

Works to trees covered by T.P.O.s can only be undertaken with the written consent of the Council except where they are deemed to be dead, dying or dangerous. It may be a requirement to replace any protected tree that is felled with a tree of appropriate species and size.

Landscape Setting

The landscape setting of the study area is largely characterised by the brooks and the farmland and parkland through which they flow. The main landscape features are:

Watercourses, Ponds and Meadows

The numerous brooks, ponds, ditches and other wetland features contribute greatly to the character of Longford itself, the Hall, Longford Park and the surrounding area. There is much evidence in the numerous weirs and ponds that their flow has long been managed not only to provide power to drive the mill at the heart of the village and control their propensity to flood but also to create water features such as those associated with the gardens of Longford Hall. The main watercourses are:

- Shirley Brook which winds its way from the north through Longford Park and the fields south of Long Lane before emptying into the pond close to the Mill Farm.



Shirley Brook with associated wet margins and copses of alder trees

- Brailsford Brook which approaches the village across farmland in the east before emptying into the same pond.
- The combined Shirley & Brailsford Brooks which emerge from the mill-pond before flowing southward to join with Longford Brook some way south of the village.
- Longford Brook which emerges from the southern end of the mill pond via the Mill before running southward through farmland.



Longford Brook on the southern side of Longford Lane

- Yeaveley Brook that runs from the west across the southern edge of Longford Hall gardens before joining Shirley Brook.

The braided nature of the streams as they flow north/ south through the village has created quite a broad swathe of water/ flood meadow. This has influenced the settlement pattern - which is largely strung out along the western side of Main Street above the flood plain – and necessitated the construction of flood prevention features such as banks and levees that are characteristic of the meadows and some gardens at the centre of Longford.

They also provide the quantity of flow necessary to have powered the mill and this is manifest in the existence of the large ponds which are the principle feature of the village landscape. The ponds are now part and parcel of extensive gardens attached to The Mill House and The Mill Farm.



Mill ponds are characteristic features

The brooks and ponds are associated with dense lines and copses of trees which mark them out in the landscape as well as other artefacts, such as small bridges, some possibly aqueducts, which are, themselves, distinctive and/or historic features.



Bridge across Yeeveley Brook, south west of Longford Hall

Hedgerows

Hedgerows associated with field boundaries and roadsides are an important feature. They cross and subdivide the landscape restricting its expansiveness to a more human scale. Hedgerow trees are important vertical elements within the gently rolling topography and substantially filter views across the terrain.



Field boundary hedgerows and hedgerow trees are a distinctive feature of the surrounding landscape

They are mainly composed of hawthorn, with localised blackthorn, elder, sycamore, elm and other species. They provide important corridors for wildlife particularly where modern farming practices have contributed to a reduction in local biodiversity.

Horse Chestnut Avenue

The avenue of horse chestnut trees that lines the route from Long Lane to Longford Hall and St Chad's Church is a particularly distinctive feature of the landscape. It stands out as much by way of the formality of its design and the contrast this creates with the surrounding agricultural landscape, as in its sheer length.



The avenue as it crosses Shirley Brook

It is a comparatively new feature of the landscape – it does not appear on the OS map of 1922 for instance and the age of the trees suggests it may have been planted in the 1960s.

Longford Park

Longford Park covers a wide area extending north of Long Lane from the field boundary hedge opposite the junction of Long Lane with the lane leading to Silver Hills Farm in the west, to the stream marking the Parish boundary in the east. On the western side it includes land associated with Carr Wood as far north as North Park Lodge from where the boundary heads due east as far as Coppice Wood just beyond Shirley Brook in the west.

Early Ordnance Survey maps plot many of the trees planted within Longford Hall Park which were planted as groups and as individual specimens to create a landscape in the style of “Capability” Brown.



A rolling arable landscape with scattered groups and individual specimen trees is typical of Longford Park.

Today the parkland is characterised by expansive, rolling fields of wheat, barley and hay all growing in the distinctive red earth that is a feature of the landscape. Individual mature specimens of ash stand out within the fields and copses of beech, oak, ash, pine and sweet chestnut are prominent as are the lines of alder that characterise the banks of Shirley Brook as it traverses the park.

St Chad's Churchyard

St Chad's Church is somewhat removed from the village to the north being more closely associated with Longford Hall. The tranquil, shaded setting of the churchyard is characterised by the number of mature trees – yew (*Taxus baccata*), silver birch (*Betula pendula*), rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*) and copper beech (*Fagus sylvatica Purpurea*) – established amongst the memorials. A line of mature yew trees is a feature close to the southern boundary wall with the Hall while a number of huge lime trees (*Tilia* spp) dominate the northern side.



St Chad's churchyard

Gardens at Longford Hall

The gardens most immediately associated with Longford Hall are contained within an area north of Yeaveley Brook - which has been canalised and widened to form a pond/ lake - and west of the farm drive with the northern boundary marked by a high brick wall on the southern side of the churchyard. The main approach to the Hall is from the east via the horse chestnut avenue and the boundary to the gardens on this side is defined by a high and tightly clipped yew hedge set behind estate railings. There are two entrances, one on the eastern side and one on the north marked by impressive wrought iron gates.

There is a long history of garden development much of which was undertaken by the Coke family in the early 18th Century. Woolley observes of the Hall in 1713 that it is “very much improved particularly by gardens and water courses”.



View across the lawns of Longford Hall from the north gate

The landscape gardener William Eames, who is known to have worked at the Earl of Leicester's other country house at Holkham in Norfolk, circa 1801-03, may have undertaken the improvements. It is known that William Barron and Sons re-designed the garden in 1924 at which time the “lake” was widened.

Much of the garden is formal in style containing a series of feature gardens linked by long, straight pathways. Sweeping lawns and planting beds are punctuated by topiarised yew trees and impressive groups and individual feature trees such as the enormous copper beech standing on the eastern side of the Hall and the cedar at the south western corner. On the western boundary the garden is more informal in nature this area being characterised by meandering pathways and woodland gardens of rhododendron set amongst denser planting of lime, yew, ash, cypress, holly and pine.

Front Gardens

As buildings are generally set well back from Main Street, Sepycoc Lane and Longford Lane front gardens are very much a feature of the street scene containing a wide range of garden trees shrubs and herbaceous plants often set behind well kept boundary hedges.



One of many well-kept front gardens on Main Street

Of particular note in this respect are the grounds of Mill House which are set out to either side of the mill stream and up against the pond. The weeping willow perched on an island in front of the building is a particular feature but a wide range of specimen conifers and fruit trees as well as horse chestnut and silver birch are set within the lawns. The well maintained nature of the gardens at Mill House is typical of most gardens within the village.



Mill House gardens

Old Bupton

The term “Old Bupton” is used here to describe the triangular area north of properties on Longford Lane and described by a line joining Millside, The Mill Farm and Bupton House. The area can be accessed via the footpath that runs north from the road between Mill House and Millside and winds its way through a tranquil and intimate assemblage of gardens, grassed open spaces, belts of trees and areas of coniferous woodland before emerging onto the green lane that runs from Blackwater in the north to Meadow View on Longford Lane. Though largely hidden from public view the gardens of The Mill Farm are a particular feature of the area



Tranquil open spaces are a feature of “Old Bupton”

Feature Trees

Trees are a feature throughout the study area. Many magnificent specimens of mature oak, beech, sycamore, alder, ash, copper beech, lime and horse

chestnut in particular are contained within the hedgerows and copses and along the watercourses. Those that feature elsewhere tend to be isolated individual specimens within parkland, farmland, and domestic gardens and make a positive contribution to the Area. These include:

- Horse chestnut and oak trees on the eastern side of Main Street
- Oak in the rape field on Sepycoc Lane.



Feature oak tree on Sepycoc Lane

- Himalayan birch tree (*Betula utilis Jacquemontii*) in the grounds of the village hall



Himalayan birch at the northern end of Main Street

- The line of mature horse chestnut surrounding the cemetery on Long Lane
- Huge sweet chestnut trees east of Longford Hall farm
- Oak, sycamore, redwood and cedar trees in the field west of Longford Hall Farm.

Notable views within the Landscape

The nature of the topography is such that views are generally filtered and/ or constrained throughout the landscape by densely scattered hedgerow, waterside and parkland trees. There are no high points from which to gain any broad views though

these are obtainable across the more open landscapes in the south and across the parkland associated with Longford Hall. Where tree planting or roadside hedges are particularly dense such as on Long Lane and in places on Main Street views are highly focussed or channelled. Views of note include:

Views Across the Meadows

The view opens out across the water meadows at the southern end of Main Street.



View across water meadows looking north

View Across Farmland to the South

Some of the most extensive views can be had across farmland on the southern side of Longford Lane. Here low clipped hedgerows and occasional trees are not high or dense enough to filter or restrict the views as they do in other parts of the village.



More expansive views can be gained across farmland in the south of the study area

Views to the North East

A broad view out across the rich red soil of farmland on the north-eastern edge of the area is seen from the avenue of Horse Chestnuts.



The red soil is characteristic of the landscape type

View Across the Barley Field to St. Chad's Church

The church tower provides a prominent focal point in views across the large fields on the western side of the Avenue.



The church tower features in many views

View Across Longford Park to Longford Hall

Longford Hall and the tower of St Chad's church are the focal points in views across Longford Park on the western approaches to the village.



Some fine views of Longford Hall across the parkland from Long Lane