



*Brimpton
Village Design Statement
2007*



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BRIMPTON PARISH

Brimpton lies just south of the A4, roughly halfway between Newbury and Reading. It is a small rural settlement with 221 houses, most of which are to be found in three distinct areas: the village, Brimpton Common and Hyde End. The total population is about 550.

The landscape is mainly low-lying with the river Kennet running through the northern part of the parish, and the river Enborne through the southern part. The soil in these river valleys is mainly London Clay on gravel. The two areas of relatively high ground are the village centre, which is on a ridge that separates the two valleys and runs westward past Hyde End to Crookham; and Brimpton Common, which is on a plateau to the south of the Enborne valley.

There are several working farms and the agricultural land, both dairy and arable, comes close to the village centre separating the three distinct parts of the parish from each other. As a result, all parts of the parish have a rural character and most houses have a view over open countryside. In addition, the

parish is criss-crossed with footpaths which provide easy access to this rural environment. Gravel has been extracted from fields to the north of the village centre but that work has now finished and the land has been restored to agricultural use together with some lakes which provide habitat for wildlife as well as recreation for fishermen.

All three areas of the parish have a long history of habitation and many of the houses in each of them are several hundred years old. In view of the parish's proximity to clay, it is not surprising that most houses are constructed of brick and tile. Indeed, this is probably the only common factor relating to the many different styles of house that have developed in the parish over the centuries.

The facilities include a shop with post office, pub, hairdresser, primary school, parish church, Baptist church and village hall.

The roads through the village are narrow and winding, and this reinforces the rural character of the parish.

BRIMPTON PARISH CHARACTER AREAS

In January 2007, the WBC Development Control Manager visited Brimpton and identified three "character areas" in the parish:

1. Brimpton Road / Manor Farm

The layout of the dwellings in this area is formal with dwellings fronting onto the highway with a strong building line. Hedges define the boundaries of the properties which help to soften the built development. The dwellings themselves are two storeys, narrow spanned and of a simple design using a mixture of materials which includes red/brown facing brick, and roughcast render under a plain tile roof. Roofs of the dwellings are punctuated by chimneys and in many cases gabled dormers which add interest. Windows tend to be two or three light casements painted white. The highway is also very informal in terms of its layout and alignment with grass verges and limited kerbing.

2. Area centred around, & south of, the War Memorial

The layout of the dwellings in this area is more organic with dwellings of various sizes sitting in their plots in a random manner. Boundaries of the properties are formed by a mix of attractive walls and hedges. The

buildings are mainly two storeys, constructed from red/brown facing bricks under plain clay tile or natural slate roofs. A number of the older properties use Flemish Bond for the brickwork and have an interesting dental course at the eaves. Chimneys are a prominent feature on many buildings which add interest to the roofscape. The visual appearance of this part of the village is enhanced by the topography of the land which provides an interesting and varied roofscape. The highway is also very informal in terms of its layout and alignment with grass verges and limited kerbing.

3. Enborne Way

This is a formal layout of dwellings served by a cul de sac with dwellings fronting, but set back from, the highway. Boundaries are formed by hedges which soften the impact of the built form. The dwellings are constructed of red/brown brick under concrete tile roofs. The dwellings are all of a similar design, some with strong front projecting gables and all with two and three light windows painted white. Chimneys are a prominent feature. Dwellings are mainly two storeys but there is a small group of bungalows situated close to the main road through the village.

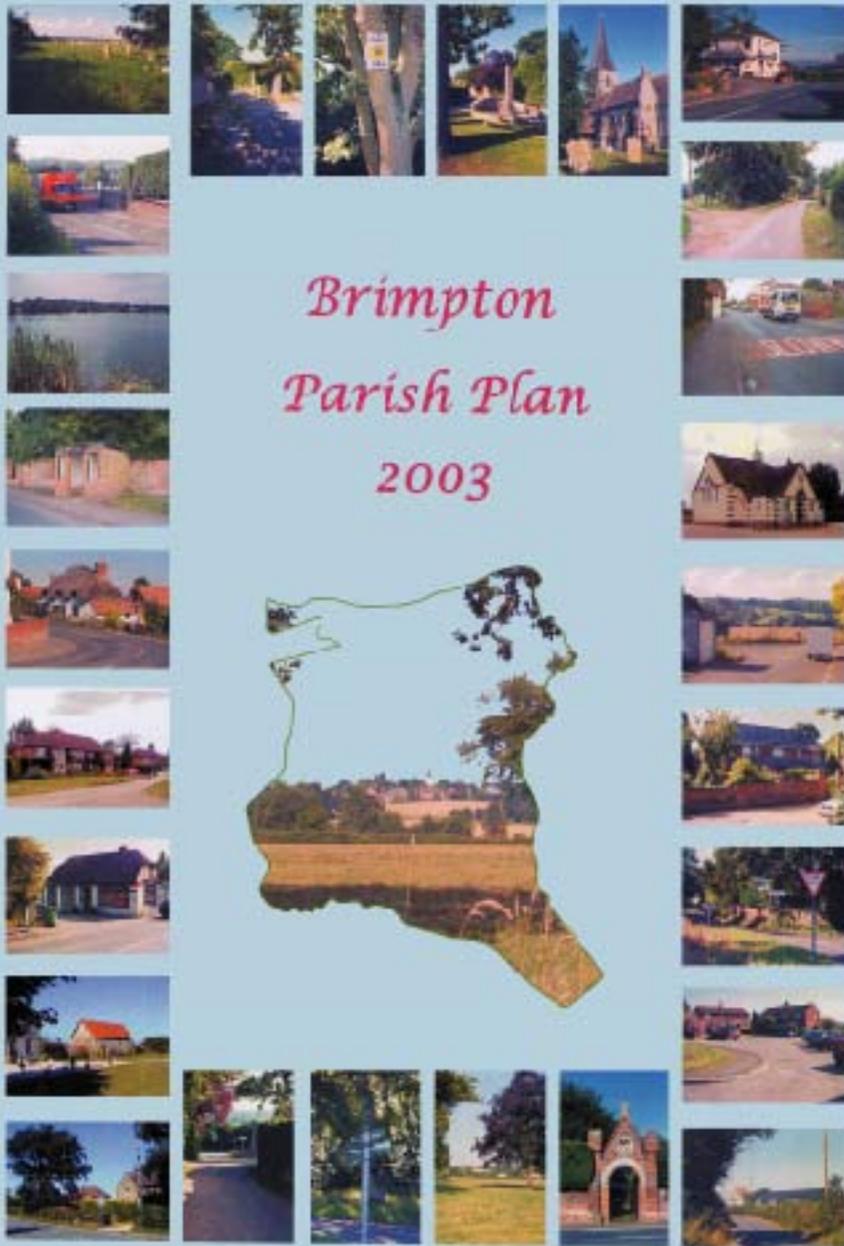


BRIMPTON PARISH PLAN

After extensive consultation within the parish and with West Berkshire Council (WBC), Brimpton produced a Parish Plan in 2003. This document was based on the results of the Parish Appraisal which was a comprehensive survey in 2002 into what people in the parish wanted. The survey, containing 70 questions covering all aspects of life in Brimpton, was completed by 74% of households in the parish.

One of the key areas covered by the Parish Plan was "housing & building development". The Plan's recommendations, which were adopted by the Parish Council and Area Forum, included:

1. Brimpton should remain a small rural settlement and any housing development should be limited to small-scale infilling.
2. Any new houses should be in keeping with the rural environment and be complementary to existing houses nearby.
3. The Settlement Boundary should not be enlarged.
4. Street lighting should not be permitted.
5. Roads should not be straightened as the bends should act as natural traffic calmers.



BRIMPTON DESIGN STATEMENT: THE PROCESS

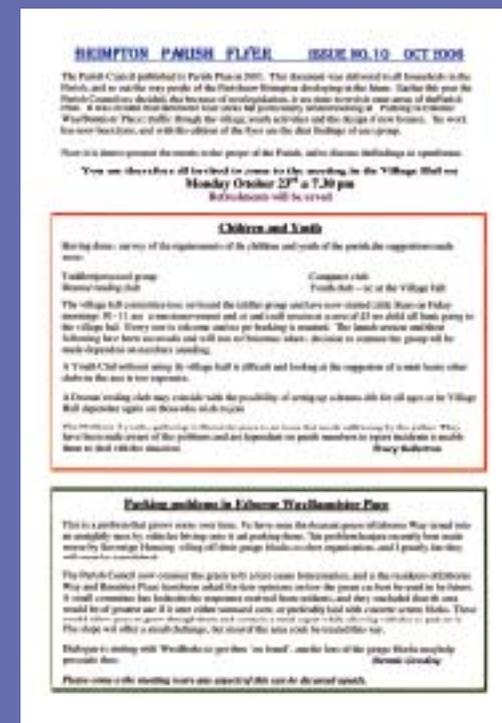
As with the Parish Plan, consultation has been at the heart of the development of the Design Statement. The Design Statement is based on the views of the people living in the parish (as expressed in the comprehensive 2002 Parish Appraisal) and the policies already adopted in the 2003 Parish Plan. Further consultation has been undertaken in the process of developing the Design Statement including a Parish Flyer inviting comments that was distributed to all households in March, followed by a public meeting on 20th April 2006.

A working party of six parishioners, with representatives from each of the three distinct areas of the parish, was set up by the Parish Council to consult with parishioners and relevant officers at WBC, and to draft the Design Statement.

The Working Party consulted Sarah Ward, Parish Planning Development Officer at Community Action West Berkshire; and on 26th July met Paula Amorelli, Senior Planning Officer at WBC, to get her input.

Following this consultation, the draft Design Statement was delivered to every house in the parish together with an invitation to attend a public meeting on 23rd October 2006 to express their views on the draft proposals. Parishioners were also given the opportunity to contact the chairman of the Working Party if they were unable to attend the meeting: several did so, all expressing support. Thirty parishioners were present at the public meeting and unanimously endorsed the proposals.

Following the public meeting, the Final Draft of the Design Statement was approved by Brimpton Parish Council on 7 November 2006. It was subsequently presented to WBC for consultation with statutory bodies and was formally adopted by the Area Forum in January 2007.





BRIMPTON DESIGN STATEMENT: PLANNING GUIDELINES

The Design Statement reflects the views and wishes of the majority of people living in the parish, and these planning guidelines are intended to help guide the design of future development in Brimpton. These guidelines are consistent with, and support, the broader policies already adopted in the Parish Plan.

The planning guidelines should also be read alongside the WBC Supplementary Planning Document series "Quality Design" which applies to all developments, both residential and commercial, across the district.

A. Landscape Setting

1. Any future development should conserve or enhance the landscape character of the area. Care should be taken to preserve or enhance the rural settlement character of the parish.
2. The character and pattern of open spaces within the parish that separate the three distinct areas (the village, Brimpton Common and Hyde End) should be retained in any future development.
3. Any new development should ensure that the biodiversity of the parish is conserved or enhanced.

B. Settlement Character

4. Within the context set by the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006, any proposed development should respect the constraints of The Settlement Boundary, the Conservation Area, and the Area of Special Landscape Importance.

5. Any new development should respect the rural nature and local character of its environment and its setting in the wider landscape.

Proposals that would result in the loss of garden land, either through infilling or through wholesale redevelopment of residential properties, should be carefully considered. Consideration should be given

to how existing garden land contributes to the character of the area, and to how the cumulative effect of proposals impacts on the character of the area.

7. Consideration should be given to the scale and design of front and rear gardens to ensure that they are in keeping with the character of the street scene. Infilling with more than⁶one or two houses may be unacceptable because of the loss of garden land and the overall disruption to the character of the area and the prevailing pattern of the street scene.





8. Any traffic management measures should be designed to be in sympathy with the rural character of the area. To avoid a suburban appearance, widening or straightening of the country roads would not be welcomed unless there were specific and over-riding reasons of highway safety.

9. The village centre is at the top of a hill and particular care should be taken with the height of new buildings to ensure that they do not dominate existing buildings or unbalance the street-scene.

10. Where appropriate, any future development should seek to retain key community facilities such as the church, shop, pub and school.

C. New Buildings and extensions

11. Any development should respect neighbouring properties in scale, siting, style and use of materials.

12. New buildings should generally be not more than two storeys high and should respect existing ground levels.

13. The footprint of new buildings should be proportionate to the area of the site; and the scale of front and back gardens considered as an integral part of the design.

14. Extensions or alterations to existing buildings should respect the character, features, scale and proportions of existing structures. Existing proportions, styles and aspect ratios for windows and dormers should be respected.
15. The roof height of extensions to existing buildings should not be higher than the roof height of the original building. Particular care should be taken in the village centre to ensure that new or extended roofs do not dominate existing buildings or unbalance the street scene. The materials used should match/complement the existing materials.
16. The provision of facilities for saving energy and water in both new buildings and extensions is encouraged, subject to the overall appearance meeting the other guidelines of the Design Statement.
17. Any external lighting should be carefully designed, and should be sited to minimise light pollution.
18. In accordance with WBC's Parking Strategy, appropriate provision should be made for parking in new development. The manner in which car parking is arranged should be carefully considered to ensure that it does not dominate the space but does allow safe vehicular access and egress.
19. Property boundaries should be in keeping with the rural village setting. In particular, existing native hedges and brick walls should be retained wherever possible. The replacement of existing hedges and walls by solid wooden fences should be avoided.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Parish Council thanks the following:

The Working Party that produced the Village Design Statement:

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Sarah Ward, Parish Planning Development Officer, Community Action West Berkshire

Teresa Newson and Melissa Elliott, Greenham Common Trust

All those in Brimpton who answered questionnaires, attended public meetings or gave other feedback to the Working Party.

