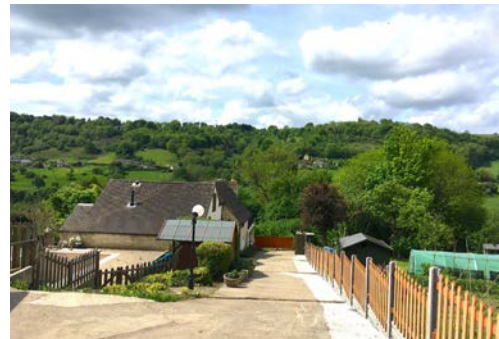
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5. SETTLEMENT PATTERN



Development in the parish is orientated on a mainly north west to south east axis, following the main valley. Within this, two roads and one 'corridor' very much define the overall settlement pattern, as follows:

- London Road: This is the main road through the parish and is what provides drivers in particular with their (rather limited) image of Brimscombe and Thrupp. The road is gently winding with, in the main, industrial buildings to one side and houses, a few shops and some important historic green gaps to the other. The road is very heavily used and creates a barrier between the residential areas to the north east and the 'corridor' as outlined below.
- Thrupp Lane/Bourne Lane: This 'top' road is narrow and winding. It offers a very different picture of the parish to that along the London Road but is not used for through traffic; it is almost entirely for local use. For some of its length through the parish it is open to the north east to the green fields and hills (with some isolated houses in places) but mostly built up along its south west side.
- The canal, river and railway corridor; all three features are largely hidden from the London

Road behind a large number of very varied industrial buildings, old and new. There are a number of footpaths through from London Road and a continuous towpath along the canal, all the way through the parish.

LONDON ROAD

The following photos provide a general picture along the London Road, starting from the parish boundary at the north west (Stroud Town end) and along to the end of the parish at the south east (Chalford end).

These photos show clearly the differences between what is on either side of the road. To the left at the start of the hill (as on the photos), much along the road is attractive and green with occasional high walls and groups of houses, and the shops area. Looking to the right, it is very mixed and far less attractive, though that is somewhat relieved by the almost constant backdrop of the hill up to Minchinhampton. There are a few houses, a few stretches of green but also a lot of commercial and industrial buildings (some not currently used) and poor quality site boundaries, poor building materials and maintenance, and often old and rather ugly signs.



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THRUPP LANE / BOURNE LANE

The photos here would seem to suggest an entirely different place. Starting from the same point to the north west, the road, really just a winding and up and down lane without pavements, is always narrow, often with on-street parking making two lanes of movement difficult. The whole area either side shows the hill clearly – dropping down to the right (again going in a south easterly direction) and up to the left, often requiring high, some very high, boundary walls. There are stretches of green, stretches with houses (and the school) on one side, sometimes with buildings on both sides. Though the hill behind to the left is rarely visible, there are very regular glimpse views to the right down to the valley and across to the hill to Minchinhampton and Rodborough Common.

There are also three roads that wind their way between Thrupp Lane and London Road, as well as some distinct green gaps between built areas, shown on the footpaths map (see page 19).



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THE CORRIDOR

In visual terms for any walkers along the canal towpath, this corridor offers views to the many industrial uses but these are nearly always balanced by the continuous line of trees on the south west side of the canal. The exception to this is the stretch of towpath close to the football pitch and through Brimscombe Port, where there is industry on both sides. Although there are a number of paths that lead from the towpath to the London Road, these are often of poor quality and poorly signed. This is important because of the intention to re-open the canal and its towpath for leisure and tourism, both for locals and visitors from further afield. Improving pedestrian access to the canal for local residents, including through improved signage, and to attract walkers and other canal users to facilities on the London Road are equally important. Much of this corridor is in the Industrial Conservation Area.



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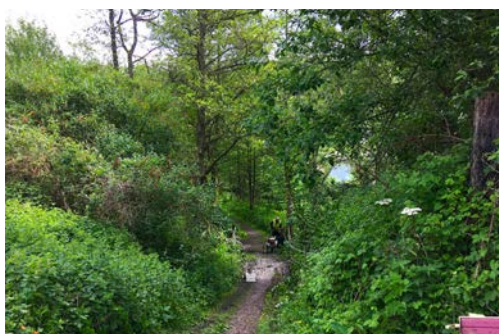
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FOOTPATHS

There are numerous footpaths throughout the Parish, some tight between buildings, some by or crossing green spaces. Some are Public Rights of Way (PROW), others are not, but many – including some PROWs – are poorly used and maintained.

Many footpaths are mainly for local use, but some go up the hill to beyond the Parish into the AONB where they connect to a wider network (see map over leaf). This pattern of paths up and down the hill is long-established, linking residents to their traditional workplaces in the valley. Although that local link may no longer seem as important as it was, it is crucial for people to access local shops, bus stops, the canal towpath and other uses. It appears from the map overleaf that many paths are not continuous, but they can link together using short stretches of relatively safe roads.

The canalside footpath also links to beyond the Parish to both east and west (notably into Stroud). The heavy traffic on the London Road does, however, make it difficult for people coming down the hill to cross to access the canal towpath, there are few controlled crossings or traffic islands and accessing the canal towpath can mean using roads in or going to industrial estates; so not very safe.





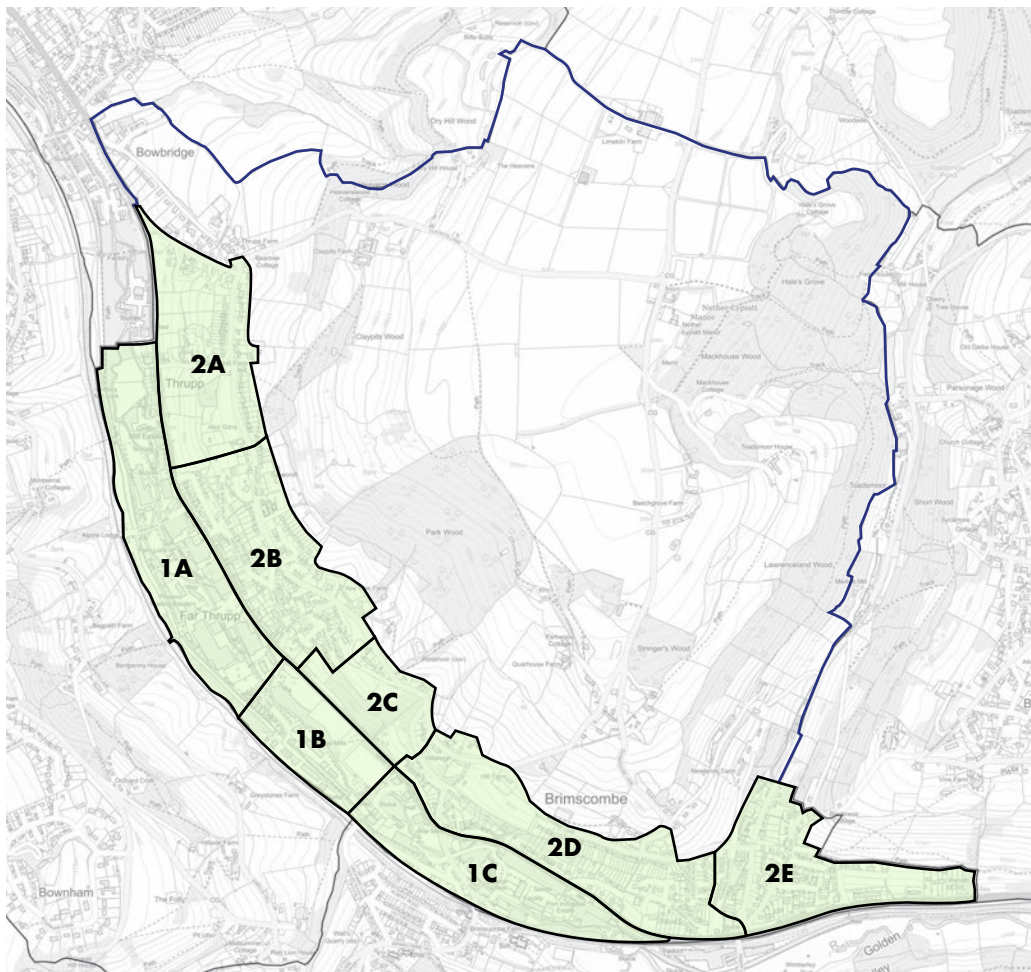
Map 4: Footpaths and Green Spaces

- Footpaths
- Main Roads
- Green Spaces

This map shows the many incidental and sometimes large green spaces that punctuate the route along London Road, as well as the many footpaths (some of which carry on further up the hill).

5.1 CHARACTER AREAS

Within this overall pattern, dictated mainly by roads, there are three main sections to the built settlements themselves, incorporating eight character areas as below. (See Section 6: Buildings for a medley of photos.)



Map 5: Character area map

SECTION ONE

This section, to the south-west of London Road, is bordered by the canal, river and railway. It is dissected by one road and several footpaths. It is curved, following the valley bottom and is mainly industrial, although there are two green areas at the northern end of the section: (a) an enclosed area which is used for grazing but could be a water meadow and hidden from the road and (b) the central part which consists of a playing field and the adjoining Brimscombe and Thrupp Football Club pitch, club house and car park. This area is fully visible from London Road.

The three character areas in this section are:

- 1A: The industrial area at the northern end.
- 1B: The central, open, mainly green area that also has a mobile home park. The only church in the parish - the much loved Blue Tin church - was in this area but was removed approximately ten years ago.
- 1C: The industrial area that includes Brimscombe Port, the only public house in the parish - The Ship Inn - and the Community Centre.

SECTION TWO

This central section lies between London Road and Thrupp Lane/Bourne Lane and consists of four character areas. Again this area curved, following the same arc as the first section but it slopes steeply at its sides. It is substantially residential with most of the houses onto London Road built directly onto the road edge with no, or very small, front gardens. The houses are mostly of Victorian red brick in terraces, although there are also some Edwardian detached houses and mixed style modern properties. There are two relatively large green areas. The five Character Areas in this section are:

- 2A: This starts with the hill up off London Road with trees and properties either side. At the northern end into Claypits Lane and surrounding Quarryhill Farm there are three listed properties. The housing along the top stretch of Thrupp Lane is quite distinctive on its western side with a series of detached houses with alternating hedgerows, walls and off-road parking spaces. The houses on the eastern side feature high retaining walls where the lane cuts through the hillside.
- 2B: This character area features close-knit housing with steep winding lanes as well as Thrupp Primary School in Thrupp Lane. The narrow road is mostly open to the west,

SECTION THREE

providing long views. Houses to the east are built into the hill with parking spaces or garages off the road. The school buildings are almost hidden behind the high wall directly onto the road

- 2C: This area is mainly green with grazing areas above the London Road opposite the football club, with housing on both side along Thrupp Lane at the top. Where Bourne Lane turns off, the houses are older and sit directly onto the road, or there are stone walls, all creating a narrow, contained feel. The area includes Brimscombe Corner with the only four shops in the parish.
- 2D: This area features close-knit housing bounded by Toadsmoor Lane to the east and 20th century



detached houses and small estates. There are some older properties along this stretch of Bourne Lane, mainly to the north, down to Toadsmoor but others along Bourne Lane and down towards the London Road are more modern. There are scattered houses along Quarhouse Lane.

- 2E: This final character area narrows into and merges with an industrial area along Toadsmoor Road. To the east, there is a mix of lower density, almost scattered housing on and off from Churchill Road, dating mainly from Victorian times to very recent.

The third section to the north-east of Thrupp Lane/Bourne Lane is almost entirely green and therefore just one character area, consisting of farmland and significant wooded areas, almost all of which are key wildlife sites. There are several public footpaths criss-crossing this section and there are links to the paths in the other two sections above. As with many Cotswold valleys, the hill slopes steeply from Thrupp Lane/Bourne Lane before flattening out at the top with mainly grazing land. There are scattered farms and houses. It is steeply sloping and is by far the largest section, covering approximately two-thirds of the parish. The eastern boundary largely follows the line of the Toadsmoor valley. Note also the comment on p.8 about the potential pressures if attempts are made to promote land for development outside the settlement boundary.

FACILITIES

Some of the facilities for the parish are in fact outside the parish itself – Brimscombe Primary School, Holy Trinity church and the Methodist church. Built facilities within the parish are either along or just off the London Road – e.g. the Social Centre, or along the top road - Thrupp Primary School. Outdoor facilities – e.g. the football field, skate park, allotments and orchards - are spread around in the valley or up the slope within housing areas.



6. BUILDINGS

Throughout the valley in which Brimscombe and Thrupp are situated there is a mix of dwellings, built mainly from original Cotswold stone, mock Cotswold stone or red brick. These lie sympathetically on the sides of the green fold of the valley. At the valley bottom there are numerous industrial units of stone, brick or metal and concrete construction.

There are broadly two types of building in Brimscombe and Thrupp: residential along the valley sides and a mix of light industrial buildings and some housing along the valley bottom. (This will change when the mill areas are regenerated, adding another important type.) Retail property is limited to a short row of shops at Brimscombe Corner, the bike shop at Bourne Mills, a few shops at Griffin Mill, The Ship Inn at Brimscombe and the Brewery bar - all on, adjacent to or just off the London Road.

The oldest buildings are farms and cottages dating generally from the mid 17th century onwards. There are 28 Grade II Listed Buildings and one Grade I (see Appendix 2). While the majority of buildings were built in the 20th century, there is no particular style or period that dominates, leading to a rather eclectic mix that gives texture and interest. Although there are many traditional

Cotswold stone cottages and houses in the valley, there are also more modern buildings that form an interesting blend of styles.

Much of the distinctiveness of the houses up the hill is created by the fact that they are built on the slope. The houses are mostly built on flat land but not always; some are split level or entered at one level and exited at another. It is then the often high boundary walls or fences, the parking arrangements and the slopes and steps up or down to the houses that make otherwise quite similar properties appear different.

INDUSTRIAL BUILDINGS

The industrial buildings split broadly into historic mills and the modern industrial sheds.

The older mills were built between 1750 and 1850, and are mostly Cotswold stone or brick construction, often with arched brick openings and slate roofs. Arranged over 3-6 floors, they tend to have shallow footprints to allow light from the windows to penetrate throughout. Examples are Ham Mill and Bourne Mill (stone), and Griffin Mill (brick). There are a number of one and two storey Victorian industrial buildings arranged around the mills, often still in use. Griffin Mill has a few, and there are more behind the social centre.

The area around Brimscombe Port has a number of 20th century industrial buildings and warehouses, most of which are earmarked for removal as part of the Port project. The modern industrial sheds, which cover a lot of the valley floor, are mostly grouped together in trading estates. Their often negative visual impact, exacerbated by the often light-coloured materials (by contrast to the area as a whole and the mills), is reduced by mature trees. These numerous industrial units also have a large amount of poor quality and visually damaging advertising on them. (The many advertising hoardings along

the poor quality roadside fences, railings and hedgerows have already been noted.

Many of the buildings, both older and more modern, remain in poor, sometimes derelict, condition. Some have already been regenerated and others, notably the key ones in Brimscombe Port, are planned for regeneration and new additions are working well.



Above: Stroud Brewery
Below: Advertising Signage





RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS

These fall into one of several groups:

- The pre-18th century stone cottages and farmhouses.
- The 19th century terraces.
- The mid-20th century developments along Thrupp Lane, Bourne Lane, Nursery Drive and around lower Toadsmoor, both houses and bungalows with and without converted roof areas, mainly one, two and three floors.
- Some developments of flats (e.g. in Spring Lane and Middle Road), generally with 4-10 units in a building, sitting happily amid the cottages and terraces that surround them.

Most of the houses higher up the valley are detached, and tend to have 3 or 4 bedrooms, though there are several larger houses. In the bottom of the valley the houses tend to be a little smaller, with more terraces and semi-detached houses.

Although some area variations follow overleaf, all areas include a variety of the different types listed above, so what follows here is a general medley of different buildings, materials etc. from across the parish as a whole.



AREA VARIATIONS



Dallaway: This is ex-council, two storey, medium to small semi-detached houses. There are pavements, small front gardens closed-in by low walls, back gardens with lots of grass. Parking is mainly on-street.



Thrupp Lane: This is a mix of 18th to 20th century, stone, brick, detached and semi-detached, houses and bungalows. This mix gives it its character, as does the way the greenery mixes with and obscures a lot of the buildings. Building lines tend to be set back from the road. Front and back gardens abound. Cars are parked both on- and off-street. The early/mid 20th century buildings have a subtle Arts and Crafts influence. Dormer windows and steep roofs seem to fit the character of the steeply sloping valley. The hedges, walls, trees and shrubs are as much a part of the character of the area as the buildings themselves. Rear gardens often contain mature trees and hedges, and this ties the character of the area together, bringing quite disparate building styles and ages together in a unified whole. Materials: usually brick, Cotswold stone, painted render, clay, concrete and slate roof tiles and brick for chimneys.



Far Thrupp: Similar to Thrupp Lane, with a greater emphasis on early-mid 20th century semi-detached houses filling the gaps between older stone

cottages. Most have gardens front and rear. Generally rendered, with concrete tile roofs. Large, rectangular, modern industrial buildings, some traditional houses with large gardens, caravan park residential settlement. Commercial industrial is modern, large traditional brick and stone mill buildings, e.g. Ham Mill, 4/5 storeys with chimney, pale coloured. Lots of trees around factories. Lots of Victorian brick. Concrete, steel, aluminium profile sheets. Fishing spots and llamas create an oasis adjacent to factory units!

London Road (east and west):

Moving from the east (Stroud) end of the valley to the west, from the junction of Thrupp Lane to Brewery Lane, there are a number of pockets of housing. 19th and 20th century semi-detached houses and terraces interspersed with the mills, and, towards Brewery Lane, there are more Victorian red brick terraces, and a former pub, a former shop, garage workshop, etc. Mostly residential, a few light-industrial, straight terraces, some flats, some semis elevated, two to three storey, mostly small or medium sized, walls of brick or pebbledash. Front gardens closed in where elevated. Back gardens often large and sloping. Parking is mostly on-street, some properties have garages at the rear.

Brimscombe: A row of Victorian red brick shops with accommodation above, and several varied pockets of housing. Larger detached houses set back from the road on Nursery Drive towards Toadsmoor Road. Youngs Orchard is very modern compared to the other houses. Red brick industrial buildings near the shop. Lewiston Mill (in red brick) has been successfully redeveloped for accommodation and employment. Bourne Lane includes 20th century semi-detached houses along the lower side and in Lewiston Close. There are some larger modern houses in Nursery Drive as well as individual cottages and stone terraces. Brimscombe Corner has some shops and the old telephone exchange. There are also a few houses – and the Ship Inn – along Brimscombe Hill towards the railway. Gunhouse Lane is a private road with a few recent houses.

7. DESIGN GUIDANCE

INTRODUCTION

In 2019, the government published a National Design Guide which “illustrates how well-designed places that are beautiful, enduring and successful can be achieved in practice”. It now forms part of the government’s collection of Planning Practice Guidance so it is what it says – guidance - not a set of formal requirements. Its key criteria are aimed to be applicable to any development site in the country, so it is inevitably rather general and some criteria may not apply to developments in the future in Brimscombe and Thrupp.

The government has also now published the National Model Design Code which takes what is in the National Design Guide into far more detail, much of it not applicable to settings such as Brimscombe and Thrupp.

Our guidance is built primarily around the criteria listed in the National Design Guide. How this will be used in developing and assessing the design quality of planning applications is, however, rather different in three key ways.

The National Design Guide is not very strong on aspects of sustainable design and construction, but these are key issues for Brimscombe and Thrupp. So, in terms of content, what follows adds (at the

end) more criteria about those aspects. These aspects should be considered by anybody proposing to build, whether or not a planning application is needed. Rather than list a series of ‘you must’ instructions to applicants, we prefer to pass the responsibility for producing good design back to the applicant and their designer, by asking them to show clearly in their Design and Access Statement how their designs have responded to the criteria that follow later. Applications that do not do this, or fail to show links to this Design Statement are potentially at risk of being rejected.

To help the local community, the Parish Council and the applicant to achieve designs good enough to be approved, we wish to reinforce to applicants the value of working within the Pre-Application Community Involvement Protocol that is in the Neighbourhood Plan as Policy. It is only through that joint working with local people as designs develop that both community and applicant can be confident about any eventual application.

In addition to this general guidance, the Parish Council will work with the wider community, landowners/developers and Stroud District Council to produce design codes for specific development sites. These will mainly be for larger sites

(Brimscombe Port and Ham Mill were topical at the time of writing) but possibly also for smaller sites that have some particular significance, for example in heritage terms.

KEY CRITERIA

The criteria that follow below in **plain and bold text** are those from the National Design Guide that seem clearly relevant to Brimscombe and Thrupp. (For completeness, those not obviously or currently relevant are listed at the end of this section.)

The text in *italics* is key points about the criteria as applied specifically to Brimscombe and Thrupp.

CONTEXT

Understand and relate well to the site, its local and wider context.

- *This requires applicants to not just show how their designs relate to their specific site but also to the broader patterns of Brimscombe and Thrupp, as in sections 2 on Landscape Setting, 3 on Views and 4 on Settlement Pattern.*

Value heritage, local history and culture.

- *This Design Statement outlines the historical development of the Parish. Appendices 1 and 2 in Part 1 of the Neighbourhood Plan provide more detailed Information on heritage issues. Applicants need to show how their designs respond to these where relevant to a particular site. See Appendix 2 for details of all Listed Buildings in the Parish.*

IDENTITY

Respond to existing local character and identity.

This is covered in the first point above under Context.

Well-designed, high quality and attractive.

- *Applications are more likely to address this aspect successfully if an appropriately qualified professional is involved.*

Create character and identity.

- *The designs of smaller infill developments need to show clearly how they relate to and contribute to local distinctiveness. It is, however, possible for larger developments to create their own distinctive identity – exactly as has always happened to shape the diversity of Brimscombe and Thrupp today – in particular when addressing issues of sustainable design and construction.*
- *Although there are no particularly distinctive design details in the mainly residential buildings up the hill from the London Road, the common boundary treatments of walls (high and low), fences and hedges are important to the character and should be used in preference to open fronts.*

- *The more historic buildings in the areas between the London Road and the canal – much of this in the Conservation Area - originally created a common character in terms of the materials of the buildings but also their site boundaries. New developments should, where technically appropriate, use historic materials or ones that match and complement these. In all cases, boundary treatments, especially along the London Road itself, should retain or replace stone and brick-built boundaries or use trees to create a strong boundary.*
- *Tree retention and new planting along all of the London Road will help to create a less tarmac-dominated visual character to the road, help with carbon capture and help to create wildlife links across the road.*

BUILT FORM

Compact form of development

- *This is about ensuring, in general, the best use of land and avoiding the loss of greenfield land. Much of the upper area of Brimscombe and Thrupp is basically suburban in character so, while good design can maximise the use of land, higher densities than in areas around a site may not be appropriate.*
- *While being compact, the layout of new development should nevertheless optimise the benefits of daylighting and passive solar gain, as this can significantly reduce energy consumption.*

Appropriate building types and forms

- *The Parish includes a mix of houses (mainly up the hill from the London Road) and industrial/commercial buildings (mainly on the other side of the London Road). It is likely (in fact it is already happening) that some buildings in the latter strip will either be demolished and housing built, or kept and converted to housing. In all cases, especially for new-build, it will be important that designs reflect and draw from the industrial/commercial heritage of this strip of land, particularly in their*

relationship to the canal in terms of scale, materials and details.

Destinations

- *The regeneration of the canal is already having in impact both locally and further afield on the number of users of and visitors to the canal. This reinforces the importance of ensuring that all designs of buildings along or closely related to the canal relate to its heritage and ideally include uses which can enhance the visitor experience.*

MOVEMENT

An integrated network of routes for all modes of transport

- *This is only appropriate to Brimscombe and Thrupp and future developments in terms of footpaths and cyclepaths. Developers are encouraged to do all possible to contribute to the improvement of footpaths and perhaps add to the network with key links. This is particularly important in the strip along the canal where links from the canal footpath and cyclepath to the London Road and beyond would be of value not just for residents but also for visitors.*

A clear structure and hierarchy of connected streets

- *The purpose of “a clear structure and hierarchy” in the context of Brimscombe and Thrupp relates to the need for clear wayfinding and hence to clear and consistent signage for residents and visitors. Once again, this is of particular importance in linking the canal to London Road and beyond, even – for walks especially – clear signage up the hill and into the AONB.*

Well-considered parking, servicing and utilities infrastructure for all users

- *The amount of on-street parking makes a negative contribution to the overall character of the Parish. Future parking provision should aim to correct this. Well-designed and secure parking for visitors to canal-related developments will be particularly important.*

NATURE

Provide high quality, green open spaces with a variety of landscapes and activities, including play

- Few developments are likely to be large enough for significant open spaces to be required, so landscaping and 'greening' generally will be of importance both in design terms and in terms of mitigating climate change. Small green spaces along and linked to the canal can enhance the walker's experience.
- Even small developments, designed with care, can link or add to green/wildlife corridors in various ways, for example through the use of approaches such as Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS). Developments should front onto, or have links to, any green/wildlife corridor.
- Parts of sites on steep land otherwise unsuitable for building should be considered for allotments or community orchards, even perhaps (according to orientation) small solar farms.

Support rich and varied biodiversity

- There are a number of features of the design not just of open areas but also of buildings that can encourage biodiversity, for example, bat boxes and swift boxes. The inclusion of trees and native species shrubs is encouraged.
- As above, tree planting along the London Road and generally along the valley can help to support biodiversity.

Improve and enhance water management

- Excessive surface water run-off that can add to flooding problems should be avoided by the use of permeable surfaces*, the maximisation of trees and shrubs (as above) and approaches such as SUDS. (* This is in the Plan as a policy for driveways etc. but should also be considered for gardens.)

PUBLIC SPACES

Create well-located, high quality and attractive public spaces

Provide well-designed spaces that are safe

Make sure public spaces support social interaction

- These criteria probably only apply to larger developments, most likely those along the canal. If so, any public spaces should be located and designed to be as available to local people as to canal/canalside users, and ideally include ground floor uses such as cafes and specialist workshops. (See also other points above)

USES

A mix of home tenures, types and sizes

Socially inclusive

- Developments that include a mix should mix fully within the development. Separate areas for any affordable housing would not be supported.

HOMES AND BUILDINGS

Well-related to external amenity and public spaces

- All occupants of any development should have full and easy access to any amenity and public spaces; 'gated' areas will not be supported.

Attention to detail: storage, waste, servicing and utilities

- Particular care is needed generally, and especially in commercial and mixed developments, with the location, design and management of waste and recycling facilities.

SUSTAINABLE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

We strongly encourage all those working on projects that require planning permission, and on those (such as house extensions) that can advance as permitted development, to do all possible to design and then build in as sustainable a way as possible.

Some aspects of this can be controlled or influenced through the planning system and some through Building Regulations, but some could not be controlled by either at the time of writing. However, as the UK continues to address the challenges of global warming, this situation is changing rapidly. For example, since the first draft of this section, legislation has been proposed to curb the use of gas boilers in homes and ground source heat energy was being promoted very heavily at national level.

To that end, there is little value in attempting to prescribe guidance that seems certain to be out of date before this Neighbourhood Plan is made. Though illustrative examples of current (2021) key issues and solutions are outlined in this section, any new development should operate fully with the standards in place at that time, ideally also those at the leading edge of practice if not yet backed up through legislation or regulation.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES

Noise: Excessive noise can impact upon health, productivity and quality of life at home, in the workplace or at school. Uses likely to generate significant noise should be separated from those areas requiring quiet. Screening, isolation or other acoustic design methods (for example, low noise road surfaces) can be used.

Light Pollution: Effective illumination for public areas such as roads and paths should be well directed, ideally downwards, and almost invisible from a distance to maximise dark skies. Floodlighting for private spaces should be avoided or sensors should be used that only trigger illumination when an intruder is detected.

Microclimate: Building layouts should avoid the creation of wind tunnels. Effects can be minimised by the use of natural vegetation. While exposure to the sun has benefits for energy efficiency (and health), global warming also requires attention to avoiding excessive solar gain and providing cooler, shaded areas.

Energy in Buildings: Reducing energy demands is a key set of aspects. Passive solar design is essential, for example through orientation, avoidance of overshadowing and landscaping.

High standards of insulation are essential while also enabling some level of 'trickle' ventilation. 'Green roofs' are to be encouraged (with care needed in the Conservation Area).

Renewable Energy: For existing buildings without high levels of insulation, solar/photovoltaic panels can be considered, although visual impacts need to be addressed, particularly on or around listed buildings and in the Conservation Area. Ground and air source energy can also be very effective in many but not all situations.

Waste Water: For larger developments, managing sewage through internal, on-site systems such as reed beds, and the use of SUDs (Sustainable Urban Drainage Schemes), are of significant value not just for any site but also for the parish's waste systems as a whole.

Other aspects can currently be controlled through the building regulations system or the ideas that follow should be encouraged:

APPENDIX 1: POLICY CONTEXT

- [The National Planning Policy Framework 2019.](#)
- [National Planning Practice Guidance.](#)
- [The National Design Guide.](#)
- [The Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan.](#)
- [The Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Position Statements on Housing and Development, Landscape Setting, Renewable Energy, Local Distinctiveness and Landscape Change.](#)
- [The Stroud District Local Plan](#) (currently under review).
- [The Stroud District Residential Design Guide.](#)
- [The Stroud Industrial Heritage Design Guide.](#)
- [The Stroud Introduction to Sustainable Design and Construction Checklist.](#)
- [The Heritage Strategy for Stroud District.](#)
- [The Industrial Heritage Conservation Area Strategy.](#)
- Historic England Guidance notes on [The Setting of Heritage Assets](#), [Local Heritage Listing](#) and [Neighbourhood Planning](#) and the [Historic Environment](#).
- [The Historic Environment Record.](#)

APPENDIX 2: LISTED BUILDINGS

Grade 1

- Nether Lypiatt Manor, also including forecourt walls, gateways etc.

Grade 2

- 52, Thrupp Lane
- 57 and 59, Thrupp Lane
- Barn and Cattle Shelter Approximately 70 Metres North of Nether Lypiatt Manor
- Bourne Lock, Bridge and Weir Immediately North of Bourne Mills
- Bramley Cottage and Balsam Cottage
- Brimscombe Cottage Brimscombe Court
- Brimscombe Port Walls
- Brimscombe Terrace
- Brimscombe War Memorial
- Cleeve House
- Coach House and Stables Approximately 30 Metres North West of Nether Lypiatt Manor
- Corner Cottage, cleevedale and Brentwood
- Foresters Cottage
- Gate Posts and Gates to Ham Mill
- Ham Lock, Canal Bridge and Weir
- Ham Mill
- Main Mill Building at Bourne Mills\
- Marlyn House
- Obelisk Monument Approximately 120 Metres South of Nether Lypiatt Manor
- Port Mill
- Railings in Front of Woodbine Cottage woodbine Cottage
- Salt Warehouse
- Small Mill Building at Bourne Mills
- Steepway
- The Lodge
- The Thrupp
- Two Bridges over River Frome
- Yew Tree Farmhouse