

## Character Area Summary 6: Canal Zone

**An open area, with residential and industrial areas, which has a rural character and a rich historic and natural environment strongly influenced by the Stroudwater Canal and River Frome.**

**Used by people to: live, work, walk, cycle, boat, fish, celebrate and commemorate events.**

### (a) Character Summary



*Bridgend taken from Boakes Drive by railings*

- The canal and River Frome are the major influence on the character of this area; the River forms the parish boundary to the South West.
- The very picturesque area around St Cyr’s Church, The Ocean and the Nutshell Bridge is a focal point for the area.
- The area has a mixed rural, industrial and residential character. There are extensive and sweeping views to the surrounding countryside, the Cotswold Escarpment to the South and Doverow Hill and Haresfield Hill to the North. There are also four small Industrial estates.

- This area is rich in heritage and natural assets. Large parts of this area are designated as the Stroud Industrial Heritage Conservation Area and as a Key Wildlife Site (mammal interest, plant interest, marsh, bog, mire and tall herb fen). All of Stonehouse’s three Grade II\* listed buildings are in this area and 59% (36) of Stonehouse’s listed historic buildings or structures.



*Canal with Stroudwater Canal Trust boats*



*Bridgend Works from Downton Road*



*Field looking towards Selsley from Ocean Bridge*

**(b) Land uses**

- Industrial and employment: Bond's Mill, Lower Mills, Upper Mills and Ryeford Industrial Estates
- Residential: Bridgend, Boakes Drive estate, Ebley Road
- Recreational/commercial: Stonehouse Court Hotel, canal and canal towpath

**(c) Settlement Pattern**

- Stonehouse Court was the manor house of Stonehouse and this area is the centre of the old parish.
- The Mills and their associated industrial estates are located alongside the River Frome.
- Residential areas include: South of the Bristol Road (Boakes Drive estate), Bridgend, Ryeford and along the Ebley Road.

*Wharfedale Road, Bridgend**St Cyr's Church from the Ocean**Bonds Mill***(d) Landscape Description**

- The area is flat and in a wide, shallow valley with views of the steep South facing Cotswold escarpment and of Doverow Hill to the North.
- There is a large amount of open space, including grazing meadows. The watercourses influence the character of the area, much of which is in a floodzone.
- Historic buildings and structures form the main landmarks including St Cyr's Church, Stonehouse Court Hotel, Nutshell House and bridge, Upper Mill, Bond's Mill and the Pill Box. Stanley Mills is a striking landmark in the adjoining parish of King's Stanley.

**(e) Roads, streets, routes**

- The busy A419 runs through this area and its junction with the B4008 through the rest of the town and the Ebley Road towards Stroud is at the Horsetrough roundabout.
- The Cotswold Way leads through Stonehouse on the East side from Leonard Stanley and King's Stanley across the valley and up behind Doverow Hill.
- The main pedestrian link to the rest of the town is along Regent Street over the light controlled crossing

at the end of Downton Road. A footpath linking the canal to the rest of the town via the side of the Berryfield starts at the end of Church Lane.

- The canal is used by small boats, canoes and dinghies and the towpath is popular with walkers and cyclists.
- The National Cycle Route 45 crosses this area leading from South Cerney through Stonehouse and on towards Saul.



*Cycle Track National Route 45 leading to Swindon from Saul*



*Cycle track showing route to Stonehouse Town and towards Eastington*



*Cotswold Way leading up past vineyards*



*Canal taken from bridge on Ryeford Rd North (Cotswold Way)*



*Stonehouse Business Park allocated industrial land, photo taken from pavement on roundabout*

**(f) Buildings, landmarks and Details**

**(i) Significant and Landmark buildings:**

**Grade 11\* Listed buildings:**

Church of St Cyr, Church Lane

Group 12 Monuments in the churchyard approx between 5 and 20m to North of Porch to Church of St Cyr, Church Lane

Stonehouse Court Hotel, Bristol Road



*Church of St Cyr from canal towpath*

**Grade II Listed buildings:**



*Gatehouse, Bonds Mill*



*Court Farm House*



*Ryeford House*



*Main building at Upper Mills, Downton Road*

The Gatehouse, Bonds Mill, Bristol Road

Court Farmhouse, Bristol Road

Coach House immediately North East of Little Court, Bristol Road

Stonehouse Neighbourhood Plan Group

Barn to North of Court Farmhouse, Bristol Road

Little Court And The Coach House, Bristol Road

Cartshed to West of Court Farmhouse, Bristol Road

Group Of 2 Monuments in the churchyard approximately 5m North of Church of St Cyr, Church Lane,

Dangerfield Monument in the churchyard approximately 3m North-East of Chancel to Church of St Cyr

Group Of 2 Monuments in the churchyard approximately 25m North-East of Chancel to Church of St Cyr

Pegler Monument in the churchyard approximately 7m South of Church of St Cyr, Church Lane, Stonehouse, Stroud, Gloucestershire

Unidentified Monument In The Churchyard Approximately 1m South And 4m From West End Of Church Of St Cyr

Group of 3 Monuments in the churchyard approximately 20m North-East Of Chancel to Church of St Cyr

Mosley Monument in the churchyard approximately 20m East-North-East Of Chancel to Church of St Cyr

Group of 9 Monuments in the churchyard approximately between 1 And 5m to South-East of Chancel to Church of St Cyr

Unidentified Monument in the churchyard approximately 3m South-West of Church of St Cyr

Group Of 4 Monuments in the churchyard approximately 14m South of Church of St Cyr

Group Of 2 Monuments in the churchyard approximately 15m North of Church of St Cyr

Group of 6 Monuments in the churchyard approximately 15m North-East of Chancel to Church of St Cyr

Group of 5 Monuments in the churchyard approximately 30m North-East of Chancel to Church of St Cyr

Nutshell Bridge, Church Lane

Nutshell Cottage, Church Lane

Nutshell House, Church Lane

Bridgend Kennels, Downton Road

Main Building at Upper Mills, Downton Road

Bridgend House, Downton Road

Bridge over River Frome, Downton Road

Double Locks Cottage, Ryeford

Ryeford House, 1 And 2, Ryeford

Ryeford Bridge

Tankard House, Ryeford

Ryeford Double Lock, Ryeford

Ryeford Lodge and Ryeford Cottage, Ryeford

Former Coal Pen near Canal Cottages

**(ii) Significant buildings and structures, not listed:**

These buildings and structures may be significant as landmarks, because of amenity value, social and communal value or architectural quality.



- Bond's Mill
- Bond's Mill Bridge
- Paper Bag Mill, Ryeford
- Telephone box, Downton Road
- Ebley Road footbridge

*Bonds Mill*



*Bonds Mill Bridge*



*Paperbag Mill*



*Downton Road phone box and post box*



*Wycliffe College Bridge, Ebley Road*

**(iii) Predominant building types:**



*Ebley Road, Cotswold stone*



*Court Farm, Cotswold stone converted farm*



*Ryeford Road North houses with limestone detail in brickwork*

- Limestone buildings, both high quality and agricultural.
- Brick buildings, industrial and residential from 18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> century

**(iv) Predominant Materials:**

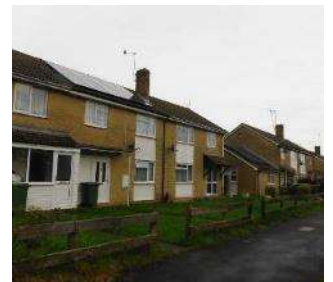
- 14<sup>th</sup> -17<sup>th</sup> century: limestone, rendered stone
- 18<sup>th</sup> century: limestone and brick
- 19<sup>th</sup> century: largely Stonehouse red brick, limestone facings and decoration.
- 20<sup>th</sup> century: red brick, yellow brick, dark brick, reconstituted “Cotswold” stone, cement render



*Nutshell Path, Cotswold stone cottages*



*Ryeford Road North stone white line continues in wall from houses below.*



*Wharfdale Way, Cotswold stone*



*House at Haven Avenue, old phone box*



*Haven Avenue, red brick houses*



*Ebley Road, mixed brick and render*

**(v) Details:**

- St Cyr's Church has many interesting carvings and gargoyles.
- Nutshell Bridge which spans the Stroudwater canal was built in brick in 1779; the integral Nutshell Cottage was added in 1803. The decorative brick work on Nutshell Cottage inspired details on some of the 1990's houses in Boakes Drive.
- Older properties tend to have narrow casements, with some sash windows.
- Modern properties tend to have larger windows with some "picture" windows in 1960's developments.
- There are a number of properties with porches.



*Houses at Boakes Drive showing style of light and dark brick based on Nutshell House and traditional local buildings*



*Path to St Cyr's from Ocean Bridge showing Stonehouse Court Wall and buttresses*

**(g) Key views**

The extensive views of the Cotswold escarpment to the South, surrounding countryside and iconic views of the area around St Cyr's Church are a significant part of this area's character.

**Views South:**

- (i) Views from Ebley Road of Selsey Common and Penn Woods





*Ebley Road: View over field to the East of Selsey Common*



*Ebley Road: View over field to the West of Stanley Hills*

- (ii) Views from Ebley Road along Cotswold escarpment to South



*Ebley Rd: Field jointly owned by residents of Ebley Rd*

- (iii) Views South West from Bridgend area



*Upper Mills Industrial Estate*

- (iv) Stonehouse Court from A419



- (v) Views of meadows from canal towpath



*Field looking towards Selsley from Ocean Bridge*



*Field opposite Stonehouse Court south of canal taken from canal tow path*

- (vi) Views of fields used for grazing from 18th century bridge over the River Frome on Downton Rd.



*Field off Downton Road looking towards Ryeford with Selsley Hills*

- (vii) View of Stanley Mills and escarpment looking South West from Ebley Road



**Views North:**

(viii) Views of Doverow Hill and Haresfield Hill to North



*Bus Stop on Ebley Road and view of Doverow Hill*



*View from South side of Ebley Road towards Doverow Hill*

(ix) Stonehouse Court from canal



*Stonehouse Court from South side of canal*

(x) St Cyr's Church from canal



**Views East:**

- (xi) St Cyr's Church from the Ocean bridge, an iconic much photographed view.



- (xii) Nutshell Bridge along the canal.



*Nutshell House and integral Bridge with Stroudwater canal boat "Perseverance"*

**(h) Open space:**

- Field opposite Avenue Terrace
- Court Farm Paddock
- Boakes Drive: Green and play area
- Wharfdale Way: play area
- Field to South East of Horsetrough roundabout
- Land South West of Horsetrough roundabout
- Site of the former Ship Inn
- Nutshell field
- Meadows flanking the River Frome to the south of Bridgend
- Fields to South of Ebley Road



*Land opposite Avenue Terrace taken from Bonds Mill car park*



*Nutshell field opposite Paper Bag Mill*



*Wycliffe Land South West of Horsetrough Roundabout, taken from pavement*



*Ship Inn Site view towards Downton taken at edge of Upper Mill bridge*



*Field opposite Stonehouse Court south of canal taken from canal tow path*

**(i) Green and natural features**

- All the estates have mature trees, established bushes and hedges. The fields are flanked by mature trees and hedges, or stone walls.
- The fields are used for grazing, and are also home to insects, bats and birds.
- The greens by the canal are used by water birds, swans, herons, ducks, moor hens and coots.



*River Frome divides here where it has overflowed many times*



*Court Farm Mews from canal side by Ocean*



*Canal looking west towards Bonds Mill from canal path by railway bridge*

**(j) Conclusions****Positive features and special qualities:**

- Rural character from the close proximity of the open fields to the buildings
- Extensive views of the hills and escarpment
- Many historic buildings, including the parish church of St Cyr's and Stonehouse's only hotel, Stonehouse Court.
- Beautiful setting in the valley with the Cotswold escarpment on South side and Doverow Hill to the North.
- The Cotswold Way, canal towpath and canal mean the relatively tranquil environment can be enjoyed by pedestrians, cyclists and canal users.
- The River Frome and the Stroudwater Canal are attractive features within the landscape and add to the rich natural environment.
- Small industrial estates offer business and employment opportunities for businesses of various sizes.

**Negative features:**

- The volume and speed of traffic using the A419.
- Views from canal through industrial areas not always attractive.
- Some flooding from River Frome during excessive rain. Much of the area is in Flood Zone 2.

**Aspirations for area:****Conservation:**

- Preserve and enhance heritage and natural assets whether currently designated or not.

**Opportunities: Enhancement, Additions**

- Ensure that Cotswold Canals restoration project benefits the area and the whole of Stonehouse; encourage good links to the rest of the town.
- Encourage provision of recreational area and facilities for local people, visitors and canal users at an appropriate canal side site.
- Encourage the sympathetic use of the small industrial estates especially for small and medium sized businesses.