



# Long Itchington



*Village Design Statement*

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# Long Itchington

## Village Design Statement

*Adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance*  
*25 January 2000*

### A multi-purpose document - opportunities for enhancement

*Long Itchington Village Design Statement offers local design guidance (as Supplementary Planning Guidance) to help manage future change, so that the existing identity of the village's buildings and landscape are integral in new design. In addition, the VDS flags up opportunities where future environmental enhancement schemes in areas of the village might help to revitalise local character. Such enhancement projects might be worked up by the local community and Long Itchington Parish Council, together with other organisations to spur action, find resources and implement schemes. The VDS will also be useful for working up Design Briefs for key sites.*

Below are listed all those on record as having participated in the preparation of this document. Naturally, in such a complex project it is possible that some have been left off this list in error. If this is so, please accept our apologies in advance.

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Invaluable assistance was also received from staff and members of: Stratford-on-Avon District Council, Warwickshire Rural Community Council, Long Itchington Parish Council

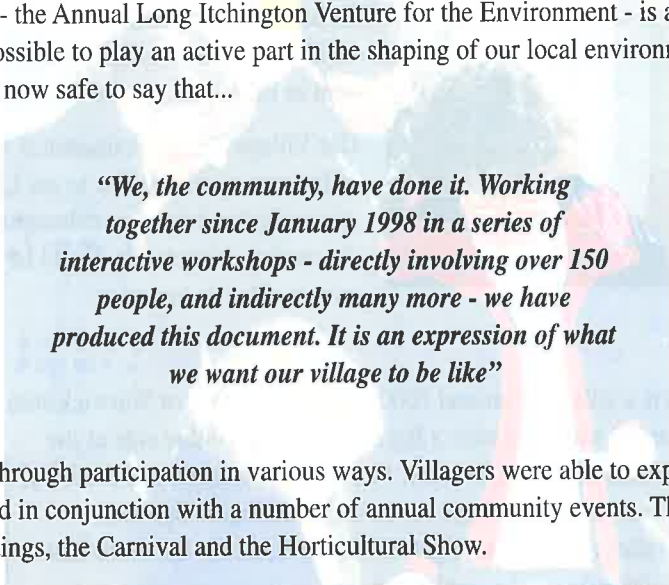
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# Introduction

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Sometime in 1997 the Long Itchington Parish Council was asked by the Stratford-on-Avon District Council to consider making a Village Design Statement. The Parish Council in turn asked the ALIVE project organisers if they would be willing to take it on. They said they would... and the rest is history.

The ALIVE project - the Annual Long Itchington Venture for the Environment - is about helping as many villagers as possible to play an active part in the shaping of our local environment, both natural and man-made. It is now safe to say that...



*“We, the community, have done it. Working together since January 1998 in a series of interactive workshops - directly involving over 150 people, and indirectly many more - we have produced this document. It is an expression of what we want our village to be like”*

This was achieved through participation in various ways. Villagers were able to express their opinions at open sessions held in conjunction with a number of annual community events. These included 2 Annual Parish Meetings, the Carnival and the Horticultural Show.

In addition, the ALIVE project team ran a major workshop in June 1998. Over 100 volunteers photographed those aspects of the village which they thought to be distinctive and characteristic, illustrating both good and bad practice. As a result, in addition to this publication, we now have a ‘snapshot in time’ comprising over 600 photographs of Long Itchington as it was on that day.

One final open event was held to encourage villagers to comment on the project's conclusions, as expressed in a first draft of the village design statement.

## *What is a Village Design Statement?*

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**A Village Design Statement is an expression of the character of a village as seen by the local community and a clear statement of how residents want their community to look in the future. Everyone is given the opportunity to say what they think. When accepted by the District Council it takes on the status of Supplementary Planning Guidance. This means that it has to be considered along with all other statutory plans and other design guidance as a basis for decisions concerning the design of any proposed development in the future.**

**For the purposes of this Village Design Statement, the Parish of Long Itchington covers Long Itchington and Model Village but not Bascote, Bascote Heath or any of the other outlying areas.**

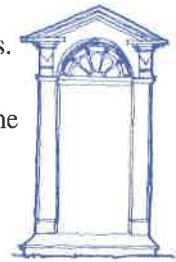
**The outlying areas are to be dealt with in Stratford District Council's new Countryside Design Summary which is available from Council offices and libraries. The two documents should be read side by side.**

## Why do we need a Village Design Statement?

The village of Long Itchington has grown by more than 20 per cent in less than 25 years. With the closure of the local Rugby Cement works in 1999, large areas of brown and green field land will become available for development. This could potentially double the overall size of the village over the next 10 years, if not the actual number of houses.



This will obviously have a dramatic effect on the village as we know it now. We would like to help influence and manage this growth, as well as the appearance of the village as a whole.



Our Village Design Statement is therefore an expression of how we would all like to see Long Itchington develop as a settled and thriving community whilst maintaining its distinctive character. It should be read in conjunction with the Parish Appraisal.

## History

Long Itchington is a village of around 2000 people in south-east Warwickshire, situated on a flood plain in the middle of what was once a flat sea bed. It lies either side of the main A423 trunk road between Coventry, 11 miles to the north, and Banbury, 17 miles to the south. Its nearest large towns are Leamington Spa and Warwick, 6 to 8 miles to the west; Rugby is a little further to the north-east, while Stratford is 15 miles to the south-west.



The village has been here, or hereabouts, for at least 2000 years. When the Romans came there was already a well-established settlement in the area - indeed, that is almost certainly why they came.

The village was not always in exactly the same place. In the 13th and 14th centuries, the village of the time was down by the river in front of White Hall Farm. In fact, the name Long Itchington literally means 'alongside the river Itchen'.

This initial settlement was eventually deserted and it was some time later that the village began to be re-established around the church. The various half-timbered houses date from this period which was around the middle of the 16th century.

This area now approximates to the Conservation Area as defined by the District Council and it forms the central area in our Village Design Statement. Development continued here using the local brick, with typical Warwickshire detailing, as the main building material.

Growth was slow and steady up to the beginning of the 20th century. Some modern materials and styles began to appear between the wars but it was not until shortly after the Second World War that substantial growth really took place.



## The village as a whole

The relatively flat topography of the area does not permit much in the way of views into, and out of, the village. However, three views into the village as it is entered by road are worth special consideration. Two are positive and one needs improvement.



The two worth protecting are:

- The view, having passed the well screened industry and the visual clutter around Grasmere Garage entering on the main road from the south, looking between the two pubs and over the canal towards Leigh Crescent.
- The view, entering down the hill from Bascote, looking across the water meadows and the river towards the church and Manor Farm.



The one in need of serious improvement is:

- The view, mercifully missing the worst of the visual intrusion of Ryland Ford because it is hidden by the shoulder of Rhine Hill, entering on the main road from the North. This comprises a mass of signs, the un-screened parking lot of the restaurant and the ex-service station with lorries parked on the forecourt.

There are also attractive points of entry worth careful consideration from public footpaths and bridleways:

- along Thorn Way from the Southeast via SM3 or SM3a;
- down Brakeley to the pond from the North via SM9 or SM10;
- past White Hall Farm and Croft Cottages from the West via SM2.



The presence of the river, canal and railway means that many of these entries are over bridges. The older ones are built of brick with large round arches and parapet walls such as Snowford Bridge. The modern ones are made of wide-span steel or concrete beams with metal railings such as the river bridge on the Bascote Road.

From within the built-up area, the wide open areas around the village can be important. Unfortunately there are currently few clear views out from public areas other than roads. One exception is the



northern prospect from the Playing Field at Green End which, although unremarkable, has at least the benefit of a wide natural treescape unhindered by any development. Another worth mentioning is the view from the front of the Co-op across Church Road to the river. Many private properties also benefit from such views. The Leamington Road, Thorn Way, Collingham Lane and parts of the main road (A423) all benefit in that, to a great extent, they bound the built-up area.

## Open spaces

The open spaces of Long Itchington are considered by many to represent its one predominant feature. The village is located in, and surrounded by, the countryside. The people who live here have chosen to do so because they can see trees and open spaces, both within the village and across open agricultural land. Space is a valuable commodity that must be retained for its significant contribution to the character of the village.

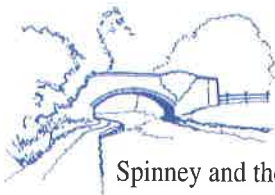
This openness is epitomised by the mature tree-lined village pond with its resident swans and surrounding greens which form a major focal point in the centre of the village. This area is considered to be of more than just local significance - perhaps our only tourist attraction. Certainly people come from far and wide to enjoy its relaxing charm - in spite of the location, on a main road junction.



The allotments and the cemetery in the middle of the village, the open spaces around the church (including The Square), the now abandoned original school site and the various parcels of common land thereabouts also play an important role. Linking all of these is the important public footpath (SM2) which runs through middle of the Central and West End areas.



Recreation naturally forms the focus for open spaces, of which the Playing Fields at Green End and Model Village are the most obvious. There are also small playgrounds at Leigh Crescent and Short Lane.



Less structured recreation is expressed in the local footpath system. Within the boundaries of the VDS area are stretches of open countryside with public footpaths linking back into the village and interconnecting other areas of the settlement such as the Community Wildlife Area (the Nature Reserve, White's Spinney and the old railway line) and the Grand Union canal.

Finally, the River Itchen meanders through water meadows at the edge of the village forming a natural boundary to the south. This natural boundary was supplemented by a floodwall and pumps in the late 1960s and early 70s which, unfortunately, still proved to be insufficient to handle the Easter Flood of 1998!



## *Design Recommendations for Open Spaces*

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- Every effort must be made not to let this essential characteristic of our village disappear. These areas, especially the pond and its associated greens, have to be protected and even enhanced so that more people can appreciate and value the role they play in our immediate environment.
- However, this may not be enough. Dense housing developments situated close to the main village rarely contribute substantially to its open nature. Each expects it to 'just happen' somewhere in between. New developments, therefore, need to be assessed in terms of their impact on the whole area and not be subject to piecemeal decision making.
- When the cement works site is developed, it is imperative that open green areas be preserved between it and the existing village and around Model Village. This is covered in more detail in the section dedicated to Rugby Cement.



- Community initiatives can improve the use and appearance of existing open spaces. Further opportunities for improvements should be sought through the medium of the Parish Council, ALIVE projects and any available tree planting schemes. For example, the Play 2000 millennium scheme is planning to upgrade the present children's playground at the Long Itchington playing field. The out-dated and play worn equipment is to be replaced and new safety surfacing installed.



- New and replacement bridges should reflect the character and detailing of the older bridges using brick as the main material such as the canal bridge on the Bascote Road.



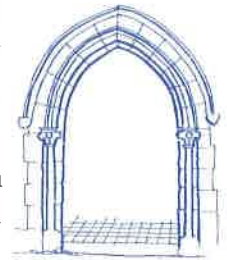
- All views into and out of the village deserve special consideration. Protection of what is aesthetically of value must go hand in hand with improvement where necessary, especially the entry down Rhine Hill on the main road where some substantial screening is needed. Opportunities should be sought to create new clear views out that enhance the rural nature of the setting.



## 'Public' Buildings

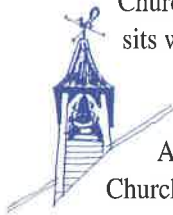


'Public' buildings by the very nature of their function tend to be in prominent locations and must therefore be a major consideration in the design of the village. The existing buildings in this category vary from the very old to very recent. They are described in some semblance of date order.



The 14th century church and its churchyard to this day form an important focus for the village. The church itself, located on a small knoll so that it escapes the floods, is of some architectural significance. In terms of design, the loss of the spire two hundred years ago was a severe setback.

The old Victorian stone built school on the opposite side of Church Road is pleasantly restrained for the period and sits well in juxtaposition to the church. It served as a school hall right up until the school was closed in 1996 and is now used for community activities.



Another building of this type is the chapel on Church Road.



After the Second World War the original stone schoolhouse needed extensions built in its grounds to cope with extra children and greater educational demands. There is a 'temporary' block in front which has done sturdy service for the community but does nothing to flatter the church and the old hall. Behind it the modern 1950s school building, now disused, has an unsympathetic flat roof and quite large windows. It is, however, built of brick unlike the prefabricated block in front.

At the recreation ground there are two buildings. The pavilion, which provides changing facilities for teams using the playing field, is another 'temporary' building on at least its second life and is well past its 'sell by' date. Its design does no favours to the village.



The second building is a purpose-built public toilet. It is made of brick but has harsh lines and a flat roof. Mercifully it is screened from neighbouring houses by a thick stand of trees.

The bus shelter stands on the green in a prominent position right next to the pond. It is reasonably unpretentious, built of brick and has a sloping tiled roof.

Galanos House is the British Legion home on the Leamington Road. Built as a residential home for the elderly, it has become more of a nursing home in recent years. It is a large complex of low, mostly single storey, buildings set in well landscaped grounds.

The new school, now the only one, is integrated with a Community Centre on the Stockton Road at the extreme eastern end of the village. In design terms this building in this location is more than adequate from the outside but it must be said that the Community Centre part of the interior leaves much to be desired on functional and aesthetic grounds. The landscape, particularly in front, is beginning to give the buildings a settled air.



## *Design Recommendations for 'Public' Buildings*

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- The fine old stone buildings should be kept open and as visible as possible, set off by carefully sited specimen trees. This will be particularly relevant in the design relationship between the church and any development of the old first school site.



- Although this recommendation is outside the scope of the VDS for Supplementary Planning Guidance purposes, the local community should strongly consider replacing the 'temporary' buildings as soon as possible if there is still a valid use for them. If there is no valid use for them they should be demolished and the space created added back to the dwindling stock of public open spaces. When replacement is possible, they should be built of brick with sloped tile roofs and of a scale sympathetic to their neighbours. The toilets should be integrated with the pavilion at some stage.

- The now disused school buildings should be replaced if no appropriate use can be found for them. Any new building must visually complement the old church and the church/school hall. Parking associated with such development should be out of sight at the rear wherever possible and also accommodate the requirements of the church.



- Because of its size, Galanos House could become a significant design issue if and when its use and/or ownership changes. In such a case it should conform to the design recommendations relevant to its new function and respect the residential areas which surround it on three sides.



- The new school and community centre would benefit from the planting of additional specimen trees.

## Shops

Local shops are essential to the heart and character of a village community. Like the village school and the church, they act as a focal point and a place to meet and interact with others. They must be fostered and supported wherever possible.

There are basically three types of shop in Long Itchington:

- small shops incorporated into domestic scale buildings
- the purpose-built supermarket
- shops associated with different commercial operations.

In the central area the small specialist shops are concentrated on Church Road near The Square. There is a general grocer's shop (the Country Store), a newsagent (Long Itchington News) and a hairdresser. In the East End there is another grocery shop on Leigh Crescent (F & M Stores).

The effect of constant competition from the vast 'edge-of-town' supermarkets on small village shops is evident in the recent closure of the post office and general store (the Old Bakery) on Church Road opposite the Green Man.

Unfortunately, from an aesthetic point of view, the post-war need for increased shopping facilities resulted in the erection of a new supermarket, albeit a relatively small one. The two-storey flat-roofed Co-op is directly opposite the 14th century Holy Trinity Church on Church Road. It is built in an unsympathetic red brick with a faceless front elevation. The new asphalt parking lot in front would be greatly improved by a simple planting scheme incorporating shrubs and small trees.



There is a shop associated with Grasmere Garage selling food, hardware and car related products to a clientele comprising Model Village and canal users as well as the passing trade from the A423. In appearance it has all the brash untidiness associated with petrol stations and is dominated by a large canopy.

Another is a small general store associated with the Warwickshire Fly Boat Company serving almost exclusively the canal trade and located, unsurprisingly, at Shop Lock. It is incorporated unostentatiously into the outbuildings of a very old canal related house.



In addition to the shops, the central area of the VDS has supported as many as four established pubs within its boundaries. There are now three in full time operation, the Green Man, the Harvester, and The Duck on the Pond on the main road, while the Buck & Bell's future is uncertain.

The Grand Union Canal passes under the main road on the southern edge of the village. It has an abundance of holiday barges throughout the summer and the added attraction of two well-established pubs facing each other across the water, the Two Boats and the Cuttle Inn. These offer sizeable gardens with picnic tables and canal-side walks for holidaymakers and villagers alike.

There is also a Chinese restaurant (The Water Margin) located on the main road at the top of Rhine Hill. While the building is unremarkable, its associated car parking in front is part of a conglomeration which is in desperate need of landscape design including substantial tree planting to blend in with the essential character of the village.

## *Design Recommendations for Shops*



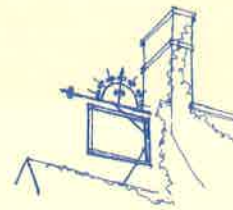
- The small-scale shop, well integrated with the building in which it is situated, is considered to be most suitable for Long Itchington. The only acceptable feature that could be significantly different to residential design is the size of the windows. Nevertheless, while these are a necessary expression of the function of the building, they should not overly dominate the design.



- The exceptional scale of a larger operation, such as a supermarket - which has undeniable socio-economic advantages - is usually reflected in its appearance. However, sensitive handling of rooflines, fenestration and human-related display at ground level can, when combined with a comprehensive landscape design scheme, do much to compensate for the inherently large scale of such development. Our village will certainly not benefit from the negative visual blight of another such as the Co-op. 'Doctors can bury their mistakes, but architects can only plant trees' - this should be tried here.



- Signs should, wherever possible, be on the buildings to which they refer. There is a precedent for signs painted tastefully directly onto brickwork. Self-standing signs, if they are necessary for the business, should not be garish or overly large.



- Every effort should also be made to ensure that open areas linked to shops such as the car park in front of the Co-op and the forecourt of the Green Man should be properly and safely surfaced and maintained. Brick paviors in this sort of situation are of a scale that permits a sensitive relationship to be established with neighbouring properties.
- Adequate off-street parking should be an essential requirement of any future developments involving commercial premises. It should also be designed using a sympathetic visual approach and ideally out of sight behind the buildings in question.

## Industry

There are basically three types of industry in Long Itchington (soon to be two with the closure of the cement works):

- very large scale primary industry e.g. the cement works on the A423
- well established medium scale industries e.g. Ryland Ford on Rhine Hill or boat builders Colecraft Engineering on the A423
- small scale, often nursery industries e.g. on the industrial estate on the A423 or the businesses on Nightingale Lane.



Because of its imminent closure and the enormous impact that this will have on the village, Rugby Cement is dealt with on its own at the end of this section.



These properties are first observed on the northern outskirts of the village where an industrial site, Ryland Ford, is set well back from the main road and in a hollow. The main visual intrusion is caused by a large area of open car parking which is shared with the adjacent, recently opened, Chinese restaurant. Although some planting has been attempted, this area and the adjoining garage facility would benefit from a more robust landscape design scheme.

Another light industrial estate is located centrally in the village and is fairly well screened behind a high brick wall and some tree planting. The location of this estate however, opposite the 16th century Tudor House and adjacent to the Central Conservation Area, is unfortunately not complementary to the most important property in the village.

On the southernmost fringes of the village towards Southam lies a petrol station and garage alongside the frontage to a local coach company. Further industrial units down a narrow lane leading to the canal basin are completely screened from the road, their existence only noted by various signs at the lane's entrance.



## *Design Recommendations for Industry*

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- It is clear that while these industries bring desirable employment, most villagers think that their physical presence should approach the invisible. Complete screening with trees is the minimum requirement.
- Screening means there is a need for suitable signs so that visitors can easily locate the businesses. Those sharing a common access should cooperate to avoid a jumbled mass of signs.



- There may be exceptions in special cases. For example, canal-based works associated with the operation of narrow boats are considered totally appropriate without such screening. Similarly with road related services e.g. garages, although a few trees and shrubs would help to break up their often harsh lines and colours.



- Many people find it difficult to separate other environmental impacts of industry - noise, smell, vibration, dust pollution and toxic waste - from the purely aesthetic. This leads to a higher level of acceptance for the smaller scale operations away from residential areas, especially where they are housed in old brick structures such as converted farm buildings. In these cases the spirit of the design recommendations made for shops should apply.



## Rugby Cement Works

A tree-lined section of the main A423 road over a former railway line screens the major industrial complex in Long Itchington - the Rugby Cement works. The old railway runs from the cement works past the western outskirts of the village towards Leamington Spa and is soon to be established as a cycleway.

The frontage of the 30-acre cement works site is well screened and set back from the road but the dominating feature for miles around is the industrial chimney rising from the centre of the complex. This site is due to close in 2000 and the redevelopment of this area will have major consequences for the whole of the village and the surrounding area.



### *Recommendations for Rugby Cement Works*

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- **With the amount of land available and the quarried areas to be landscaped and pooled, there is great potential to incorporate nature walks, cycleways, bridleways and the like for use by the whole community.**
- **Development should be concentrated on the 'brown field' areas of the site and those immediately adjacent to them.**
- **Housing design for the proposed development site will not necessarily affect the rest of the village providing the whole development is contained within the present area of mature trees bordering the A423. To this extent a more flexible approach could be adopted for this site.**



## The five zones

Expansion to the east and west made a significant difference to the look of the village.

The main A423 Coventry-Banbury road that now runs right through the middle of Long Itchington resulted in the village being split into separate, distinctive areas.

For this Village Design Statement, the ALIVE project team identified five village 'zones', each with its own individual characteristics. These are the:

- Central Conservation Area
- West End
- East End
- Main Road (A423)
- Model Village

The following pages attempt to identify the nature of, and variations between, each area and how they relate to each other; also to explore how the design of future planned development can be integrated sensibly into each of the five zones.

However, several types of development (or non-development) - open spaces, shops, industry, recreation and the like - are difficult to associate with specific geographical zones. This is because the zones have been defined primarily by the type of housing they contain. Therefore these aspects are dealt with first.





## Central Conservation Area

The Central Conservation Area of Long Itchington runs three-quarters the length of Church Road past the Holy Trinity Church and the old village square to the footpath opposite Bascote Road. From here it runs past the allotments and the graveyard to the Leamington Road and back down to the main A423 Coventry-Banbury Road which runs through the centre of the village.



Buildings in this area consist of larger detached properties and smaller terraced cottages dating from the 19th century. These are built in local red brick with steep pitched plain clay tiles or slated roofs. In some cases these roofs replaced original thatch destroyed in the village fire of 1905.



Window styles are generally small paned casement or sash. Some of the older properties have been rendered or painted over in the intervening years.



Within the Conservation Area there are 12 listed buildings (details available from Stratford District Council) in contrasting styles. The most notable and prominent of these is the substantial timber framed Tudor House. Others include the Red House, 8 The Square, Yew Tree Cottage, Manor Farm and Devon House.



Scattered among these older properties are a few post-war infill houses which have not incorporated any distinctive local features and remain at odds with their original neighbours. Other larger scale developments include 10 old people's bungalows set within the grounds of Beechcroft House and which sit neatly behind the original boundary wall.

Six individual detached properties set in large plots at the junction of Church Road and Leamington Road have blended in well with their environment by retaining local traditions of building design and materials. More recent infill developments to the east and west of the Old Vicarage, while incorporating these desirable elements, nevertheless appear less well spaced and poorly situated by comparison.



## *Design Recommendations for the Central Conservation Area*

- Imaginative and original design should extend and renew the distinctive character and traditional aspects of Long Itchington's built environment.



- Well designed buildings on appropriate infill plots should exploit surrounding materials and styles while taking into account relative scale and size. Given the inevitable conflict between open spaces and the economics of house building, housing density should aim to complement that of its immediate neighbours and never increase the prevailing density.



- The main criteria for design in this area are the right choice of red brick together with a steep pitch roof design (generally 40-50 degrees) covered with small plain tiles. Traditional timber casement or sash windows with complementary doors are also important requirements.



- Any extensions or replacement materials should harmonise with the existing building facade with particular attention given to doors and windows which should be in traditional materials. The use of flat-roofed extensions in Conservation Areas can be inappropriate and a small number already exist in Long Itchington. No further such extensions should be considered within the Conservation Area.



- Traditionally, most buildings would have been built with red/orange brickwork in its natural state. If alterations, extensions or changes are proposed to an existing brick building its characteristic features, detailing and materials should be respected and reflected in any development proposals accordingly.



- Any accessories on the facade of buildings, notably TV dishes and aerials, should be of the minimum size possible and sited unobtrusively.
- Private security lights should be installed for the purpose intended and be carefully sited to avoid over-illumination of the area.

## West End

This area of the village encompasses post-war housing developments adjacent to the Central Conservation Area on one side while facing open countryside on the other.

Two distinct 50 dwelling estates to the east and west of Short Lane dominate this zone. The first, known as The Tankards and built in the 1970s, incorporates all the urban distinctiveness of that era with lower pitched roofs, concrete roofing slates and large windows, including bow and bay styles. This estate, with the benefit of a spacious overall layout and mature landscape setting, has created its own coherent identity over the years.



The Hedgerows estate was built on the west side of Short Lane in the 1990s and has employed more distinctive characteristics with an appropriate choice of brick, steeper sloping roofs, plain tiles and smaller proportioned casement windows. Given time, therefore, this development should blend more sympathetically into its environment than its older neighbour.



However, a heavier density and greater diversity of house types have resulted in an abundance of tarmac parking areas and garage blocks that need to be softened with appropriate landscape design.

Both estates are built in cul-de-sac formats although the older 1970s layout allows more open visual and pedestrian links in and out of the estate. The singular access approach to the new estate, without suitable pedestrian links on the edge of the village, could result in a lack of proper integration.

Another smaller terraced cul-de-sac development, Orchard Way, was built in the early 1970s and is situated immediately alongside the Conservation Area. Due to a lack of notable design features and minimal planting, it appears stark in comparison with the older original properties nearby.

The remainder of the housing in the West End area is a mixture of contrasting house and bungalow styles within a continuous streetscape along both the main Leamington Road and Stonebridge Lane. A number of bungalows have converted their roof spaces to provide first floor living accommodation resulting in elongated flat-roofed dormer projections.



Also on the Leamington Road is Russell Close, a recently developed affordable housing scheme providing 16 semi-detached houses for village people. Green End is a further, older cul-de-sac facing immediately onto the central playing field and boasts a football pitch and children's playground.

A notable feature in this area is Galanos House, a British Charitable Trust which provides single room accommodation and public areas for 60 ex-servicemen and women in the form of single storey units set in extensive gardens.



## *Design Recommendations for the West End*

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- Buildings in new developments should avoid standardised urban design by respecting the local characteristics of the village and site in question and by using good quality materials such as red brick and plain clay roof tiles.



- Study surrounding properties and proportion new designs to reflect their neighbours if appropriate. Subtle variations to house types, as demonstrated by The Hedgerows development, can be incorporated without resulting in stark contrasts in design or materials.



- Avoid large areas of hard landscape with garages and parking areas obscuring house fronts. Avoid blocks of garages, especially alongside roads.

- Allow for informal recreation spaces within new developments and incorporate well-planned and furnished play areas for children.
- It is essential that good landscape design schemes be submitted as an integral part of new development proposals. Particular attention should be made to complementing/better integrating planting with hard landscaped areas.



- While cul-de-sac developments provide privacy and safety for children, single access can lead to a lack of integration within the village environment - try to avoid this problem by using footpaths and cycleways wherever possible unless a road link is demonstrably a more logical solution.



- Space should be retained between buildings within developments to allow views in and out combined with footpaths and cycleways. Minute passages between buildings should be discouraged.
- Incorporate grass verges to soften kerb edging and tarmac footpaths.

## East End

The East End area is situated off the A423 along Stockton Road. This was originally a linear development with local authority owned and rented properties for local farmworkers.



These houses were built shortly after the Second World War in the materials of the day with brick and rendered facades that have now been colour washed in various contrasting shades.

Set well back from the road behind deep grass verges, these properties were built on generous plots with large front and rear gardens. An array of detached garage units have appeared in subsequent years, mainly set back behind the original building line.

Further cul-de-sac developments evolved shortly afterwards in the form of the Leigh Crescent estate which has its own purpose built general store. The estate comprises mainly terraced houses running down from Stockton Road to the canal with a central core of maisonette accommodation.

These houses have small front and rear gardens with no vehicle access which has resulted in plain blocks of garages dotted throughout the estate. However, the siting of the maisonettes centrally within the estate has the benefit of large open areas of grass which would be enhanced by additional soft landscape designs.



Collingham Lane runs north out of the village off the Stockton Road and comprises mainly detached bungalows with gables facing the road. Over the years the majority of these properties have been extended into the roof space to provide additional living space.

A second cul-de-sac development comprising pairs of semi-detached bungalows was built in Wulfstan Drive. These houses are set around a large central green and on the whole remain in their original format with few intrusions into the original roof lines.

Finally, set on the eastern edge of the village, there is the modern single storey Long Itchington Primary School. This has a car park area and private roadway set unobtrusively and safely behind a mature hedge line. Part of the school building houses the local Community Centre, parish meeting room and occasional doctor's surgery.

This building is set within generous open grounds used as sports fields by the school and for other activities by the local community such as the Long Itchington Carnival. Tennis courts are also available alongside the playground area for both schoolchildren and villagers.

## *Design Recommendations for the East End*

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- **Few detached dwellings exist within the East End area with all properties constructed after the Second World War. Any new or infill housing should incorporate integral garages which should be either flush with the housing frontage or even slightly set back. If multiple garage blocks are proposed, for example as part of terraced accommodation, they should be located towards the rear of the plots and accessed through a shared entrance and out of view from the public realm.**
- **Bungalow developments should incorporate steeper pitched roofs to alleviate the introduction of large flat-roofed dormers. Light should be provided via gable windows or roof windows set within the existing rooflines.**
- **Any developments must incorporate ample open spaces and appropriate landscape design schemes. The further use of grass verges and occasional green areas, which are valued characteristics of this area, are a minimum prerequisite for any proposal.**

## **Model Village**

Situated on the southern edge of Long Itchington towards Southam, the Rugby Cement works has quarried the local Blue Lias stone since the late 19th century. When production finally ceases in 1999, its heritage will be retained in the form of the street of houses opposite.

Model Village presents a living historical record of building methods and philosophies of the early 20th century and, as such, is irreplaceable. The development of the cement works site is seen by some as a threat to this but it could actually be an opportunity to restore some of the original character by allowing ownership of the garden plots to revert to the owners of the houses associated with those plots.

Built by Kaye's between 1905 and 1930, with a few later additions in a different style in the 1960s, Model Village was unusually constructed using the now defunct Calway Method. The houses were designed to provide workers with a decent house containing 'three good bedrooms, each with a fireplace'.

The 35 original houses were built of concrete blocks finished with a cladding of grey stucco and a roof of clay tiles or slate. Each was provided with a generous garden and an earth closet. A number also had pigsties which are now derelict and something of an eyesore.



Once rented, more than half of these houses are now privately owned. Many include extensions since the original units contained no bathrooms. Generously proportioned gardens have also provided ample space for individual garages to be erected within each property's boundary.

A number of allotment areas were provided for the workers between certain properties and these, together with wide grass verges and mature lime trees, add to the spacious aspect of the linear streetscape. There is also a large playing field area with a playground behind the houses which hosts cricket and football matches throughout the year.

This is another of Long Itchington's cul-de-sac developments and, due to its location, it is somewhat isolated from the rest of the village. This is accentuated by the lack of a community facility such as a small shop or public house with a community room which could be used as a clinic, crèche or residents' meeting place.

### *Design Recommendations for Model Village*



- It is possible that the main street in Model Village may at some point be classified as a separate Conservation Area or even be accepted by English Heritage as a listed area. With this in mind, any nearby development should be undertaken with the utmost care to preserve the unique and distinctive character and density of the original buildings and streetscape.
- As a general observation, further footpaths and cycleways need to be provided to integrate Model Village with the main part of Long Itchington.

- Additional development within this area should reflect the unique design of the current cottages and be set in small terraces with recessed entrances behind an arched stucco facade with gabled slate or clay tile roofs.
- Extensions to existing properties should be in keeping with the main buildings and avoid flat roofs and deviations in the texture and colour of rendered finishes.



- The existing green spaces, privet hedges and lime trees lining the road should be preserved along with the playing field which is the only local amenity.

### **Main Road (A423)**

The main Coventry to Banbury road, the A423, runs centrally through Long Itchington with the village set in a dip between Marton to the north and Southam to the south.

The housing pattern is a continuous ribbon development with occasional gaps in the line of houses allowing an important visual connection with the open countryside. Interspersed with the residential houses are various forms of commercial and industrial building.



Apart from a few detached and infill houses, the north end of the Main Road mainly consists of 19th century red brick terraced cottages whose frontages have been adopted as parking bays in lieu of proper garage accommodation.

After passing through the central area including the village pond and greens, the road reaches a recently constructed estate of 23 houses called Leather Street which is situated on old farmland. These properties have incorporated good design in the choice of materials as well as the adoption of well-proportioned windows, steep pitched roofs, variety of design and other features in keeping with the older established areas of the village.



Once again, however, there are large areas of tarmac for car parking. At present, this estate appears to be hard edged with a continuous close-boarded fence along its roadside boundary and little in the way of screening to boundaries facing open countryside. With the maturing plant scheme in these locations it is hoped that time will soften these aspects of the development.



Older detached properties are situated on the opposite side of the road to this estate with long well established front gardens set back from the road behind a grass verge. Moving into the southern section of the Main Road past Stockton Road there is a series of former council houses bordering on the area defined as East End. These properties have the benefit of open countryside opposite which runs from the rear of the Leather Street estate down to the Grand Union Canal.

### *Design Recommendations for the Main Road (A423)*



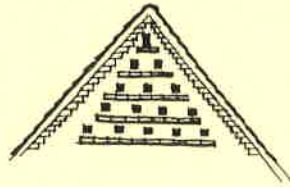
- **All developments, especially local industries, should be aware of their rural location and make efforts to upgrade their frontages either in the form of additional landscape designs or subtle screening techniques.**
- **The village of Long Itchington must maintain its identity and boundaries separate from the neighbouring villages of Southam and Stockton.**
- **Consultation with the Highways Agency will be required to provide for road widening and roundabouts in anticipation of increased traffic flows on the main A423 road and at the junction with the Rugby Road.**



## Village-wide design principles



- The characteristics of buildings of all types should reflect the scale and form of the village, using indigenous styles, materials and detailing.
- The open rural character of the village should be retained by preserving all the existing community open spaces and creating new ones.
- Existing trees must be protected and supplemented with new planting of specimen indigenous trees in key locations to enhance desirable features. This is particularly relevant to public buildings and spaces.
- Tree planting and landscape design considerations must be an integral part of any new development proposal. Essentially operational, large scale (but otherwise beneficial) development such as modern industrial buildings should be completely screened.
- New developments need to be assessed in terms of their impact on the village as a whole and not in isolation. Furthermore, the integration of different developments should be strengthened by more extensive use of footpaths and cycleways, and to the location of open spaces.
- Adequate car parking must be provided in all developments but should be located behind the buildings it serves wherever possible. The ground surfaces should not be only large expanses of asphalt. Screening with suitable landscape design schemes is essential.
- The forthcoming redevelopment of the Cement Works site must be seized as an opportunity to enhance all aspects of village life, including some small-scale industry. However such development must be visually separate from the village and protected by buffer zones of open space.



*Village Design Statement*  
*JANUARY 2000*

