

Slimbridge Parish Neighbourhood Plan Part 2  
**Slimbridge Parish Design Statement Revised 2022**  
Reg 15 submission





“When we see Slimbridge Spire  
we know we are home.”

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# Slimbridge Parish Boundary Map

<b>Slimbridge CP</b>	<b>Date:</b> 18-6-2014 <b>Scale:</b> 1:29923		
<b>Portrait Slimbridge boundary</b> 1:29923 portrait Slimbridge boundary map	<b>Map Centre - easting / northing:</b> 373133 / 203885	© Crown copyright and database right. All rights reserved (0100053259) 2014 © Contains Ordnance Survey Data : Crown copyright and database right 2014	



Hamlets  
Main Villages

Shepherds Patch

Troy Town

Cambridge

Kingston

Slimbridge

Moorend

Gossington

Tumpy Green

Slimbridge Parish Boundary map (Parish Online 2014)

# Introduction



Slimbridge Parish, from its landscape setting through to the details of some of its buildings, is highly distinctive. This Parish Design Statement (PDS) is a key way to ensure that this local distinctiveness is protected and enhanced as development proposals, both large and small, come forward.

The elements which create the distinctive character of the Parish are a combination of the broader landscape, the buildings, the open spaces, the water courses and the trees and hedgerows, as well as how these all fit together. Understanding and describing these in some detail, as in this PDS, provides an evidence base to enable any future development to contribute to the distinct sense of place and sensitive integration, avoiding the sort of 'anywhere' development that would detract from the unique character of the Parish.

This PDS follows a proven format used by many other communities elsewhere in the UK. It has been produced with community input and support; it describes the distinctive character of the Parish, the villages and the hamlets, and it uses this to draw together design principles for all future developments. Its focus is very much on design so, although the PDS cannot be used to determine what development happens where, it can nevertheless be used to help inform such decisions.

**Though presented separately, this Parish Design Statement is Part 2 of the Slimbridge Parish Neighbourhood Plan.**

## Using the Design Statement

This PDS aims to help planners and developers to understand what is valued by local people about the character of the Parish and its buildings and provide guidance on which aspects should be conserved or enhanced, so that the special character can continue to be enjoyed by future generations. It establishes the context in which to help manage the design elements of changes in terms of land use and development, ensuring that any such changes reflect the distinct character of any site and its context.

The PDS also aims to be of benefit to local people given the increased scope in planning law for what is termed 'permitted development'. As such it is hoped that local people will also use the PDS in considering the design of any extensions and adaptations to their properties, respecting the widespread concern from their neighbours about the locally valued character of their Parish.

While this PDS is based on an analysis of the existing character of Slimbridge Parish, this does not mean that high quality designs that are clearly of their time are inappropriate, particularly given today's necessary emphasis on sustainable development, climate change and so forth. Contemporary designs that show the continuity from those of earlier times are to be encouraged.

This PDS alone cannot, however, ensure the best quality design. That can only come through meeting and talking with those proposing changes or developments, doing this early enough to have a constructive influence and basing discussions on how best to meet the guidance in this PDS. To that end, this PDS is linked to the Slimbridge Parish Pre-Application Engagement Protocol (in Part 1 of this Plan), which strongly encourages very early contact with the Parish Council and, through them, the local community. There is now overwhelming evidence that such early engagement with the local community improves design standards and can speed progress towards planning permission.

## Planning Context

From September 2019 a number of important changes have taken place in relation to national, local and neighbourhood practice on design issues.

The first was a new National Design Guide published by the government<sup>1</sup>. Key quote: *"The underlying purpose for design quality and the quality of new development at all scales is to create well-designed and well-built places that benefit people and communities."*

This was followed by the government's 'Planning for the Future' White Paper<sup>2</sup>: Key quote: (We will) *"expect design guidance and codes – which will set the rules for the design of new development – to be prepared locally and to be based on genuine community involvement .... so that local residents have a genuine say in the design of new development and ensure that codes have real 'bite' by making them more binding on planning decisions."*

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-design-guide>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/planning-for-the-future>

In 2021, the government published a revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)<sup>3</sup>. Key quote: *“Design policies should be developed with local communities, so they reflect local aspirations, and are grounded in an understanding and evaluation of each area’s defining characteristics. Neighbourhood Plans can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and expanding how this should be reflected in development.”*

Also in 2021 the government published the National Model Design Code (NMDC)<sup>4</sup>. Key quote: *“When preparing design codes and guides, communities need to be involved in the process in order to gain measurable community support that is appropriate for the scale and location of new development. Design codes should be prepared in light of information about what is popular locally, on the basis of evidence.”*

(NB. As of July 2022, a new NPPF is being produced and there is uncertainty about the continued status and use of the National Model Design Code)

Considered together, all of the above confirm the increased value placed by government on high quality design, highlight the role of Neighbourhood Plans, stress the importance of communities in assessing their own locally distinctive character and also stress the need to produce some form of design guidance, all as in this document.

The 2022 draft Local Plan includes the following strategic policies directly relevant to this PDS:

- Strategic Objective SO1: Accessible communities
- Strategic Objective SO5: Climate change and environmental Limits
- Strategic Objective SO6: Our District’s distinctive qualities

Other important but less directly relevant strategic policies address Healthy, inclusive and safe communities (SO1a), Local economy and jobs (SO2), Town (*and therefore village*) centres and rural hinterlands (SO3) and Transport and travel (SO4).

There are then some more specific, design-related Core Policies within Section 6: Our environment and surroundings:

- Core Policy CP14: High quality sustainable development
- Core Policy CP15: A quality living and working countryside

Section 6 also includes some relevant Delivery Policies:

- Delivery Policy ES1: Sustainable construction and design
- Delivery Policy DES1: Conversion of redundant agricultural, forestry and rural buildings
- Delivery Policy DES6: Providing for biodiversity and geodiversity
- Delivery Policy ES7: Landscape character
- Delivery Policy ES8: Trees, hedgerows and woodlands
- Delivery Policy ES10: Valuing our historic environment and assets
- Delivery Policy ES11: Maintaining, restoring and regenerating the District’s canals
- Delivery Policy ES12: Better design of places

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-model-design-code>

## Production of the Design Statement

Design issues had been highlighted by the local community well before work started on the Neighbourhood Plan, mainly in the original version of this Design Statement from December 2016. The Steering Group for the Neighbourhood Plan took on the task of updating the original Statement and placing it in the context of the Neighbourhood Plan. A draft of the updated version was then shared with the local community in September 2022.

## Historical Development



The Parish of Slimbridge was first recorded in the 11<sup>th</sup> century in the Domesday Book. Slimbridge is today defined by the St. John the Evangelist church in Slimbridge village, the spire of which can be seen from all over the Vale. The 12<sup>th</sup> century church dominates the landscape, and, with the Village Hall opposite, it provides a focal point for the community.

Following recent archaeological investigations, evidence exists to show that there was Roman occupation in Slimbridge, and there is a strong case for stating that the Vikings had a camp, possibly on the River Cam, when they made a major assault up the River Severn to the Midlands. The name Heslinbruge has appeared as an early name for Slimbridge and is in common use by the Vikings where they built a stone walkway, usually not much more than 300 metres long from where their boats were moored to their campsite. This suggests that the present centre around St. John's Church has not always been the centre of the village but rather, Slimbridge Street, now called Ryalls Lane, might well have been the original centre of the village. In support of this argument it should be remembered that before the canal was constructed the River Cam meandered across the fields entering the Severn near Frampton church ("Cam" originally meant winding river).

The treacherous waters of the River Severn led to the construction of the Gloucester to Sharpness canal which was first conceived in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century but only fully opened in April 1827. This briefly brought trade through the Parish from a new direction, although its commercial viability was almost immediately challenged by the construction of the nearby Bristol to Gloucester railway in 1844. The canal remains in use today although mainly for leisure purposes.

Further evidence of previous generations remain for the casual observer who can still see the medieval ridges and furrows in the surrounding fields, the Grade I listed church of St. John's, the Grade II listed tombs in the graveyard and the numerous Grade II listed houses.

Slimbridge Parish contains two main villages - Slimbridge and Cambridge - plus the hamlets of Gossington, Moorend, Tumpy Green, Kingston, Troy Town and Shepherds Patch. The Parish covers approximately 6.5 square miles (as shown in the map on page 3). 2,480 acres of the land are owned by the Ernest Cook Trust<sup>5</sup>, bought from the Berkeley Estate in 1945. The majority of the remaining 200 acres of farmland is still owned by the Berkeley Estate.<sup>6</sup>

**Slimbridge** is a village just off the A38 from the Slimbridge roundabout, standing near the Gloucester and Sharpness Canal, and has the main road through to the Wetlands and Wildfowl Trust (WWT). Along the canal, brick making was important at Shepherds Patch, and also in Cambridge. The canal was constructed to give a depth for boats of 14 feet (around 4 metres) and was dug through gravel and clay. Much of this was used to build up the level across low land and to 'waterproof' the canal, but much clay was also spread on neighbouring land and future gardens, whilst the remainder was dumped in heaps at The Patch and Cambridge Wharf.

Slimbridge hosts numerous community facilities along its main road – St. John's Church, Legion Social Club, Primary School, playing field with play equipment, sports pavilion and amphitheatre, Village Hall, Cemetery and Post Office. Towards the canal end of Slimbridge is the Tudor Arms pub, a caravan park and café. Slimbridge is a rural community with a number of farming businesses within the village.

**Cambridge** lies on the A38 road between Bristol and Gloucester, about three miles (5 km) from Dursley. It takes its name from the River Cam which flows through it. Being on the natural route from Bristol to Gloucester, the original Cambridge existed in comparative tranquillity but was able to offer refreshment to travellers who wished to break their journey. Cambridge had three inns; "The White Lion", (closed in 2011), "The George" (still in operation), and "The Drovers Arms", (closed in the early 1970's). The main A38 trunk road from Bristol to Gloucester still carries a considerable volume of traffic even though the M5 runs parallel to the road for many miles. Cambridge had a bakery and a Post Office, these merged to become a Londis / Post Office before eventually closing in 2000 with the shops converted to dwellings. The only other shops were small antique-type shops, also now closed. With several farms around the village, farming continues to be the main occupation, although there are two small industrial sites – Wisloe Industrial Park and Cambridge Mills, with a range of tenants. Slimbridge Association Football Club has its own ground in Wisloe Road and play all their matches there, with some of their development teams using the Slimbridge Playing Field for training occasionally.

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<sup>5</sup> To find out more about the Ernest Cook Trust visit <http://ernestcooktrust.org.uk/>

<sup>6</sup> To find out more about Berkeley Estate visit <http://www.berkeley-castle.com/estate.php>

# Landscape



Slimbridge Parish, located in Stroud District, lies on the Severn Plain with open views across the Forest of Dean and to the Black Mountains beyond. This, together with the Cotswold escarpment, forms a magnificent backdrop for the whole parish. Slimbridge is positioned between Gloucester and Bristol - between junctions 13 and 14 on the M5. Slimbridge itself, and the other hamlets are accessed from the Slimbridge roundabout on the A38.

The Parish forms a rough square with approx. 4km sides. Parts of the boundaries that border the Parish are the M5 and the River Severn. The Gloucester-Sharpness canal separates Shepherds Patch from the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust, with a bridge across.

The River Cam flows through Cambridge and on to the River Severn. The river and its surroundings are a key feature of the landscape of the Parish. Along with the prominent spire of St. John's Church these features define the Parish and its landscape.

The land in and around Slimbridge village is very flat and over three quarters of the area of the village lies below the 10m contour above sea level. It gradually rises across contours running roughly south west to north east to just reach a height of 36m over a small area at Horns Hill on the southern boundary. To the south the horizon is formed by the wooded slopes of the Cotswolds edge, whilst looking beyond the northern boundary across the Severn is a low line of hills including the prominent May Hill.

On the west, the Parish is bounded by the River Severn, whilst about a mile inland from the Severn runs the Gloucester-Sharpness canal. The landscape at the west is well described as "Severn Vale grazing marshes" in the Stroud Landscape Character Assessment<sup>7</sup>. It consists mainly of fields used for grazing in the summer, and some fields are used for crops. There is a risk of flooding in the wetter months from the River Severn. On the horizon, it is possible to see the outline of the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust, with a few buildings visible standing along the route of the canal. The land at New Grounds is low lying fertile land between the canal and the River Severn. New Grounds is around 7m above sea level but 1m below the level of high tides. There is now a constructed sea wall suggesting less likelihood - subject to global warming - that flooding will extend so far again. This area has a touristic feel to it; along with the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust, is the Tudor Arms pub, Caravan Park, Wild Goose Lodge and the Black Shed café which also includes the renting out of canal boat moorings, plus additional activities of cycle hire and paddleboarding. Between them, these attract thousands of visitors each year.

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<sup>7</sup> [assessment-of-lcas-in-stroud-district\\_opt.pdf](#)

The land is fairly flat and low-lying in and around the Parish. Bordering the Severn Estuary as it does, the area is prone to the various climatic variations which accompany the changing tides and also to the sometimes severe winds that blow up from the Bristol Channel.

## Settlement



### The Road and Footpath Pattern

The A38 is the principal road that runs through the Parish. Before the M5 was built this road had major improvements made to it due to the volume of traffic, which has now resulted in a road that is unsuitable for its location as it allows traffic to reach high speeds, causing both danger and noise. However, good communications along the A38 through neighbouring parishes are essential to allow Slimbridge commuters to reach their places of work in Gloucester and the Bristol area. St.

John's Road goes off the A38 and is the major road in terms of tourism, leading to the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust, the canal and caravan park.

Traffic calming measures were introduced on the A38 in 1997 with a speed camera located outside what was the White Lion pub. With new houses being built in Cam and Dursley, the volume of traffic can be expected to increase

There is a regular bus service along the A38 to Stroud, Gloucester and Dursley, with limited evening services. The no 65 bus stops approx. 12 minutes (walking) away from the Cam and Dursley train station. Since the station car park is frequently full, this reduces the value of the station to Slimbridge. There is no bus service into Slimbridge itself, the service just runs along the A38 through Cambridge. The M5, A38 and the Bristol-Gloucester railway all run almost parallel north east to south west through the district.

The Gloucester-Sharpness canal runs through the Parish, providing a publicly accessible area for recreation for both parishioners and visitors, along with the Wildlife and Wetlands Trust. The canal has moorings throughout the year, with some boats used as permanent residences. There are also a number of equestrian centres in the Parish, one being at Tumpy Green and another on Wisloe Road. Many horse riders use the roads and bridleways in the Parish

There is a wide network of footpaths and bridleways, covering around half of the Parish. These footpaths are used by walkers and horseriders. Sustrans Cycle route 41 passes along Moorend Lane, Kingston Road and the canal.

St. John's Road is one very long road through Slimbridge with roads coming off towards places such as Moorend and Kingston or to small developments.

### The Nature of the Roads

With the exception of St. John's Road, the majority of smaller roads within the Parish run from east to west with the pattern reflecting access to major trade routes which pass through the Severn Vale. The majority of the roads are quite narrow, rural lanes, with the exception of St. John's Road.

Ryalls Lane in particular is narrow in places with hedges, although the speed limit is 60mph. There are unprotected ditches alongside the road and vehicles cause damage to the verges. In general, there is poor upkeep of roadside trees and hedges.

The smaller settlements (see below) all have smaller lanes, some only wide enough for one car with passing places, and the speed limit is set at a default of 60mph on all of these.

### **The Villages and Hamlets**

Slimbridge Parish villages and hamlets are concentrated on the higher ground to the south. From Tudor times a number of hamlets of Gossington, Moorend, Tumpy Green, Kingston, Troy Town and Shepherds Patch can be identified, connected by lanes.

**Slimbridge** is the principal settlement, starting originally around the church, in an area known as Churchend. Behind the church is land known as the Glebe fields which are seen as an important area for walking within an open space which separates the main villages of Slimbridge and Cambridge. The village school was built in 1906 just off the A38 and located on St. John's Road. Along this stretch of road leading into the village are the main community facilities. All the way down to Shepherds Patch there is either one or no pavement, involving either crossing the road to remain on a pavement or having to walk on the busy narrow road itself. The majority of houses along St. John's Road and beyond tend to have their own driveways and cars can park off road. Slimbridge is by no means a typical village, but a collection of hamlets. There are two areas that were previously social housing in or off St. John's Road, including Berkeley Court, just off Moorend Lane. Mostly though, over the years, development has been of larger detached type properties built in small clusters off St. John's Road.

**Cambridge** is a mainly linear settlement. The buildings, some on their own, some in terraces, often face the road with small frontages and are of varying ages. At the junction with the A38 there is The George Public House and further along is a transport / lorry business. Travelling from north to south into Cambridge one can see the newly developed solar farm covering around 100 acres. This has been in operation since 2015. The Riverside Caravan Park is just off the road north of The George. Ryalls Lane turns off west from the A38 and leads towards the canal with the River Cam running alongside its north east side. This narrow lane deals with a variety of vehicles including tractors, horses, cars and sometimes caravans taking an alternative route to the caravan park at The Patch! Whilst the speed limit is 60mph, traffic does not tend to reach these speeds due to the nature of the road. The buildings here are all detached, vary in style, age and structure and are generally close to the lane. As the lane approaches the canal there is one residential building off to the right. Another road off the A38, this time to the east, is Dursley Road, leading into Wisloe Road. Dursley Road, as the name suggests, was the original route to Dursley. The settlement pattern here is primarily linear with two exceptions. One is the development to the east along Narles Road, a private unmade road, with no pavement with access to fields at the bottom end. The other, also off the Dursley Road is Barton's Field, a recent housing development. The A38 has numerous signs for various tourist attractions and surrounding areas, and whilst some may be needed, they can be overbearing on the look of the natural countryside.

In **Gossington**, close to where the A38 crosses the railway, there is a layby, a former truck stop, now turned into a waste disposal depot owned by Stroud District Council, and a farm. Travelling south along the A38, before the railway bridge, there is a right turning into Tyndale Road leading into Gossington. There is a nucleus of buildings towards the junction with the A38 and then further buildings along the lane towards its junction with Moorend Lane. There are no pavements, and it is lined with hedgerows and narrow grass verges.

In **Moorend**, going from St. John's Road into Moorend Lane, on the left is a small council housing estate of eight houses built in 1991. Further down the lane on the right is an access

road to a new development (The Bewicks) and further on are a number of old houses, cottages and farm buildings. The road is narrow with a ditch on the left, behind which are fields. Lighenbrook Lane feeds off Moorend Lane, this is a narrow lane in poor condition, almost unsuitable for traffic and with a ditch on either side.

**Tumpy Green** has an equestrian centre and only a small handful of houses. There are no pavements along the single track road which also crosses over the railway by bridge. The fields, home to numerous horses, have some access via tracks.

**Kingston** was originally a hamlet in its own right but, in the 1960s, it appears that the lane was renamed Kingston Road and the hamlet as such disappeared. It is just over 9m above sea level at the junction with Lighenbrook Lane falling to 7 or so metres outside Price's Court. The road is at a lower level than the surrounding fields and is narrow, with no pavement and some open ditches, creating insufficient width for cars to pass at its narrowest. There is a prominent pylon line which crosses the road between Fairlawne and Cypress House. Kingston Road is a busy road as it carries all the traffic to the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust; along with pedestrians and cyclists using the Sustrans 41 route. It is also used extensively by farm vehicles. The fields along Kingston Road are used variously for grazing and crop production.

In **Troytown**, Longaston Lane is approximately 1/2 mile long linking Churchend and Ryalls Lane. There are varied properties alongside dating from different periods. For approximately 1/4 mile, there is farmland either side of the lane, which is edged with hedgerows before entering Troytown itself. Troytown comprises a small number of cottages, a bungalow and Longaston Stables. Proceeding north along the lane there are more fields on the right. Just before Ryalls Lane, there is another cluster of residential buildings. No development has occurred in recent years in this part of the parish. Roads are single lane with hedges and/or trees bordering both sides. Ryalls Lane has the River Cam to the right as one travels towards the canal, and parts of the lanes have ditches which are part of the drainage system for the village, assisting with flood relief from surface water. These must be maintained to continue with the alleviation of surface water flooding.

**Shepherds Patch** is primarily a linear settlement along the Gloucester-Sharpness canal to the south-east of the bridge crossing the canal. The canal is the prominent feature in the hamlet and a popular location for walking and cycling. A small number of houses are situated on the lane opposite the Tudor Arms; these have mostly been there for many years. This area has been identified as where one of the wharves were located for brick making a couple of centuries ago. The settlement grew up due to the trading on the canal but, by the 1950s and despite continued trading, nothing was discharged at the Cambridge Arms and Shepherds Patch bridges. The general impression when travelling through Shepherds Patch is of a random selection of buildings situated along the canal with views towards the Cotswolds and the Forest of Dean. There is a 'no turning' sign at the beginning of the road, on the right, as it is a dead end. Businesses and tourism dominate this area, yet the road space for tourists visiting is limited and at busy periods such as Bank Holidays congestion can be a cause for concern, especially with regards to emergency vehicle access. Parking along Kingston Road causes damage to the verges and ditches. The Parish Council has constructed a car park in this area, opening in 2020 to help alleviate the tourism parking along the road, allowing better free flowing traffic.

# Facilities



The Parish supports a number of community facilities as follows:

In Slimbridge:

- **Village Hall** - The village hall built in 1930 hosts a number of village organisations. It is a well utilised community asset and is situated opposite the church.
- **St. John's Church** - This is the focal point of the Parish, thought to be built in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. The church spire can be seen for miles around. A graveyard lies within the grounds.
- **Cemetery** - Behind the Village Hall is a car park which leads onto a cemetery which is owned by Slimbridge Parish Council.
- **War Memorial** - Erected in September 1921 the war memorial is situated in the grounds of St. John's Church.
- **Playing fields** - Slimbridge playing fields are home to Slimbridge youth football team and cricket team. The pavilion was built in 1921 (wooden) then again in 1996 (brick). There is also a children's play area and an amphitheatre.
- **Slimbridge Legion Social Club** - Built in 1952, the social club is located on St. John's Road and is a popular community hub. It hosts a skittles team, has a licensed bar and is open most nights of the week.
- **Primary School** - The school is located on St. John's Road and was built in 1906. It has 5 classrooms and has capacity for 112 children. An additional classroom was built in 2015 to cater for growing numbers within the Parish and catchment area.

In Cambridge:

- **Village Green** - The village green is located on the Bristol Road in Cambridge. It has a flood marker on it which was put up after the floods in 1905. Also on the Green is a traditional phone box – which accommodates a Book Swap and defibrillator, a bench, and notice board. A bus stop is also located here.
- **Rosie's Wood** - Rosie's wood was established in 1992. It was planted by local man Tony Raybone in memory of his first wife Roseanne, a much-loved figure in the Slimbridge community who taught dance. Annual events such as Jazz in the Woods and art exhibitions raise money to maintain the woods for the community.

# Buildings and Materials



## Buildings

Slimbridge: There are two areas that were previously social housing in or off St. John's Road. Some were terraced cottages but in the main the properties are larger. In recent years the only buildings erected in the village have been of the large, detached type. There is a mixture of architectural styles. Examples of post-war developments include Tying Crescent. More recent developments built in the later part of the 20th century include Lancelot Court and Longaston Close. During this time there have also been smaller areas of infill development and barn conversions around Churchend and White House Farms. In 2014 the site of The Forge was developed and, more recently, development of the former garden/orchard of Ruaval was completed, adding a further three houses. The main non-farming commercial enterprise now surviving is Allen and Elliot's Garage.

Cambridge: Cambridge again has an extremely diverse range of properties although mainly of a smaller size than in Slimbridge. The properties in Cambridge typically face onto the road and have long rear gardens. There have been a number of properties built in recent years, all individually designed. The latest development was the 10 terraced and semi-detached affordable houses built next to the former White Lion, which are co-ownership. The site on the Dursley Road named Bartons Field is a mixed development of affordable and market houses completed in early 2015. Bartons Field sits next to a mobile home park for the over 55s and mainly contains large twin units arranged around a central green. There are three self-build bungalows further down Dursley Road. The majority of residential properties are situated towards the A38 end of Dursley Road, near to the junction with Narles Road. The houses along the A38 are mostly traditional in design, now with some back garden development recently permitted. The previous Post Office and shops, along with the White Lion pub, have now been turned into residential properties.

The smaller settlements are Gossington, Moorend, Tumpy Green, Kingston, Troytown and Shepherds Patch. The characteristics of all these groups of houses are such that they do not spoil the intact nature of the Parish countryside. They are virtually free from suburban style features, which would appear incongruous in these settings. Where dwellings have been built within the last century care has been taken to keep the architecture and building materials in keeping with their environment.

Buildings blend well with the landscape and there is a good degree of screening. There is good use of combinations of wood and brick, attractive windows and porches, all of which avoid uniformity. An important factor is that the size of the land holdings with most of the houses is such that there is both scope and incentive to maintain well landscaped surroundings. The houses with their attractive gardens and trees, blend into and enhance the landscape of the surrounding farmland and hedgerows.

Gossington - Along the A38, the main buildings in Gossington are commercial. Off the A38, the principal property is Gossington Hall, located at the highest point 25m above sea level. The Hall stands in approximately eight acres of land and is currently used as a base for a gardening school. Close to the A38 there is the former Gossington Chapel, now converted to residential use. Many buildings are related to farming, either farm buildings, farmhouses or former farm workers' cottages, the majority close to the road.

Moorend - Mostly farm buildings and older style housing. There are farming fields opposite the houses and some farm buildings.

Tumpy Green - The main building within this area is Tumpy Green Equestrian Centre established since 2003, and much of the surrounding land provides areas for a variety of riding such as cross country and jumping. Horses from the equestrian centre exercise down Moorend Lane as far as Slimbridge village.

Kingston - The properties in Kingston include Price's Court (Farm) and three bungalows, two of which were built for agricultural workers. There are four cottages along the lane which look to have been the original farm workers' cottages due to the similarity in the design and materials used. A fifth may have been situated on a piece of land now owned by Slimbridge Parish Council (there is a property shown on the site, on the 1803 Inclosure map). All but one of the properties (Cypress House, built in 1605) on its south side are close to the road with large gardens to the rear. Several properties have their front door away from the road.

Troytown - Houses in Troytown are mostly set back from the road, some with walled entrances, five bar gates and long driveways. The houses all have large surrounding gardens. Close to Churchend there is a row of detached bungalows, all built in a similar style, and all have front gardens with driveways. The first of these are two detached cottages situated close to the lane with small front gardens and parking to the side. These properties have deep front gardens and driveways. Longaston House is a large period detached house which is side-on to the lane. It looks out over the fields towards the hamlet of Troytown and beyond to the Cotswolds.

Shepherds Patch – In Shepherds Patch there are a number of houses situated along the road towards the Patch area, with a road spurring off opposite the Tudor Arms pub leading to Wild Goose Lodge. A number of houses are also situated along this road. Along the canal are a great many moorings used as permanent homes for boaters. Boats are moored north and south of the canal bridge, on the east side of the canal. In Patch Lane, building styles are diverse although all are at least two storeys. There is a real mix of different ages, from early 1800s to a building recently constructed. The oldest property, originally used for farm labourers, is at the end of a gravel path. The properties are all very individual except for a pair of cottages known as Rectory Cottages. Along the lane there is at least one former farm, Patch Farm, now residential. Wild Goose Lodge, formerly a Youth Hostel, now provides accommodation for school parties, companies or individuals. The Black Shed, which is a café, was formerly a farm shed. A large white building - Patch House, formerly a hotel, then care home, now residential apartments - has steps to it directly off the road. The listed bridge-keeper's house is located on the canal. Businesses and tourism dominate this area, yet the infrastructure is limited.

## **Building Materials**

Slimbridge Parish has a diverse selection of building styles. Early properties were constructed of the local Cambridge/Frampton bricks (see History section) with a tile or slate roof.



The copper smelting industry in Bristol produced Black Foundation Bricks, made from waste products in the 1750s. Their size was 9"x9"x19" approx. and, importantly, they were impervious to water. They were used as ballast in boats on outward trips (no cargo) and were unloaded at stopping points on the Severn when the craft were loaded with products for the smelters (possibly wood and/or coal). In the villages on the Severn they found a use as foundations for their houses and walls. In Slimbridge they can be seen in Church House, the Village Hall wall, Whitney Cottage in Ryalls Lane, Kingston House (photos opposite) and a few other houses dating from that period.

### **Distinctive Features**

There are a number of distinctive features within the parish on buildings of varying ages, including a variety of window designs, chimney and roof features, gates, and brickwork designs. Below demonstrates some of these.



Slimbridge – St. John's Church and graveyard, The Old Rectory and ancient moat, Churchend and Whitehouse Farm houses, Village Hall and Church House, Slimbridge Primary School, Rectory Farm, Yew Tree Cottage, The Malthouse, and Malthouse Farm.

Cambridge - The George Inn and caravan park, White Lion (used to be a pub, now converted into residential accommodation), Transport Yard, Village Green, old antique shop (now a residential dwelling), river Cam, Rosie's Wood, Solar Farm, Industrial Estate, listed barn, Cambridge House with Rolls Court and Thatch Cottage down Ryalls Lane.

Gossington - Gossington Hall, Gossington Chapel, Gossington Truck Stop – SDC Waste Depot.

Moorend - Moorend Farm, Slimbridge Farm.

Tumpy Green - Tumpy Green Equestrian Centre.

Kingston – Pylons, Pump House, Kingston Farm and cottages.

Troytown - Ancient mythical Labyrinth.

Shepherds Patch - Canal and moorings, Bridge Keeper's house, canal milestone, Tudor Arms Pub, Tudor Arms Caravan Park, Wild Goose Lodge, two Rectory Farm Cottages, Patch Farm, Black Shed, Patch House, Wildfowl and Wetlands Centre (including Sir Peter Scott's house).

## Listed Buildings

Slimbridge has 43 listed buildings or monuments. All except the church, which is Grade I, are Grade II status. This information was taken from Stroud District Council's website where further information can be gained on each listed building. An appendix (1) is included with these details.

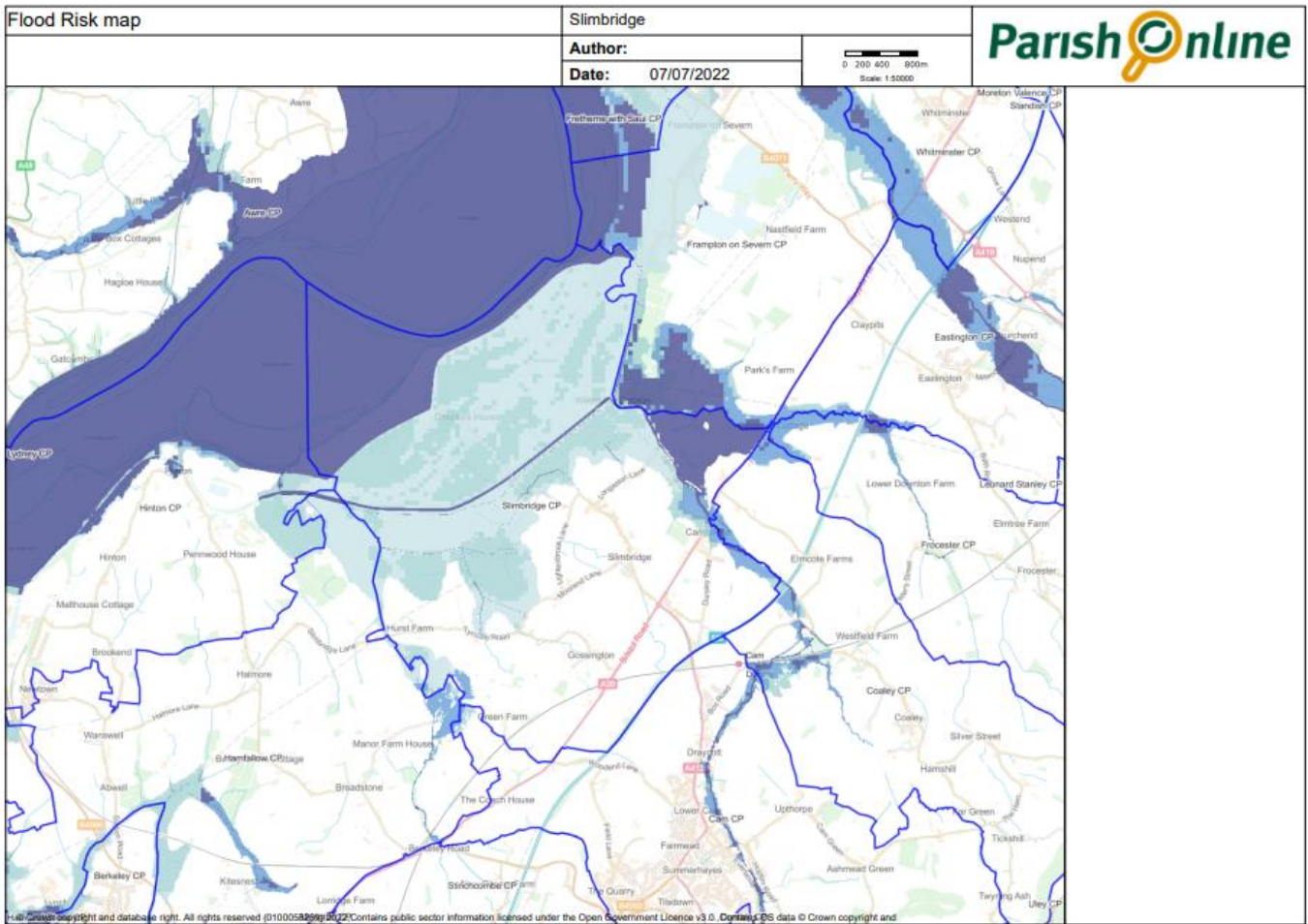
## Flooding



The Parish has suffered with surface water flooding and sewage flooding, and much liaison continues between the Parish Council, the community, Severn Trent Water and other bodies – such as Gloucestershire County Council, Stroud District Council and the Internal Drainage Board to reach satisfactory conclusions. This is an ongoing project. The flooding affects St. John's Road, Churchend and Ryalls Lane along with a number of other small areas. Parts of the Parish of Slimbridge are within a flood zone – see map below which is updated by the Environment Agency regularly.

In the context of climate change and global rises in sea level, flooding seems certain to be an increasingly challenging issue in the future – the map overleaf is likely to show more dark blue areas. This also seems likely to affect existing buildings and should certainly be taken into account when siting any future buildings.

In addition, local people have collected, and will continue to collect, information about specific instances of flooding that add to and in some cases challenge the desk-based conclusions by the Environment Agency as shown in the map. The most up to date data is included in Part 1 of the Neighbourhood Plan. This material should be taken into account when assessing site suitability and any development proposals.



### Risk of Flooding from Rivers and Sea

- High
- Medium
- Low
- Very Low

## Strategic sites

Looking ahead, the picture above could change in the future, certainly over the plan period, with any proposals of strategic sites within the Stroud Local Plan. These could increase the population of Slimbridge Parish considerably and, even if as fully self-contained and sustainable as developers intend, large strategic sites would have significant impacts on the whole Parish. This could be positive if the scale of development enabled more local facilities (e.g. a small supermarket) or better public transport links - as long as that also connected to Slimbridge and Cambridge. It could enable better footpath and other links to Cam rail station, hopefully adding to parking provision there. It could also, however, be negative, for example if it prejudiced the viability of the current community facilities (Village Hall etc.). It would seem certain to lead to significant change for the Primary School.

What is unarguable is that large strategic sites would significantly change the character of the Parish as outlined above, so it is essential that this is addressed in this Design Statement as well as in the main Plan. How to achieve that is outlined in the next section.

## Design Guidance

The Stroud District Local Plan Review includes several policies directly relevant to design quality (as listed on p.6) in its main Section 6: Our Environment and Surroundings. To a large extent this provides the detailed guidance necessary for Slimbridge (and other communities), with the proviso that the two documents focus mainly on design in town and city rather than rural contexts. As a result, a first overarching point in terms of design guidance for this Design Statement is that:

**All planning applications for new developments in Slimbridge Parish must demonstrate their compliance with the National Design Guide, the National Model Design Code and Stroud District Council's design policies and show their responsiveness to the rural qualities of Slimbridge Parish.**

There are in addition some features of the Parish, outlined in this Statement, to which particular attention should be paid in new designs in our area. These are:

- **Views in the wider landscape.** Almost any new building will be visible from the landscape, even perhaps from some considerable distance. Attention should be paid to building heights and forms and to the colour and tone of any new building materials when seen from further away.
- **Building relationship with roads.** As outlined above, some buildings front directly onto the street, others follow a consistent group building line and others are set back, sometimes well set back. That variety and irregularity is an important feature of local distinctiveness so the default need not always be to setting buildings back; on pavement can also have the benefit of creating larger gardens. Back gardens facing to the road is not an appropriate approach.
- **Plot boundaries.** Although there is great variation across the Parish in how buildings relate to the road when set back – open, fence, low wall etc., there are some consistent patterns in some groups of buildings and in the two villages. It is expected that any clear and consistent pattern should be followed in new developments, for example not creating an open plan front garden where other houses have low walls etc.
- **Materials:** Almost all possible materials have been used, even over time, across all the buildings in the Parish. Modern construction techniques, especially to promote sustainable construction, will almost certainly lead to new and perhaps different-looking buildings in terms of their materials. This is to be encouraged provided that the choices satisfy the views in the landscape point made above. In Slimbridge, Black Foundation Bricks can be seen in Church House, The Village Hall wall, Whitney Cottage in Ryalls lane and a few other houses dating from the 1750's
- **Strategic Sites**  
Government guidance now places very strong emphasis on community engagement in relation to all stages and forms of Design Codes, and that includes Masterplans for any large strategic site. That point about community involvement is also addressed in Part A of this plan in terms of the use of the Pre-application Community Engagement Protocol. A Design Code will need to be produced for any strategic site, so it is imperative that this is developed in close collaboration with Slimbridge Parish Council and our local

community (and, of course, Stroud District Council). Because any large strategic site could be totally new and large developments for the Parish, that code will need to cover design-related issues not covered here, for example open space and trees in streets, as well as ensuring that it considers implications for the Parish as a whole, not just the development site.

## Appendix 1 Listed buildings

Slimbridge has 43 listed buildings or monuments. All except the Church which is Grade I, are Grade II status. This information was taken from Stroud District Council website where further information can be gained on each listed building. Below are lists and photos of some of these buildings.



**Hurn Farm**



**Yew Tree Cottage**



**Churchend House**



**The Old Malt House**



**Whitehall Farmhouse**



**Churchend Farmhouse**



**White Lion**



**The George Inn**



**Rolls Court**



**Bridge Keepers Lodge**



**Mile post Glos/Sharpness**



**Rectory Farm**



**The Old Rectory**



**Gossington Hall**



**St. John's Church**

**St. John's Church Graveyard**  
where the following listed  
tombs and features are  
located:

- Piers, gates, railings and dwarf wall at boundary to Churchyard
- Watts Memorial Chest tomb
- Unidentified chest tomb
- Unidentified Chest tomb
- Daniel Phillimore Memorial
- Unidentified Chest tomb
- Humphrey Wind Memorial
- Unidentified pedestal tomb
- Group of 9 memorials
- Unidentified chest tomb
- Daniel Long memorial
- Two unidentified tombs
- Group of 3 unidentified tombs
- Unidentified chest tomb



The following list are of other listed buildings within the parish

- Hornshill Cottage
- The Poplars
- Bramley Cottage
- Barnfield Cottage
- Barn immediately north of Gossington Hall
- Beech House
- Kingston farmhouse
- Slimbridge Farmhouse
- Thatch Cottage
- Ovaca Cottage
- Malthouse Farmhouse
- Malthouse building
- Patch Farmhouse
- Old Hurst Farmhouse
- Rectory Moat – noted as a scheduled monument.