

# **Longney and Epney Parish**

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## **VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT**

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Adopted by Longney and Epney Parish Council (*date tba*)

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## **INTRODUCTION**

### **What is a Village Design Statement?**

This Village Design Statement describes Longney and Epney Parish as it is today and highlights the particular qualities for which it is valued. The Statement is based on the views of its residents so that local knowledge, views and ideas may contribute to the future and the quality of their environment. The aim is to ensure that further development and change, based on a considered understanding of the villages' past and present, will contribute positively to a sustainable future for the Parish and protect and enhance its unique and special characteristics.

### **Who is it for?**

Change is brought about not only by large developments, but more often, in a rural area such as this, by smaller day-to-day adjustments to homes and gardens, open spaces, paths and hedges, which alter the look and feel of the whole village. This Design Statement is therefore addressed to:

- Statutory bodies and public authorities
- Planners, developers, builders, architects, designers, engineers
- Local community groups
- Householders and businesses
- Landowners

### **How does the Village Design Statement work?**

The objective is for this Design Statement to be adopted by Stroud District Council as Supplementary Planning Advice, so that its recommendations will be taken into account when planning applications are assessed. The Design Statement would thus supplement Stroud District Council's planning policies and would be read in conjunction with it. In this way it should support the saved Local Plan policies and any future Local Development Framework policies as they affect Longney and Epney. It will assist the work of the Parish Council in its role as a statutory planning consultee.

The recommendations in this document will be carefully considered in planning decisions relating to Longney and Epney Parish, but it should be borne in mind that there can be tensions between different strategies and policies of stakeholders, all relevant in reaching a final balanced planning decision. Each individual application is decided on its own merits in the context of many different documents operating at different levels, whether international, national and regional. These documents are analysed and weighed by the District Council prior to a final planning decision.

This means that, when considered together, in some instances other policies may take precedence over the recommendations made here.

### **How does this Design Statement reflect the views of residents?**

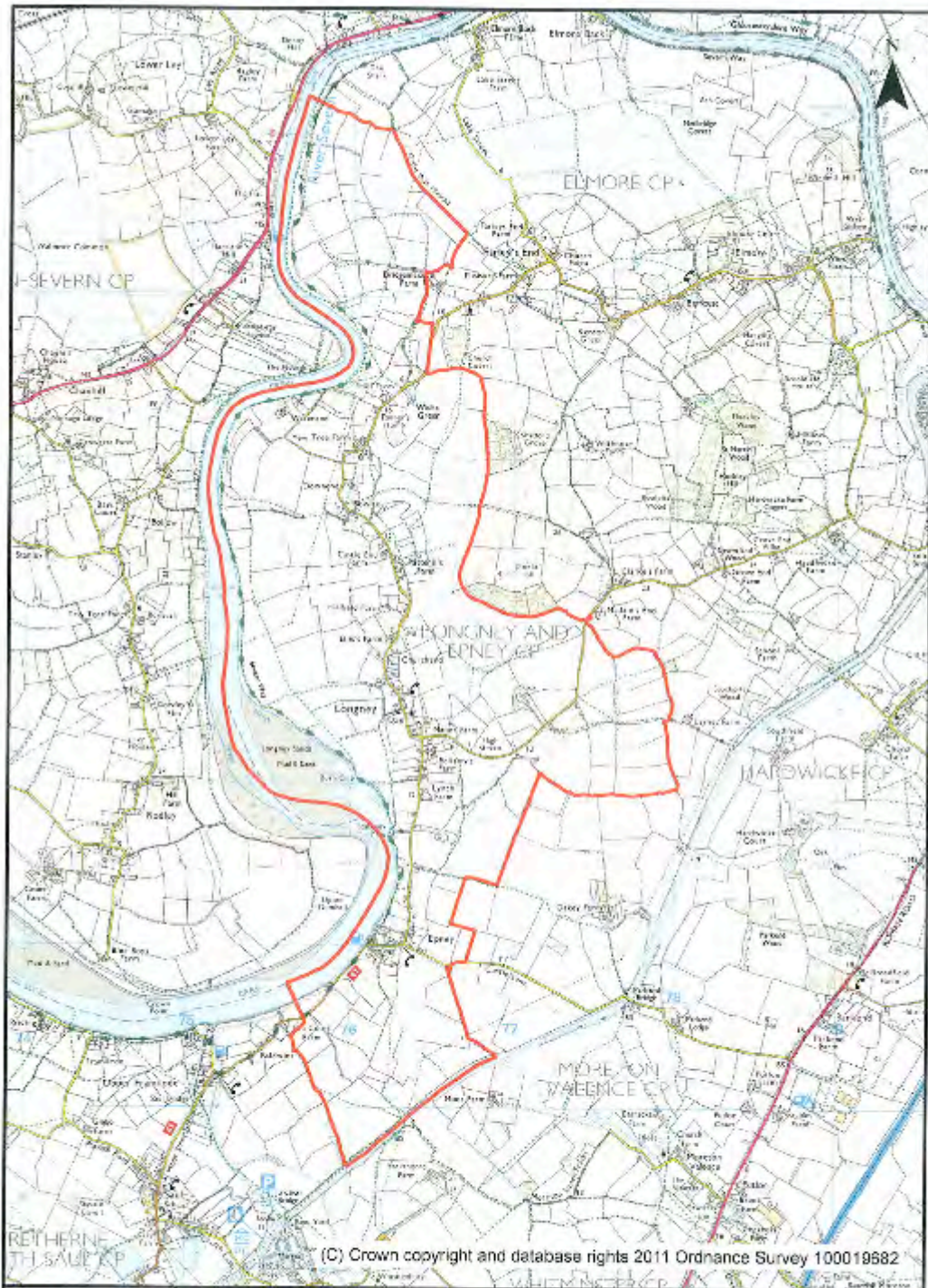
This Village Design Statement is based on the Longney and Epney Parish Plan of 2007 (Ref: [www.longneyandepney.co.uk](http://www.longneyandepney.co.uk) and printed document attached). Three years on, many of the actions suggested within the Plan have been implemented or are currently in process. One such action is the development of a Village Design Statement as a way of consolidating residents' views on planning matters.


We appreciate that there are sometimes conflicting interests in reaching a planning decision, and that each individual application is decided on its merits in the context of several different documents at different levels, local, regional and national. Some of the views expressed in this Design Statement may not accord entirely with policies developed, of necessity, without taking detailed local variations into account.

However our local community does indeed "have a unique appreciation and understanding our own place" (see "Introduction to Village Design Statements"). One of the areas of serious concern for our residents remains the role of the Planning Authorities in the future development of the place where they live, and the level of influence that residents have over this in practice. Our expectation is that this document will ensure that their views are respected by Stroud District Council in their future planning decisions and the enforcement of the same.

### **Acknowledgements**

Residents of Longney and Epney, Parish Councillors, Officers of Stroud District Council and a number of Agencies and Statutory Bodies have all participated in the development of this Design Statement. Details of their particular contributions can be found in Appendix A.



 <p><b>STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL</b> www.stroud.gov.uk</p>	<p><b>Epney and Longney Parish</b></p>	<p>25/07/2011</p>	<p>1:30,000</p>
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## DESCRIPTION

### What kind of place is the parish of Longney and Epney?

Longney and Epney is a single parish comprising settlements of a particular rural character extending over two and a half miles to the East of the River Severn. They lie within the Lower Severn Flood Plain, with two distinct areas of denser housing.

There are 209 inhabitants living in 108 dwellings (as of 2007). There is one Church, one Chapel, one Public House, two telephone kiosks (out of use) and three letterboxes. There is no Post office, shop or Village Hall but the parish has one of the best primary schools in the County.

### Historical development of the area

Longney and Epney, in common with a number of villages between the River Severn and the Gloucester-Sharpness canal, were originally settled with their focus on access to the river and to service the needs of the very significant river traffic. In the nineteenth century, the builders of



the canal left their mark with a particular type of housing characteristic of canal builders elsewhere in the United Kingdom. One consequence is that these parishes, which besides Longney and Epney include Frampton, Saul with Fretherne and Elmore, are not tightly clustered around a central village green with terraces or a consistent building style. The development is more sporadic and in a linear form. The older houses are generally spaced apart with substantial gardens, fields and orchards between them.

Brick for many local houses was supplied from the brickworks in Frampton and Longney. The remains of the latter, which were swept away in the flood of 1949 can still be seen at low tide. Reed beds at Frampton supplied material for the several thatched houses in the area.

Reference books on English buildings ("The Buildings of England" Verey and Brooks, Yale University Press 2002) make detailed reference to St Laurence Church, Longney, which is mostly early 14th century, as well as to the fine collection of 17th and 18th century headstones in the churchyard.



They also mention Longney School (by Jacques and Son 1861-2), the Independent Chapel (1839), the former Vicarage (1869) and Manor Farm, the largest house in the village. A further five "good timber framed farms and cottages" - mostly 17th century and one 15th century - are all mentioned by name.

Epney is described in reference books as a small, mostly late 19th century Severnside hamlet, with a number of "modestly classical" brick houses with distinctive individual detailing which, like those in neighbouring Saul, are said to have been built for ships' masters. (See Appendix B for further illustrations)

### **The Natural Environment**

Sited around the outside of a vast bend of the river Severn, the parish enjoys clear views over agricultural land across the river to the Forest of Dean to the West, to the Cotswolds to the East and South towards the Severn bridges and Avonmouth. It is against this background that the settlement of relatively scattered houses and farm buildings which constitute the Parish of



Longney and Epney is situated. This natural environment in and around the settlement is a key feature of the parish. Sympathetically managed agricultural land, woodland, river banks and the sandbanks formed within the river at low tide provide a balanced and exceptionally rich wildlife habitat. This is also due to the relatively low density of population and a correspondingly low level of the noise and

movement disturbing to wildlife.

#### *National and International Wildlife Sites*

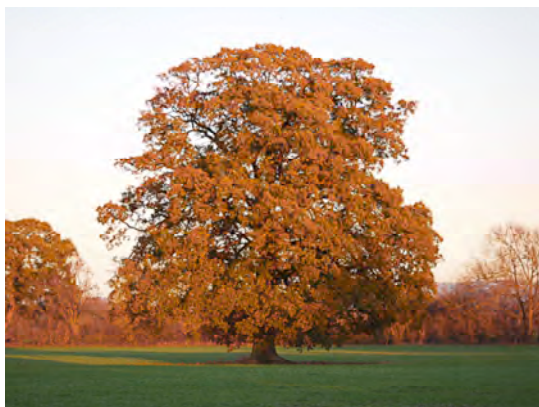
The Parish lies between two key wildlife sites. It is within two miles of the internationally recognised (RAMSAR) wetlands area of Slimbridge, which is also protected by statutory National SPA status. Two miles to the North across the River Severn is the Walmore Common RAMSAR and SPA site.

(See Appendix B for map of wildlife sites)



### *Trees and traditional orchards*

The tree preservation order currently administered by the District Council requires a licence for the felling of trees. There are a number of particularly fine aged oaks in the parish as well as Lombardy poplars, pollarded willow, walnut and Scots pine which should be conserved and retained via Forestry Commission Tree Preservation Orders (TPO) for their contribution to the amenity and character of the area and their provision of wildlife habitats. (Ref: Stroud District Local Plan p. 129 and [www.forestry.gov.uk/](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/) - Tree Felling - Getting Permission).



A near-unique feature of this Severnside landscape is the orchards which border the river, many of which still survive. Traditional orchards are defined for priority habitat purposes as orchards managed in a low intensity way, in contrast with orchards managed intensively for fruit production by the input of chemicals such as pesticides and inorganic fertilisers, frequent mowing of the orchard floor rather than grazing

or cutting for hay, and planting of short-lived, high-density, dwarf or bush fruit trees. Orchards are hotspots for biodiversity in the countryside, supporting a wide range of wildlife. Orchards are recognised as a UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) priority habitat and can include an array of Nationally rare species.

Fruit trees are not covered by TPOs and the very extensive orchards within the Parish have been greatly reduced in the last 40 years. As recently as the 1960s virtually every house within the settlement had a small orchard. (See map in Appendix B)

**“Traditional orchards have recently been added to the list of Priority Habitats under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP). With existing data relating to the extent and distribution of traditional orchards being outdated, the UK Habitat Action Group has recognised that producing an inventory of**



**traditional orchards is a very high priority.”(People’s Trust for Endangered Species 2010)**

The wildlife potential of orchard sites depends on the mosaic of habitats they encompass, including fruit trees, scrub, hedgerows, hedgerow trees, non-fruit trees within the orchard, the orchard floor habitats, fallen dead wood and associated features such as ponds and streams. A feature of the diversity of traditional orchards is the great variety of fruit cultivars that they



contain and more than 100 varieties of apple and 16 varieties of plum and damson have been identified within the county by the Gloucestershire Orchard Group (GOG).

While they are no longer of obvious commercial value, there are a few orchards in the village which are conserved and maintained by their owners and there is a project currently under discussion to turn traditional orchards within the village (either existing or to be restored in the future) into a business venture.

Many of the remaining orchards have been uprooted or fallen into disrepair. They remain a very particular feature of this landscape and the remaining ones should be preserved. In Gloucestershire it is estimated that over 75% of our old orchards have now been lost. The Gloucestershire Biodiversity Action Plan sets out the state of the county's orchards, their importance in landscape and historic terms as well as for wildlife, and what must be done to safeguard and improve the future. The Gloucestershire Orchard Group (GOG) has surveyed the area and plays an important role in their conservation. (See Appendix B for a more extended excerpt from the GOG report on Longney and Epney orchards)

**“The Peoples trust for endangered species classify a Traditional Orchard as being 5 trees or more in a group on traditional spacings. Whilst surveying these (...Longey and Epney) orchards we occasionally came across single or scattered trees which due to their age and condition, decaying with plenty of dead wood and holes, were worthy of being surveyed and placed into veteran tree status.” (Chief Surveying Officer, Gloucestershire Orchard Group 2010)**

#### *Farmland and the natural environment*

**“Under the Countryside Stewardship scheme, Severn Vale farmland has been selected as a priority for encouraging wading birds, wild flowers, species-rich pastures and meadows and pollarded willows. Traditional orchards, ridge and furrow fields...are also targets.” (Ref: Stroud District Landscape Assessment 2000 p.A12)**

This statement appears to reflect the existing healthy biodiversity in the area, but it is not clear what the terms “priority” and “encourage” imply in this case.

Working arable and mixed farms within the Parish subscribe with enthusiasm to good practice in sustainable husbandry through existing conservation and set-aside schemes. The majority of farmed land within the Parish is managed in accordance with the Natural England Environmental Stewardship Scheme.

#### *Night Skies*

The Parish and surrounding area currently benefit from an unusually uninterrupted (for Southern England) view of the night sky and the value of this as a nationally endangered asset is now recognized by a number of national and international agencies.

Incorrectly set lighting, whether on residential or commercial premises, produces glare which can conceal rather than reveal and thus be counterproductive as a security measure. It can impact on the ecology and wildlife of an area and affect the behavioural patterns of mammals, birds and insects. It can also contribute to the “suburbanization” of this rural area. (Ref: Campaign for the Protection of Rural England Guidelines on limiting lighting pollution and technical guidance)

**“In areas with low ambient lighting levels, glare can be very obtrusive and extra care should be taken when positioning and aiming lighting equipment. ...Many planning Authorities have already produced, or are producing policies that within the new planning system will become part of the local development framework.”(ref: The Institution of Lighting Engineers “Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light 2005)**

#### **Guidelines (Natural Environment)**

LNE1. Developments which imply changes in the use of land or buildings should seek to minimize noise, air and light pollution in this rural location as set out in CPRE Guidelines.

LNE2. Tranquillity and dark night skies are a characteristic of the Parish and should be maintained through measures to minimize noise and light pollution both within settlements and beyond in the open countryside as set out in Institute of Lighting Engineers Guidelines.

LNE3. The local landscape character is defined in the adopted Stroud District Landscape Character Assessment. All new development should be designed to conserve and enhance the character and appearance of the landscape, and this character should influence the layout and form of any such development.

LNE4. Wildlife species and their supporting habitats should be managed appropriately through the protection and maintenance of the existing wildlife areas and corridors within the farmed environment (including arable land), river banks, traditional orchards, ditches and water courses.

LNE5. Regulations relating to the felling of trees and the preservation of hedgerows and other natural features should be robustly enforced in accordance with the Natural Environment Policies in the Local Plan p.128

LNE6. Orchards will be a protected asset and their status as national Priority Habitats will be observed when considering planning applications. A full ecological survey will be required to accompany any application. This will assess their wildlife value and taking account of other sustainability considerations, should seek to secure their future management..

(Ref: Stroud District Council Landscape Assessment 2000 and Stroud District Local Plan sec. 8 Natural Environment)

## Farming

The parish was traditionally an agricultural area with small farms, many of them growing fruit. Extensive plum and apple orchards are a particular feature of the Severn Vale villages, and in past times the fruit industry, including cider making, was important throughout the area. Before the current river defences were established, what were then flood meadows close to the river were used for grazing and are still classified in the Stroud Landscape Assessment (2000) as “Severn Vale Grazing Marshes”. Since the current river defences were completed, c. 250 hectares of prime agricultural land have been protected as productive farmland, while preserving through good husbandry their value as an unusually varied wildlife habitat.

The area exhibits a number of key characteristics which includes the open flat landscape with extensive views across a large scale rectilinear field pattern. It exhibits a strong influence of water manifested in numerous drainage ditches and streams.. Whilst farming practices continue to change in this locality, the identified key characteristics remain.

The farms within the Parish range from medium-scale dairy, arable and beef farms to family-run smallholdings.

**“The best and most versatile land is defined as grades 1, 2 and 3a by policy guidance PPS7. This is the land which is most flexible, productive and efficient in response to inputs and which can best deliver future crops for food and non-food uses such as biomass. (Ref: Natural England “Agricultural Land Classification” 2009)**

This agricultural land in this area is composed of alluvial deposits and is largely Grade 2 or 3 with some Grade 1. High grade agricultural land such as this is a significant source of food produced for consumption within the UK and for export, and there are national, strategic sustainability issues around ensuring it remains available as such.

**“With the predicted loss of much of the world’s productive farmland over the next forty years due to water shortage, salinity and increasing frequency of extreme weather events, I believe that there is a particular responsibility on countries less**



**vulnerable to the impact of climate change, such as the UK, to maximize their agricultural potential” (Jules Freeman, chairman of the All-Party Parliamentary group on Science and Technology in Agriculture, 2011)**

It is therefore of paramount importance for those that live and have their business within the Parish

that the river defences (see “Flooding” below) are maintained to protect this agricultural land as well as the buildings which comprise the homes and farms of the Parish.

The need to diversify farming practice now and in the future is recognized as vital to ensuring the viability of farming enterprises in the area. Of the 4-5 farms within the parish, one in particular has diversified by adding value to its products and a second runs a thriving equestrian establishment using existing buildings. These enterprises between them provide locally distributed food of high quality and local employment respectively. In the future this may include the traditional orchards (see above, under “Natural Environment”) which could become a basis for small business within the community.



Pasture formally used for cattle is now frequently used for grazing horses, often at livery, and this had the advantage of maintaining the existing field system paddocks, fences and hedgerows (wildlife corridors) and thus contributing to the wildlife diversity in the area. It also provides employment within the parish.

There are also farm buildings which have been converted for residence or for commercial use for plant hire, timber and equestrian activity. Diversification has generally followed the servicing of local (rural) needs and interests. However a number of redundant farm buildings, many of which are of historical interest, remain unused (see sections below on the Built Environment and Business).

#### **Guidelines (Farming)**

LF1. Agricultural land is regarded as a natural asset and finite resource which should be protected. The presence of the best and most versatile agricultural land will be taken into account alongside other sustainability considerations (e.g. biodiversity, the quality and character of the landscape, its amenity value or heritage interest, maintaining viable communities) when considering planning applications.

LF2. Diversification which protects land as a nationally important and finite productive asset while managing the requirements of a sustainable community (such as equestrian activity, specialized food production) will be encouraged.

## The Built Environment

Longney and Epney are "late developers" compared with many rural villages, at least in southern England, and this is probably due to their floodplain location as well as their somewhat isolated situation between the Gloucester-Sharpness Canal with its swing bridges and the river.



This late development provides a rare opportunity to preserve the rural character of this area. Older houses in the parish have not been subject to extensive external renovations until fairly recently and much of the housing stock, while much improved internally, has maintained its original character.

Most of the built environment of the Parish is not of the kind normally associated with the conservation or "heritage" in the UK, but is nevertheless valued and respected by residents and visitors for what it is; fit for purpose, largely well-built rural housing.

The villages are currently characterized by relatively little new building apart from some infill plots in Longney. The scale of the local building is small to medium in size. There are a number of houses of particular historic interest with either Grade 2 listing or orders preserving particular features.

While there is no consistent building style throughout the parish, there are particular features which appear repeatedly in the many traditional houses more than 100 years old - namely in the brickwork, window styles, porches, and above all in the scale of building. (See Appendix B for further illustrations)



There have been some excellent examples in the parish from the last 15 years of conversions of barns and extensions to houses which are sympathetic in their use of traditional building materials - brickwork, tiling and timber - and which respect the building style typical of the area while creating a new and imaginative living environment. (See appendix B for further details and illustrations)

There are individual buildings within the parish with particular features which might be considered protection via local listing (Ref: Stroud District Local Plan PPS6 and see appendix B for illustrations)



Longney and Epney are settlements of mainly fairly widely scattered housing. The consequence is that the space between the houses, whether this be agricultural land, footpaths, verges,



generous hedgerows, fields for horses or other domestic animals, are as essential to the character of the place as the buildings themselves. Many houses, including the smaller ones, have medium to large gardens, some with small orchards attached thus allowing scope for a level of self-sufficiency.

Given the number of houses with relatively spacious gardens or orchards attached, a form of “Garden Theft” - the use of these spaces for housing development - often under the guise of replacing an existing outhouse/building has become an occasional feature of the parish. Development rights for extensions and replacements need careful qualification to avoid the gradual erosion of the “scattered development” character of the village.

A key character component of the area is the mix of dwelling size. There are a few large houses, relatively substantial farmhouses with associated farm buildings, and numerous cottages. Where houses have been extended or replaced by larger dwellings, there has been an incremental but significant loss of smaller and therefore more affordable homes.

The personal need of people already resident in the village for particular kinds of housing over the next 5 or 6 years has been shown to be limited whether it be starter homes for single people or couples or family homes or bungalows for older people. Three quarters of respondents did not answer this question at all in a Parish-wide questionnaire, and we assume that this is because they are adequately housed for the future as they see it. A number of individuals expressed a need for starter homes for single people or couples, and a somewhat smaller number say they will need family homes or bungalows for older people but it was not specified whether these would be needed within the parish. The Stroud District Housing Needs Survey completed in January/February 2007 has helped to clarify this.



PPS5 – Planning for the Historic Environment (March 2010) sets out planning policies on the conservation of the historic environment. It currently defines a heritage asset as “A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape positively identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions. Heritage assets are the valued components of the historic environment. They include designated heritage assets (as defined in this PPS) and assets identified by the local planning authority during the process of decision-making or through the plan-making process (including local listing).”

#### **Guidelines (Built Environment)**

LBE1. The existing mix of building/housing size is seen as a positive feature of the parish as a whole and should be maintained. Extensions or upgrades to existing dwellings or any new development should retain the mix of house types and dwelling sizes . It is important to maintain the characteristic diversity of dwellings in the village which can meet established local housing needs.

LBE2. The character of the existing housing stock should be seen as a positive asset and its scale and proportionality conserved. New development, including extensions, garages and adaptations to existing properties, should respect the traditional and vernacular in terms of proportion, scale, height, materials, and landscape patterns. Care should be taken to ensure that elevations in extensions or new buildings remain in proportion to existing buildings.

LBE3. Opportunities for the further identification and potential designation of heritage assets will be explored with the District Council and English Heritage, including potential local listing. A reasoned justification on its architectural and historic importance must be provided to commence this process.

LBE4. Building area to plot area ratios should be managed to preserve the “scattered dwellings” character of the village. The ratio of building to green spaces in the village settlement should be maintained.

LBE5. The conversion of redundant farm buildings will need to comply with the requirements of any relevant national and Local Plan policies. .

LBE6. The existing Village Settlement Boundaries should be maintained, to protect the rural character of the villages.

#### **Infrastructure**

##### *The road network*

There are a number of contradictions to be managed between people's desire for the convenience of easy access to shops and other facilities, the needs of local farm traffic and other freight and van traffic relating to local business, and environmental sustainability issues and the explicit desire of most residents to live in "peace and quiet" and maintain the rural character of the area.

The roads through the Parish serve a multitude of purposes. Besides cars, they are used by lorries, delivery and other business vehicles, agricultural machinery, motorbikes, cyclists, pedestrians and horse riders, and this traffic passes relatively close to many of the houses. There is a 30 mph speed limit through the built up part of the parish.

The roads though the parish are narrow with insufficient or limited space to pass at many locations. Sight lines can be poor and there are multiple bends. Hedges, ditches and banks are immediately adjacent to the carriageway which makes them subject to damage, especially in wet and freezing weather, from larger vehicles passing each other and generally careless drivers. The road dimensions, condition and rural location can have a traffic calming effect though.

The surface of the roads is not in good condition, though given their minor status they are understandably not a high priority in Gloucestershire Highways maintenance budgets. Potholes tend to be fairly promptly but temporarily repaired and there is constant damage to the edges of the lanes by heavy vehicles pulling into the side to allow for passing. While poor road surface discourages speeding by some drivers, potholes and cracks are also hazards which can cause cyclists, motorcyclists and smaller cars to swerve. Any improvement or upgrading could make the roads safer but may also encourage speeding, inappropriate driving and increased traffic.

Official records indicate there was one fatality and a number of slight accidents within the parish since the year 2000, one at Epney and one between Epney and Longney, but there were five slight and two serious incidents in the same period on the same road just across the parish boundary towards Saul. (Ref: Gloucestershire County Council, Road Safety Unit)

The Parish is on an island accessible only via swing bridges across the Gloucester-Sharpness canal. Access to the Longney and Epney parish via Park End bridge is imperative and anything which might limit that access or make it more difficult should be robustly opposed. Damage to any one of these bridges by heavy or indeed any vehicle would have serious consequences for residents. The alternative of using other bridges to the north and south brings traffic, often very heavy traffic, through Frampton, Saul or Elmore on winding, narrow lanes already in poor condition.

The canal bridges, located within the adjacent Parishes of Moreten Valence, Frampton, Saul with Fretherne and Hardwicke are also a significant security issue. They are vital for access by police, fire and ambulance services and the British Waterways bridgemen provide an informal but highly effective emergency information and surveillance point.

### *Public transport*

Public transport exists but is of limited use to residents. The parish is served by two buses daily in and out of Gloucester only, the first of which is (currently) at 7.15 in the morning.

It is recognised that public transport is not commercially supportable and a taxi or minibus service is probably a preferable solution. This however, needs to be affordable to those who can neither drive nor afford a car.

A volunteer-run village taxi service (shared with Frampton and Saul) currently exists to help those who do not drive or do not own a car to get to essential appointments.

### *Utilities*

Mains water is supplied by Severn Trent. A sewerage system, itself a contentious subject within the Parish, was installed to serve the needs of Longney. Most households continue to utilise a septic-tank soak-away system of their own, and these generally work adequately.

The area enjoys a reliable electricity supply and power cuts are rare.

### *Communications*

British Telecom does not maintain cable in sufficiently good condition to supply broadband access to the parish, and under a Parish Plan initiative, wireless broadband is now used by many residents on a local network installed by Cotswold Wireless. British Telecom recently upgraded some of the cable into the parish but it is yet to be seen what benefits this will deliver.

The public phone box in the village has been disconnected by BT on the grounds of insufficient usage, despite protests from the parish that not everyone has a mobile phone and such boxes are vital in the event of a serious emergency when mobile networks are normally out of use. Mobile phone reception in the parish is variable with some "no signal" spots.

### **Guidelines (Infrastructure)**

L11. Any development, residential or commercial, which results in a significant increase in traffic volumes, will be strictly controlled in this rural location. Where required a transport assessment or the Design and Access Statement for new proposed developments should take into account the effect of additional car ownership upon the highway capacity within the Parish.

L12. Highway verges should be managed appropriately to maximise wildlife opportunities wherever possible in accordance with published County Council advice.

LI3. Development bringing additional heavy traffic across the canal bridges should be strictly controlled owing to highway safety and the risk of damage to the bridges.

LI4. Urbanising features such as kerb stones, road markings and road signs should be restricted to a minimum legal requirement to ensure road safety and to be sensitive to their rural location.

LI5. Any planning application should also set out roadside vegetation management and the maintenance of ditches and culverts relevant to the site and its proposed use.

LI6. Any new development should identify how foul drainage will be managed the first presumption being to provide a system of foul drainage discharging into a public sewer.

### **Business**

Around 20% of residents run a business from within the Parish and in many cases this entails a single person working from home. Such businesses include small building and/or building maintenance, specialized technical support, photography, computer-related expertise, arts and crafts and office based activities including administration and consultancy.

The establishment of a wireless broadband system for the Parish with the aid of grants from Gloucestershire First was part of an initiative to facilitate and encourage such local, small-scale entrepreneurship. It can also provide a sustainable and productive use of otherwise redundant farm and other outbuildings.

Where a business within the Parish entails commercial buildings and plant there are issues of proportionality and scale to be addressed. There is a concern based on experience in the Parish that where permission is granted for commercial development it can be difficult to prevent inappropriate expansion of such a business, and the negative effects in terms of very large non-agriculture related heavy traffic on small roads can be considerable.

There are sustainability issues around access to facilities. Currently most employment and almost all facilities are reached by car journeys. Apart from possible access to more local food, this is unlikely to change significantly, given the size of the population.

It should be noted that at the time of writing (July 2011) there is no long-term unemployment within the parish.

### **Guidelines (Business)**

LB1. Environmental constraints and sustainability considerations such as in- and out-commuting will be considered in any analysis of expansion or new business applications.

LB2. Small-scale entrepreneurship which does not create disproportionate burdens on the



existing infrastructure and facilities will be encouraged. Any business development and the activity associated with it shall be low impact and be consistent with the rural location in terms of environmental quality and countryside character. (Lack of) public transport links, noise and preserving the visual amenity will be important considerations in reviewing any proposals.

(PPS7)

LB3. The re-use of redundant farm or other outbuildings for business will be supported where the other guidelines (above) are applied.

## **Community**

### *Population and community sustainability*

The parish has a strong long-term population, with about one person in five having been born within the parish and lived here all of their adult lives, and nearly half have lived here more than 10 years.

According to the 2001 Census nearly a third of people in the village are in managerial and professional occupations or are small employers or own-account workers, and there were no long-term unemployed. According to the Parish Plan questionnaire, more than half of residents travel outside of the parish to get to work.

Out of 109 households, 13 were pensioners living alone, and five households had no car.

Extensions, conversions and replacements to existing residential buildings are generally acceptable as they ensure the healthy evolution of the community and improve and maintain the housing stock. However if this activity is not subject to any constraints, it can result in a level of "upgrading" which makes much housing in the village irreversibly beyond the financial means of single or medium to low income families.

There is a need to limit the scope of extensions and the upgrading of housing on the grounds of the sustainability of the fabric of the community. By "affordable housing" we do not refer to social housing - but owner occupied or rented housing affordable by a small family or as a starter home. A diminishing number of such homes remain in the village.

This can result in a double loss to the area; affordable homes and the loss of a building which contributes to the established character and sense of space of the area. This is a form of gradual social, historic and aesthetic erosion which requires positive action to control it. [Ref: Stroud District Council Local Plan PP6 re potential for local listing]

The challenge to maintain a healthy and evolving community in rural areas is far from simple and a number of conflicting interests and priorities are constantly vying for position. The parish shares the challenge of many rural areas - that it is difficult to live there without the use of a car

and in this case to travel distances which most people would find impossible to cycle or walk. Many individual carbon footprints may therefore appear relatively high. When fuel prices rise as they did in the summer of 2008, and will inevitably do again in the years to come, there is a real possibility that living in a rural area will be confined to the relatively well off who can afford both a vehicle and the fuel.

#### *The school*

Longney primary school has an excellent reputation and it is a major asset to the village. Out of more than 100 pupils, more than 30 children from the immediate vicinity attend the school and it is an important reason why a number of families have moved to the area, with all the community-building advantages this brings. Recent changes in catchment area policy have created some serious anomalies in school journeys, and the parish is campaigning vigorously for policies to be more accurately focused on the particular geography of the area.

In the absence of a village hall, the school is an important community asset for the parish, as well as the location for the annual fete and bonfire party. The school building is used as a meeting place for the Parish Council and the school car park provides space for a small recycling collection point and is also used by churchgoers.

There is a rewarding collaboration between the school and parish over speeding and litter campaigns and the possible distribution of surplus fruit and vegetables from the school car park.

#### *Sustainability and local food*

There are no shops within the parish. The nearest is a village shop/post office in Frampton (2-4 miles away) where the doctors' surgery and pharmacy is also located. Mobile shops have not generally found a viable customer base within the parish.

Some local (produced within or close to the parish) food is available, such as milk, eggs, meat and vegetables.

In 2009 the Parish was in receipt of a grant for the purchase of gardening equipment (a rotavator and shredder) as part of a project to encourage more residents to grow their own vegetables. This is already showing promise, and the amount of produce grown within the parish and available for purchase on the spot has increased exponentially.

Given the relatively generous garden size of many houses in the Parish, vegetables have become increasingly available from such private garden surplus in the summer months, and house-gate sales for charity have greatly increased in the last two years.

The school is developing a funded project to grow vegetable on a larger scale which will be available for sale to residents and parents at the school gate.

There is a Parish project to restore some of the remaining orchards within the Parish which could enable a local supply of mixed fruit and scope for the production of added value products.

A community garden project is currently being explored and a piece of land which is currently farmed has been identified as available when required. This is shown on Map xx overleaf. This project will provide for community use of a piece of land with the sale of surplus produce at the gate to local residents. This serves a number of sustainability, carbon footprint, health and community-building purposes.

**Guidelines (Community)**

LC1. The school is important in attracting younger families to settle in the village and therefore maintaining a vibrant and developing community and should be regarded as an asset to be protected.

LC2. The school building, car park and sports field should be regarded as a key community asset to be protected on account of its local administrative, social and educational functions.

LC3. Production and consumption of local food should be supported by preserving productive space including grazing and encouraging local outlets.

## **GENERAL CONCERNS AND ISSUES TO BE ADRESSED**

### **Climate Change and its Effects**

The parish is situated in a floodplain, and the names of the villages Longney (long island) and Epney (short island) indicate the extent and frequency of flooding in earlier times. Much of the older housing is located on the slight rise of Longney and Epney villages respectively, and defences to prevent fairly regular flooding of the area at high tides are a comparatively recent feature of the area.

There are no natural outfalls to the river. Apart from a small area of higher ground in part of Longney, the Parish land falls within the Internal Drainage Board (IDB) remit. This much wider area covers land to the east as well as the west of the village and water levels across this area are regulated on a daily basis by a complex system of pumps and sluices. This area remains at substantial risk from flooding in the sense that it depends upon the river defences and the pumping system being maintained at least at their current level.

The map of this area administered by the Internal Drainage Board corresponds almost precisely with the area which suffered flooding in the last significant episode in 1999 (See Appendix B for map)

The flood plain land immediately adjacent to the River Severn is protected by defences largely reinforced by the Environment Agency (EA) in the years following the 1999 flood. It is now estimated to provide 1:100 level of protection from flooding from the river downstream of Longney Crib and 1:25 upstream over a period of 30 years. The Environment Agency is at present committed to maintaining the present flood defence level for the next 20-30 years (Lower Severn Flood Management Plan 2011).

However these figures are subject to significant modification by the level at which the defences are in practice maintained in the future, the possible building of a tidal power installation in the estuary, as well as sea level and extreme weather conditions brought about by climate change. Since the reinforcement work was carried out, actual flooding within the Parish has on the last two occasions (2007 and 2008) been caused by heavy rain falling on already saturated fields and ditches and could not be pumped fast enough from the land into the river.

This is an issue which affects all residents, visitors and through traffic, and a Parish-Council-generated "flood warnings and contingency planning" system is in place.

The development of this Parish Emergency Plan (Ref: Longney and Epney Parish Council - [www.LongeyandEpney.co.uk](http://www.LongeyandEpney.co.uk) <<http://www.LongeyandEpney.co.uk>> ) led to useful clarification of where and to whom flooding at various levels of severity within the Parish leads to a minor (or

major) inconvenience, a potential requirement for Parish-based or external assistance from the emergency services, or a threat to life and limb. Current thinking is that this risk is managed and very largely manageable with present flood management by the EA and IDB and Parish resources, but that the plan must be subjected to routine updating.

A challenge for residents and local businesses of note is the effect of published Flood Risk maps and documents on insurance premiums or even insurability of properties and the potential collapse in value of land and buildings where these documents can undermine confidence. This is likely to remain an ongoing challenge to properties and land management.

Planning policy (PPS 25) (March 2010) indicates the need for a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) to support the application of a Sequential Test in terms of land use and flood risk. A sequential risk-based approach to determining the suitability of land for development in flood risk areas is central to the policy statement and should be applied at all levels of the planning process. In Stroud District the level one SFRA has assessed all forms of flood risk: fluvial (rivers), tidal (sea), surface water, groundwater, sewers and impounded water bodies (reservoirs and canals). This has been approved by the Environment Agency in 2008. The Council has further commissioned a level 2 SFRA that involves a more detailed review of flood hazard (flood probability, flood depth, flood velocity and rate of onset of flooding) taking into account the presence of flood risk management measures such as flood defences. This information will help the Council in allocating land for development by adding more detail for the application of the Sequential Test.

The Shoreline Management Plan 2 is a non-statutory document, containing policies proposing how the shoreline around the Severn Estuary should be managed over the next 100 years. The Severn Estuary Shoreline Management Plan Review (referred to as SMP2) has been finalised now using DEFRA guidance (2006) and adopted by Stroud District Council in December 2010. The SMP2 has been developed by the Severn Estuary Coastal Group (SECG), in consultation with the people that live, work and visit the shoreline of the Severn Estuary using government-agreed guidance documents. The SECG is a partnership of the Environment Agency, conservation authorities, Internal Drainage Boards (IDBs) and various local authorities around the Severn Estuary. The study area of the SMP2 follows the shoreline from Lavernock Point, near Penarth in Wales to Anchor Head, just north of Weston Bay in England. Although not strictly a design issue Longney and Epney and neighbouring Parishes are concerned at the draft response to the SMP2 published by the Environment Agency entitled "Managing flood risk the Severn Estuary". The Parish has a low level of confidence in the proposed flood management strategy recommendations and the basis of assessment. Until concerns have been specifically addressed, this will remain an issue for the local community. This paragraph reflects the views of local residents and is a record of these continuing concerns.



### **Guidelines (Climate Change and its Effects)**

LCCE1. Environment Agency data supported by local knowledge on water levels in the Parish and surrounding area should be used to ensure that planning applications are supported by robust, realistic and up to date site-specific flood risk assessments (FRAs).

LCCE2. The Parish support the need to have regard for the potential effects of flooding. The Parish will seek to ensure that any new development is appropriately flood resilient and resistant, including safe access and escape routes where required, and that any residual risk can be safely managed.

LCCE3. The Parish will give priority to the use of SuDS (sustainable drainage systems - ponds soakaways).

LCCE4. Energy efficient installations including renewables such as solar panels should be supported in/on all buildings so long as they are in proportion and scale to the building and do not adversely affect any acknowledged historic architectural character or structural integrity."

### **How does the Area Provide for Visitors?**

Longney and Epney have a very particular profile when it comes to visitors and tourism. It is a rural farming area served by "C" roads which are not always well-maintained, and accessed only by crossing one of 5 swing bridges over the Gloucester-Sharpness canal. However it also lies at the northern edge of the Severn Villages indicated by a "heritage" sign at the A38 turning toward Frampton. It is criss-crossed by an exceptional concentration of rural footpaths generally in good condition, with the riverbank footway (The Severn Way), bird watching, level roads for cycling, Sustrans Routes 41 and 45 run through the parish and a pub with food and an exceptional view over the river. (See Appendix B for maps indicating footpaths and cycle routes)

However it is very close to Gloucester and the densely populated area of Quedgeley and is within one of the closest accessible "rural green spaces" to this urban area. It is very popular with an increasing number of cyclists, walkers and horse riders. It is a focus for leisure and day-visitor tourism, which by its nature is welcomed for its particularly low impact on the environment.

This unique asset would, however, be lost if visitor numbers were significantly increased or in the event of sub-urbanisation or "rural theme park" development of the area. Visitors come to the area for an opportunity to enjoy wildlife from footpaths within an agricultural area or to cycle or walk on rural roads.

**“Key Priorities for Action...’Control public access to the area, leaving some areas inaccessible and retaining the remote unpeopled character.’**

**“This landscape is .... sensitive to increased accessibility which would undermine its tranquil and remote qualities.”**

**(ref: Stroud District Landscape Assessment Supplementary Planning Guidance Nov 2000 ps. B46 and B50)**

**Guideline (Providing for Visitors)**

LPV1. Rural businesses (including tourism) can support the viability and vitality of rural communities and should be supported as such. However any development (and associated promotion of that use or activity) will need to take account of the built and/or natural environment character and ensure no adverse impact results to this locality.

LPV2. The area provides particularly well for cyclists, walkers, and birdwatchers and these forms of low impact tourism are to be encouraged.

LPV3. The public rights of way network should be safeguarded and properly maintained.

## **SUSTAINING AN UNUSUAL RURAL ENVIRONMENT**

It has been discussed and agreed within the Parish that for a variety of reasons we should not seek conservation status for any part of the Parish, apart from its few listed buildings or features of particular buildings.

However, proximity to the densely populated corridor of Gloucester and Cheltenham and the increasing demand for housing on the one hand and “leisure facilities”, frequently of a generally urban or suburban nature (the countryside as theme park or playground for urban dwellers) does put the area at risk of a change which can very easily erode, in small but irreversible steps, the character of the area.

However it is at far greater risk from the current (SMP2 2011) Shoreline Management Plan which currently seems to recommend an evolution towards a landscape which is primarily a wildlife habitat with the accompanying “wildlife tourism” rather than an area of working farms. Many of the recommendations in SMP2 2011 appear to significantly contradict the findings and recommendations of Parliamentary Committees and other national and inter-governmental bodies.

It is also at risk from the trend for new and existing residents to demand more and more of the facilities and convenience of urban or suburban life within a rural area, the provision of which can very easily erode, in small but irreversible steps, the character of the area.

Residents have expressed the strong desire for the area to remain rural, and that its productive farmland, its wildlife, its silence, its unspoilt character be valued and maintained.

This design statement seeks to encourage the sustainable evolution of this particular community, and manage the pressures of change in a way that protects the rural environment and its aesthetic, social and economic character.

## POLICY CONTEXT FOR THE GUIDELINES

Guideline	National Planning Statements	SDC Local Plan Saved Policies	Other Planning advice Documents
<b>Natural Environment</b>			
LNE1 Minimising noise, air and light pollution	Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005	GE2	<a href="http://www.cpre.org.uk/campaigns/landscape/light-pollution">http://www.cpre.org.uk/campaigns/landscape/light-pollution</a> <a href="http://www.cpre.org.uk/campaigns/landscape/light-pollution/national-and-regional-tranquillity-maps">http://www.cpre.org.uk/campaigns/landscape/light-pollution/national-and-regional-tranquillity-maps</a>
LNE2 Light Pollution technical	Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005	GE1, GE2	<a href="http://www.britastro.org/dark-skies/pdfs/ile.pdf">http://www.britastro.org/dark-skies/pdfs/ile.pdf</a> <a href="http://www.environmental-protection.org.uk/neighbourhood-nuisance/light-pollution/">http://www.environmental-protection.org.uk/neighbourhood-nuisance/light-pollution/</a>
LNE3 Landscape Character	PPS7 – Para 24&25	NE10 HN8	Stroud District Landscape Assessment (2000) <a href="http://www.stroud.gov.uk/docs/lp/landscape.asp">http://www.stroud.gov.uk/docs/lp/landscape.asp</a> <a href="http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=13189">http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=13189</a>
LNE4 Wildlife habitats within the farmed environment	PPS9	NE3, NE4, NE5 NE6 NE7	Gloucestershire Biodiversity Plan <a href="http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=2479">http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=2479</a> <a href="http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=13190">http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/index.cfm?articleid=13190</a>
LNE5 Tree felling	PPS9	NE 11	<a href="http://www.naturenet.net/trees/tpo.htm">http://www.naturenet.net/trees/tpo.htm</a> <a href="http://www.trees.org.uk/">http://www.trees.org.uk/</a>
LNE6 Protection of orchards	PPS9 PPS7 – Para 24&25	NE6, NE10	Gloucestershire Orchard Group <a href="http://www.gloucestershireorchardgroup.org.uk/">http://www.gloucestershireorchardgroup.org.uk/</a>
<b>Farming</b>			
LF1 Protection of farmland as asset	PPS7 – Para 28	NE10,	<a href="http://www2.defra.gov.uk/food-farm/">http://www2.defra.gov.uk/food-farm/</a> <a href="http://www.defra.gov.uk/foodfarm/landmanage/land-use/">http://www.defra.gov.uk/foodfarm/landmanage/land-use/</a>
LF2 Encourage diversification	Rural Whitepaper (2001) PPS7		
<b>Built Environment</b>			
LBE1 Retain mix of housing size in parish	PPS1 PPS3	HN8	
LBE2 Respect scale and character of existing buildings	PPS1 PPS3	HN8	
LBE3 Further listing of some buildings to consider	PPS5		<a href="http://www.stroud.gov.uk/info/listed_buildings/stroud.pdf">http://www.stroud.gov.uk/info/listed_buildings/stroud.pdf</a>
LBE4 Maintain building to plot ratios	PPS1 PPS3	HN8, HN16, GE7,	
LBE5 Redundant farm buildings for residential/local housing needs	PPS7	BE16, BE17	
LBE6 Existing	PPS1	HN8,	

settlement boundaries to be maintained	PPS7	HN10	
<b>Infrastructure</b>			
LI1 Restrict development which increases traffic volumes	PPS1, PPS7 PPG13	GE5, GE7, TR1, BE16	
LI2 Maintain verges to encourage wildlife corridors	PPS9	NE5, NE6, NE12	<a href="http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/utilities/action/act_download.cfm?me_diaid=35915">http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/utilities/action/act_download.cfm?me_diaid=35915</a>
LI3 Restrict development which brings further heavy traffic over and above the present level.	PPG13	GE5	
LI4 Road signage to be minimized in this rural location		NE10	<a href="http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2010/aug/26/signs-bollards-streets-character-eric-pickles">http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2010/aug/26/signs-bollards-streets-character-eric-pickles</a>
LI5 All new development to carry obligation to maintain culverts and ditches	PPS25,		<a href="http://www.stroud.gov.uk/localplan/sfra.asp">http://www.stroud.gov.uk/localplan/sfra.asp</a> <a href="http://www.severnestuary.net/secg/index.html">http://www.severnestuary.net/secg/index.html</a> <a href="http://publications.environment-agency.gov.uk/pdf/GEMI0909BQYM-b-e.pdf">http://publications.environment-agency.gov.uk/pdf/GEMI0909BQYM-b-e.pdf</a> <a href="http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/static/documents/Research/draft_cfmp_part_1_1684703.pdf">http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/static/documents/Research/draft_cfmp_part_1_1684703.pdf</a>
L16 New development gives priority to use of mains sewage system	PPS23		Circular 3/99 (Environment Agency)
<b>Business</b>			
LB1 Considerations of in-and-out commuting to apply to new business permissions	PPS1 PPG13	TR1, BE16	
LB2 Small scale low impact entrepreneurship appropriate to rural environment supported	PPS4, PPS7	BE16	
LB3 Redundant farm buildings conversion to business supported where other guidelines applied	PPS7	BE16, BE17	
<b>Community</b>			
LC1 The school an important factor in attracting young families to the parish	PPS7	SH15, RL1, RL3, RL4	



LC2 The school an important community asset as a location and active community centre.		SH15, RL4	
LC3 Local food production and consumption to be supported	PPS1	RL9	<a href="http://ww2.defra.gov.uk/food-farm/">http://ww2.defra.gov.uk/food-farm/</a> <a href="http://www.defra.gov.uk/rural/policy/services.htm">http://www.defra.gov.uk/rural/policy/services.htm</a>
<b>Climate Change and its Effect</b>			
LCCE1 EA data and local knowledge to be used in assessing site specific flood risk	PPS25, PPS23		<a href="http://www.stroud.gov.uk/localplan/sfra.asp">http://www.stroud.gov.uk/localplan/sfra.asp</a> <a href="http://www.severnestuary.net/secq/index.html">http://www.severnestuary.net/secq/index.html</a> <a href="http://publications.environment-agency.gov.uk/pdf/GEMI0909BQYM-b-e.pdf">http://publications.environment-agency.gov.uk/pdf/GEMI0909BQYM-b-e.pdf</a> <a href="http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/static/documents/Research/draft_cfmp_part_1_1684703.pdf">http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/static/documents/Research/draft_cfmp_part_1_1684703.pdf</a>  Note: Stroud District has recently commissioned Halcrow to carry out a Level 2 SFRA.
LCCE2 Any new buildings or extensions to be flood resilient			
LCCE3 SuDs (sustainable drainage systems) will be given priority	PPS25		<a href="http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/business/sectors/36998.aspx">http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/business/sectors/36998.aspx</a>
LCCE4 Renewable energy measures will be supported	PPS1, PPS5 PPS22		<a href="http://www.stroud.gov.uk/info/micro_technology_notes.pdf">http://www.stroud.gov.uk/info/micro_technology_notes.pdf</a> <a href="http://www.stroud.gov.uk/info/plan_strat/renewable_energy.pdf">http://www.stroud.gov.uk/info/plan_strat/renewable_energy.pdf</a>
<b>Provision for Visitors</b>			
LPV1 Tourism can contribute to the viability of the community but impact on the built and natural environment to be contained.	PPG17 PPS7		<a href="http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/goodpracticeguide">http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/goodpracticeguide</a>
LPV2 The parish already provides for cyclists, walkers, bird watchers	PPS1 PPG17	RL4	<a href="http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/37/contents">http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/37/contents</a> <a href="http://www.defra.gov.uk/rural/countryside/crow/">http://www.defra.gov.uk/rural/countryside/crow/</a>
LPV3 The rights of way will be maintained	PPG17		<a href="http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/prow">http://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/prow</a>

## APPENDIX A: AUDIT TRAIL

### Parish Residents

The Longney and Epney Parish Plan was developed during 2006-2007 based on a detailed questionnaire seeking residents' opinions on a wide range of subjects including those qualities that they value in their parish and its surroundings.

Out of a total of 209 questionnaires distributed to all households in Longney and Epney parish, 159 (76%) were returned. Of these 159, more than one third were completed by people between 25 and 49 years of age, and around one third between 50 and 64 years of age. A detailed analysis of all the above responses can be found at the back of the Parish Plan document which is also viewable/downloadable from the Parish website [www.LongneyandEpney.co.uk](http://www.LongneyandEpney.co.uk)

Focus groups with a good level of resident participation were held on issues which were of most concern. These included communications, transport and road safety and planning and development, The latter included a presentation by representatives of Stroud District Council on the pros and cons of creating conservation areas, and it was concluded by the group that the development of a Village Design Statement would best serve the general concerns of residents.

A draft of this Design Statement was made available to all residents of the Parish, for a six week consultation period initially from 15th March 2011.

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION FROM YOUR PARISH COUNCIL**

**Village Design Statement**

The Village Design Statement (VDS) is now available in draft form. It raises issues of importance to us all and provides guidelines relating to our Parish for the Stroud District Council Planning Authorities.

We urge you to read it carefully and let us have your comments by 30th April so they can be taken into account before we prepare the final document for approval and adoption. If issues of concern to a significant number of residents are raised, a public meeting to discuss them to which all residents are welcome will be held within the month of May.

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The VDS can be accessed via the link on the Parish website [www.longneyandepney.co.uk](http://www.longneyandepney.co.uk). It saves costs to the Parish if you can read it on-line or print it off for yourself. Please inform any of your neighbours who do not have web access. If they, or you, require a printed copy, Roger Godwin or Susannah Finzi will supply one.

**Your comments should be addressed to:**  
Roger Godwin  
[rag.farms@cotswoldwireless.co.uk](mailto:rag.farms@cotswoldwireless.co.uk)  
01452 720938

**OR**  
Susannah Finzi  
[susannah@antelopes.com](mailto:susannah@antelopes.com)  
01452 741010

**OR**  
by letter to Colin Squire  
Longney and Epney Parish Council at  
Sheldon Cottage, Epney, GL2 7LN.

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Issued by:  
**Longney and Epney  
Parish Council**

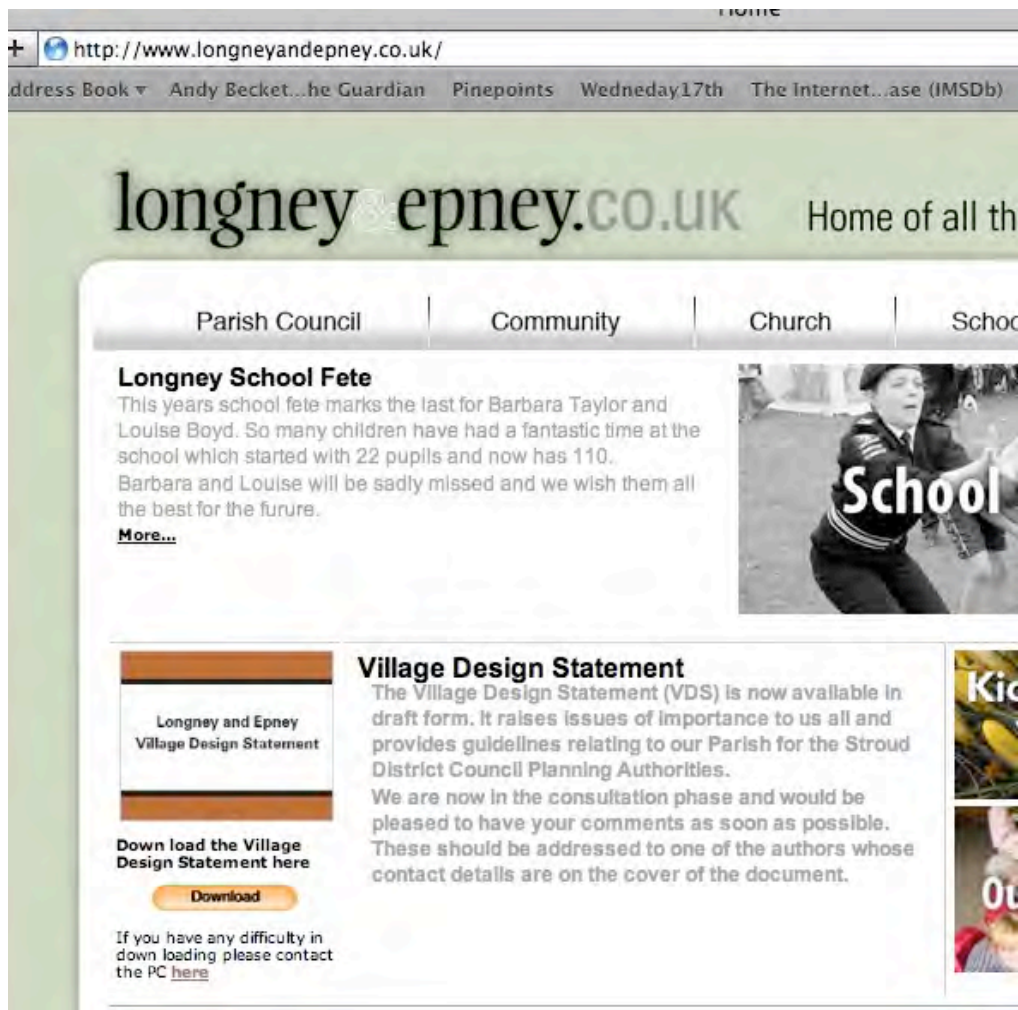


The document was posted on the Parish website and also offered as paper copy on request. Posters were put on all Parish notice boards and a leaflet announcing the consultation was distributed to every household in the Parish with an invitation to make direct contact with the authors for discussion of particular issues. A public Parish-wide meeting was offered as part of the consultation process should any issues prove to be contentious.

Copies of the leaflet/poster and the relevant webpage are included here.

Feedback was very limited. Comments were made regarding dairy farms in the Parish and some grammatical matters which were incorporated in the document.

Given the apparent lack of response, the consultation period was extended via the website and a "health check" questionnaire on paper distributed to a random 15 residents. There were no further comments.



Since every household has been provided with an opportunity to comment, it is concluded that this can be regarded as a general consensus in favour of the Design Statement among residents of the Parish.

### Statutory Bodies and other Agencies

Throughout the development process Stroud District Council planning officers have checked the document to ensure conformity with its current planning policies and offered advice on latest planning practice. In particular, they have advised and checked the conformity of the guidelines proposed in this document with local and national policies (see "Policy Guidelines" table above.)

Stroud District Council also offered some comments regarding the climate change section after the publication of the Environment Agency's Shoreline Management Plan (SMP2) document.

Other bodies invited to comment on the draft Design Statement were:

- Gloucestershire County Council Environment Directorate (GCC)
- Environment Agency (EA)
- Natural England (NE)
- Gloucestershire Rural Community Council (GRCC)
- English Heritage (EH)
- Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust (GWT)
- Gloucester City Planning and Forest and Dean Planning (GC/FOD)
- Severn Voice (adjoining) Parishes (SV)

<b>Body</b>	<b>Period of consultation</b>	<b>Response</b>	<b>Changes to document</b>
Residents	15.3.2011-present	Very limited response	Some detailed factual amendments and copy errors.
GCC	18.5.2011-30.6.2011	Positive support for document plus notes	No change. Notes re waste management minerals and flood risk to larger developments not relevant to the area. No large beef or dairy enterprises in the Parish and no known mineral resources.
EA	18.5.2011-30.6.2011	Positive support for document plus notes	Additional guideline on foul drainage and the public sewer system.
NE	18.5.2011-30.6.2011	General support. No specific comments.	None.
GRCC	18.5.2011-30.6.2011	Detailed notes mainly re format	None. To change the format as suggested post consultation would create issues for the Parish at a late stage and undermine people's input and support to date.
EH	18.5.2011-30.6.2011	Received document but no comments	None.
GWT	18.5.2011-30.6.2011	General support. No specific comments.	None
GC/FOD	18.5.2011-30.6.2011	Received document but no comments	None
SV	15.7.2011	Received document but no comments	None to date (July 2011) but consultation period extended to end August.
SDC	1.7.2010 - present	Extensive support and involvement	Developed in partnership with SDC with their substantial input particularly in matters of compliance with process, existing policies and strategies.

## APPENDIX B: ADDITIONAL PHOTOS AND MAPS REFERENCED IN THE TEXT

### Built Environment

*Houses characteristic of the area showing typical brickwork, window styles, porches, scale of building*





*Examples of extensions and new-builds within the Parish using sympathetic building materials - brickwork and use of timber.*



*Buildings within the parish with particular features which might be subject to protection including farm buildings.*





## Natural Environment

Longney and Epney Orchards Survey (2010)

“The Peoples trust for endangered species classify a Traditional Orchard as being 5 trees or more in a group on traditional spacings . Whilst surveying these (...Longey and Epney) orchards we occasionally came across single or scattered trees which due to their age and condition , decaying with plenty of dead wood and holes, were worthy of being surveyed and placed into veteran tree status.

Although Longney and Epney orchards are on the whole not as large or as plentiful as their neighbours across the river in Minsterworth, their significance is by no means lessened. Due to farming methods and the ley of the land it is easy to see why orchards along both sides of the river went into decline not least with the use of dwarfing rootstocks, You only need to look north to Herefordshire and south to Somerset to see intensive cider fruit cultivation. This...is part of the explanation as to why the orchards fell into decline.

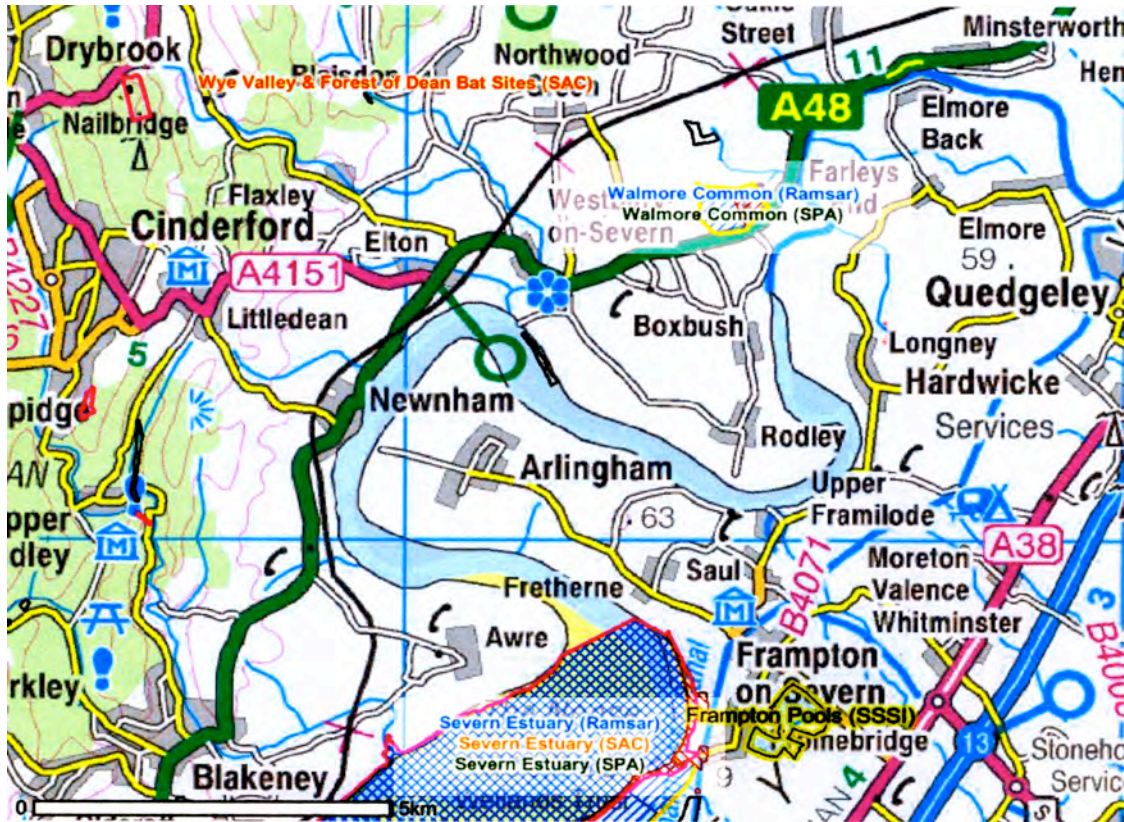
Of the orchards, or remnants of, that are left there is one straight line which can be traced along the road from Farleys End which winds its way through the centre of Longney and Epney . At its north end the orchards which are mainly Apple can be found on farm land and dotted around farm buildings. Entering Longney, orchards become more prevalent which is due to more housing with orchards being 'allocated as gardens. It is in these gardens we start to find pear and plum which is due to re-planting or adding to the orchard more interesting varieties. When leaving Longney and heading to Epney, Orchards dot either side of the road and although we surveyed a lot of orchards identifying varieties within a species was not undertaken .

Where the road from Farleys End in the north meets Wicksgreen, Hill Farm and Tanners tump there is a defined semi circle of orchards. At this point the river Severn has curved in and orchards branch off to follow the river bank for a while and as you pass Waterend farm and cottage there are some quite significant areas of fruit trees. With a long thin strip of orchard heading south along the river to the derelict building on the bank the orchards head back to the road at bow Cottage. Along this line there are apple, plum and pear trees.” (Martin Hayes, Chief Surveying Officer, Gloucestershire Orchard Group 2010)

The map indicates the distribution of orchards within the Parish during the 1960s, and demonstrates that at that time virtually every house within the settlement had a small orchard attached.

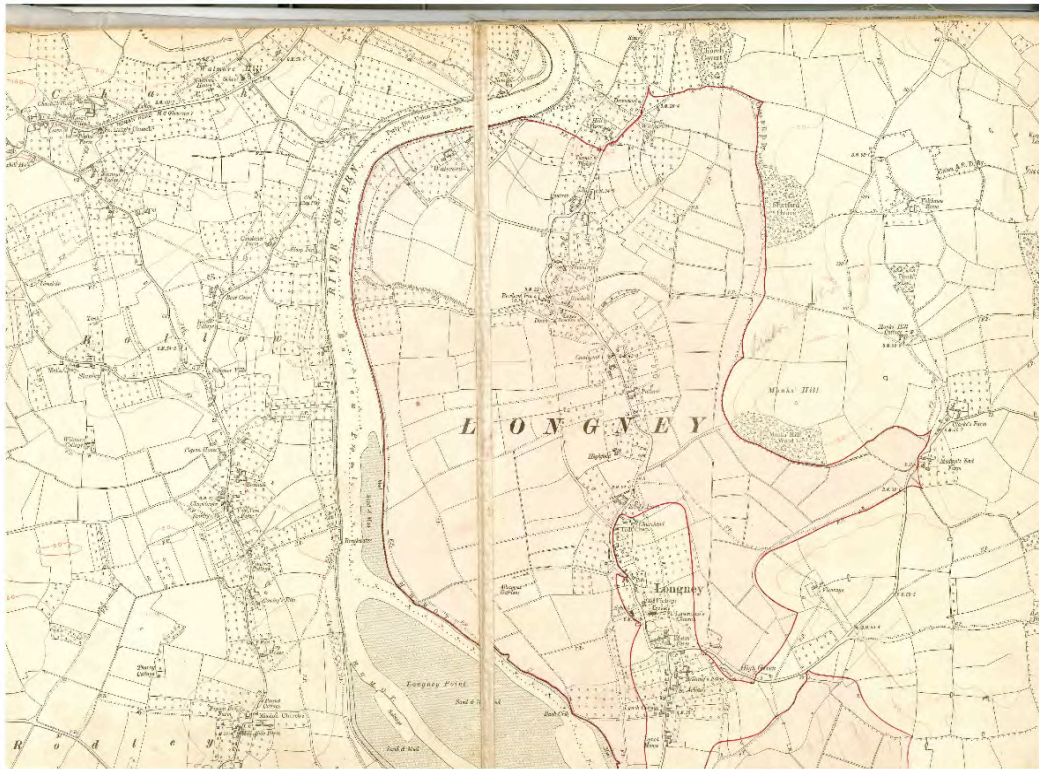


The map indicates the Location of the Parish of Longney and Epney in relation to the various SSI, SPA and RAMSAR sites.



## Climate Change

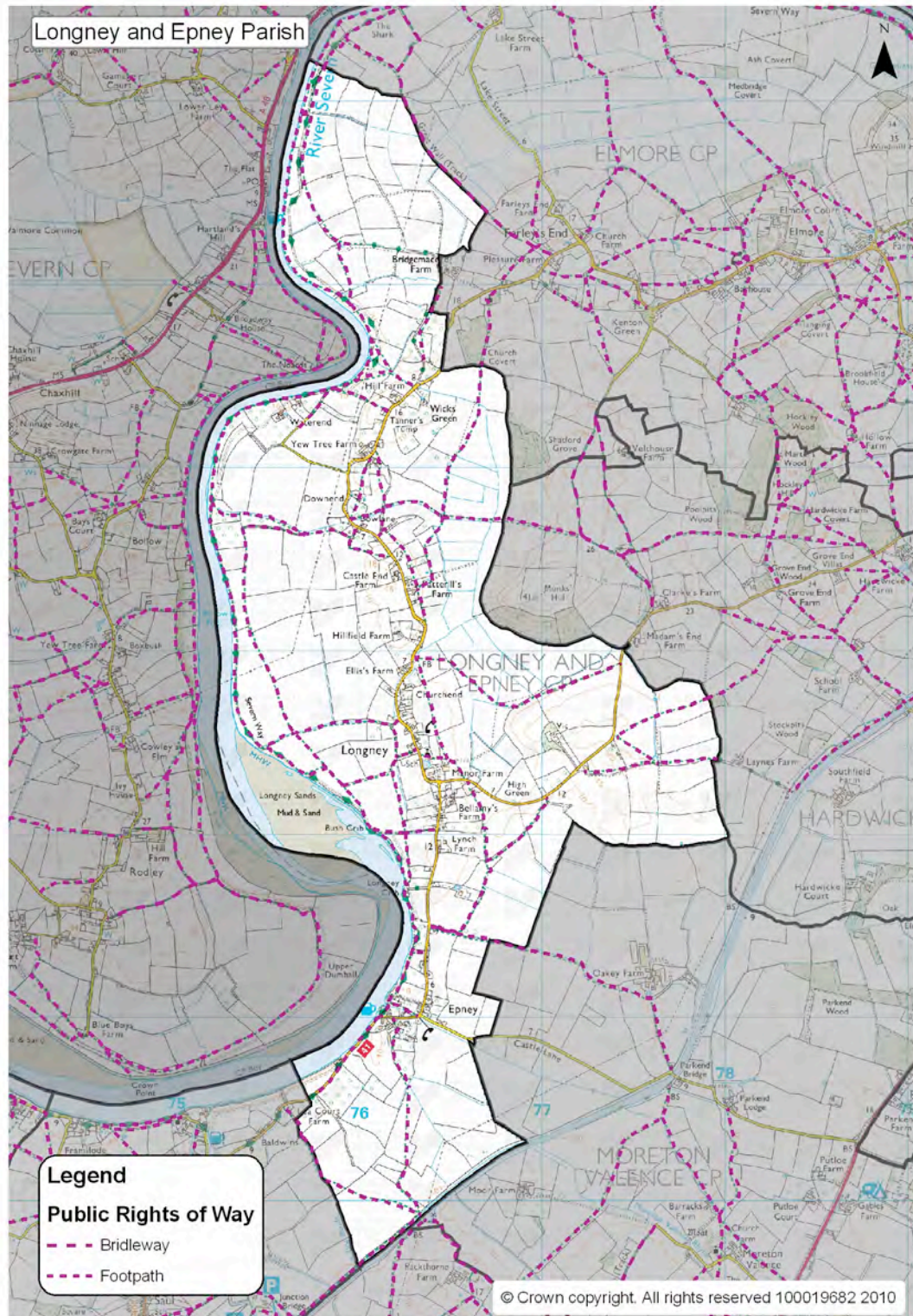
*The Map indicates the area covered by the Internal Drainage Board.*





## How the area provides for visitors

The map shows the footpaths within the Parish of Longey and Epney and the surrounding area





The map shows the National Cycle routes which pass through the Parish.

