

# Individual Decision

---



Scan here to access the public documents for this meeting

The attached report will be taken as Individual Portfolio Member Decision on:

**Thursday 26 March 2026**

<b>Ref:</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Portfolio Member</b>	<b>Page No.</b>
ID4794	<b>Stanford Dingley Parish Design Statement (2026)</b>	Councillor Denise Gaines	3 - 62



This page is intentionally left blank

---

## Stanford Dingley Parish Design Statement (2025)

---

<b>Committee considering report:</b>	Individual Executive Member Decisions
<b>Date of Committee:</b>	26 March 2026
<b>Portfolio Member:</b>	Councillor Denise Gaines
<b>Report Author:</b>	Paula Amorelli
<b>Forward Plan Ref:</b>	ID4794

---

### 1 Purpose of the Report

To report on the formal public consultation undertaken on the updated Stanford Dingley Parish Design Statement and to consider its adoption as part of the community planning process.

### 2 Recommendation

- 2.1 To endorse and adopt the updated Stanford Dingley Parish Design Statement (2025) as outlined in Appendix B.

### 3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
<b>Financial:</b>	There are no direct financial implications at this stage.
<b>Human Resource:</b>	There are no direct HR implications at this stage.
<b>Legal:</b>	There are no direct legal implications at this stage.
<b>Risk Management:</b>	There are no direct risk management issues arising from this Design Statement.
<b>Property:</b>	There are no specific property implications at this stage.

<b>Policy:</b>	Design Statements prepared as part of the community planning process in West Berkshire can influence the operation of the statutory planning system.
----------------	--

	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
<b>Equalities Impact:</b>				
<b>A</b> Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?		X		
<b>B</b> Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		X		
<b>Environmental Impact:</b>	X			Better designed buildings and places will have a positive impact on the environment
<b>Health Impact:</b>	X			Better designed buildings and places will have a positive impact on overall health and wellbeing
<b>ICT Impact:</b>		X		No impact
<b>Digital Services Impact:</b>		X		No impact

<b>Council Strategy Priorities:</b>	X			Priority Area 5 – thriving communities with a strong local voice – encouraging and supporting local communities to take the lead in driving what is important to them (5A) and helping our villages to remain vibrant long term (5D) by helping them develop their local plans
<b>Core Business:</b>	X			Priority Area 5 – thriving communities with a strong local voice – encouraging and supporting local communities to take the lead in driving what is important to them (5A) and helping our villages to remain vibrant long term (5D) by helping them develop their local plans
<b>Data Impact:</b>		X		No impact

<b>Consultation and Engagement:</b>	Local stakeholders and officers previously consulted during the preparation of the Design Statement – see Appendix A for responses			
-------------------------------------	--	--	--	--

## 4 Executive Summary

4.1 The Stanford Dingley Parish Design Statement was originally adopted by West Berkshire Council in 2010 but has now been factually updated and revised by a Parish Council working party to reflect the situation in 2025. The draft document was subject to a six-week period of formal public consultation and has been revised as appropriate. If the updated Stanford Dingley Parish Design Statement (2025) is endorsed and adopted by West Berkshire Council it will replace the original 2010 design statement, provide detailed context for existing policies in the West Berkshire Local Plan and, where appropriate, will be used as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

## 5 Introduction/Background

### Introduction/Background

5.2 The Stanford Dingley Parish Design Statement is a document describing the qualities and characteristics that local people value in the parish. It sets out clear and simple guidance for the design of all development in the parish. It cannot be used to stop new development, but it can be used to influence developers and the local planning authority, and to ensure that new buildings respect and reflect local character.

- 5.3 Such design statements are intended to influence the operation of the statutory planning system and this has worked well in West Berkshire in the past. The Council has actively encouraged the production of design statements and since 2001 seventeen Design Statements have been adopted by the Council.
- 5.4 Since June 2008 design statements achieve recognition through the community planning process rather than the statutory planning process, as previously. However, it does not mean that they are seen as any less important.
- 5.5 To ensure that design statements produced in this way are still accorded weight in the planning process, for example, by planning inspectors at appeals, it remains particularly important to show that they:
- have been produced in consultation with the local community and stakeholders, including statutory consultees;
  - conform with relevant development plan policies; and
  - have been adopted by the Council.
- 5.6 The following procedures are therefore being adopted by community groups in West Berkshire when preparing design statements:

**Stage 1**

Production of draft design statement by the design statement group with the involvement of a wide cross-section of the local community;

**Stage 2**

Officer agreement to final version of draft design statement;

**Stage 3**

Six week 'formal' consultation period where the design statement group consults with the local community and West Berkshire Council consult with relevant stakeholders & statutory consultees;

**Stage 4**

Amendments to the design statement made as appropriate;

**Stage 5**

Design statement group presents final design statement to the Council for adoption as an Individual Executive Member decision.

- 5.7 The review and updating of the Stanford Dingley Parish Design Statement has been carried out in accordance with this procedure.

## 6 Options for consideration

6.1 No other options were considered as this was a review and updating of the Stanford Dingley Parish Design Statement, originally adopted in 2010.

## 7 Proposals

7.1 The Stanford Dingley Parish Design Statement was originally adopted by West Berkshire Council in 2010 but has now been factually updated and revised by a Parish Council working party to reflect the situation in 2025. It is not considered that this review has fundamentally changed the original design statement but the changes, although minor, do provide a more up to date document. While much of the content of the updated Parish Design Statement remains the same, it incorporates:

- some factual updates;
- expanded descriptions of some buildings and features;
- information on developments built post-2010; and
- some updated design guidelines to reflect current circumstances.

7.2 Formal consultation on the draft design statement was undertaken by West Berkshire Council for a period of six weeks from 7 November to 19 December 2025. Officers consulted directly with a range of statutory agencies, national interest groups, adjacent parish councils and local interest groups. The document was also made available on the Council's website.

7.3 Overall, eleven formal consultation responses to the draft document were received. Of those who made comments, the consultation representations were positive and constructive. The Working Group has made amendments to the draft document in response to the consultation as set out in Appendix A. A final text version of the updated Stanford Dingley Parish Design Statement (2025) is attached as Appendix B.

## 8 Conclusion

8.1 If the updated Stanford Dingley Parish Design Statement (2025) is endorsed and adopted by West Berkshire Council it will replace the original 2010 design statement, provide detailed context for existing policies in the West Berkshire Local Plan and, where appropriate, will be used as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. A full colour version with maps and images will also be produced by the Working Group following adoption.

8.2 Appendix A – Table of consultation representations and responses

8.3 Appendix B – Text version of Stanford Dingley Parish Design Statement (2025)

---

---

---

## Background Papers:

\*(add text)

### Subject to Call-In:

Yes:  No:

**Wards affected:** Bucklebury

### Officer details:

Name: Paula Amorelli  
Job Title: Team Leader, Planning Policy  
Tel No: 01635 519233  
E-mail: paula.amorelli@westberks.gov.uk

---

Stanford Dingley Parish Design Statement (Update)

Consultation Representations and Responses

Blue underlined text within the PDS Group response column is text which is to be inserted, and text with ~~strikethrough~~ is for deletion.

Consultee	Representation	PDS Group response and updates to be made to the Statement
WBC Archaeology Team	<p>Not much to add, but they could update the bibliographic references in Appendix 1, eg The English Heritage guidance on Conservation Areas was superseded - now Historic England Advice Note 1, Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management, Historic England 2019 – available online here <a href="#">Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management   Historic England</a></p> <p>And the 1966 Pevsner guide was greatly enlarged and revised in 2010 - Tyack, G, Bradley, S and Pevsner, N (2010) <i>The Buildings of England (Berkshire)</i>. A few more buildings in the village are cross-referenced.</p> <p>If they wanted to include a link to the character assessments, the relevant Historic Environment Character Zone is currently at <a href="https://www.westberks.gov.uk/media/19427/HECZ-PVL/pdf/HECZPV_PVL_Pang_Valley_Lower.pdf?m=1759770395280">https://www.westberks.gov.uk/media/19427/HECZ-PVL/pdf/HECZPV_PVL_Pang_Valley_Lower.pdf?m=1759770395280</a> (though this media item is planned to move to a webpage)</p> <p>Do they know about Dils, J(ed) 1994 <i>Stanford Dingley: A Tudor and Stuart Village</i> – a small book arising from research by students of the Department of Extended Education, University of Reading. There are copies in the Museum library.</p>	<p>Comments noted.</p> <p>Update bibliographic references in Appendix 1 as follows:</p> <p><del>‘English Heritage (2005), Guidance on the management of conservation areas</del>  <a href="#">Historic England Advice Note 1, Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and</a></p>

	<p>The Tithe maps of many parishes are now online - 1841 <a href="#">D/D1/117/1   Royal Berkshire Archives Digital Repository</a></p> <p>Appendix 3 Schedule of listed buildings, to be included in final version – The archaeology team could provide a table of these if wanted.</p> <p>The maps and illustrations in the 2010 version obviously make it much easier to understand so hopefully they have a good selection to put in the new draft <a href="https://www.westberks.gov.uk/media/35721/Stanford-Dingley-Village-Town-and-Parish-Design-Statement-VDS/pdf/Stanford_Dingley_Village_Town_and_Parish_Design_Statement_VDS.pdf?m=1530695469270">https://www.westberks.gov.uk/media/35721/Stanford-Dingley-Village-Town-and-Parish-Design-Statement-VDS/pdf/Stanford_Dingley_Village_Town_and_Parish_Design_Statement_VDS.pdf?m=1530695469270</a></p> <p>One or two typos spotted but not seriously affecting the flow. It's usually Domesday rather than doomsday (they have both). I like 14<sup>th</sup> century rather than 14<sup>th</sup> C. But generally an informative document containing a lot of observation.</p>	<p><a href="#"><i>Management, Historic England 2019</i></a></p> <p><del><a href="#"><i>Pevsner, N., Berkshire, London, 1966</i></a></del></p> <p><a href="#"><i>Tyack, G, Bradley, S and Pevsner, N (2010) The Buildings of England (Berkshire)</i></a></p> <p><a href="#"><i>Dils, J(ed) (1994) Stanford Dingley: A Tudor and Stuart Village. University of Reading.</i></a></p> <p>Amend throughout the document as appropriate.</p> <p>Correct typos throughout the document as follows: '<del>doomsday</del> <a href="#">Domesday</a>' and '14<sup>th</sup> C' <del>14<sup>th</sup> century</del>'</p>
Environment Agency	Thank you for consulting the Environment Agency on the Updated Stanford Dingley Parish Design Statement. We have no comments to make at this time.	Response noted
National	We note that this consultation is a refresh of the original 2010 document and we	Response noted

Highways	have now reviewed information available on your planning portal and have 'No Comments'.	
Natural England	Natural England has no comments to make on the Updated Stanford Dingley Parish Design Statement.	Response noted
Oxfordshire County Council	Oxfordshire County Council's Minerals and Waste Policy Team have no comments to make on the Stanford Dingley Parish Design Statement.	Response noted
Canal & River Trust	Thank you for your consultation on the above document. The Trust have no waterways, assets or land interests within the area covered by the document and as such we have no comment to make.	Response noted
Swifts Local Network: Swifts & Planning Group	<p>We are a community wildlife conservation organisation that works across the region. The Statement looks very thorough. The 7.3 (iii) requirements for wildlife are welcome.</p> <p>For clarity please add to 7.3 (iii) "including building-dependent species such as bats and endangered red-listed bird species such as swifts, house martins, and house sparrows".</p> <p>To make the Statement in line with national planning guidance, please also include the text from NPPG Natural Environment paragraph 017; especially with regard to at least one swift brick per dwelling on average being installed in each new development;</p> <p>and swift bricks being a universal nest brick for small bird species;</p> <p>and include the best-practice guidance references from the NPPG.</p> <p>Here is the key text:</p> <p><i>"New developments should include integrated nest boxes (commonly known as swift bricks) where possible, with the general aim across a development of a minimum of one nest box per unit. Nest boxes can provide important habitat for other species as well as swifts, such as starlings and sparrows. Specific support for the selection and installation of swift bricks can be found in the British Industry Standard BS 42021:2022, and the Future Homes Hub Homes for Nature Guidance, and the RSPB's Guide to Nestboxes."</i></p>	<p>Comments noted.</p> <p>Agree that it would be helpful to reflect this in the document and so an additional general guideline will be added after 7.3 iii as follows:</p> <p><u><a href="#">' iv. Development proposals should incorporate features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs. For building dependent species.</a></u></p>

	<p>Here is the relevant link for the NPPG, and I have also copied out the full text at the end of this email for reference:  <a href="https://www.gov.uk/guidance/natural-environment">https://www.gov.uk/guidance/natural-environment</a>  Full text from NPPG Natural Environment 2025 paragraph 017:  <b><i>How can developments incorporate features which support priority or threatened species?</i></b>  <i>The National Planning Policy Framework expects development proposals to bolster wildlife by incorporating features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs.</i>  <i>The use of swift bricks is particularly important in this context because swifts rely on urban cavities for nesting, and the national loss of suitable nesting sites through building renovation has been part of the reason for the species' decline.</i>  <i>Developments should include integrated nest boxes (commonly known as swift bricks) where possible, with the general aim across a development of a minimum of one nest box per unit. Nest boxes can provide important habitat for other species as well as swifts, such as starlings and sparrows.</i>  <i>Extensive guidance is available on wildlife friendly features, including the <u>National Design Guide</u> and <u>National Model Design Code</u> which illustrate how well-designed places can support rich and varied biodiversity by facilitating habitats and routes for wildlife. More specific support for the selection and installation of swift bricks can be found in the British Industry Standard <u>BS 42021:2022 the Future Homes Hub Homes for Nature Guidance</u>, and the RSPB's <u>Guide to Nestboxes</u>.</i>  <i>Paragraph: 017 Reference ID: 8-017-20250609</i></p>	<p><u><i>developments should include integrated nest boxes (commonly known as swift bricks) where possible.</i></u></p> <p>Renummer subsequent guidelines as appropriate.</p>
David Barton (Community Campaigner, Civic Heritage)	<p><b>Design Codes, Designated &amp; Non-Designated Heritage Assets, Conservation Areas, Climate Change, Historic Buildings, Traditional Vernacular Architecture</b></p> <p><b>SECTION 1: Design Codes</b>  Design Codes based on TVA should be utilised in preference to Design Guides  LAs should establish recurring partnerships with key Consultation Bodies, such as Create Streets and The King's Foundation, etc who specialise in getting through to a huge swathe of grassroots members of the public with tried and tested previous</p>	All relevant comments noted

	<p>experience in Local Plans, such as Lichfield, etc.</p> <p>Non-demolition of historic buildings prior to the 1950s must be made policy or adhered to as part of LCC's commitment to combatting the Climate Crisis through sequestering carbon in its Old Builds.</p> <p>LAs should adopt a Local List of Valued Buildings (Non-designated Heritage Assets), which have been a Government requirement since the policy introduction through the NPPF in 2012. Historic England produced a guide to help Councils in May 2012. Bristol produced an exemplar list in 2015, which is well worth reviewing. Existing Action Plan if present for Designated and Non-designated Heritage Assets needs identifying and/ or establishing (I may support this if invited).</p> <p>Option for people to provide feedback even if out of time for additional documents, such as SPDs or at the discretion of Councils where feedback may be particularly assistive or lead to additional academic and architect guidance. Option for public publishing of feedback should be encouraged with the consultee's consent to encourage wider consultation uptake moving forwards.</p> <p>Era-style Buildings, especially rows of Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian architecture must be faithfully restored, retained and recreated to complement surrounding historic streets that may or may not be classed in official Conservation Areas preventing harsh contrast with newer built housing estates from the 1950s onwards.</p> <p>Where demolition is proposed for 1950s style housing onwards- any new construction must be in the historic building style and local materials to ensure high carbon capacity, quality aesthetic and true blending of the interconnected conurbations of any one area, place or location.</p> <p>Concerted efforts to identify and locate core suppliers for raw materials and specific heritage skills should encourage new uptake of these limited artisan craft skills by new contractors locally based to support the local economy, provide employment, and reduce the cost of product and service in the long-term.</p> <p>Volunteer labouring assemblies should be fully encouraged and supported identifying key individual an group skillsets that can be utilised to protect historic buildings or areas at risk with a view to supporting the construction of new authentic</p>	
--	---	--

	<p>style housing (as and where appropriate) and the reconstruction of demolished prized old buildings beloved by the community, such as community pubs, libraries and community centres.</p> <p>Simplified streamlined Planning Process for key stakeholders either working to authentically restore buildings and/ or build new ones, such as observed with many civic buildings in Budapest Hungary and the Federal University Buildings in the US. Where there have been evolving building styles over years, eg. Combination of one or more: Georgian, Edwardian and Victorian, the style that best promotes the area, ie. One that has the majority era structures left or capacity size requirements as examples should be utilised by house builders, especially where a streetscape may have been annihilated during the World Wars.</p> <p><b>SECTION 2: Designated &amp; Non-Designated Heritage Assets</b></p> <p>Enhancement of Historic Areas to remove modern street furniture with the integration of classical style timepieces should be encouraged and pursued wherever possible with clear preferred guides set out for each part of the City.</p> <p>Enhancement of Setting with funding grants and financial incentives from all tiers of Government for Private Investors especially those contributing actively towards achieving Net Zero through Embodied Energy/ Carbon Capacity rich measures, i.e. Retention of Old Builds.</p> <p>Archive Pooling of invaluable source material, such as Historic Photographs, Oil Paintings, such as “Memory Lane” featured on InYourArea Magazine to enrich existing material archives.</p> <p>New officialising of Non-Designated Heritage Assets must be actively supported even if informed by the (wider) community thereby providing some possibility of removing these from risk of demolition.</p> <p>Incentives must be provided to those dependable sincere third party investors that take on, maintain and protect said sites against their annihilation from the streetscape with rescue-packages actively promoted and supported once again with a trusted Directory creating goodwill amongst the local community.</p> <p>Opportunity to meet or correspond on Zoom Conference Call regarding key areas, buildings and places at risk where key stakeholders, such as property owners may</p>	
--	--	--

	<p>be better placed to engage in positive and constructive discussion through third parties, such as myself and a trusted panel of experts in their fields and sectors who could enable these people and organisations to maximise their civic heritage, whilst proactively striving to protect more historic buildings from decline and/ or demolition where a strategy package for raising the revenue to do this could be arranged and facilitated.</p> <p>Defining Character Areas- zoning symmetrical parallel construction recommended where distinctive individualised properties remain as checked against authentic archive blueprints. This will ensure high-quality housing for everyone reducing the societal divides between misperceived “good areas” where affluent people reside in historical style properties and less advantaged reside in contemporary ones.</p> <p>Industry should be conserved at former industrial complexes, such as Economic Docks with equivalent sites offering modern-day uses, alongside traditional uses such as export and import of raw materials at places such as Docks and Port encompassing: ICT sector, Green Research &amp; Development, etc.</p> <p>Every effort must be made to reach out to Property Owners, especially Housebuilders that are pursuing demolition of long-beloved buildings, especially those with demonstrable evidence of Holy Worship.</p> <p>Every effort must be made to reach out to Property Owners, especially Housebuilders that are pursuing demolition of landmark buildings, especially those with key links to an area’s founding or history locally.</p> <p>All Powers to monitor, collaborate with existing and/ or new property owners to conserve these buildings should become mandatory with appointed Community Champions for Civic Heritage that area direct link between Local Authorities and said wider key stakeholders to prevent demolition of structures that may be at risk of destruction from vandalism, urban exploration and demolition.</p> <p>Reconstruction Programme harnessing existing limited crafts people’s skillsets to be used as a fundraising vehicle to bring back buildings that may have been demolished to dissuade future demolition as a choice by property owners and by means of expanding these otherwise lost skillsets that are at live risk of becoming extinct from the UK.</p>	
--	--	--

Checklist of buildings at high risk must be expanded beyond the existing groups and organisations that are saturated with high caseloads, such as SAVE Britain's Heritage, etc so that dialogue channels can be created and fostered between Community Champions for Civic Heritage.

Bespoke-tailored funding packages for Properties at Risk of decline or demolition should be integrated with Local, Regional and Central Government-funding as a means of regional economic output through the return on investment that may support other key grant funding capital infrastructure projects, such as transportation and drainage improvements.

### **SECTION 3: Conservation Areas**

Alterations for Listed Building Consent must be simplified with additional streamlined testing methodologies, such as proof of legitimate third party support, such as correspondence chains between applicant and Groups, such as The Victorian Society that can assist LAs complete workload much sooner allowing more attention for challenging cases, such as Non-Designated Heritage Assets at live or upcoming risk of demolition by Housebuilders, etc.

Highways & Street Furniture should be duly supported across the whole of an area to enhance its historic appeal to the commercial community as much to its indigenous community; as this is supported greatly in equivalent Public Realm Strategy SPDs- where any and all guidance and support must and should be provided, with key at risk projects being an exceptional anecdote that may be cited in future documents or versions of this and other consultations to stimulate economic construction and restoration across other designated Conservation Areas, etc or otherwise.

Provide incentives for the return of lost adornments and decorative features, such as roof fixtures like Chimney Stacks once again with an approved contractor directory to make Old Builds practical to own, live and work in the 2020s onwards. If a Directory cannot be provided then specific wording and guides on esoteric restoration and new traditional building styles that would see modern-day use of decorative features must be provided by the Local Council.

	<p>Permissions for authentic replica and more durable materials, such as reproduction sash windows must be supported to prevent exorbitant high costs through procuring these, limited longevity and economic climates being unstable. This must be assessed on a case by case basis.</p> <p>No more deliberate manipulation and selective misinterpretation of using contemporary modern designs using old-style fabric raw materials, such as stone cladding for new housing where the design and shape clearly undermine the concept of blending within or around a Conservation Area.</p> <p>Compendium of approved and recognised TVA Architects based across the UK with a view to supporting the training in time of more Northern counterparts to reduce cost associated with travel expenses, etc. This will actively reduce the level of demolition applications countering the purpose of this SPD and other live Policy. If a Directory cannot be provided then specific wording and guides on esoteric restoration and new traditional building styles that would see modern-day use of decorative features must be provided by the Local Council.</p> <p>New Conservation Areas should be established covering areas of surviving built historic environment to positively reverse fascia changes to more modern ones.</p> <p>Blue Plaques should be fully supported across as many different Conurbations, especially if Applicants reach out for endorsements.</p> <p>Discretionary Rate Relief should be provided to those proactively support LAs with conserving their respective Conservation Areas through their own resources, skillsets and time as an incentive to others to work alongside the Council positively and constructively.</p> <p>Where long-lost prized buildings are reconstructed whether based in a Conservation Area or not this should confer discretionary financial support, e.g. Rate Relief for the length of time taken to produce this outcome acknowledging the embodied carbon now contributing positively towards the LA's Climate Change Action Plan Targets.</p> <p>Retention of historic street furniture, such as Lamp Posts adorning high streets or Promenade style streetscapes with collaborate fundraising models utilised from key stakeholders, such as property owners, undisclosed third party investors, Residents' Groups, etc.</p>	
--	---	--

Retention of historic street furniture, such as Lamp Posts adorning high streets or Promenade style streetscapes with authentic identical reproductions permitted where all options to secure finance have been fully exhausted and/or the existing streetscape is at imminent risk of receiving contemporary replacement street furniture on health and safety grounds, eg. Lap Posts.

#### **SECTION 4: Climate Change**

Pleased to note that LAs broadly acknowledge and grasp this concept therefore the aim should be to increase the net number of carbon-rich Old Builds long-term through support packages that will combat the Climate Crisis, provide economic benefit and improve Conservation in a pioneering fashion that may draw wider funding opportunities for the area.

Retrofit Ventilation is a key point that should warrant future new construction utilising higher ceilings through the reconstruction of Old Builds outfitted for the modern day with retrofitted energy supplies, etc that will also serve to break down societal divides regarding perceived good and bad areas where streetscapes are harmonious yet distinctly unique in beauty like any one Conservation Area.

Embodied energy and embodied carbon- must remain a central priority and so influence new construction to readopt TVA principles as this will be pivotal towards the area's future green credentials as outlined in many existing auxiliary planning documents approved presently with Carbon Studies taken of existing architecture, notably buildings saved from demolition.

A brick by brick case study of as many buildings as possible may warrant invitation of national and international academic institutions to undertake a regional or national Carbon Study further justifying the retention of prized Old Builds elsewhere across the area, region and the UK.

Sustainable Materials- an approved contractor directory that could readily advise and source the necessary raw materials with realistically reduced costs substantially again deterring potential demolition-driven applicants from consuming workload time of the Planning Department. If a Directory cannot be provided then specific wording and guides on esoteric restoration and new traditional building styles that would see modern-day use of sustainable materials must be provided by the Local Council.

Biodiversity- maximise greenery along all arterial roads ad commuter routes with dense tree planting and the introduction of hedgerows and wherever possible financial incentives to get more private property owners on side.

Flooding Defences- existing and prospective hotspot areas should be clearly identified for emergency grant funding whereby Local Authorities, especially across a region may agree with the respective Government Department to distribute emergency flooding to prevent costly consequential recurrent repairs.

Transportation using arterial roads and commuter routes (Motorways and Railways) should prioritise linking each end of a Local Government sphere with the surrounding Local Government spheres, such as Southport at the very northern tip of Merseyside where transportation links are much weaker with Lancashire in the north and east than with the rest of Merseyside to the south.

Coastlines should be reclassified as SSSIs, especially where the economic potential is not being fully realised, such as Coastal Towns with underused Beaches, such as Southport in Sefton as one example for other LAs.

Financial Incentives for the demolition of Carbon-poor Glass Towers and contemporary construction should be utilised to restore the skylines across any one area whilst providing better mathematical application of the space for residential and commercial use, such as larger tenement buildings or the original streetscape reinstated yet designated specifically for housing where there may be a deficit.

**SECTION 5: Historic Buildings**

Create a Designated AND a Non-Designated Heritage Asset List, such as AHV whereby existing buildings and those that may yet return can be logged and recorded to combat the Climate Crisis whilst making heritage work for LAs in modern day with attractive locations timeless for everyone to appreciate enhancing the investor appeal, all-round interest and acknowledging the industrial pioneering legacy of the City.

Clearance of vegetation along the Railway Lines alongside other equivalent parts of the Line to eradicate the perceived neglected aesthetic.

Exception Areas, such as those at risk or recently restored have the real potential for

wider grant funding for ambitious projects out of the realm necessarily of undisclosed third party investors supporting Property Owners, therefore all and any support in reaching these person(s) will greatly contribute to all possible tangible success in the interim period.

Providing key guidance, such as agreed in-keeping historic street furniture, such as Cast Iron Lamp Posts, Bins, Planters approved upon inspection of historic photographs, agreed installation and where appropriate maintenance by the LA will ensure the iterative success of this transferring to other Conservation Areas, etc. Scheme to rebuild and reconstruct long-lost buildings, prioritising vacant sites that could adapt some mixed use with residential accommodation and commercial application thereby supporting Climate Action, creating employment and recordable success through placing of necessary economic drivers, such as offices for Technology Sector if original use cannot be sourced in sufficient time simultaneously meeting housing targets.

Archive Blueprints for historic conurbations that have suffered architecturally over time through building conversions, demolitions, etc should be provided to key stakeholders, if necessary with a printing charge available for official spiral hard copy version to view detailed historic plans covering layouts, etc.

Those people and organisations that have either/ both maintained their properties well over the years or may wish to provide additional support to others, such as restorative support, archive blueprint guidance, etc should be eligible for discretionary reductions by the Council across various property taxes where they may be suffering hardship or through personal circumstances.

“Newer” style housing with true authentic rhythm, such as Suburban style faux Tudor fascia frontages with red clay tile pitched roofs and terracotta design windows (tile hung walls) are a good compromise whereupon finance and scheduling may otherwise adversely impact on housing settlements.

Fascia Frontage details should be reinstated whether in a Conservation Area or not, especially where approval has been granted to rebuild an entire house using breeze block to produce a stereotypical black, white and grey dwelling out of place. LAs should work closely with Foundries to procure raw materials and building services in

the event of harnessing their own Contractor Firm(s) in-house that could work cross-authority to make net savings whilst ensuring particular new housing neighbourhoods conform to an appropriate style.

Modern “Carbuncle” extensions should not be permitted at any one area- instead an authentic style addition may be used to retain blending.

Discretionary financial support packages to assist House Builders choosing the traditional vernacular route should be considered and utilised where it can be proven that this third party will restore the historic streetscape yet making it applicable or modern day requirements- residential or commercial. This may be especially so where they are able to help others prevent the demolition of a prized Old Build built before the 1950s.

#### **SECTION 6: Traditional Vernacular Architecture**

Provide a directory of approved and trusted Conservation Specialist Contractors- this will be key for repairs and maintenance reducing costs for all parties, expediting the physical process of regeneration and smoothen planning work schedules so that finer detail may be considered on priority cases or those that may be at risk of consequential repair, such as Places of Worship and detached Buildings with flat roofs, etc at higher risk of damage than customary dwellings.

These same people should be readily contactable for new construction

Encourage smart building methods and use of TVA as meticulously explained in this SPD outlining “Breathing” Solid Wall Construction using older style materials thereby reducing maintenance cost which combined with the approved contractor directory will further drive down costs, time and effort for everyone.

Alterations- must introduce a simplified listed building consent form and application process that is streamlined encouraging better maintenance of Old Builds and reducing the rising propensity of builders to allow buildings to deteriorate, such as the Historic Pub that had to be rebuilt in Kilburn, London post 2015.

Provide specialist Heritage Arts & Craft Skills Programmes that anyone can learn and use so that these high cost tasks can eventually stabilise in price making them more affordable and available to those that don’t have the time to do this themselves or may be risk averse even.

	<p>Extensions- there must be a proactive emphasis on in-keeping structural fabric to prevent future errors, such as the Municipal Building depicted in the SPD being replicated again thereby harming the Conservation value.</p> <p>New Housing Estates should adopt historical archival blueprints, ie. A Georgian, Victorian or Edwardian layout with the likeliest period architecture utilised where this area remained greenbelt until the 1950s.</p> <p>Area Expansion of housing must revert to traditional timeless designs that confer many practical advantages over modern styles that are harder to maintain are timeless with regard to dating and ensure a more evenly distributed community atmosphere in the long-term future.</p> <p>Infrastructure should be appropriately considered for existing and new areas so that no one area is at risk of becoming congested through traffic for a particular commodity, such as Schools, Doctor Practice, Dental Practice, etc.</p> <p>Site Layouts should complement the historic layout with a view to Post 1950s contemporary Architecture out of place being one day demolished to reinstate Long-lost beloved buildings from before the World Wars that could blossom economically today.</p> <p>Building Form shouldn't permit for dated modern structures that delineate and essentially divide communities between the old and new parts of any one location.</p> <p>Façade Design mustn't be compromised for contemporary architecture, especially in view of coveted Heritage Status for any one area being at risk of being lost if said contemporary architecture is pursued.</p> <p><b>SECTION 7: Making an application</b></p> <p>Identify recurring applicants that are harming civic heritage, be this across Conservation Areas, Non-designated heritage assets or elsewhere with experience of demolition to date- this should be considered before granting permission to apply or acquire planning approval.</p> <p>Enforcement Penalties for key stakeholders that purposely allow their properties to fall into decline and hoped eventual demolition through this tactic, which is more prevalent since 2020.</p>	
--	---	--

	<p>Create an Action Plan to deter persons or organisations from pursuing demolition, such as financial incentives, sincere investor network directory set by Central Government to offload for profit and enforced Design Codes that cannot be manipulated through semantics like Design Guides in isolation as has happened elsewhere. This must be kept for emergency instances where there is an expected threat of decline or demolition.</p> <p>Agreed that temporary alteration of heritage sites, such as stairs or ramps for wheelchairs should be utilised to prevent deleterious loss of historic surroundings and features alike.</p> <p>Full Pre-Consultation publicised and utilised to ensure appropriate Design Codes for new housing alongside positioning and layout in case volunteer assemblies may assist property owners with restoration of historic buildings.</p> <p>Brick by brick Analysis undertaken of projects set for Traditional reconstruction so that these statistics may provide both the Council with evidence for green grant funding support for other key infrastructure projects, such as Transportation and Drainage Defences and property owners may incur a discretionary reduction in associated reconstruction costs of heritage buildings and vistas.</p> <p>Ability to lock feedback in for Consultation automatically unless the council can alert interested consultees in taking part again whether they are locally, regionally or nationally based.</p> <p>Special partnerships with Property Owners of historic buildings at risk of decline/ demolition to discreetly support them with the option to publicise this accordingly to reach out to others in the same position to secure alternative use for these structures as opposed to demolition.</p> <p>Proactive effort to stop Breaking and Entering style of “Urban Explorers” who are coincidentally apparent whenever demolition is scheduled for buildings especially since 2020.</p> <p>LAs to proactively work closely alongside Community Champions and other leading Heritage Groups, such as English Heritage giving these organisations a voice on the frontlines, especially where so many buildings are presently being overlooked for additional guidance and/ or support due to cost and time restraints facing these</p>	
--	--	--

same groups and organisations (including the LA).

### **SECTION 8: MISCELLAENOUS**

Provide all possible support for the reconstruction of Old Builds as is happening elsewhere across Europe, especially Budapest, Hungary, North America, etc to significantly increase Embodied Energy/ Carbon storage.

Establish a Plan to adopt Unadopted Roads or supply key services, such as carriageway resurfacing as disabled access and entry/ exit of Emergency Vehicles is presently a cause for concern.

Provide Pre-Approval and agreement of specialist Conservation Area style Historic Street Furniture, such as Cast Iron Lamp Posts, Bins and Planters for this prime Conservation Area including installation, maintenance costs (where appropriate).

Provide full access to the Archive Resources (at no/minimal cost) as an invaluable incentive for existing and parallel undisclosed third Party Investors. Discretionary waivers may be appropriate for those third parties proactively working to prevent decline and demolition of historic buildings.

Car Parking on and off street should be supported to ensure freedom of choice for everyone, accessibility and connectedness.

Car Parking abodes should be tastefully designed like modern-day stables for vehicles that are in-keeping with the built historic environment.

Provide publicly published names of consultees willing to work alongside the local authority and other key stakeholders, such as property owners and undisclosed third party investors, etc. Provide select tours for prospective investors and housebuilders of existing traditional architecture where Design Codes of this identical style would complement both old and new architecture bending the area better more cohesively, eg. the form and layout of Oxford City Centre which has changed minimally structurally since the 1800s.

Provide a focused effort on utilising people's skillsets on a meritocratic basis, ie.

Procure specialists and volunteers that could work together on key emergency projects, such as Historic buildings at risk without layered bureaucracy on achieving positive outcomes, such as Community Assets where deadlines can be thwarted by

	<p>separate third parties.</p> <p>Create a Top Ten Historic Buildings at Risk Register where appropriate conditions, such as security against Urban Exploration, etc can be utilised safeguarding these structures, providing the respective property owners peace of mind whilst actual scope for revitalising these for solid economic gain.</p> <p>Infrastructure assessments should be fully outlined, such as Air Quality risk from new construction at presently congested areas, hence the case for Traditional Architecture that will confer longevity benefits in the long-term with as much free car parking as possible.</p> <p>Free Car Parking may be monitored through expected proof of purchase when visiting, eg. minimal £1.00 at a shop encouraging partnerships between private businesses and LAs.</p>	
Stuart Logan	<p>I wholeheartedly endorse this design statement. It is well informed and comprehensive. It offers sympathetic advice to potential residents and possible developers on how they could and should proceed in this special village when proposing or undertaking building works.</p>	Support noted
Emanuela Morando	<p>Many thanks for sharing this. I read it carefully and think it's a great action that has been taken by the local community! I am totally aligned with them and other local villages should do the same so I hope this is shared.</p> <p>I just finished an email to our MP to state exactly how worried the community is for all the very low-quality building that is going on today with no infrastructure just for political gain. We need to all work towards sustainability and support the community.</p>	Support noted
Councillor Chris Read	<p>I am delighted to see that the Parish Council and those involved are keeping the Stanford Dingley Parish Design Statement up to date and alive to maintain the parish's vital character. I fully back the updates proposed as District Councillor for the ward in which Stanford Dingley sits.</p>	Support noted

This page is intentionally left blank

# Stanford Dingley Parish Design Statement

**Updated December 2025**

## 1. Introduction

### What is the Parish Design Statement?

1.1 Village, Town and Parish Design Statements (VDS) are produced by local communities. They describe the distinctive local character of an area and set out principles to guide the design of new development. This Parish Design Statement for Stanford Dingley forms an update to the comprehensive Design Statement set out in 2010 and aims to describe Stanford Dingley as it is today, and highlights its qualities which are valued by those living and working in the parish. It represents the views of local people so that their local knowledge and ideas may contribute to any change within the village and preserve the high quality of its environment. The aim is to ensure that further change is based on a considered understanding of the parish's past and present and will contribute positively to the future of Stanford Dingley and enhance its unique and special nature and heritage. The Statement sets out principles which will protect and enhance the local distinctiveness of Stanford Dingley, in respect of its built environment and landscape, through guiding new development and other changes to the environment.

### What is it for?

1.2 This statement provides guidance for any new development, both large and small. It is intended to foster good design and the use of materials and forms that are appropriate and sympathetic to the parish environment. It is also intended to encourage the conservation of Stanford Dingley and ensure that any new development should appropriately consider and positively respond to its historical context. Any application for development within the parish should demonstrate that account has been taken of this Statement. In particular, new development should fit in well with the rural setting and refer to the character and style of the existing buildings and enhance the village and surrounding countryside, all of which is part of the North Wessex Downs National Landscape. Much of the village is designated a Conservation Area which in itself imposes further obligations of preservation and enhancement.

### Who is it for?

1.3 Change in Stanford Dingley is mostly brought about by residents seeking to alter their homes and gardens, but also by alterations to open spaces, pathways and hedgerows, all of which can alter the character and appearance of the village. Pressure for change may take place in the future as more buildings become redundant, and alternative uses and development is sought. This statement is therefore aimed at:

- Householders and businesses
- Planners, developers and builders
- Architects, designers and engineers
- Statutory bodies and public authorities

## How does it work?

1.4 The original Stanford Dingley Parish Design Statement was adopted by West Berkshire Council on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2010. This updated Parish Design Statement supersedes that document. It was endorsed and adopted by West Berkshire Council, as part of the community planning process, on 27 March 2026 and will continue to be used as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. Compliance with the recommendations in this document does not by itself guarantee planning permission as each case is judged on its own merits.

1.5 This Statement will provide guidance at the most local level. It will inform and influence planning decisions in the parish. It will assist the Parish Council, who are consulted by West Berkshire Council on planning matters, to assess the impact of proposed development on the village. It will also help the Parish Council and local groups by encouraging and directing voluntary local initiatives that will conserve and enhance the character of the parish as a whole.

1.6 This statement compliments and supports District level design guidance set out in the Quality Design - West Berkshire Supplementary Planning Document (adopted June 2006).

## How was it prepared?

1.7 The Stanford Dingley Parish Design Statement, first published in January 2010, has now been factually updated and revised by a Parish Council working group to reflect the situation in 2025. The need for this update was agreed by the Parish Council in 2022, who identified that the current plan was in need of updating to reflect the changes of the past 10 years. An initial draft was prepared in January 2023, and consultation undertaken with the local community at that time. Further informal consultation was then undertaken with West Berkshire Council. This final draft document was then submitted to West Berkshire Council Planning Policy team in order to arrange a formal 6 week consultation period in November/December 2025. Formal consultation was undertaken from 7 November to 19 December 2025 and the comments received as part of that process have been incorporated into this final version as appropriate.

## 2. The Parish Context

### Geographical Context

2.1 Stanford Dingley is a village and civil parish in Berkshire. It is situated in the West Berkshire district, between Newbury and Theale. The villages of Frilsham, Yattendon, Bradfield, Bucklebury and Burnt Hill are also nearby. The parish contains 390 hectares (963 acres).

2.2 Stanford Dingley is located in the valley of the River Pang, on the minor roads between the A4 Bath Road and the M4 motorway. The southern parish boundary runs along the edge of the woodland on the northern slopes of Clay Hill. The northern boundary is the M4 motorway. Bucklebury lies to the west and Bradfield to the east. Stanford Dingley straddles the River Pang that has continuous water flow in the river, thanks to two springs which feed the river from the southwest of the village.

*Figure 1: Location of Stanford Dingley within West Berkshire (to be included in full colour adopted version)*

2.3 The village and the whole of the surrounding area is within the North Wessex Downs National Landscape, which is designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). AONB's are nationally designated landscapes and in planning terms have the highest level of protection with regard to the conservation of their natural beauty. The River Pang flows between the steep slopes of the clay capped escarpment to the south of the village and rich alluvial farmland rising gently to the north. Within the designated Conservation Area there is very little topographical change.

2.4 In terms of planning designations, the village has no settlement boundary. A Conservation Area covers part of the village.

*Figure 2: Parish Boundary (to be included in full colour adopted version)*

*Figure 3: Village and Conservation Area (to be included in full colour adopted version)*

### A Short History of the Parish

2.5 Stanford Dingley is an ancient settlement, as the village is recorded in the Domesday Book and more recent archaeological finds suggest the Romans may have been here. The church, dedicated to St. Denys, is a Grade I listed building famous for its medieval wall paintings dating back to the 12<sup>th</sup> century. It is believed to be one of the oldest foundations in Berkshire, as some of the original Saxon stonework still stands. The font is Norman and additions to the building were made in the 12th, 13th and 14th centuries.

2.6 Stanford is commonly held to be a corruption of "stone ford" as, before the present bridge was built, wagons and livestock crossed the Pang by a ford, with a wooden footbridge for pedestrians. However, the 1086 survey refers to "Stanworde", which means stone

enclosure. As the church dates back to Saxon times, this would seem more probable and would indicate the existence of a very ancient settlement. Dingley is believed to be a corruption of "Dyneley", a family who held considerable sway in the parish in the early 15th century, as a fine brass memorial in the church testifies. In addition to the church, other buildings of interest include a 15th century public house, 'The Bull', and an 18th century one, 'The Old Boot'. Thomas Tesdale, the founder of Pembroke College, Oxford was born in Stanford Dingley in 1547.

2.7 Adjacent to the church are a substantial farmhouse and barns, which were built on the site of an old, moated Manor House and small medieval village. The house is mentioned in the Domesday Book as being held by William, son of Anscluf, who was a holder of considerable land in Berkshire. Despite considerable infilling over the years, it is still possible to trace the moat,

2.8 In the early 17th century the important families in the area were involved in the then staple trade of the county, that of cloth manufacture, and the description "weaver" occurs frequently appended to names in the Registers. A water mill is mentioned in the Domesday survey and again in historic documents during the 14<sup>th</sup> century and early 17<sup>th</sup> century. During the Elizabethan period the tannery was operated by the Knight family. In the 18th and 19th centuries an important tannery existed in the centre of the village, where the mill was built to straddle the Pang - vital to the working of this industry. The Census of 1851 showed that five Journeymen Tanners and five Tanner Labourers lived in the parish. It was certainly a thriving community in those days as the Census also lists carters, a miller, a hurdle maker, two dress makers, two butchers, two shepherds, a blacksmith, a baker, a shoe maker and apprentice, a hoop shaver, a Rector, a school mistress, nine house servants, 27 house wives, 40 children - and six farmers and 24 farm labourers. This last statistic shows, fairly decisively, that, apart from the tannery, the main industry was agriculture, and, to this day, the whole area is still predominantly agricultural. There are currently five working farms within the parish - utilising all the surrounding land, which is the main factor that makes this parish so idyllic and peaceful, despite its proximity to urban developments.

2.9 The surrounding fields also have many historical associations, including several areas of old Glebe Land of St. Denys Church. A number of ancient hedgerows and "green roads" remain despite their erosion by modern farming methods. The Bucklebury Manorial Court rolls mention agricultural matters pertaining to (and thus seen as vital to) Stanford Dingley as far back as 1408

## **The Parish Today**

2.10 There have been traditional activities, which have provided employment and livelihood for the occupants of the village. There are several remaining active farms in the locality and their management has a significant impact on the character of the village. The mill is now a private house and Manor Farm is occupied as a leading carpenter's workshop working exclusively on large oak framed structures. Other sources of regular activity are the two public houses as well as businesses being run from homes. The dynamic, of working from home, has generally increased and the trend looks set to continue. During the summer

months the village attracts many walkers, equestrians and cyclists who take advantage of the numerous footpaths and bridleways as well as the roads in the Pang Valley and circular walks around the village.

2.11 The parish is an 'attractive' place in which to live. The qualities that make it attractive are: -

- The river valley, farmland and deciduous woodland
- Views of the open countryside and access to it<sup>1</sup>
- An attractive built environment with many interesting and historic buildings
- An abundance of flora and fauna
- The constant flow of the River Pang
- The small roads into and out of the village, as well as the steep climb out of the south side of the village, limiting heavy goods traffic
- Tranquillity or 'peace and quiet' brought about by low noise and light pollution.

---

<sup>1</sup> 2021 Village Survey <https://stanforddingley.co.uk/2022/09/29/village-survey-results/> - completed on behalf of approximately half of the village, access to the countryside was scored as the single greatest village amenity

## 3. The Landscape Setting

### Landscape Character

3.1 The landscape within which the parish of Stanford Dingley sits has been subject to a number of landscape character assessments. The most significant of these are the West Berkshire Landscape Character Assessment (2019), the North Wessex Downs Landscape Character Assessment (2025), and West Berkshire Historic Environment Character Zoning (2008). These studies provide a detailed assessment of the components of the landscape that define the parish and also discuss some of the issues that might influence the conservation of the landscape.

3.2 The defining landscape features of the Parish are the broad shallow valley of the River Pang flanked on either side by areas of mixed woodland, heathland and mixed farming. Whilst the core settlement is the village located on the crossing point of the river there are a number of small, dispersed farmsteads in the parish. These assessments also highlight red brick and tiled roofs as the dominant building material and a network of narrow winding lanes within the landscape.

3.3 The parish is bisected by the middle reaches of the River Pang, a 23 mile long chalk stream which forms a very distinct linear landscape. There are only 210 chalk streams in the whole world and 160 of them are in England. Typically, they are characterized by a rich mix of grazed pastures, water meadows, wetland and woodland, all of which are seen within the parish. The village nestles in the valley formed by the Pang with the escarpments rising to the north and south of the parish and perpendicular to the course of the river.

3.4 Geologically the village and surrounding countryside lies on the northern limb of the Berkshire Downs syncline with Tertiary Beds overlying Upper Chalk dipping gently to the south. Over thousands of years the River Pang has eroded through the clays, silts and sands of the Tertiary strata to expose in places the underlying Chalk but also depositing gravels, and more recently, peaty silts. This has resulted in a diverse subsoil which in combination with the high-water table and an undulating topography, provides the right conditions for the rich flora and fauna which is enjoyed today.

3.5 Dense hedgerows coupled with mixed woodland form an almost continuous screen around the village. The screen is principally deciduous and affords limited glimpses of both domestic and agricultural roofs during the winter months but provides a soft variegated backdrop of green throughout the remainder of the year. The southern scarp slope is densely wooded with mixed woodland. There are fine trees throughout the parish, many of great antiquity. For instance, chestnuts in the churchyard are estimated to be in excess of 500 years old. The natural arboreal landscape comprises examples of alder, ash, beech, common whitebeam, oak, poplar, rowan, silver birch, cherry, willow and yew. This is augmented by the many attractive ornamental trees within village gardens.

3.6 There are numerous open spaces within the Conservation Area, small open paddocks and water meadows behind domestic curtilages which enable views through from one part of the village to the backs of properties beyond. Opposite The Bull Public House is the village green, identifiable by its mown grass and historic seats donated by tannery owner, Peter Fabyan Sparke Evans (b 1826). A circular seat, commemorating the 2000 millennium surrounds a *Crataegus prunifolia* (Cockshpur thorn) in the centre of the green. Another tree *Malus floribunda* (Japanese crabapple) was planted in 1935 outside of Willow Cottage. This was to commemorate the Silver Jubilee of K. George VI and Q. Mary. The tree canopies merge with those of other protected trees on the opposite side of the road. To the north of the church is the Village Field, which is an open space of grass, which is used by residents for recreational purposes and is used for village events. It is also used for car parking for special events at St Deny's Church.

## Flora and Fauna

3.7 The River Pang together with Ingle Stream and the Stanford Brook (beside the rectory) are some of the many streams and ponds that are the key to the aquatic environment for wildlife in the parish. The un-named lane to Bushnells Green and Chapel Row actually follows a spring line. These water features provide a haven for wildlife, both flora and fauna. For example, over 35 species of birds have been recorded in the Parish, including Barn and Tawny owls and the endangered Yellow Hammer. Kingfishers and swans are regular visitors in the centre of the village. The water vole was seen on The Ingle until recently. Other large mammals such as foxes, badgers, squirrels, bats & deer are common, as are reptiles and amphibians. Invertebrates are likewise, well represented.

3.8 In recent years there has been considerable activity for conservation of the natural environment under the auspices of the Pang Valley Project to re-generate the natural habitats of the River Pang and its immediate environs. The work ensures a sympathetic management of the riverside resulting in renewed economic activities, such as the traditional coppicing of willows, hedge laying and successive planting of native tree and plant species.

3.9 An important part of the landscape are the three Local Wildlife Sites:

- The 6.5 ha field opposite Manor Farm ((In 1841 called Malthouse Meadow and Lower Cornleys) which is a semi-improved lowland wet meadow with elements of unimproved grassland.
- Pangfield Farm 4.4 ha ((In 1841 part of West Moor) with riparian habitat with rich grassy marsh, two wildlife Heritage sites lie adjacent to this site.
- Jewells Farm has Jewells Hayfield which consists of semi-improved neutral grassland and lies within the River Pang flood plain.

## Approaches to the Village

3.10 Whilst traditionally, Stanford Dingley has not been generally used as a "through route", volumes of traffic are certainly increasing. There are four vehicular approaches - Yattendon Road (for anyone approaching from the north), Back Lane (from both the Bradfield - east - and Bucklebury - west - directions), Bushnells Green Road (or Bucklebury Road) which leads down from Chapel Row, and Jennets Hill, which will bring the traveller down from Bradfield Southend via either Cock Lane or Hungerford Lane. The parish is devoid of much traffic signage and other street furniture such as street lighting. This helps emphasises the rural character.

3.11 Bushnells Green is exceptionally narrow, with high banks and few passing places - it is designated as "unsuitable for large vehicles".

3.12 Pedestrian access is much more plentiful, with a multitude of footpaths and byways. In fact, one of the joys of Stanford Dingley, and a reason that it is so popular with ramblers, is the numerous "circular" footpaths which radiate out from the village providing beautiful country walks of varying lengths. Visitors to the Bull and the Boot often combine a walk with their PH sojourn. Unfortunately, on street parking is increasing and often poses a safety issue to local residents as well as an obstruction to farmers and their large tractors

## 4. Settlement Pattern

4.1 Stanford Dingley and the adjoining riverine parishes are unique in the local area in that the built environment has been relatively untouched by modern development and still retains its sense of the past through its historic buildings which recall the previous life of the community.

4.2 The present-day pattern of settlement is predominantly linear with buildings either abutting the highway, sitting towards the front of their surrounding plots or set back with gardens stretching back to hedgerow, stream, meadow, farmland or woodland behind.

4.3 The distinctive rural character and open structure of the village is enhanced by the views of the surrounding countryside which are obtained through gaps in the built environment. These open spaces allow fingers of the countryside to reach into the heart of the village and give views to paddocks, water meadow and woodland beyond. These gaps in the development are a distinctive feature of the parish and help define its rural character and appearance.

## Built Form

4.4 The density of buildings increases at the centre of the village around the river crossing and the mill. Here there are few spaces between buildings. The views are short and are of "layers" of building juxtaposed on one another. The majority of the buildings in the village are residential dwellings and are therefore of a comparable scale however a number of large barns are also present – both agricultural, and some which have been converted to residential. There is variety in built form from the small vernacular cottages to the large architecturally "polite" houses, for example Brook House and the Garden House. There are very few tiny cottages, the majority of buildings sitting detached within their own plots. The predominant character of dwellings is of steeply pitched tiled roofs with straight gables and open eaves, sometimes sprocketed. Continuous traditionally unbroken dormers are very much a later feature probably indicating the addition of bathrooms in the upper storeys during the last century. The older properties are generally of timber frame construction; many having been altered with brick additions during the 18th century.

4.5 No single type of housing dominates and with this diverse mix of building forms and materials, variety is an important part of the character and appearance of the village. This variety also applies to the siting and the density of buildings, where some groups of houses are in close proximity i.e. at the centre of the village, and other houses are set in more spacious plots. This has the effect of producing constantly changing focal points and vistas which lend variety and interest to the eye and allow distant views across the fields to higher ground beyond.

## Building Materials

4.6 The predominant building material is brick, which is usual in an area where clay caps are found. Typically, the local orange/red bricks are laid in Flemish bond with salt-glazed greys used as headers and for detail brickwork. Brickwork detailing is most commonly seen as eaves and gable dentils, projecting string courses or plat bands of projecting bricks defining the building storeys. Roofs are generally tiled using handmade clay tiles of local origin. Later roofs and those of some of the more architectural buildings are covered in natural slate. There are a number of barns and more industrial types of building within the village, and these tend to have timber boarded external walls, boards being traditionally wide planks of elm or oak, allowed to weather naturally to a silver-grey finish. The roofs of these buildings tend to be corrugated/wriggly tin reinforcing their agricultural origins.

4.7 Vernacular buildings in the village are mainly built from locally available materials and reflect local custom and tradition more than architectural fashions. They are a conspicuous and historically important component of the landscape of the Parish. They are essential ingredients of local distinctiveness and irreplaceable documents of the past lives of people, providing evidence of long-lost craft traditions.

## Enclosures/boundaries

4.8 Throughout the parish, roads and fields are generally bounded by mixed native hedgerow. This hedgerow extends to many domestic boundaries, but in some places more formal plantings such as yew, privet and holly are used. Generally, green borders dominate, and boundary walls and fencing do not usually exceed 1.5 metres in height.

4.9 There are many other long and short distance views from within and outside the Conversation Area, particularly from local footpaths and roadways. The most significant visible features of the Conservation Area are the hedges, banks and walls which create a sense of enclosure to the individual properties from the main thoroughfares, but which allow framed views over and between the open spaces to other parts of the Conservation Area beyond.

4.10 Shelterbelts, hedgerows and other green borders feature throughout the Parish, some of them pre-date the Enclosure Acts, passed mainly between 1720 and 1840. Although these ancient hedgerows support the broadest range of flora and fauna, new plantings have much to contribute. Listed below are common hedging plants which blend well into the existing landscape: Ash, Beech, Blackthorn, Bramble, Cherry, Dog Rose, Dogwood, Elder, Elm, Field Maple, Hawthorn, Hazel, Poplar, Holly, Honey Suckle, Lime, Oak, Pear, Plum, Spindle, Willow and Yew.

4.11 Historically, high panel fencing and gates have generally not been erected within the village. Traditionally many gardens and curtilages are bounded by hedgerows and open fencing providing glimpses into gardens and to the landscape beyond. Likewise, gateways and driveways within the village are generally open and provide

views beyond.

4.12 Although the parish is devoid of pavements, grass verges are found alongside many of the narrow roads within the parish. These verges thought to originate from providing grazing to livestock en route to market, and are an important element to maintaining the rural character of the parish.

## 5. Areas of the Parish

### Area from the Bridge to The Boot

5.1 This area contains a variety of styles of architecture. The scale of building, the use of brick and hanging tiles and the presence of trees and shrubs integrates these very different buildings in a pleasing way. Although having substantial gardens these buildings form a distinct group.

5.2 Of great importance is the Garden House, which is mentioned in *The Buildings of England (Berkshire)* (Tyack, Bradley & Pevsner, 2010). This is a listed building dating from 1717 with an elegant symmetrical and classical façade, which echoes some of the features of the Old Rectory; a later servant's wing added to the house by the Ranfurly family in the early part of the last century in a 'mock Tudor' style is now a separate dwelling. To the east and downstream of the bridge is Saffron House, originally a small dwelling built in a modified vernacular style, but which underwent extensive modernisation in 2021. At the same time its barn was split from it and sympathetically converted into a new modern dwelling. As one approaches the village on foot from the east this house stands out charmingly against the river-side willows. Views from the road bridge looking east are also of note for their beauty and charm and the adjacent weatherboarded barns and other buildings which originally belonged to the original smallholding on this site and have now been replaced by a sympathetic separate dwelling in the same style. The original curtilage has been split into two separate dwellings.

5.3 To the south of this and abutting the road is Bradfield Farm, a substantial 19th century house built in an atypical classical style with adjacent farm buildings, these now converted to several dwellings. West of The Garden House are two 20th century houses, owing some of their features to the local vernacular style. Further west is The Boot public house, a simple 17<sup>th</sup> century house, which is Grade II listed. These last three buildings are faced with painted rendering which further links them visually. To the west of the Boot is The Spring, a timber framed building. Originally two 17th century cottages, it was converted into a single dwelling in the 1920's (by Dr Hasson, who also converted Roman Way and Jewells Farm). The house retains many of the features of Berkshire vernacular architecture found also in some of the houses to the north of the Pang.

### The Area West of The Boot

5.4 To the west of The Boot the character of the village changes. Housing is less dense, and gardens are larger. There are one or two smallholdings here and a replacement dwelling was constructed on of those of traditional form with Brick under a clay tiled roof at Fairholme Farm in 2020 to replace the old farmhouse which had fallen into some disrepair. There are hedgerows, both thorn and formal, some fencing and as one proceeds westwards there are many distant views towards the escarpment to the south, and northwards into the valley and the Frilsham woods. The road winds and gradually rises as it reaches open country. The Grade II Listed Old Rectory with its surrounding buildings is the dominant

structure in this part of the village; Tyack, Bradley & Pevsner (2010) describes this building as a five-bayed early 18th century house in 'Chequer' brick and further describes the doorway in some detail (Ionic pillars, broken pediments etc).

5.5 The house stands within a formal garden to the north of the road, and there is a small area of parkland in the field opposite. This symmetrical building, clearly inspired by the English tradition of Palladian architecture, contrasts with most of the other houses in the area which are in a more vernacular style; some of these latter houses are indeed of 17th century origin (Roman Way and Ducarts for example - both Grade II listed) but others are more recent and to a greater or lesser extent informed by an earlier style of architecture, both in scale and detail. The result is a varied and harmonious panorama of buildings, vegetation and natural spaces, and this part of the village offers a good model for the successful integration of different types of building. Jewels Farm is set back from the road with its farm buildings fronting the road. The Ingle Spring rises to the southwest of the 1930's house of the same name. At the southwestern edge of the parish Hunter's Moon Farm is a 18<sup>th</sup> century Grade II listed house, on higher ground and at the centre of a smallholding.

### **The Central Area Immediately North of the River Pang**

5.6 This area in the centre of the village is dominated by a group of five or six small 18th century houses. They were probably built for tannery workers. The mix of roofs and chimney stacks creates a series of interesting shapes, enhanced by a repetition of detail, materials and roof pitch. Architectural details and materials are mostly traditional. One of these buildings, The Mill is weather-boarded and incorporates the mill race and a set of working floodgates. These houses contribute greatly to the character of the village and to a sense of history, and it is easy to imagine the very different lives of those living in the original small dwellings centuries ago. The central position occupied by these houses enhances their role as a witness of village life in the past. The river broadens both above and below the race and curls round some of the houses, and in the upper reach it is shrouded in tree cover. This area is particularly rich in wildlife, for example kingfishers are regularly seen here, an unusual feature in the very centre of a village. A new dwelling 'Oaken' was constructed here in 2020 with brick under a red tiled roof.

### **Area Around The Bull Public House**

5.7 Further north is the village green, and an area of rough land known as Butchers' Piece. Until the 19<sup>th</sup> century the butcher's shop stood here. Beyond this, the appearance of The Bull public house reflects many of the features of the cottages already discussed. The building dates from the 15th century and sports an interesting Berkshire feature also found elsewhere in the village, a 'catslide' roof. The Bull has recently been extended to provide bed and breakfast accommodation. To the north of this is a group of buildings which originally formed a farm. The farmhouse, an attractive 18th century building, now Brook House, is Grade II listed. The rest of the farmyard, to the south of the house, is flanked by

an open sided barn and 'Diamond Cottage', said to be the old cowshed. This complex of buildings gives a picture of the former farmstead, and it is interesting to note that the buildings stand on the same 'footprint' as the original structures. Opposite this are three buildings, one of c17th century origins with many of the features already discussed with respect to the cottages further south. It was originally the home of the village blacksmith who also ran the pub. His adjacent, small forge now has a shop front. These buildings abut the Pang. Further up the river is a Mill House built in 1870 and typical of the 'villa' style of this period. Within the large, wooded garden is a memorial to Kyrle Leng and Robert Gathorne-Hardy, two previous owners, by the great neo-romantic artist, John Piper.

### **Area Around the Church**

5.8 Further north and standing on raised ground, St Denys church is a Grade 1 listed small flint structure with a weather-boarded bell turret dating from Saxon times; this is one of the oldest foundations in Berkshire. Within the building are the remains of 12th century wall paintings. The churchyard is noted for its magnificent and ancient sweet chestnut trees and its fine Grade II listed funerary monuments. Looking west from the high ground around the church there is a good view of the Pang valley and over a large water meadow with surrounding woodland and a very busy rookery. In the other direction is Manor Farm House, a Grade II listed building built on the site of an old, moated Manor House which in the 14th and 15th centuries was owned by the de la Beche family (there are famous monuments to members of this family in nearby Aldworth). The original moat is still visible. Adjacent Grade II listed barns are currently occupied by Peter McCurdy and in these he created the wooden structures which were assembled on the South Bank in London to form the Globe Theatre.

### **Area North of the Church**

5.9 This part of the parish has a wide variety of building styles dating from the 17th century to the present day and includes terraced, semi-detached, detached and bungalow styles. There are views of woodland and mixed farmland. There are three working farms (Mazelands, Severals and Pangfield) which utilise this land and together contribute significantly to the character of the Parish. This ensures that the countryside and the built environment form an inseparable and integrated whole.

5.10 The pattern of settlement is predominantly linear with the positioning of houses being relatively close around the crossroads of Back Lane and Burnt Hill Road while to the north and west of this junction the siting of properties is much more dispersed. The effect is to produce constantly changing focal points and vistas, allowing distant views across fields to higher ground beyond, and up and down the Pang Valley.

5.11 The field immediately north of the Church was purchased by the Parish Council, with the aid of a grant, thus preserving the land for the local community. This land was originally part of Berkshire County Council's smallholdings, amounting to about 79 hectares, comprising Manor Farm (previously Stanford Dingley Farm), Stanford Farm, Manor House,

Chalkpit Cottage and cottages now known as Briar Bank, Wisteria Cottage and 2 Stanford Farm Cottage. The latter three cottages were built to accommodate the smallholders but by 1995 the County Council had disposed of all its holdings in the Parish as they were surplus to requirements. Meadowlands, a terrace of five properties (replacing the Old Buildings which were four cottages demolished in 1967/68) and the adjacent Coppers, a chalet bungalow, were built in the 1960s. Turning east in to Back Lane there is Chalkpit Cottage originating from the 17th century, sympathetically extended in the 1970s and again in 2008. Opposite Chalkpit Cottage there is Church View Barn, a substantial green oak house constructed under a clay tiled roof. Adjacent to Grade II listed Chalk Pit Cottage, a new house, Blossom Cottage, built in 2015, replaced a number of disused metal farm barns. To the north, across a substantial and disused chalk pit is Mere View House is a substantial house designed by a local architect and built in 2001 in replacement of a bungalow originally on that site. The chalk pit, owned by the owners of Mere View House, is now a relatively wild area, and home to a myriad of local wildlife.

### **The Principal Farms in the Parish**

5.12 Continuing north on Burnt Hill Road the route opens up to give wide panoramic views of the surrounding farmland with the wooded higher ground beyond before reaching Mazelands Farm. Mazelands, which farms mainly sheep and beef cattle but also rare and different breeds, was formerly part of the Iliffe Estate before being purchased by Trinity College, Cambridge and then sold in the late 1980's to the present owners. The M4 Motorway forms the northern boundary of the Parish.

5.13 Severals Farm with its timber and corrugated iron barns and sheds is sited in a very prominent elevated position overlooking the Pang Valley and the village. Its 80 acre holding has been run by the Plank family for nearly a century. The farmhouse is of white painted rendered walls on an exposed brick plinth with a hipped pitched roof of plain clay tiles and prominent stacks. From Severals Farm the road opens up to give wide unbroken views of the surrounding farmland and the picturesque valley landscape which supports an extremely diverse range of plants and animal communities. The farm has recently added three large agricultural buildings of a timber cladding under pitched corrugated iron roofs to the southwest of the farmhouse.

5.14 Pangfield Farm is set well back from the road and is approached by a long drive. This bridleway is a northern extension of Green Lane, an ancient track joining Bushnells Green Lane to the site of Dodd's Cottages (demolished early 20<sup>th</sup> century) and eventually Yattendon Originally known as Field Farm, the old farmhouse stood to the east of the position of the present house where the main farm buildings stand today. One barn is Grade II listed. The continued existence of these farm buildings, and the shapes of barns and sheds are important to the preservation of the richness of our surroundings and the conservation of the character of the built environment and the countryside. Several buildings at Pangfield Farm have been recently converted for use as an equestrian business.

5.15 Farms are working places that have had to adapt over time to remain viable. The future of agriculture is of particular importance to the Parish, as a landscape supported by

viable agriculture will be of positive benefit to the natural beauty and sustainability of this National Landscape.

### **Area South of Bradfield Farm**

5.16 Travelling south from Bradfield Farm, the route gradually rises through the Parish but starts as a sunken lane, with embankments lined with hedges and yew trees planted by George Matthews-May the 19<sup>th</sup> century. tannery owner. giving restricted visibility, before opening out at Jennetts Hill House. Originally the site of a row of thatched cottages, destroyed by a roof fire in the early 1970's, the present building was built a few years later. It is of neo-Georgian style characterized by its harmonious proportions and symmetrical façade with 12 paned white sash windows and a projecting string course at first floor level.

5.17 Adjacent to this property is Dumbledore reputedly the oldest house and arguably one of the most important buildings in the village. Dating from the late 15th century, it is Grade II listed and originally a medieval 'open hall' house formed by a very complete two bay cruck frame. Formerly two farm labourers' cottages with two large gables, the first floor was probably installed in the 17th century before the building was converted into one house in 1958.

5.18 Opposite these properties is Casey Court, a formal layout of buildings with a garage block at the rear and served by a short cul de sac. This development differs from the simple one building deep characteristic of the older parts of the village. The present buildings were built on the site of a row of farm labourers' cottages, circa 1820 with their water supply being the old existing well across the road. In the early 1960s they were demolished by the then Bradfield Rural District Council to make way for the existing properties (originally all Council owned).

5.19 The present development was built to a standard design, layout and budget and introduced regularity which was not previously present in the older buildings of the village. The houses consist of chalet and traditional bungalows, which feature variations on the basic style by adding, for example, flat roofed dormer windows and part timber cladding at ends of gables.

5.20 The road twists up Clay Hill at the southernmost border of the parish to offer spectacular views of the parish and of the Pang Valley to the East and West. Although the properties at Clay Hill form a less visually cohesive group, there is the common thread of using traditional materials indigenous to West Berkshire thus maintaining a fundamental essence of vernacular architecture.

## 6. Description of building designs within Parish

6.1 An analysis of the style and design of existing buildings and the materials used was carried out to describe the unique character of the village. The objective results obtained from this analysis helped to produce the detailed Building Guidelines which will assist in the preservation and enhancement of the architectural character of the Parish. (See Section 7: Design Guidelines)

### Roofs

#### Roof Form

6.2 The majority of the buildings in the village are residential buildings and are therefore of a comparable scale. They are predominantly of two storeys, some having dormers on the first floor, while some have a full first floor and dormers in the roof while approximately 19% are bungalows. Consequently, the average ridge and eaves heights are comparatively low and as a result do not have a detrimental effect on the visual appearance of the Parish. There are no dwellings within the village with a flat roof.

6.3 There is a consistency of comfortable and well accepted clear roof forms without severe changes in roof geometry. The domestic vernacular is of pitched roofs with gable ends although approx. 30% of buildings have either half hip or full hipped roofs. There are a few examples of catslide roofs, another feature of Berkshire vernacular architecture, where one side is longer than the other and continues at the same pitch, sometimes over an extension. There is also one instance of a Mansard roof which has a double differing roof pitch. The juxtaposition of roofs where buildings are in close proximity, especially in the centre of the village creates a series of interesting shapes, enhanced by a repetition of detail, materials and roof pitch.

#### Roof Coverings

6.4 The prevalent roofing material is plain clay tiles, handmade, of local origin, mainly on the older properties and machined on the later buildings. The traditional design of the plain clay tile has a timeless quality and versatility which can be adapted to any new building, extension or improvement. Approximately 20% of buildings have concrete or clay interlocking tiles, some of pantile design and 10% of buildings have natural slate roofs with the appropriate lower roof pitch. There are two examples of diamond asbestos slate roofs and one 16th century house that is partly thatched.

6.5 There are a number of barns and more industrial types of building within the village, and these tend to have a roof covering of corrugated iron sheets, some of which are supported by a double purlin roof with queen post trusses. Where these buildings of agricultural origin exist alongside the residential properties, their contrasting textures lend interest to the street scene.

## **Chimneys**

6.6 Chimney stacks are a prominent feature in the Parish, with a variety of pot designs, on the majority of buildings, which add interest to the roofscape. Chimneys are located in various positions on the roof i.e. through the ridge, at a gable, at the eaves, on side or end of a hipped roof or through some point along the slope. The relationship between chimney and roof is a major determinant in the external appearance of a building. Brick, with its fire-resistant quality, is the most common and satisfactory material used for chimney stacks and can give the opportunity for displays of craftsmanship with many existing examples of distinctive and decorative brick detailing including the use of oversailing brick courses.

## **Dormer Windows**

6.7 Approximately 20% of buildings have dormer windows which are generally small in scale and designed with regard to their proportions and positioning on the roof slope. The majority are positioned with the cill at approximately eaves height, but there are examples of dormers centred at the eaves, coincident with the ridge of the main roof or located midway on the roof slope. The main style is gabled, some tile hung, although there are instances of flat roofed dormers and a few with a catslide profile.

## **Eaves and Gable Detail**

6.8 The domestic vernacular is open eaves, sometimes sprocketed and brickwork detailing seen as eaves and gable dentils. Some of the larger 18<sup>th</sup> century houses have a moulded and dentil brick or wooden eaves cornice. Later properties have the conventional soffit and fascia detail at the eaves and gable ends.

## **Walls**

6.9 More than any other single component, the choice of wall material establishes the character of the vernacular architecture in the Parish. With a variety of wall materials there are, broadly speaking, two structural systems prominent in the Parish: "mass" construction of brick and timber frame construction. In the former the loads of roofs and floors are carried to foundations by means of walls which also provide the weather protection envelope. In the timber frame construction, the loads of roofs and floors are carried by a frame which concentrates these loads until they are redistributed by the foundations; the weather protective envelope is sometimes independent of the frame although often spaces between the members of the frame are filled.

## **Timber Framed Buildings**

6.10 There are several listed 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century and earlier buildings surviving in the Parish which are originally timber framed but with later additions. These houses amount to approximately 15% of the buildings in the Parish and contribute greatly to the character of the Village. The frame construction of these properties often has exposed structural and

non-structural timbers with infill panels of brick or, on the earlier buildings, wattle and daub as surviving in The Bull Inn. In addition, for reasons of weather protection and fashion, various cladding materials such as tile, brick, weatherboard or lath and plaster have been used to conceal and encase the timber frame. Oak is the timber predominantly used for structural purposes in timber framed buildings in the village.

### **Brick Construction**

6.11 The predominant building material in the Parish, which is usual in an area where clay caps are found, is brick, which came into use for vernacular buildings during the 16th and 17th centuries. Brick walling provided the weather protective envelope and became fashionable in Georgian times (1714 - 1837) when farmhouses and medium sized houses of 'polite' architecture were built e.g. the Old Rectory (circa 1720), The Garden House (1717), the Manor Farm House (1821) and Brook House (18th century). Bricks became the universal building walling material by the second half of the 19th century and "mass" brick construction accounts for 85% of the houses in the Parish.

The use of the traditional local red/orange brick is prevalent throughout the village, with handmade bricks found on the older buildings and machine-made ones on later properties.

### **Bonding**

6.12 Early brickwork on the 15th - 18th century buildings, before the advent of cavity walls, is laid in either English Bond, alternate courses of headers and stretchers or later Flemish Bond, alternating headers and stretchers along each course. The cavity wall gained widespread use from the 1920s and buildings later than this date are mainly built in stretcher bond composed entirely of courses of stretcher bricks. Lime mortar and plaster is mainly used on properties built earlier than 1900, before patent cements, such as Portland cement, were introduced.

### **Brick Patterning and Detailing**

6.13 Another feature of using brick in the Parish is the use of the traditional burnt blue headers to form decorative masonry geometrical patterns including diamonds and chevrons as constructed on Privett House and Kingsmead (built 1870s). Some of the earlier brick houses have projecting string courses or plat bands of projecting brickwork to define storeys. Other decorative effects are found on the eaves of the older brick buildings in the use of dentilation and dog-tooth projecting brickwork, for example on Brook House and Manor Farm House.

### **Wall Cladding**

#### **Vertical Tile Cladding**

6.14 There are several examples of vertically hung clay roofing tiles used as a wall cladding material in the Parish. On timber framed walls they have been used for weather protection over thin infill panels or poor-quality masonry.

Approximately 13% of buildings in the parish have external walls partly clad with vertically hung clay tiles and mostly located on the more exposed area at the top of a gable end wall but also on gabled dormers, for example Bridge Cottage. As well as the plain roofing tile, other shaped tiles are used to give decorative effects and patterns, for example as seen on The Garden House.

### **Weatherboard and Shiplap Cladding**

6.15 Weatherboard is found on many timber-framed agricultural and formerly agricultural buildings throughout the Parish, most with brick plinths, such as barns and workshops. These make a major contribution to the richly varied character of the countryside and the built environment. Fine examples can be found at Manor Farm with its courtyard plan layout of 17th and 18th century listed barns, which remain in use as workshops. Original weatherboards were made of oak or elm and sealed with pitch, although some weatherboarding is treated with stain or replaced with more modern shiplap.

6.16 Weatherboarding as a cladding material in domestic architecture only became popular for the lightweight timber-framed buildings towards the end of the 18th century. As well as The Mill, The Look Out, Church View Barn, 82-83 Meadowlands and some domestic outbuildings, e.g. garages, which are totally encased with timber cladding, there are many examples of walls partly clad with shiplap or weatherboard. Again, this is mostly located at the top of a gable end, often for reasons of architectural fashion. Approximately 23% of domestic buildings have either timber total encasement or part shiplap or part weatherboard used for wall cladding.

### **Rendered and Painted Walls**

6.17 There is a significant number of buildings with walls painted white or cream, either directly onto brickwork or on smooth rendering or pebbledash, which has been used to cover poor masonry or blockwork. There are examples where this style is mixed with others such as a painted and rendered upper storey with a lower storey of facing brickwork. In addition some walls have rendered and painted panels between members of structural and non-structural timber framing, which in some instances creates a mock Tudor effect. Approximately 15% of buildings have either whole walls rendered or partly rendered, while 14% have whole walls of painted brickwork, mostly in white or cream.

## **Windows**

6.18 Of all the architectural detailing to new and existing buildings windows are one of the most prominent and in the case of replacements, most abused features. They are an integral part of a buildings character and require very careful consideration. The fenestration (arrangement of windows), window style, including lintel and cill detailing, materials, colour and means of opening all contribute to the character. Original windows provide wonderful dating clues for houses.

6.19 Although most windows are sash and casement there is a wide variation included at times on the same building where extensions and additions have been added over time. Opening types are commonly either vertical sliding double hung sashes or side hung casements. Traditional window patterns comprise designs which are symmetrically balanced about the horizontal and vertical axes.

6.20 With such a wide variety of styles there are also examples of distinctive feature windows in the Parish, such as the canted diamond leaded oriel windows on Roman Way and there are a few large picture windows which can be found on the newer properties.

### **Sash Windows**

6.21 Approximately 11% of houses in the village have vertical sliding double hung sash windows. The period characterized by the vertical rectangle shape began towards the end of the 17th century and included the Georgian style of architecture 1720 - 1840 with its main features associated with this era of harmonious proportions and symmetrical façade. The Old Rectory, The Garden House and later White Cottage are excellent examples of these characteristics with their classic sash windows of three panes across and two panes down amounting to the traditional 12 equal panes on a pair of sashes. These windows are set below structural arches, to support the brickwork, such as the flat gauged brick arch as seen on the properties above. These traditional characteristics are maintained with the neo-Georgian style of Jennetts Hill House built in the 1970's.

6.22 The Victorians reduced the number to two panes over two or one over one, examples of which are on Kingsmead and Bugeildy. Removing so many glazing bars made the windows weaker and to strengthen them small protrusions called horns were added below the centre bar on either side.

6.23 The placing of windows within the wall thickness has a considerable effect on the character of the building. The older properties such as The Old Rectory and The Garden House have the exposed wooden box frames of their sash windows almost flush with outside face of the brickwork, while the later buildings have window frames set back within the wall thickness.

### **Casement Windows and Fixed Light Windows**

6.24 The vast majority of this style of window are rectangular and of portrait configuration and tend to be of 1 - 3 lights often including a fixed window with a top hung fanlight and an opening side hung casement. Older properties generally have smaller windows split into a number of equal size panes and approximately 58% of the windows in the Parish have a distinctive arrangement of one or more horizontal glazing bars.

6.25 Many newer properties including some with replacement windows have the more modern side hung casement window, with the larger single pane (without glazing bars) but still of portrait configuration. This style of window can be found on 42% of buildings and often includes a fixed single pane window with a small top hung fanlight. As with sash windows, the position of casements and fixed lights within the opening has an important

effect on the character of the property. The older properties, especially the listed timber framed buildings, have their windows flush with the outside face of their particular cladding material as can be seen with the leaded casements on Roman Way and The Spring. In rendered buildings and where the wall is timber boarded the reveal depth is less critical.

6.26 However with newer brick buildings the frames are often set back slightly from the front wall exposing brick reveals which add a sense of depth to the façade and create strong shadow lines. Generally, in brickwork window frames are set back so as to show a minimum reveal depth of 100mm.

6.27 Another style that can be found in the Parish is the leaded casement, either divided into smaller rectangular or diamond shaped equal lights. These exist on approx. 10% of the buildings, in particular the older properties, for example on the listed timber framed houses such as The Spring and Roman Way. The latter property also contains some 17th century Flemish glass.

### **Dormer Windows**

See paragraph 6.7

### **Window Arches and Lintels**

6.28 At window openings the vertical loads are carried either by structural arches or non-structural arches and/or lintels of timber, concrete or steel. These various methods of support are an important visual feature of the façade of a building. Older brick properties tend to have windows set beneath structural arches, for example the flat gauged arch, as seen with sash windows or segmental arches both of which do not rely on secondary support.

6.29 More modern brick buildings tend to have non-structural arches where facing brickwork is used in conjunction with and supported by a secondary steel or concrete lintel such as the soldier arch which visually portrays the supporting action of the brick arch. Some properties such as Kingsmead have exposed concrete lintels without a brick veneer.

### **Materials and Colour**

6.30 The predominant window frame colour is white and this amounts to approximately 83% of the houses in the Parish. The remainder have frames of black, brown or cream. The majority of external timber joinery is painted which is usually the correct finish, although some timber windows are stained.

6.31 Windows in timber framed buildings particularly leaded casements tend to be black to match the surface treatment applied to the exposed timber structure, for example Roman Way and The Spring.

6.32 Window frames of timber is the preferred material and accounts for approximately 54% of properties. As alternatives became available a few properties have been fitted with metal frames but a large proportion of householders, approximately 42%, have replaced existing with uPVC windows.

6.33 Although some uPVC frames are difficult to differentiate from a distance, their widespread use has arguably been an unwelcome visual intrusion to the appearance of buildings, particularly within the Conservation Area. It is often forgotten that time and the elements are important effects. The weathering of natural materials results in an appearance that improves with age, an effect not found with uPVC structures. In addition, uPVC conservatories use thicker beams and more cross-members in order to match the rigidity of wooden equivalents.

## Doors

6.34 There is an extensive variety of external door styles and door finishes throughout the Parish as characterised by the diverse mix of building designs. No single style dominates, and doors vary from the traditional simple construction of vertical boards to complicated joinery of panels, frames, glazing and fanlights. Generally external doors in the Parish are in character with the building and work in harmony with the architecture of the property. There are many fine examples of door styles reflecting the period of the building such as the 18th century listed Georgian houses, the Garden House and the Old Rectory. These buildings have a central hardwood door divided into six raised and fielded panels with a radial fanlight, to provide natural light for the hallway, and a triangular pediment above. The typical six and the later four panelled Georgian style door, some with panels replaced with glazed lights, account for approximately 20% of the door types in the Parish. Many of the 17th century vernacular cottages have the traditional simple framed and ledged hardwood plank door, some of which are reeded on the front with studs and with a small fanlight such as Ducarts. This style of door totals approximately 20% of the door styles within the Parish. A variation of this type of door is the stable door which can be found in about 10% of buildings in the Parish and mostly in the vernacular cottages.

6.35 On the more modern buildings and with mass production of doors there is a greater diversity of styles. The more common style is the upper half of the door being glazed and divided into a number of equal size panes (2, 4, 6 or 9) by glazing bars and the lower half split into one or two panels or alternatively boarded. Approximately 23% are of this style, some of which have side lights of toughened glass. Other than the elaborate entrances of the 18th century Georgian houses, porches and canopies are generally of small and simple design or recessed into the house. External doors are further enhanced with good quality door furniture and ironmongery.

### Door Materials and Finishes

6.36 The predominant material in the older style doors is hardwood with many of the plank or boarded doors made of oak. Some of the mass produced more modern doors are constructed of pine. As with windows, replacement doors are increasingly made of uPVC

and account for 8% of doors in the Parish. The predominant colour of external doors is white and this amounts to approximately 37% of buildings. Many of the oak doors have a light pigmented wood stain and preservative to minimize any change of colour in the timber and enhance the grain. Other hardwood doors have a light to dark brown wood stain with approximately 33% having a stain finish. A few doors have adopted recent trends for soft and muted shades of green, although there are examples of gloss navy blue, black and pillar-box red. In general, the colours of doors in the Parish complement the buildings and act as a strong focal point for the house.

## 7. Design Guidelines

7.1 These guidelines represent the key points that any proposal for development should take into account, at an early stage, when planning or implementing development or change. The guidelines have been split into two sections: General Guidelines and Detailed Design Guidelines.

7.2 When considering any new development, it is also advisable to consult with neighbours and the Parish Council. In many cases a design and access statement should be produced in support of an application. The Parish Council recommends that the services of an RIBA qualified architect are sought to assist with both this and the overall design of a proposal.

### General Guidelines

7.3 The overall aim of these guidelines is to maintain the beauty and character of the parish and to conserve it as an area of architectural and historic interest. At the same time, they provide guidance on future changes to ensure that development is in harmony with the parish. There are parts of Stanford Dingley, notably in the Conservation Area, that could be particularly sensitive to change.

- i. New development should conserve and enhance the character of the village. It should reflect the linear pattern of the existing settlement. Where practicable plots should extend back to a natural boundary such as a hedge or a streamline and should not penetrate the protective natural vegetative screen.**
- ii. The distinctive rural character and open structure of the village is dependent on the views of the surrounding countryside which are obtained through gaps between buildings. This relationship should be respected and retained with any new development.**
- iii. The wildlife of the Parish, both plants and animals, is extensive, rich and diverse. It is important to be aware of the potential loss of habitats or habitat change resulting from inappropriate management or development of land within the parish. Wherever possible, the biodiversity of the parish should be enhanced or at the very least preserved.**
- iv. Development proposals should incorporate features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs. For building dependent species, developments should include integrated nest boxes (commonly known as swift bricks) where possible.**
- v. Tranquillity, remoteness from the urban environment and dark night skies are important attributes of Stanford Dingley. Development which would detract from these attributes should be avoided.**
- vi. Materials that match or are sympathetic to the existing building should normally be**

used for extensions and repair and alteration work.

vii. The conservation of the quality of the traditional vernacular architecture within the parish in particular of the several fine period houses within the Conservation Area is encouraged. Any changes should be in keeping with the character of the building concerned.

viii. The principle of 'subservience' should generally be applied to new extensions. That is to set down a new roof from the original building, and to set back the new build from the frontal elevation. Dominant or bulky additions and annexes should be avoided.

ix. Barn conversions should preserve the character of the original structure and reflect the agricultural origins in both materials and form.

x. Hedgerows and trees should be preserved throughout the parish and enhanced where possible through new planting. Parishioners are encouraged to seek local arboricultural advice before replacing or adding trees and hedges that have a visual impact on their neighbours. Other than yew, conifer trees and hedges are seldom appropriate because they are unlikely to be a native species and therefore would detract from the character of the parish landscape.

xi. The use of native hedging plants, shrubs and trees should feature as boundaries to houses and other buildings within the village (see 4.9 and 4.10). Where fencing is proposed, post and rail is preferred. High panel fences and gates should be avoided as these are urbanising features, out of character with the parish.

xii. The wetlands of the parish should be preserved and enhanced to preserve habitat for a wide range of plants and animals. They absorb water and reduce the risks of flooding residential property and help mitigate climate change by acting as carbon sinks.

xiii. Street furniture and signage should be kept to a minimum throughout the village, and no street lighting and pavements introduced.

xiv. The visual impact of power transmission and telecommunication wires in the village should be kept to an absolute minimum. In particular, poles carrying transformers and switchgear should be positioned to reduce their visual impact or relocated underground. Any replacement poles should be of timber to match existing.

xv. Grass verges provide a sanctuary for wildflowers.

### Designing Out Crime

The Police Crime Prevention Design Advisor can advise on crime prevention measures, including in rural areas with sensitive design guidelines such as Stanford Dingley. Contact: TVP Crime Prevention Design Team, Thatcham Police Station, 20 Chapel Street, Thatcham, Berkshire, RG18 4QL or call 01635 295156.



## Detailed Design Guidelines

### Walls

- In any new development the wall material type and colour should be sympathetic and match commonly used existing materials that harmonise with existing buildings and the surroundings, such as the traditional local red/orange brick, brick and flint, or timber cladding for agricultural buildings.
- Brickwork of new extensions and alterations to existing buildings should match the type, colour and size of brick used on the original.
- Decorative brick features such as the use of traditional burnt blue headers for banding and patterning and the use of bricks of another colour for dressings around openings and as eaves and gable dentils/corbels are encouraged.
- Brick bonding of new extensions and alterations e.g. Flemish or Stretcher bond should match the original development.
- Large expanses of stretcher bond should be avoided.
- Brick pointing of new extensions and additions should be of the same style (e.g. concave/hollow or flush) as the existing building. Similarly, any re-pointing to brickwork should match the original.
- The same mortar, whether cement or lime on the original building, should be used on new extensions and when re-pointing existing brickwork. The colour of the mortar should be carefully chosen to blend well with the brickwork.
- Rendered walls should be painted either white or in pale pastel shades and should be sympathetic and complement those already used in the village.
- Brickwork in the Parish should be retained in its original state where possible, characteristically unpainted. However, there are also examples of lime washed and painted brickwork in white and in pale pastel shades which is encouraged where appropriate.
- Barns and other buildings with timber boarded external walls should be repaired with the same style of weather boarding or shiplap boarding as the original and treated accordingly to match existing.
- Vertical hanging clay tiles are encouraged where appropriate, such as in gable detail, the upper storey or a whole wall with pattern effects achieved with decorative shaped tiles.
- External pipework should be discreet, properly integrated and installed so as not to detract from the appearance of the building.
- The use of artificial mock effects such as non-structural timber framing or plastic reproductions should be avoided.

### Windows

- In any new development the size of windows should be in correct proportion to the façade. The style of window should be in character with the building and in harmony with the architectural character of the village.

- The depth of reveals on new extensions and additions should be appropriate to the house type and match the existing building.
- On listed buildings, period properties and in the Conservation Area uPVC windows should be avoided.

### Dormer Windows

- Dormer windows should generally be small in scale and not detract from the architectural interest of the building.

### Rooflights

- Careful consideration should be given to the position, size and design of rooflights with the number of openings kept to a minimum. They should be sited as unobtrusively as possible, preferably on the rear of buildings rather than the front.
- On listed buildings and buildings within the Conservation Area, the conservation rooflight should be used, mounted flush with the roof line.

## Roofs

### Roof design

- The roof design of extensions and alterations should relate well to the proportions, roof form and massing of the existing building and neighbouring properties and should be subservient to the original design. Any new building should have a clear main roof form and profile without severe changes in roof geometry.
- Roofs with variable pitch slopes from ridge to eaves should be avoided.
- The inclusion of decorative fascias, barge boards or exposed rafters, rather than deep eaves boarding, is encouraged where appropriate.
- Flat roofs and low roof pitches should be avoided as steeper sloped roofs are generally more in keeping with the character of the parish.
- The inclusion of brick chimney stacks that are in scale, character and proportion to the building is encouraged.

### Roof materials

- The preservation and retention of thatched roofs is encouraged.
- Handmade clay tiles predominate in the Conservation Area and should generally be used for developments within the Conservation Area. They are encouraged generally throughout the Parish.
- The roof covering material of new extensions and alterations should match the type, colour and size of the roofing material used on the existing building e.g. hand made plain clay tiles, machine made clay tiles, pantiles or slate or corrugated/seamed tin in the case of agricultural buildings.

- The use of concrete tiles is not encouraged as they do not age well and do not reflect the architectural and historical character of the Parish.

### **Roof additions**

- The installation of micro-renewable energy systems should be discreet and sensitively incorporated with minimal disruption to the appearance or fabric of the building.
- The design of TV dishes and aerials should be sympathetic to the building on which they are to be sited. They should be of minimum size and sited unobtrusively away from public vantage points wherever possible.
- Cast Iron or cast aluminium rainwater goods are preferred to uPVC especially within the Conservation Area and on historic buildings. Rainwater goods should be of a design so as to not detract from the external appearance of the building.

### **Doors and Porches**

- Doors should be appropriately designed for the age and style of building.
- Doors of timber construction are preferred while the use of uPVC is not encouraged. On listed buildings, period properties and in the Conservation Area uPVC should be avoided.
- The alteration of the size of existing door openings should be avoided if the alteration would adversely affect the architectural character of the building.
- Colours of painted doors should be in shades that are in harmony with the character of the building and the parish.
- Porches and cantilevered canopies should relate to the style of the building, and generally be kept small, simple, in proportion to the building and not overly prominent.

### **Garages, Driveways, Conservatories and Ancillary Garden Buildings**

- It is recommended that new build garages, conservatories and other garden buildings are sited in discreet locations such as to the side or rear of the house. They should be in keeping with the scale of the main building they are associated with.
- Garages should be designed to complement the style of the main building and materials used should harmonise with those of the existing building. Garages should have pitched roofs, and timber framed barn type buildings are encouraged.
- Any new development should minimize the visual impact of parked cars and avoid car parking areas of hard surfacing to frontages.
- Conservatories and garden rooms should respect the design of the existing building.

- **Timber conservatories are preferred to uPVC, especially with regard to listed buildings, period properties and within the Conservation Area where uPVC is discouraged in almost all cases.**
- **Loose natural materials or bound gravel should be used for driveways as opposed to tarmac and concrete blockwork.**
- **Careful consideration should be given to the siting and colour of oil and liquid propane gas tanks so that they are not visible from the highway and blend in with the surroundings with, if necessary, appropriate planting.**
- **Garden buildings such as sheds, greenhouses, and summerhouses should be appropriate in form and scale to the size of the plot, with the visual impact kept to a minimum, and sited so as not to be an intrusion on the privacy of adjoining properties.**

#### **Under-used and Vacant Farm Buildings**

- **The appropriate reuse of suitable under-used or vacant barn buildings is encouraged by the community if their loss would not be detrimental to the character and visual quality of the parish, In the case of such buildings being listed or in a key position within the village and in a state of disrepair, every effort should be made to rehabilitate them providing that their essential fabric and character are maintained.**

## **Appendix 1: Bibliography**

Historic England Advice Note 1, Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management, Historic England 2019

North Wessex Downs National Landscape Management Plan 2019-2024

Tyack, G, Bradley, S and Pevsner, N (2010) *The Buildings of England (Berkshire)*

Dils, J(ed) (1994) *Stanford Dingley: A Tudor and Stuart Village*. University of Reading.

North Wessex Downs National Landscape Integrated Landscape Character Assessment (2025)

West Berkshire Council (2008), *West Berkshire Historic Environment Character Zoning*

## **Appendix 2: Further reading**

Greenaway, Dick, and Dorcas Ward, (Editors), *In the Valley of the Pang*, Reading, 2002.

Platt, Mary, (Compiler), *Stanford Dingley, Stories of a village*, London, 2003

## Appendix 3: Schedule of Listed Buildings

Grade	Name of Asset	National Heritage List for England (or Local List) ref	Date Listed
I	CHURCH OF ST DENYS	1213251	29/11/1983
II*	THE OLD RECTORY	1213108	29/11/1983
II*	DUMBLEDORE	1213110	29/11/1983
II	GARDEN HOUSE	1213107	29/11/1983
II	SKILCROFT	1213109	29/11/1983
II	LITTLE ORCHARD	1213111	29/11/1983
II	THE OLD BOOT INN	1213177	29/11/1983
II	ROMAN WAY	1213181	29/11/1983
II	CARTER TOMB APPROXIMATELY 3 METRES TO SOUTH OF CHANCEL OF CHURCH OF ST DENYS	1213271	29/11/1983
II	CARTER TOMB APPROXIMATELY 12 METRES TO SOUTH OF CHANCEL OF CHURCH OF ST DENYS	1213274	29/11/1983
II	MANOR FARMHOUSE	1213276	29/11/1983
II	MILKING PARLOUR APPROXIMATELY 10 METRES TO NORTH WEST OF MANOR FARMHOUSE	1213278	23/03/1981
II	BARN APPROXIMATELY 35 METRES TO NORTH OF MANOR FARMHOUSE	1213279	23/03/1981
II	BROOK HOUSE	1213281	29/11/1983
II	BRIDGE HOUSE	1213282	29/11/1983
II	K6 TELEPHONE KIOSK OUTSIDE THE BULL INN (TEL BRADFIELD 744446)	1214116	27/01/1988
II	BRIDGE COTTAGE	1289111	29/11/1983
II	BARN APPROXIMATELY 30 METRES TO NORTH WEST OF MANOR FARMHOUSE	1289134	23/03/1981
II	BARN APPROXIMATELY 30 METRES TO NORTH EAST OF MANOR FARMHOUSE	1289135	23/03/1981
II	THE BULL INN	1289136	29/11/1983
II	THE SPRING	1289198	29/11/1983
II	CHALK PIT COTTAGE	1289239	29/11/1983
II	DUCARTS	1289240	06/05/1983
II	Former threshing barn approximately 52m east-south-east of the farmhouse, Pangfield Farm, Stanford Dingley	1444053	23/06/2017

## Appendix 4: Consultation process with parishioners for original 2010 design statement

### 1. Introduction

A consultation process was organised such that parishioners were invited to attend a display of 150 photographs relating to features of the parish in terms of its built and natural environment, and to answer a multiple choice questionnaire. The display was organised in the Club Room in Stanford Dingley on Saturday, 13 September 2008. The date was chosen to coincide with the Stanford Dingley annual fete and mini show which was held 150 metres from the Club Room at Fairholme Farm. The fete and mini show was held between 2.00pm and 5.00pm and the Parish Design Consultation between 3.00pm and 7.00pm. At all times the Club Room was manned by members of the Parish Design team. An invitation (see Section 5 below) was circulated to each household in the parish, and notices were posted outside the Club Room. The fete and mini show is the event that draws most members of the village together and good weather meant that it was well attended on the day. It is estimated that approximately 60 people visited the Club Room, and 42 people completed questionnaires.

### 2. The Display

The display comprised 150 photographs printed on A4 sheets and posted on the walls of the Club Room. The photographs were grouped to illustrate the 13 statements to which visitors had to indicate whether they strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed, strongly disagreed or were unsure on the questionnaire.

Therefore, as visitors circulated the room the photographs were grouped in order of the statements. In addition, there were sheets posted on the nature of the Parish Design Statement (What is it? - What is it for? - Who is it for? - How does it work?) and a householder guidance note on how to prepare your own 'Design Statement'.

### 3. The Questionnaire

The questionnaire was carefully designed to reflect the main guidelines that the team wishes to include in their draft of the Parish Design Statement. Visitors were told at the outset that the team generally agreed with the statements, but the team wanted to seek written comments particularly where the participant disagreed with the statements, or was unsure about them. There was one direct question on the form asking 'What makes our Parish an attractive place in which to live?' to which some suggestions were made by the team:

- The river valley, farmland and deciduous woodland.
- Views of the open countryside and access to it
- A sympathetic built environment with many interesting and historic buildings
- Flora and fauna
- Tranquillity brought about by low noise and light pollution?
- Participants did not have to give their names or addresses.

This page is intentionally left blank