



# **THE COOKHAM PLAN**

## **FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Housing & Development Group**

**December 2007**

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## **1 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Purpose**

This report was commissioned by the Cookham Parish Plan Steering Committee to support the development of a Parish Plan for Cookham. The report has been prepared by the Housing and Development Working Group and describes the research carried out by the group into planning, housing, development and other matters linked to the built environment.

The report covers a great deal of ground and examines each subject area in some detail. While much of this detail will, inevitably, be omitted from the overall village plan, we hope that villagers, councillors and others interested in housing and development matters in and around Cookham will find it an interesting and useful resource.

Throughout the report we have endeavoured to identify significant issues within the housing and development fields, to explain the factors that determine or regulate these issues and to propose actions which should be undertaken over the 10 to 20 year period of the Cookham Plan in order to tackle the matters raised.

Many of the issues raised in our consultations with local people have their roots in legislation, government planning policy and the economics of the housing market. As such, their complete solution is far outside the scope of a Parish Plan but we have, wherever possible, endeavoured to suggest practical ways to mitigate their effects locally.

### **1.2 Remit**

The Remit for this work was set by the Steering Committee and accepted by the Working Group in September 2006. In summary, it required the group to consider the following topics:

- Town Planning
- Infrastructure
- Mobile Telephones
- Flooding
- Building Quality
- Housing demand and affordability
- Housing provision for the elderly and disabled

- Siting of other Facilities
- Commercial Development
- Accessibility

The Remit is set out in full in Appendix 1.

### **1.3 Membership of the Working Group**

The working group was made up of the following people:

- Martin Coker
- Roger Davies (group leader)
- Gavin Hall
- John Wilkinson
- Liz Winfield

### **1.4 Acknowledgements**

Support was generously provided by many people, whether by responding to questionnaires, contributing ideas and issues at public meetings, responding to specific questions or by supporting the work in other ways. Particular thanks are due to Brian Martin of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead for his work in supporting the group's enquiries to the council and to Mike West for providing his superb photographs.

## **2 SUMMARY**

### **2.1 About this Report**

This report has been prepared in response to the remit issued to the Housing and Development Working Group by the Cookham Plan Steering Committee in September 2006.

The report is intended to provide background information on housing, development and related matters and to identify initiatives which will improve the quality of life within Cookham over the next 10 to 20 years. Many of the matters identified in the report need to be addressed urgently in order to prepare the way for their benefits to be released over the period of the plan. For example, detailed review of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead's (RBWM's) emerging Local Development Framework is essential to ensure that the new policies provide Cookham with an appropriate framework to control development. To support this there is a need for preparation and adoption of a Village Design Statement. Perhaps most urgent of all is the development and implementation of a comprehensive flood relief scheme for Cookham. These and other proposals are summarised below and covered in detail in the report.

The report goes into some considerable background detail on each of its subject areas. This was a conscious decision in order that we could understand the issues, and the factors that influenced them, in order to produce reasoned and measured proposals. We hope that this information will provide a useful resource to the Parish Council, RBWM and other groups and individuals who have an interest either in Cookham itself or in specific issues and development proposals.

This report is the outcome of 6 months intensive work by a small group of volunteers. We have endeavoured to check all of the facts and to take account of the many thoughts and ideas which were put to us through the consultation process but, inevitably, we may not have represented everyone's pet issues or every nuance of technology, hydrology or the planning process. We believe that the report provides a broad and balanced view but it should not be relied on in matters where there is financial or other risk.

The proposals have been collected together in a consolidated action plan at the end of this summary. Many of these deal with the need to review, constructively criticise and develop policy and other initiatives. We suspect that it will be difficult to find individuals to take these on and to find ways to make them happen but we do believe that they could make a significant difference to life in

Cookham in the foreseeable future. We call upon the Parish Council, the Cookham Society and others who care about Cookham to take up the reins and implement our findings.

## **2.2 Town Planning**

Cookham is a special place to its residents and to its many visitors. This is a result of the mixture of its riverside setting, open spaces, historic buildings and good connections to transport and business within one of the most affluent parts of the United Kingdom. This means that there is very strong demand for property and the consequential high prices lead to significant pressure for redevelopment, particularly for housing.

Development is largely controlled by national and local rules over which villagers can have little direct influence. We can, however, bring pressure to bear on RBWM to develop local policies which take account of Cookham's unique character and pressures. In particular, there is a need to scrutinise and, if necessary, challenge policies in the emerging Local Development Framework (LDF). A very important aspect of this will be to produce a Village Design Statement in a suitable format to allow it to be adopted as supplementary planning guidance within the LDF.

The land around Cookham currently enjoys a high level of protection through its designation as Green Belt. Areas to the west and north are also designated as being of Special Landscape importance and land adjacent to the river is designated as being important to the setting of the Thames. All of these provide significant levels of protection but, with continued pressure for housing in the south east, Green Belt designation alone may not be a guarantee against development. The report therefore recommends that Green Belt land around Cookham should remain undeveloped (including road developments). We also recommend that the Green belt should be extended to cover the Poundfield area and that additional land to the east and west of Cookham should be upgraded as being of Special Landscape Importance.

There has been some concern expressed about the quality of enforcement of planning rules and we call upon RBWM to ensure that this is of the highest standard with a fully coordinated approach between all council departments. There may need to be more done by local people to police the quality of enforcement.

## **2.3 Quality of Construction**

The physical quality of buildings in Cookham is largely determined by building regulations and (when applicable) by Conservation Area planning Rules. There

is an opportunity to further influence this through the Village Design Statement previously referred to.

One area where local people can take the initiative is by improving the energy efficiency of their homes. We suggest that an initiative be started to promote better home insulation and other energy efficiency measures with a target of reducing Cookham's carbon dioxide emissions by 5,000 tonnes per annum over the next five years.

## **2.4 Infrastructure**

Cookham is generally well served by utilities and, whilst there is room for improvement in matters such as cable and internet provision and, potentially for further extension of mains drainage in Cookham Dean, these matters do not significantly affect or constrain housing and development. There may be opportunities for local generation of electricity from the Thames at Cookham Weir and we recommend that this be investigated.

Schools and medical facilities operate near to capacity albeit that this is due to them serving parts of North Maidenhead and (in the case of the Medical Centre) Buckinghamshire. There is little scope for expansion on existing sites and these services are therefore a significant constraint on the scale of future development in Cookham.

Parking and road congestion are very significant problems in Cookham and are dealt with in detail in the Traffic and Transport Working Group's report. Put simply, Cookham's roads are full and, from a planning point of view, the message is that all new business and housing developments must provide adequate off-street parking. Any sites to be developed must demonstrate that they can provide adequate access and that their traffic flows will not add to congestion. Given the need to protect the Green Belt, no new roads should be permitted.

## **2.5 Mobile Telephones**

Mobile telephones are an indispensable part of modern life and, whilst most people are happy to use them, the siting of masts and other infrastructure in residential areas or on prominent sites causes much consternation.

Information provided by the mobile telephone companies and supported by the Cookham Plan questionnaire suggests that there are enough existing mast sites to provide an adequate service across Cookham at current levels of demand. There is scope to manage deficiencies in individual companies' services by a

combination mast sharing and the use of microcells and picocells to provide local infill in business premises.

Local people can assist by taking measures to minimise their use of mobile phones at home and by establishing a forum to liaise with the operating companies and limit the impact of any future essential developments.

## **2.6 Flooding**

The risk of flooding from the River Thames is a major concern for Cookham with all of the Village and parts of the Rise within the Flood Plain. Although recent floods have, thankfully, not caused any significant property damage, they have caused much disruption through road closures. The Environment Agency has conceded that its recent works to protect North Maidenhead have increased the risks for Cookham and are currently developing measures to protect the village. At the time of writing, these fall short of providing a comprehensive solution and there is a need for Cookham to campaign for effective measures.

Until such measures have been implemented, there should be no relaxation of current restrictions on development in the flood plain.

Responses to the questionnaire indicated that there is also a significant level of concern about the continued risk of local flooding from flash floods and drainage problems. Further work is required by RBWM and Thames Water to quantify these problems and to find solutions.

## **2.7 Housing Demand and Affordability**

Cookham's attractive nature and the limited supply of housing means that house prices are very high (we estimate that there is a premium of over 20% compared to RBWM as a whole). While this is good for individual owners, it does limit people's ability to move to larger houses and it is a particular problem for people with lower incomes and first time buyers who wish to live near their families in the village.

This is a problem which cannot be solved by a village plan. We are fortunate compared to more rural communities that (relatively) lower priced housing is available in nearby towns and also in that we do have 205 housing association properties plus lower priced private accommodation at Strand Park.

It is important that this mix is maintained and that, where possible and suitable, more public sector / affordable housing is built to improve its availability which is currently below regional averages. We hope that the Village Design Statement will be able to influence the long term mix of housing types in Cookham.

## **2.8 Housing Provision for the Elderly and Disabled**

Our research suggests that Cookham is well provided with social sheltered housing for the elderly (25 units compared with an estimated future demand of 13 units) however, the questionnaire suggested that there is unfulfilled local demand. We believe that this may be due to demand from other areas such as Maidenhead and / or the lack of private sector sheltered housing.

We believe that there may be a case for the development of up to 13 private sheltered units in Cookham. Alongside this, we consider that there is probably a small unfulfilled need for sheltered housing for younger disabled people.

We recommend that more work is done to confirm needs and that the results should be reflected in the LDF and the Village Design Statement.

## **2.9 Other Developments**

Our remit called on the working group to support the People & Places and Business & Economy working groups by considering siting and other planning related matters arising from their proposals.

No specific issues requiring planning input were raised by the other Working Groups during the preparation of this report. We have therefore provided a general commentary on the main suggestions that emerged from public consultations and private discussions during the work of the group.

Businesses are an important part of Cookham with about 120 specific business premises being identified and many more people operating from their homes. We call on both business owners and RBWM planners to consider their neighbours and take all practical measures to reduce the impact of their operations and of their customers' behaviours.

## COOKHAM PLAN

### HOUSING & DEVELOPMENT ACTION PLANS

Ref	Proposal	Purpose	Responsibility	Timescales	What needs to be done
<b>TOWN PLANNING</b>					
1.	Re-classify Poundfield site as Green Belt	Protection of an important open space within the Village.  Reducing the likelihood of a large development overloading road infrastructure.	Cookham Parish Council  The Cookham Society	As soon as possible within the timescales for development of the Local Development Framework	Make representations to RBWM.
2.	Define the settlement boundaries of Cookham Village and Cookham Rise	To reduce the risk of the lack of defined boundaries being used to justify infilling in Green Belt sites.	Cookham Parish Council  The Cookham Society	As soon as possible within the timescales for development of the Local Development Framework	Make representations to RBWM.
3.	Identify and implement improvements to the communication, review and (where appropriate) opposition of, planning applications.  Establish arrangements to monitor planning activity in adjacent authorities.	To alleviate concerns about inappropriate development	The Cookham Society (or other similar body if they are unable to expand their role)	12 months from the date of this report.	Review existing arrangements, consult interested parties and set up new local processes.
4.	Review the Cookham Plan and take account of its findings and recommendations in development of the Local Development Framework.	To ensure that the Framework reflects local people's views.	RBWM	As soon as possible within the timescales for development of the Local Development Framework	Amend the LDF as necessary.
5.	Review the emerging policies which form and support the Local Development Framework to ensure that Cookham continues to enjoy an appropriate level of protection.	To ensure that the current, general policies set out in the draft LDF are developed in the interests of Cookham so far as is possible.	The Cookham Society (or other similar body if they are unable to expand their role)	On going – reviews need to be completed to the timescales set by RBWM.	Respond to all adverse proposed policies.
6.	Produce a Village Design Statement and obtain its adoption as Supplementary Planning Guidance.	To ensure that local planning policy and decision making better reflects the needs of Cookham and its residents.	The Cookham Society (or other similar body if they are unable to expand their role)	As soon as possible within the timescales for development of the Local Development Framework	Identify structure of VDS, undertake consultation, draft the VDS and negotiate with RBWM to ensure it is adopted.
7.	Develop design statements for sites within the Conservation areas identified in section 3.6.2 and during preparation of the VDS.	To ensure that any future development of such sites is appropriate and alleviates their detrimental effect on the Conservation Areas.	The Cookham Society (or other similar body if they are unable to expand their role)	In parallel with the VDS unless development proposals are brought forward earlier.	Consult and produce guidelines for appropriate improvements.

Ref	Proposal	Purpose	Responsibility	Timescales	What needs to be done
8.	Extend the areas of Special Landscape Importance	To improve protection of the countryside around Cookham and to support protection of the 'Area of Attractive Landscape' on the East bank of the Thames.	RBWM	As soon as possible within the timescales for development of the Local Development Framework	Consult and revise the boundaries on the Proposals Map.

Ref	Proposal	Purpose	Responsibility	Timescales	What needs to be done
<b>BUILDING QUALITY</b>					
1.	Establish village wide project to improve energy efficiency	Reduce Cookham's CO2 emissions by 5,000 tonnes per annum by 2012	Steering Group to be established	Set up by end 2007	Identify people to take this forward Obtain funding Publish information and encourage participation Measure effects

Ref	Proposal	Purpose	Responsibility	Timescales	What needs to be done
<b>INFRASTRUCTURE</b>					
1.	Approach Parish Council and RBWM about the possibility of getting a feasibility study done on installation of electricity generating turbines in Cookham Weir (ala Windsor Romney Lock project)	To have a significant flagship renewable energy project in the Parish. Enable Parish and RBWM to meet future government pledges to reduce carbon and increase the use of renewable energy	Parish Council Cookham Society	Q1 2008	Letters lobbying and later will need a full team.
2.	Lobby RBWM so that all Section 106 monies from a given development go back into the Parish where that development is actually occurring Ideally should become written policy	So Cookham gets something back from developments occurring within it	Parish Council and Cookham Society	ASAP	Consistent lobbying; letters, publicising issue on websites
3.	Lobby BT to make exchange/ network changes to enable 8-10 MB Broadband speeds across Cookham	Encourage home working possibly reducing traffic pressure and congestion in Cookham.	Parish Council / Cookham Society Individuals who support idea	Q4 2007	Letters and phone calls to BT
4.	Lobby Cable companies NTL/Virgin Sky etc to extend cable network to Cookham - get it to top of list of places to connect next	Encourage home working again with possible traffic and environmental benefits	Parish Council /Cookham Society Individuals who support idea	Mid 2008	Letters and phone calls to service providers
5.	Undertake feasibility study into providing full mains drainage capacity for Cookham	Provision of modern infrastructure standards	Thames Water	December 2008	Lobbying by Parish Council, RBWM and residents groups.

Ref	Proposal	Purpose	Responsibility	Timescales	What needs to be done
<b>MOBILE TELEPHONES</b>					
1.	Form a Cookham Mobile Phone Forum	To provide a focus for mobile phone planning and development in Cookham and a resource for resisting / resolving controversial proposals	Cookham Society and Parish Council	By December 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agree terms of reference.</li> <li>• Co-opt members (e.g. representatives of the Parish Council, major landowners, Cookham Society and the public)</li> <li>• Agree programme of action</li> </ul>
2.	Engage mobile phone operators about future developments	To ensure there is clarity about future needs and dialogue about how they can be met without intrusive developments	Cookham Mobile Phone Forum	Within 3 months of formation of the Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate with RBWM Mast Forum</li> <li>• Development and consultation on long term needs for phone infrastructure</li> </ul>
3.	Engage Landowners to identify site options	To broaden the choice of sites available for any essential developments	Cookham Mobile Phone Forum	Within 3 months of formation of the Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dialogue to identify and resolve issues affecting the availability of sites</li> </ul>
4.	Encourage the reduction of demand	Minimise demand on the existing infrastructure etc to reduce pressure for new developments	Cookham Mobile Phone Forum	Within 3 months of formation of the Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and distribute information packs for home and business users</li> <li>• Encourage the installation of picocells in premises with heavy demand</li> <li>• </li> </ul>
Ref	Proposal	Purpose	Responsibility	Timescales	What needs to be done
<b>FLOODING</b>					
1.	Identify a comprehensive and prioritised list of flood relief measures for Cookham.	To stimulate progress and to confirm that measures proposed by the Environment Agency are in the best interests of the community as a whole.	Cookham Parish Council Environment Agency	By 30 June 2008	<p>Discussions with Environment Agency. If no independent review of the options is available, commission a consultant such as WRA to produce a master plan.</p> <p>This should include consideration of flooding of Lulle Brooke, increases in capacity through and around Cookham Weir, reduction in flow across the Moor and the effectiveness of existing bunding as well as measures to address specific local areas of risk.</p>
2.	Implement flood relief measures	To reduce the risk and impact of flooding by the River Thames	Environment Agency	As soon as practical	Construct additional flood relief measures.
3.	Raise level of B4447	To maintain access to the village in times of flood (if not resolved by flood relief measures)	RBWM	As soon as possible	Raise level of road and increase culvert capacity to prevent closure by flooding

Ref	Proposal	Purpose	Responsibility	Timescales	What needs to be done
4.	Improve Traffic Management at times of flood	To minimise disruption to residents and businesses when roads are closed by flooding	RBWM Cookham Parish Council	By 30 November 2007	Agree a traffic management strategy and associated roles and responsibilities.  Seek any powers necessary for enforcement.  Obtain and store all necessary signage and other equipment.
5.	Engineering surveys and maintenance of the Causeway bridge	To ensure that the bridge remains an attractive part of the Moor landscape and able to carry traffic at times of flood	RBWM	By 31 December 2007	Commission engineering survey.  Agree ownership and funding responsibilities  Undertake recommended maintenance regime
6.	Publish drainage problems and target / actual response times on the Internet	Enhanced visibility and accountability for resolving local drainage issues.	RBWM	31 March 2008	Establish fault logging and status information on the RBWM Internet Site.
7.	Undertake a study of reported flash flooding risks and drainage problems across Cookham	To clarify the extent of the problem and to identify solutions.	RBWM	31 March 2008	Identify the causes of problems and produce a plan for their management and resolution.

<b>HOUSING DEMAND AND AFFORDABILITY</b>					
Ref	Proposal	Purpose	Responsibility	Timescales	What needs to be done
1.	Signpost potential sites for development of sheltered homes and affordable housing	To ensure a balanced mix of accommodation within Cookham which is accessible to the widest possible cross section of society.	Parish Council and RBWM planners	By end 2008 or as otherwise required to support development of the LDF	Identify suitable sites  Produce development briefs  Develop LDF policies to promote suitable development.
2.	Review publicly owned land to identify current or future opportunities to develop affordable housing.	To ensure that opportunities to develop affordable homes are not lost.	Parish Council and RBWM	By end 2008	Identify potential sites  Identify development arrangements (e.g. joint ventures with Housing Associations) which will result in suitable developments
3.	Develop detailed policies within the LDF which promote appropriate developments of affordable housing and which maintain a balanced mix of privately owned housing.	To maintain a balance of housing types and sizes in the long term interests of the community	Parish Council and RBWM  Input and lobbying by residents groups such as the Cookham Society.	As required to support development of the LDF	Develop a clear strategy  Take action to ensure that it is included in the LDF.

Ref	Proposal	Purpose	Responsibility	Timescales	What needs to be done
<b>HOUSING PROVISION FOR THE ELDERLY AND DISABLED</b>					
1.	Confirm the estimated needs for supported accommodation in Cookham and how best this can be provided	To ensure that, so far as is practical, there is adequate provision for local people who wish to remain in Cookham but require support and care to do so. (This applies both to the elderly and to disabled people)	A group of service providers and other interested parties (e.g. medical, social services, existing accommodation providers, Elizabeth House etc).	Needs to be identified as soon as possible to provide input to the LDF.  Beyond that, developments may take some time.	Form group  Identify needs  Provide input to LDF  Promote suitable developments

Ref	Proposal	Purpose	Responsibility	Timescales	What needs to be done
<b>FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS</b>					
1.	Develop Village Design Statement to give guidance on acceptable forms of development.	To guide developers and planners and to discourage unsuitable forms of development.	The Cookham Society (or other similar body if they are unable to expand their role)	As soon as possible within the timescales for development of the Local Development Framework	Identify structure of VDS, undertake consultation, draft the VDS and negotiate with RBWM to ensure it is adopted.

## **3 TOWN PLANNING**

### **3.1 Remit**

*Review the built environment in Cookham, where and in what form future development should be permitted or prohibited, and how well the planning system works to meet residents' views and needs.*

### **3.2 Issues and Concerns**

Planning and development related matters are probably the most emotive subjects for people in Cookham. The village's proximity to London, good transport links and the buoyant economy of the Thames Valley all provide strong demand for property and the consequential pressure for development threatens the special nature of the area that attracted many residents in the first place.

Many concerns related to housing and development matters were raised during the consultation process in the course of our preparation of this report. 644 households (over 25% of the total in Cookham) responded to the questionnaire issued by the Steering Committee and, where relevant, these responses have been taken into account by the Housing & Development Working Group. Key messages from the questionnaire included:

- 97% of respondents valued Cookham's pleasant semi-rural nature (question 4)
- 95% agreed or strongly agreed that 'the Cookhams should remain a semi-rural environment with a strictly limited increase in housing stock' (question 8)
- 95% agreed or strongly agreed that 'in general, the undeveloped open areas should be protected from development' (question 8)
- 80% agreed or strongly agreed that 'future house building in the Cookhams should concentrate on small scale in-filling within existing developed areas' (question 8)
- Responses to question 10 which asked about the acceptability of various types of development showed very strong bias against either larger groups of housing or expansion on the edge of Cookham

The most important issues and concerns can be summarised as follows:

- Green Belt

People value the Green Belt – they don't want to lose the division between Cookham and Maidenhead – it is important to them to maintain the village status of the Cookhams.

- Open space

People value the green space that exists within the villages and would be unhappy to see any of it disappear. This applies to both fields and commons and to gardens which are under pressure from infill development and increased development densities.

- Mix of development

People are concerned about the increased numbers of flats being built and the lack of 'affordable housing'. Residents would like to see more control of styling, size, number and type of housing and extensions.

- Visibility of Planning Applications

Residents would like to see better engagement by the planning department of those affected by plans. Currently only immediate neighbours are notified of developments which often means that interested parties lose the opportunity to object.

- Traffic concerns

There is no spare capacity for off-road parking in Cookham yet parking standards for new developments do not appear to recognise this.

Similarly, the effect of new development on traffic volume and existing parking provision, particularly in Cookham Village and Cookham Rise do not seem to be given enough weighting.

- Uneven balance between developers and residents

Large property owners or developers appear to have a disproportionate sway on what and where development can occur and this can have a big impact on the village environment. An example of this is developers' ability to submit multiple applications and then wage what many see as a war of attrition until successful.

- More effective enforcement from the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead (RBWM).

When things go wrong with new developments or regulations are broken, more than one planning department can be involved. There is an apparent lack of processes in place to ensure that issues are dealt with jointly and that the various council departments work together to resolve the problems.

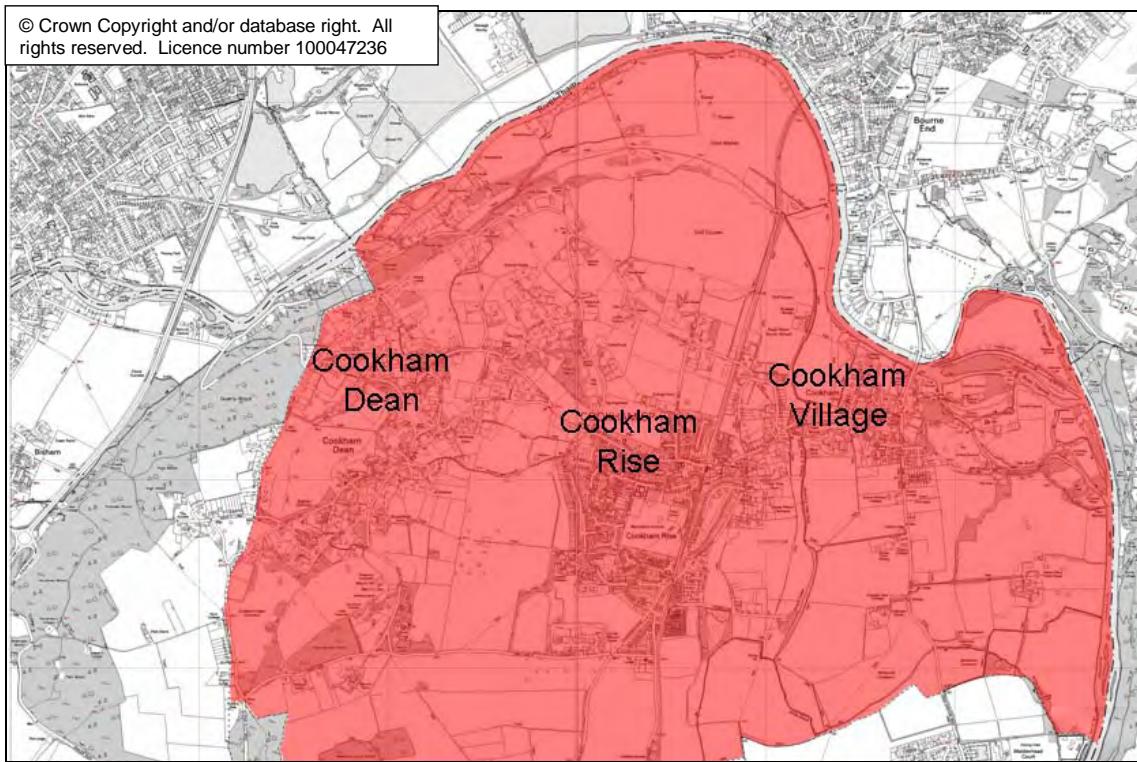
In this section we will be looking at what makes the built environment in Cookham special, how it is currently protected and the preferred shape of future development.

### **3.3 The Built Environment**

The Cookhams comprise Cookham Dean ; Cookham Rise, Cookham Village; and the surrounding green space between the River Thames and Maidenhead (as illustrated in Figure 3-1). Each of the villages is distinctive but as a whole they form an area which is much loved for its diversity and unique character.

According to the 2001 Census, Cookham Parish covers an area of 1,329 hectares and has a population of 5,497 people. There are 2,383 household spaces contained within 2,368 dwellings: 36% are detached, 49% semi-detached or terraced and 15% are flats or temporary structures (such as mobile homes). 80% of dwellings are owner occupied, the rest are rented; 9% being public sector rentals and 11% private sector.

**Figure 3-1 Cookham Location Map**



The red shaded area shows the overall extent of Cookham (based upon the Parish Council boundary). Note that the area extends slightly to the south of the map where the southern boundary runs along Malders Lane, Hindhay Lane and along the northern boundary of Furze Platt.

The approximate centres of the three settlements of Cookham Dean, Cookham Rise and Cookham Village are highlighted.

### 3.3.1 Cookham Dean

Cookham Dean (the 'Dean') is a rural area within which a number of distinct settlements can be identified. These include: the main village area around St John the Baptist Church, the School and Post Office; Cookham Dean Bottom; and Winter Hill. There is a primary school, a nursery, 4 pubs/restaurants, a post office, 2 village halls and a number of commercial enterprises. The buildings are all in Green Belt with many also in Conservation Area and/or in an Area of Special Landscape Importance. (See Figure 3-6, Figure 3-7 and Figure 3-8).

According to the Cookham Dean Conservation Area Statement<sup>(3.3)</sup>, the Cookham Dean of today grew from a 14<sup>th</sup> century settlement most likely centred on Cookham Dean Bottom. This grew with the establishment of farmsteads in the surrounding area but most of the buildings seen today date from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards.

The area is distinctive for its hilly nature, the liberal sprinkling of common land (the result of Cookham's notable success in resisting enclosure) and its network of small lanes and footpaths which connect the various parts of the village.

**Figure 3-2 Uncle Tom's Cabin, Cookham Dean (Mike West)**



Development in Cookham Dean is generally of a low density with many large, detached houses set in their own grounds. These are interspersed with smaller cottage style properties and a smaller number of modern style houses.

The majority of properties are constructed of traditional materials, notably brick, flint and clay roof tiles although a number are of older timber framed and / or thatched roof construction.

### 3.3.2 Cookham Rise

In the middle of Cookham is Cookham Rise (the 'Rise') which is the largest and most densely populated of the three main settlements. It is built around the railway station on the Maidenhead-Marlow branch line with connections to London and Reading. Cookham Rise is mostly surrounded by Green Belt but has no other significant planning protection. The area contains most of Cookham's main facilities including a primary school, a nursery school, the library and parish council office, medical centre, dentist, day centre and a variety of shops

and restaurants, many serving the villagers day to day needs. There are also two churches, a village hall, scout hut and sub-Post Office. Most of these facilities are located around the station and along Lower Road.

The public facilities, shops and business premises are generally small scale buildings of traditional appearance and materials although the parade, nursery and primary schools are in a more modern style. The shop units are home to a wide variety of retailers and provide a very important local facility (particularly with growing awareness of the importance of shopping locally and reducing car use). They and the other local businesses play a vital role in defining Cookham as a thriving and living community rather than as just another dormitory village. Unfortunately, a number of the shop units, notably Countrystore and the Parade are of an unattractive modern design made worse by some poor maintenance of both buildings and the surrounding landscaping.

**Figure 3-3 Cookham Rise (Mike West)**



Much of the housing stock dates from the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries and includes a wide range of styles and sizes. Along Lower Road and High Road in particular are many terraced cottages originally built for farm workers. Alongside these and in areas such as Westwood Green and Whiteladies Lane there is more of a mix of semi-detached and detached properties in a variety of styles but mainly with gardens and mature planting which creates a pleasant suburban environment. The roads around Whiteladies Lane include many former council houses built in the 1950s and 60s which are now in either private or housing association ownership. This stock also includes some low rise flats and maisonettes. To the south east of the Rise is Strande Park, a small estate of mobile

homes which provides an important source of lower cost housing for Cookham.

### **3.3.3 Cookham Village**

Cookham Village (the ‘Village’) is the oldest part of the area, having grown up around the ancient river crossing and parish church. The Village is surrounded by Green Belt, has an extensive Conservation Area and is further protected to the north and east by land designated as being important to the setting of the Thames (see Figure 3-6, Figure 3-7, Figure 3-8 and Figure 3-9) Much of the area of the Village is also deemed to be at risk of flooding (see Figure 7-6 and Section 7).

The Village is mainly residential in nature except for the High Street area which has a mix of residential and commercial buildings (approximately: 52% residential, 37% Retail/residential and 11% commercial). The commercial/retail buildings consist of restaurants, clothes shops, 3 garages, 2 florists, 2 hairdressers, a travel agent and several other specialised shop outlets catering in the main for visitors to the village. In addition, there is the Stanley Spencer Gallery, a primary school, the main parish church, two residential care homes and a fire station.

The Village also hosts two of the largest local businesses – the Chartered Institute of Marketing at Moor Hall and the John Lewis Partnership’s training facilities and social club at the Odney. (John Lewis also own Winter Hill Golf Course).

The majority of the properties in the Village are in the Cookham High Street Conservation Area which extends from the Odney Club in the east to Poundfield in the west (see Figure 3-7).

According to the Conservation Area Statement<sup>(3.1)</sup>, the main boundaries of the Village have developed from the medieval settlement and have not changed significantly since at least 1761. This is reflected in there being 50 listed buildings within the Cookham High Street Conservation Area, three of which are grade 2\* and the rest being grade 2 listed.

**Figure 3-4 Cookham Village (Mike West)**



The character and appearance of the Village depends heavily on the use of a limited range of traditional material and building styles and features, mainly brick, flint and clay tiles with some older timber framed buildings. The more modern buildings are generally of traditional construction with brick and slate or tiled roofs. The largest concentrations of modern housing date from the 1950s onwards and can be found in Sutton Close, Woodmoor End and Vicarage Close although there are other examples. Most properties are detached or semi detached (apart from in the High Street) and most houses are of a medium to large size.

### **3.3.4 Farmland, Commons and Open spaces**

Just as important as the built environment is Cookham's rural setting amid farmland and open spaces. These spaces are considered in more detail in the Environment and Land Working Group's report but the main features (as they relate to the setting of the village and to potential future development) are described below.

In the Cookhams the majority of the farmland is situated to the south of Cookham Village, south and west of Cookham Rise and south and east of Cookham Dean. Nearly all of this land is in the Green Belt and it serves the purpose of separating the villages from Maidenhead whilst also adding green space between the different parts of Cookham, so maintaining the distinctiveness of each centre. To the north lies the

important open spaces of Marsh Meadow, Cock Marsh and Winter Hill. In this area, , apart from Winter Hill Golf Club, the land is predominately agricultural. It is classified as Green Belt, of Special Landscape Importance and important to the Setting of the Thames.

Historically, Cookham was very successful in resisting the enclosure of common land and so enjoys the benefit of many sites within and around the settlements. The National Trust owns Cookham Moor, Cock Marsh, Widbrook Common, Winter Hill, Cookham Dean Common, Bigfrith Common and a few other smaller areas in and around Cookham Dean whilst the Parish Council administers Odney Common in Cookham Village. Details of registered Common Land can be found on the Natural England web site <sup>(3.3)</sup>.

**Figure 3-5 Farmland, Cookham Village (Mike West)**



The National Trust's ownership at Cookham falls within a raft of protective planning policies, including Green Belt, Conservation Area and land Important to the setting of the River Thames. Following consultation during preparation of the Cookham Plan, the Trust has confirmed its support for continued protection of the quality of the open countryside around Cookham and stated that it would like to see a continuation of the principles established by the RBWM Core Strategy, namely to protect such landscapes and their setting, to protect and enhance historic environments and to promote appropriate levels of development only within the existing urban fabric.

Other significant open Spaces include: Riverside and Bell Rope Meadow (between Holy Trinity Church and the river), Poundfield, Westwood Green and the Alfred Major Recreational Ground all of which play an important part in defining the Rise and Village's open and semi-rural environment. Bell Rope Meadow, Westwood Green and the Alfred Major

ground are classified as Important Urban Open Space. Poundfield has been the site of a number of planning battles over a potential housing development and was formerly classified as Green Belt. Following a legal challenge, this status was removed from much of the site in 2001 (the High Street Conservation Area was extended to cover much of Poundfield at this time).

### **3.4 Protecting Cookham's character and surroundings**

At present, Cookham's environment enjoys a relatively high degree of protection through a combination of policies covering:

- Green Belt
- Conservation Areas
- Special Landscape Importance
- Open Spaces
- Land important to the Setting of the Thames
- Flood Plain
- Other special designations such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and Wildlife Heritage Sites.
- Normal planning principles supplemented by specific local policies

Although the special designations provide enhanced protection for Cookham, this is not absolute. Continued pressure, both from developers wishing to exploit the strong local demand for property and also from the government struggling to provide sufficient housing for the buoyant south east economy are likely to remain a fact of life for the foreseeable future.

This ambiguity is reflected in comments made during preparation of the plan when, on the one hand, many wished to see more affordable housing and homes for their families in Cookham, whilst, on the other hand, there was an overwhelming desire expressed to maintain the size and character of the village.

In the following sections, we consider the protection given by each aspect of the planning rules and consider some of the good and bad points. Planning law is a complex area and, whilst we attempt to summarise the key factors affecting

Cookham in this report, it must not be taken as a definitive guide to policy or its implementation.

Local planning rules are made up from a combination of the law, government guidelines and local policy (see Appendix 2). The government requires local planning authorities to comply with national policy as set out in relevant legislation, Planning Policy Guidance Notes and Statements (PPGs / PPSs). At a regional level, policy is set out in the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) which covers matters such as housing, transport, the environment, the economy, infrastructure and mineral extraction<sup>(3,4)</sup>. Local Policy is set out by RBWM in the Local Development Plan, this comprises:

- Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Local Plan (incorporating alterations adopted in June 2003)<sup>(3,4)</sup> together with:
- The Berkshire Structure Plan 2001-2016 (2005); the Replacement Minerals Local Plan for Berkshire (Incorporating Alterations adopted in 1997 and 2001) and the Waste Local Plan for Berkshire (1998)

The Borough has recently embarked upon a consultation exercise to replace this plan with a new Local Development Framework (LDF). This comprises a Core Strategy together with a number of supporting policies (including a regional spatial strategy) which will be developed over the coming years. It is vital that due account is taken of the Cookham Plan and its associated working group reports in developing these policies.

Significant policies in the existing Local Plan and draft Core Strategies are listed in Appendix 2.

### **3.5 The new Core Strategy**

At the centre of the LDF will be the Core Strategy and Policies Development Plan Document (the 'Core Strategy'). This document was issued for consultation in late 2006 and a independent inspector will review the representations made during June 2007.

It is unfortunate that the consultation on this document took place prior to completion of the Cookham Plan which means that the issues raised in this report could not be formally submitted to RBWM. The Cookham Society has, however, made representations that Parish Plans should be taken into account in developing the LDF and it is to be hoped that the inspector will support this view.

Throughout this report, we have referred to the draft policies in this document wherever possible (these are prefixed 'CS'). Where necessary for clarity or

detail, we have also referred to policies from the existing Adopted Plan, these have various prefixes (e.g. GB).

### **3.6 Planning Principles and local policies**

The consent of RBWM as Local Planning Authority is required before anyone develops land or buildings (unless the alterations are very minor in nature). ‘Development’ includes:

- changing the use of land and/or buildings
- construction or alteration of building
- most other construction and engineering works

Permission is granted in accordance with relevant law, government planning policy guidance and local policies. There are a number of specific policies addressed to commercial developments in Cookham, these are highlighted in section 11 (Commercial Development).

#### **3.6.1 Green Belt**

The purpose of the Green Belt is set out by the government in Planning Policy Guidance note 2 (PPG2) and is:

- 1) *To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas*
- 2) *To prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another*
- 3) *To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment*
- 4) *To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns*
- 5) *To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land*

RBWM apply this guidance through the adopted local plan, particularly policies GB1 to GB10 (to be superseded by Policy CS2 in the new Core Strategy). The overwhelming thrust of these policies is that development will only be allowed in the Green Belt in limited ‘special circumstances’ which meet the criteria laid down in the policies.

Draft Policy CS2 states that:

*Within the Green Belt, development will only be granted, save (sic) in very special circumstances, for:*

- 1) *The construction of new buildings for:*
  - a) *Agriculture and forestry*
  - b) *Essential facilities for outdoor sport and recreation, for cemeteries and any other uses of land that preserve the openness of the Green Belt and which do not conflict with the purposes of including land in it*
  - c) *Limited extension, alteration or replacement of existing dwellings*
  - d) *Limited residential infilling in Recognised Settlements*
  - e) *Limited affordable housing in accordance with CS19*
  - f) *Limited infilling in or redeveloped(sic) of identified major existing developed sites*
- 2) *The re-use of buildings and the making of material changes in the use of land which maintain openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land in the Green Belt*
- 3) *Engineering and other operations which maintain openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land in the Green Belt.*

*All development either within, or conspicuous from, the Green Belt should not cause harm to its visual amenities and where appropriate enhance the appearance of the countryside.*

*Changes to the Green Belt will only be made in exceptional circumstances.*

**Figure 3-6 Green Belt within Cookham**



This map includes the amendments to the Green Belt boundary around Poundfield made in 2001.

In principle, this provides a very high degree of protection to the land around Cookham Village and Cookham Rise and to all of Cookham Dean. However, the wording is slightly less restrictive than the existing policies coupled with which recent years have seen a number of developments which do not obviously meet the specified criteria. These include new facilities at Moor Hall and some residential developments on Winter Hill.

Given that this report does not support large scale development in and around Cookham, it seems appropriate the principles of Green Belt Policy should remain unchanged and that settlement boundaries should be defined for the Village and Rise to remove any ambiguity about infilling opportunities. It would also appear that residents concerned about development in the Green Belt should (individually or through the Cookham Society) ensure that there is clear accountability from RBWM for decisions made.

### **3.6.2 Conservation Areas**

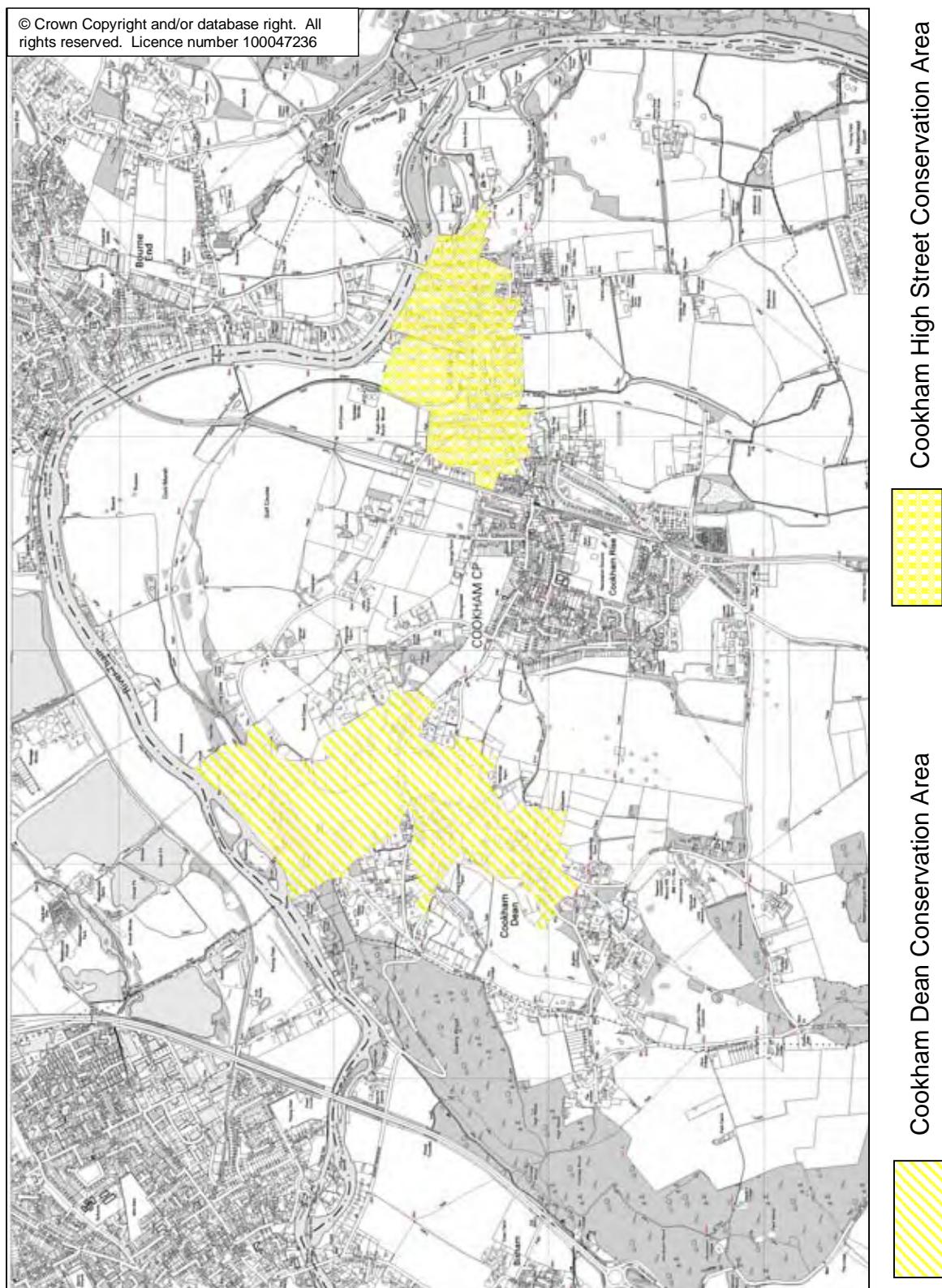
Conservation Areas are established to provide a commitment to preserve and to enhance the special character or appearance of an area. These areas are protected by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and earlier legislation.

The protection regime recognises that the special character of these areas does not come from the quality of their buildings alone. The historic layout of roads, paths and boundaries; characteristic building and paving materials; a particular 'mix' of building uses; public and private spaces, such as gardens, parks and greens; trees and street furniture, which contribute to particular views - all these and more are important. Conservation areas give broader protection than the listing of individual buildings: all the features, listed or otherwise, within the area, are recognised as part of its character.

Within a conservation area the local authority has extra controls over:

- demolition
- minor developments
- the protection of trees

**Figure 3-7 Conservation Areas within Cookham**



Some of the means by which local authorities can enhance the appearance of conservation areas are:

- preparing special development briefs for sites they identify as detracting from the character or appearance of the area;
- ensuring that new buildings harmonize with or complement their neighbours in scale, style and use of materials;
- making environmental improvements, for example by reinstating historic paving materials, sympathetic landscaping and planting, or removing unsightly elements such as hoardings;
- integrating road signs and markings as far as possible with the character of the street;
- controlling the position and design of advertisements and shop signs;
- ensuring that traffic safety and control measures harmonize with the landscape.

Within the Royal Borough's Adopted Local Plan, development in Conservation Areas is guided by Policies CA1 to CA6 (to be superseded by CS12 in the Core Strategy). The existing policies provide for:

1. *Applications for new buildings to be submitted with full details of landscaping, materials and advertisements and other relevant information so that the full impact of the proposal can be assessed including access arrangements.*
2. *Applications for demolition are to be accompanied by details of the replacement development scheme and will where appropriate, control the timing of demolition by condition.*
3. *RBWM to:*
  1. *Require that any development will enhance or preserve the character or appearance of the area*
  2. *Require the retention of any building and the protection of views that contribute to the distinctive character of the Conservation Area*
  3. *Require proposals for new buildings and extensions or alterations to existing buildings to be of a high design standard and sympathetic in terms of siting, proportion, scale, height, form, materials and detailing to adjacent buildings and the character of the area in general*
  4. *Not permit the use of inappropriate synthetic materials and require the use of traditional materials for windows, doors, shopfronts, canopies, fascias and rainwater goods*

5. *Require changes of use to be sympathetic to the character of both the building and the overall Conservation Area and not to lead to an undesirable intensification of activities in the area*
6. *Not grant permissions on sites which form important open spaces within the conservation area or sites which by their openness form part of the essential character of the conservation area*
7. *Require the retention of all significant walls, fences and hedges.*

Conservation Areas are also provided with additional protection to their character under Policies: CA3 (original architectural features), CA4 (environmental improvements and management of conservation areas), CA5 (street furniture) and CA6 (car parking in conservation areas).

Owners of property in a Conservation Area, should comply with the normal planning controls which affect everyone else but additionally extra controls also apply – for example, written authority is required for the following (this is not a definitive listing):

- Demolishing buildings larger than 115 cubic metres in volume. This can include some garden walls.
- Making additions and alterations to the roof of a house (including dormers)
- Cladding the outside of a house with stone, timber, tiles or any synthetic/ imitation material
- Installing satellite dishes on the front of the building
- Cutting down, lopping or topping most trees

The regulations for house extensions, garden building and advertisements are also different in Conservation Areas.

As can be seen, there is less emphasis on preventing development in Conservation Areas than on ensuring that development is appropriate to the local character and that opportunities are taken to enhance the appearance of the area. New Policy CS12 is much less prescriptive than the existing arrangements and it is to be hoped that the promised supporting policies will provide more detailed protection consistent with the existing policies.

During preparation of the Cookham Plan, no strong case was identified to change the boundaries of the existing Conservation Areas (although we would not object if other working groups wished to bring forward cases

based on traffic and parking issues or nature conservation / environmental grounds).

We have identified a number of sites within the Cookham High Street Conservation Area where past developments do not appear to have complied with the spirit of the policies and where there is a case for a special development brief to be prepared in readiness for any future development. These sites could include: Barnside, Church Farm Autos and The Forge garages; The Peking Inn; The Fire Station and restaurant sites – particularly where these generate traffic and parking problems, noise and strong smells which detract from the nature of the Conservation Area.

### **3.6.3 Areas of Special Landscape Importance**

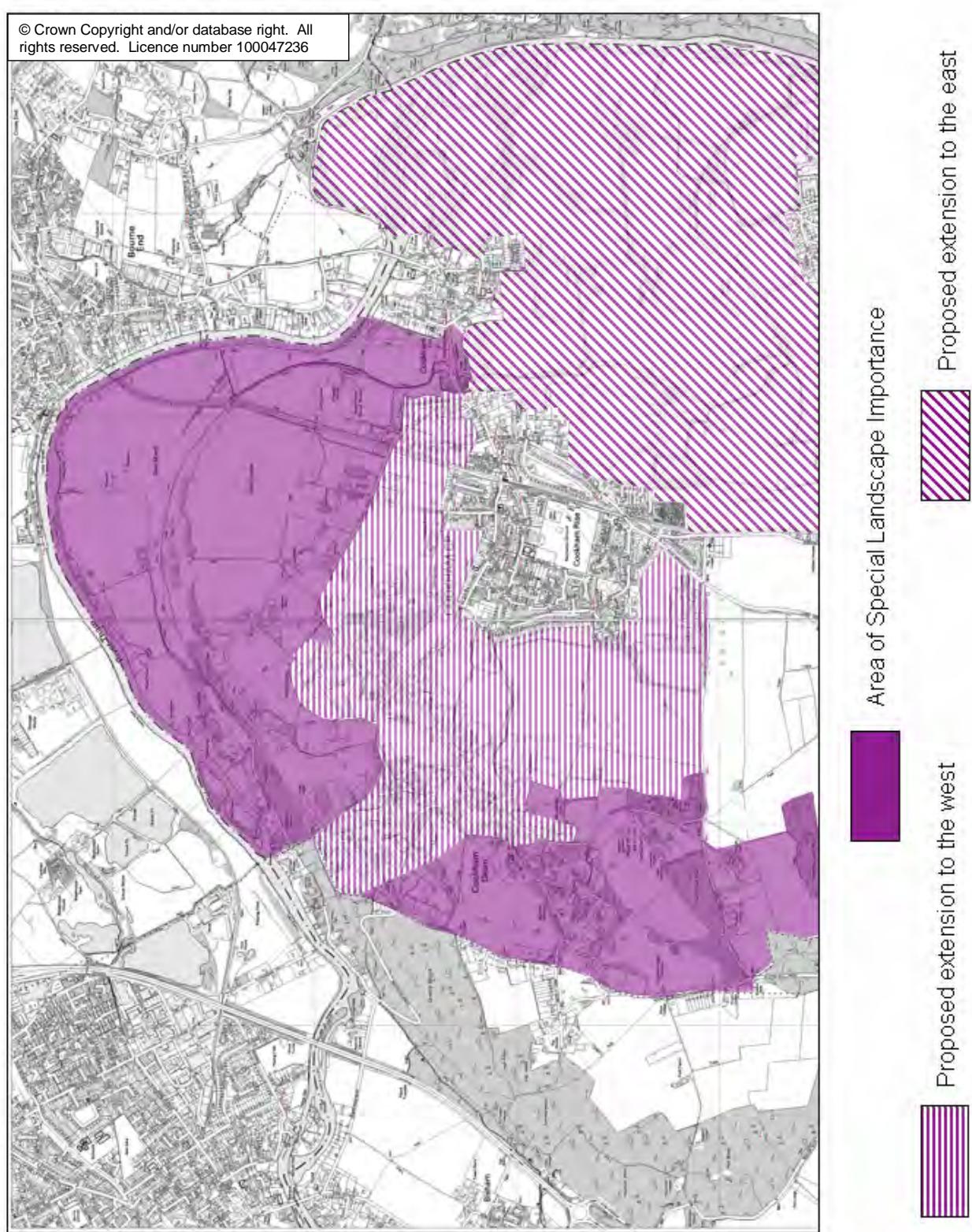
The objective of this designation is to ‘protect and enhance valued landscapes, preserve and enhance existing wildlife habitats and provide opportunities to create new areas of nature conservation interest, in both rural and urban areas’. It is also intended to ‘maintain and enhance the level of tree and hedgerow cover within the Borough and to promote opportunities for environmental education within the Borough and to ensure that new development maintains and enhances the quality of the natural environment’

Policy N1 states that:

*Within the areas of Special Landscape Importance as shown on the proposals maps (see Figure 3-8), land uses and development which would detract from the special qualities of that landscape will not be permitted. The Borough Council will in particular resist proposals that would:*

1. *Adversely affect both long distance and local views within these areas;*

**Figure 3-8 Areas of Special Landscape Importance within Cookham**



2. *Result in the loss of tree cover and hedgerows or adversely affect the ecological value of the area;*
3. *Adversely affect formal landscape features and their settings.*

*Where development is permitted, special care will be taken to ensure its siting, scale, height, design and materials respect the surrounding landscape. extensive landscaping of any new development will also be required.*

The currently designated areas focus on undeveloped chalk hill land and we consider that this designation should be extended to much of the land around Cookham in order to provide enhanced protection for the important views from the village as well as those from further afield (see Figure 3-8). In particular, it should be extended to include:

1. All Green Belt land within Cookham to the east of the Railway (there may be a case for the southern boundary to extend to the full extent of the Green Belt in this area). This would enhance the protection of the important landscapes around Widbrook, Strand Water and White Place Farm. (Refer to the report of the Environment and Land Working Group which additionally considers nature conservation issues in these areas).
2. All Green Belt land within Cookham to the west of the railway and to the north of Long Lane (again, there may be a case for extending the area to include all Green Belt in this area to protect the views from Cliveden and from North Maidenhead).

Policy N1 will be superseded by the very general Policy CS7 in the Core Strategy. It is vital that the promised detailed supporting policies maintain similar levels of protection to those existing at present.

### **3.6.4 Land Important to the Setting of the Thames**

The stretch of the Thames which forms Cookham's northern and eastern boundaries is recognised as being one of the most picturesque sections of this world famous river. The importance of protecting the setting of the river is recognised in RBWM's Policy N2 which states:

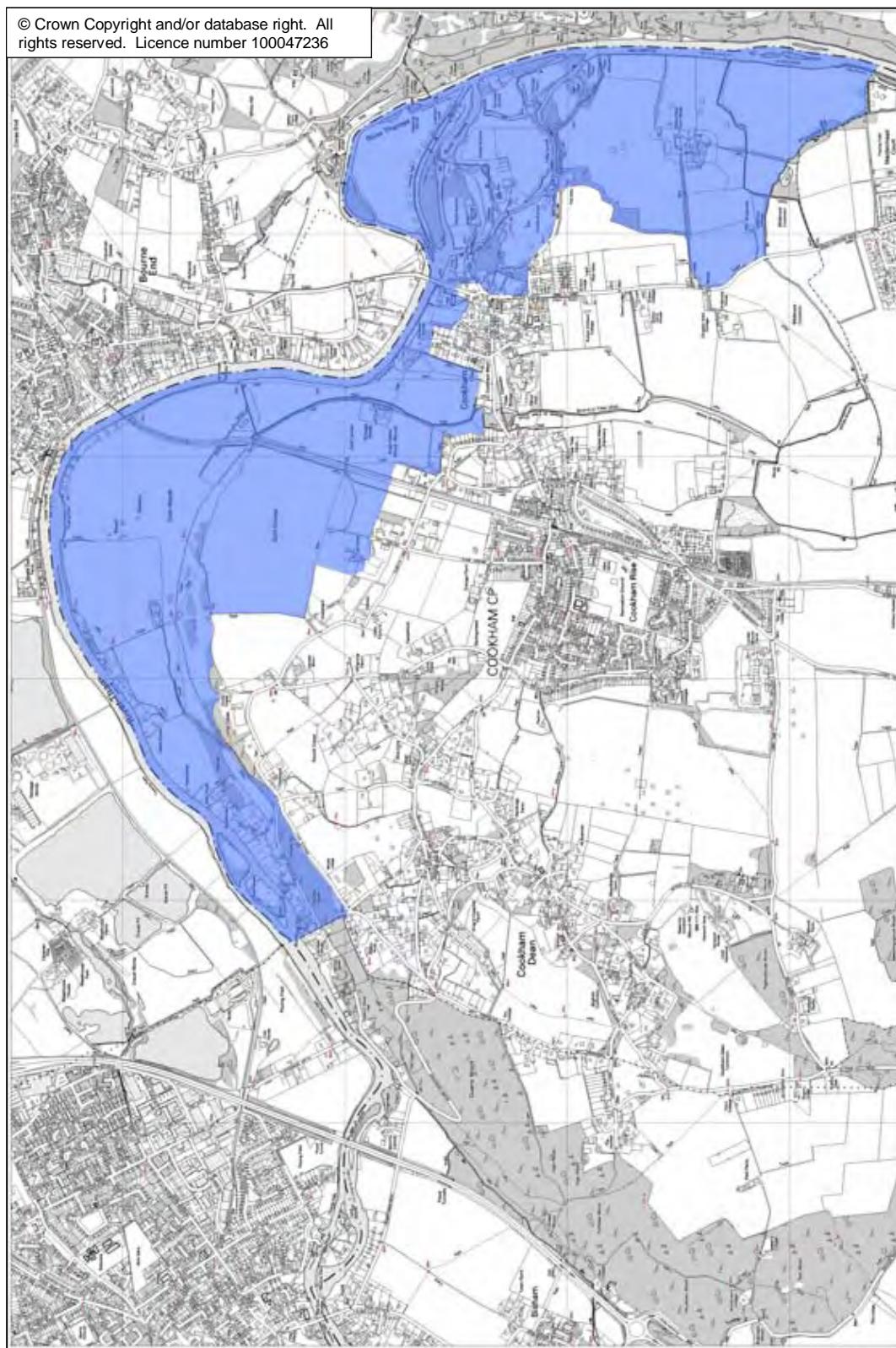
*The Borough Council will conserve and enhance the setting of the Thames, as defined on the proposals maps (see Figure 3-9) and will not permit development which would adversely affect the character and*

*setting of the river in both urban and rural locations. Proposed development will be required to meet the following criteria:*

1. *the character, height, scale and bulk of the development respects the water frontage together with adjoining development and land uses;*
2. *the protection of important views of and from the river;*
3. *the retention of existing waterside buildings where these are considered to be of merit, especially traditional boatyards;*
4. *the retention of tree-cover and the conservation of the ecological value of the area, particularly the retention of vulnerable meadow-land;*
5. *existing public access should be retained and, in appropriate locations, the provision of new public access will be sought.*

We consider that this important protection should be retained and strictly enforced. Unfortunately, Policy CS8 in the draft Core Strategy is less prescriptive than N2 and will require detailed supporting policies in order to have a similar effect.

**Figure 3-9 Land important to the Setting of the Thames within Cookham**



### **3.6.5 Flood Plain**

Flood risks to Cookham are considered in more detail in Section 7 of this report. The problem is recognised by RBWM in Policy F1. This provides that:

*Within the area liable to flood as shown on the proposals maps, or within other areas subject to flooding, development will not be permitted for new residential or non-residential development, including extensions in excess of 30 square metres, unless it can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Borough Council, that the proposal would not of itself, or cumulatively in conjunction with other development:*

1. *impede the flow of floodwater; or*
2. *reduce the capacity of the flood plain to store flood water; or*
3. *increase the number of people or properties at risk from flooding.*

Notwithstanding this policy, there have been a number of large scale developments within the Flood Plain in recent years. These include extensions to the Chartered Institute of Marketing and the new conference facility at the Odney Club.

Until such time as Cookham has the benefit of a comprehensive and effective flood relief scheme, we consider that this policy should remain unchanged and should be strictly enforced.

At the time of writing, the extent of land classified by RBWM as being in the Flood Plain is not published. Supplementary guidance on the interpretation of Policy F1 was adopted by RBWM on 27 May 2004 based on revised flood risk maps issued by the Environment Agency following completion of the Maidenhead, Windsor & Eton Flood Alleviation Scheme<sup>(3.7)</sup>. Following investigations into the flooding in 2003, the status of these maps changed and the Borough withdrew the maps from the guidance document. At the time of writing, it is understood that the areas subject to Policy F1 are broadly as shown in Figure 7-6.

The new Policy CS10 in the Core Strategy provides a more risk based approach assessing development proposals.

### **3.6.6 Rural Communities**

All of Cookham is designated as a 'Rural Community' and so is covered by Policy CS3 which states that rural communities will be sustained by:

1. *Requiring any new development to be of a scale and form which respects the distinctiveness of rural settlements and the landscape*

2. *Ensuring new development is designed to be safe and accessible to the whole community*
3. *Supporting initiatives which preserve the range of rural community facilities and enable the rural community to become more self sufficient*
4. *Ensuring new development is concentrated in or near local service centres*
5. *Identifying opportunities for affordable housing to meet local needs as outlined in Policy CS19*
6. *Facilitating appropriate diversification of the rural economy*
7. *Supporting rural transport initiatives*
8. *Protecting the best and most versatile agricultural land from development which would irreversibly prevent its use for agriculture except where other sustainability considerations strongly suggest otherwise.*

### **3.6.7 Other Restrictions**

In the previous sections, we have considered the main planning policies which affect the size, structure and shape of Cookham. In addition to these, there is a wide range of ancillary policies covering matters such as Tree Preservation Orders, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and Wildlife Heritage Sites which are applicable to Cookham.

The impact and importance of these measures is considered in more detail in the Environment and Land Working Group's report but we recognise and endorse their continued importance to maintaining the special characteristics of Cookham.

## **3.7 Adjacent Planning Authorities**

Our review of planning within Cookham has focussed on those policies which are directly applicable in the area of the Village – i.e. those set by RBWM. We must remember that Cookham is bounded on two sides by other authorities and that, with the Thames forming the boundary between districts, our neighbours in Wycombe and South Bucks have a strong role in shaping our surroundings.

Wycombe District Council sets planning policy for the north bank of the Thames from west of Cookham along to Hedsor Water (just upstream from its confluence with Cookham Lock Cut). Policy is set out in the council's adopted

plan<sup>(3.9)</sup> and the land designations are similar to those used by RBWM. In particular:

- All apart from Bourne End and Riversdale is classified as Green Belt.
- Abbotsbrook and Riversdale are designated as Conservation Areas.
- Virtually all of the river bank and the land for some distance behind it is classified as Flood Plain.
- Much of the river bank south of the Marlow Branch Line and the fields north of Sashes Island are classed as an Area of Attractive Landscape.
- The grounds of Hedsor Park are classified as Parks and Gardens of Historic Interest.

This would generally appear to provide a good level of protection and should be retained and enforced. The exceptional areas are the sewage works south of Little Marlow which is classed as a 'Major Developed Site within the Green Belt' and so is potentially able to be developed (albeit on a similar scale) under Policy GB9 and the hotel site to the east of the Marlow by-pass, any expansion of which should be subject to the normal Green Belt and Flood Plain restrictions.

South Bucks District covers the eastern boundary of Cookham from Hedsor Water to Maidenhead and, as would be expected, has applied strong protective measures to the eastern banks of Cliveden Reach. Their Local Plan<sup>(3.10)</sup> classifies the land between the river and the crest of the hill as:

- Area of Attractive Landscape
- Green Belt
- River Thames Setting
- Historic Park and Gardens.

From Cookham's point of view, this is most welcome and should be continued and strongly enforced.

### **3.8 Planning Process and Enforcement**

As we have described above, Cookham's special character is generally well protected by existing planning policies but there have been a number of issues raised in our consultation which give concern about how effective their coverage and enforcement is. These include:

- Housing developments within the Green Belt on Winter Hill.
- Extensive alterations and extensions to the Chartered Institute of Marketing's premises at Moor Hall in the Green Belt and Flood Plain.
- Construction of a large conference centre at the Odney Club within the Conservation Area, Setting of the Thames and Flood Plain.
- Extension to Charlescote House in the High Street in the Conservation Area and the area covered by Policies CKM1 and CKM4.

These examples show that local people cannot rely on existing policies to prevent development in protected areas. This can only be done where there is good visibility of applications and where local people and organisations such as the Cookham Society challenge proposals and hold officers accountable for decisions made and councillors accountable for providing and managing a suitable level of planning officers. Coupled with this is a need for rapid and effective enforcement action when work is undertaken without permission or not in accordance with what was approved.

Another major planning issue raised during consultation involves increases in the density of development (including the loss of gardens to infill development and the redevelopment of sites such as the former Colin Hatch yard to higher densities) which existing policies seem unable to prevent despite local residents' concerns. There seems to be a strong case for additional measures such as designating garden areas as 'Important Urban Open Space' or an ability to justify lower densities than those set by government policy where local conditions dictate. It is to be hoped that pressure can be brought to bear on these matters through development of the LDF and a Village Design Statement (see below).

The protection that Conservation Areas receive vary from council to council. In a large part it will depend on the size of the workforce and funding of the local department. RBWM offer the following services for conservation:

- maintaining records of listed buildings, conservation areas, register of Historic Parks and Gardens and sites scheduled as Ancient Monuments;
- providing specialist advice on listed buildings and buildings in conservation areas;
- production of Conservation Area Appraisals;
- leaflets with further details in regard to listed buildings, conservation areas and the grant scheme are available from the Conservation team.

Enforcing conservation requirements relies on the planning and planning enforcement officers keeping a watchful eye on developments or the public informing the department of changes or alterations in the area. With 27 conservation areas in the borough much of the reporting must come from the public.

### **3.9 Village Design Statement and Local Planning Guidance**

As stated above, we strongly hope that the matters covered by the Cookham Plan in general and this report in particular will influence RBWM in finalising and implementing the new Local Design Framework.

There is provision within the LDF for Village Design Statements (VDSs) to be formally adopted as supplementary planning guidance provided that they are based on widespread consultation and are suitably formatted. The preparation of a VDS is beyond the scope of the Cookham Plan but we strongly recommend that steps are taken to build on our work by creating a VDS for Cookham which is consistent with the Cookham Plan and ensuring that it is adopted by the Borough Council.

### **3.10 Key Findings**

Our key findings from the review of Town Planning related matters are set out below. These are based on a combination of our reviews of planning policies and the common themes which emerged from the consultation process and questionnaire.

- Cookham is special because of its semi-rural setting, mixture of building types and uses. This is what makes it attractive to most residents and it is important that this balance should be maintained.
- Cookham does not have the space to support any significant level of development. This means that it is not possible to meet people's aspirations for more affordable homes other than through small scale developments. See Appendix 4 for an illustration of this point.
- Green Belt Policy is vital and should be supported. There should be no reduction in the areas classified as Green Belt and the Poundfield site should be returned to Green Belt in the new Local Development Framework (see Figure 3-10). This proposal excludes the field next to the Nursery School which may be suitable for appropriate development for community related schemes.

- To support enforcement of Green Belt Policy, the boundaries of Cookham Village and Cookham Rise should be defined as the edge of the Green Belt.
- There is a belief that better visibility and enforcement of planning applications and decisions is needed. This needs more rapid and proactive communication between RBWM and local people and better coordination and consultation between locals and groups such as the Cookham Society and Parish Council.
- The RBWM should take the findings of the Cookham Plan and its supporting working group reports into account in finalising the Local Development Framework and updating the Proposals Map and other supporting documents.
- Careful attention should be paid to the development of the LDF and its supporting policies. The impression from the current draft is that the core policies are generally less prescriptive than the current Local Plan and it is vital for Cookham that this should be addressed and there is no weakening of the current protection which we enjoy. Full and active consultation with local people must be undertaken during the development of the LDF.
- A Village Design Statement should be produced as a matter of urgency. The format and timing of this should be agreed with RBWM to facilitate its early adoption as Supplementary Planning Guidance.
- In conjunction with preparation of the Village Design Statement and in consultation with RBWM, Design statements should be developed for the Conservation Area Sites for CA sites listed in section 3.6.2.
- Areas of Special Landscape Importance should be extended as shown in **Figure 3-8** to cover (at least):
  - a. All Green Belt land to the east of the Maidenhead to Cookham railway line (to support the setting of the Area of Attractive Landscape on the east bank of the Thames and the undeveloped flood plain land south of Cookham).
  - b. All Green Belt land west of the Maidenhead to Cookham railway line and north of Long Lane (including Poundfield (to protect the setting of Cookham Dean and the view of the ridgeline from Maidenhead and Cookham Rise).

- It is important to monitor any changes to and enforcement of planning policy in Wycombe District and South Bucks District.

**Figure 3-10 Proposed Changes to Green Belt at Poundfield**



### 3.11 Action Plan

Ref	Proposal	Purpose	Responsibility	Timescales	What needs to be done
1.	Re-classify Poundfield site as Green Belt (excluding the field next to the Nursery School)	Protection of an important open space within the Village.  Reducing the likelihood of a large development overloading road infrastructure.	Cookham Parish Council  The Cookham Society	As soon as possible within the timescales for development of the Local Development Framework	Make representations to RBWM.
2.	Define the settlement boundaries of Cookham Village and Cookham Rise	To reduce the risk of the lack of defined boundaries being used to justify infilling in Green Belt sites.	Cookham Parish Council  The Cookham Society	As soon as possible within the timescales for development of the Local Development Framework	Make representations to RBWM.

Ref	Proposal	Purpose	Responsibility	Timescales	What needs to be done
3.	Identify and implement improvements to the communication, review and (where appropriate) opposition of, planning applications.  Establish arrangements to monitor planning activity in adjacent authorities.	To alleviate concerns about inappropriate development	The Cookham Society (or other similar body if they are unable to expand their role)	12 months from the date of this report.	Review existing arrangements, consult interested parties and set up new local processes.
4.	Review the Cookham Plan and take account of its findings and recommendations in development of the Local Development Framework.	To ensure that the Framework reflects local people's views.	RBWM	As soon as possible within the timescales for development of the Local Development Framework	Amend the LDF as necessary.
5.	Review the emerging policies which form and support the Local Development Framework to ensure that Cookham continues to enjoy an appropriate level of protection.	To ensure that the current, general policies set out in the draft LDF are developed in the interests of Cookham so far as is possible.	The Cookham Society (or other similar body if they are unable to expand their role)	On going – reviews need to be completed to the timescales set by RBWM.	Respond to all adverse proposed policies.
6.	Produce a Village Design Statement and obtain its adoption as Supplementary Planning Guidance.	To ensure that local planning policy and decision making better reflects the needs of Cookham and its residents.	The Cookham Society (or other similar body if they are unable to expand their role)	As soon as possible within the timescales for development of the Local Development Framework	Identify structure of VDS, undertake consultation, draft the VDS and negotiate with RBWM to ensure it is adopted.
7.	Develop design statements for sites within the Conservation areas identified in section 3.6.2 and during preparation of the VDS.	To ensure that any future development of such sites is appropriate and alleviates their detrimental effect on the Conservation Areas.	The Cookham Society (or other similar body if they are unable to expand their role)	In parallel with the VDS unless development proposals are brought forward earlier.	Consult and produce guidelines for appropriate improvements.

Ref	Proposal	Purpose	Responsibility	Timescales	What needs to be done
8.	Extend the areas of Special Landscape Importance	To improve protection of the countryside around Cookham and to support protection of the Area of Attractive Landscape on the East bank of the Thames.	RBWM	As soon as possible within the timescales for development of the Local Development Framework	Consult and revise the boundaries on the Proposals Map.

## **4 BUILDING QUALITY**

### **4.1 Remit**

*Consider the quality of development and how to identify and encourage good design, the right mix of housing types and sustainable development.*

### **4.2 How to define Building Quality?**

In addressing this issue, the Working Group was faced with a problem: how to adjudicate on building quality when so many aspects are a matter of personal taste? During consultation, there were several instances of recent developments being cited as being good to some people and bad to others. Perhaps the most extreme example was the development on the old Dean Farm garage site at Cookham Dean Bottom which was mentioned by many people as model for the sort of good quality development that they would like to see more of despite having been opposed and delayed by the planning system.

To attempt to provide guidance on this matter, we have considered different aspects of overall quality.

### **4.3 Building Control**

Most developments require building control approval to confirm that they will be constructed to appropriate standards of insulation, strength, safety, access etc and certain developments also need to meet additional licensing requirements e.g. for alcohol sales, entertainment etc.

### **4.4 Quality of Construction**

Almost all construction work is subject to Building Regulations and is inspected and approved by RBWM's building control officers. The regulations set minimum standards for matters such as foundations, strength of structures, insulation and resistance to fire. This ensures that good minimum standards are set for new buildings and significant alterations.

Older buildings (and there are many in Cookham) were not constructed to modern standards. Whilst this is not a concern for most of the matters covered by the regulations, it is likely that many older properties are poorly insulated by modern standards. We consider this issue in more detail below.

### **4.5 Design Quality and the Appearance of Buildings**

A large part of Cookham's character (certainly in Cookham Dean and Cookham Village) is derived from the buildings in the Conservation Areas. It is very important to the local community that these historical buildings are not lost or

destroyed and that any new ones (in any part of Cookham) add to, and fit in with the surrounding environment. To try to ensure that development is appropriate, the draft Core Strategy (see section 3.5) includes Policy CS 13 - Achieving Quality Buildings and Spaces. This is intended to ensure that all development is of high quality in design and states that development should:

1. *Have a site coverage, layout and access, scale, mass, bulk, height, density, landscape, materials and colour that respects the characteristics of neighbouring properties and the wider area and reinforces local distinctiveness;*
2. *Be visually attractive from all angles through good architecture and the use of landscape;*
3. *Be durable and adaptable;*
4. *Respect the established pattern of development and landscape character in the wider area;*
5. *Protect, and where appropriate enhance, existing tree cover and other important areas of vegetation, wildlife habitats and other spaces, providing a setting that will allow features to mature;*
6. *Provide open spaces and ancillary facilities appropriate to the function of the use;*
7. *Provide high quality environments for future users, whilst not adversely affecting the privacy and amenity of nearby properties;*
8. *Incorporate appropriate crime prevention measures that are in keeping with the location to ensure the development is safe for occupiers and passers-by;*
9. *Incorporate the highest practical levels of sustainable design and construction.*

If approved and strictly enforced, it is to be hoped that this policy will provide a strong lead in ensuring that future developments in Cookham are of an appropriate quality. It is encouraging that the draft policy guidance states that:

*'The Council will refuse design which is inappropriate in its context, or which fails to take opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions'.*

## **4.6 Energy Efficiency**

It is now widely acknowledged that global warming is happening and that significant reductions in carbon emissions are required to mitigate its effects. This is an area where energy efficiency in buildings has an important role to play and where there is significant scope to improve the quality of insulation and efficiency in both new and existing structures.

A report prepared for Parliament<sup>(4.1)</sup> estimated that household energy consumption represented more than 25% of the UK's total energy usage with over a third of that energy being wasted. Much of this is due to inefficient use of lighting and other electrical equipment but insulation is also a very significant factor.

According to British Gas estimates<sup>(4.2)</sup>, average domestic carbon dioxide emissions in the South East are 5.8 tonnes per annum (tpa). There is considerable variation within this total and household sizes are likely to play a role. Areas similar in nature and prosperity to Cookham show higher emissions – for example:

Chilterns	7.4t pa
Oxfordshire	7.4t pa
Reading	6.1t pa
<b>Average</b>	<b>7.0t pa</b>

If we assume that Cookham's dwellings emit an average of 7t pa, this equates to a total of 16,576 tonnes per annum across Cookham's 2,368 dwellings. Applying the government's estimate of efficiency to this suggests that approximately 5,500 tonnes per annum is being wasted.

The parliamentary paper suggested that, whilst upgrading domestic insulation to the highest standards may not be cost efficient at current energy prices, it could save approximately 35% of emissions.

Cookham has a good history of embracing 'green' initiatives and a village wide project to identify energy inefficiency and to improve household insulation and reduce other energy waste could stimulate significant savings (especially if combined with initiatives to reduce car use). Such an approach should be supported by Core Strategy policy CS11 (Renewable Energy)

## **4.7 Key Findings**

- Quality of construction is adequately covered by existing Building Regulations.
- The quality of design and the appearance of buildings in Cookham plays a very important part in defining the character and special qualities of the village. It is to be hoped that the new LDF will strengthen controls over future developments.
- There appears to be considerable scope to improve the quality of buildings in terms of energy efficiency. A coordinated village wide initiative to measure energy use and to promote efficiencies could provide a strong local contribution to combating climate change.

## **4.8 Action Plan**

Ref	Proposal	Purpose	Responsibility	Timescales	What needs to be done
2.	Establish village wide project to improve energy efficiency	Reduce Cookham's CO2 emissions by 5,000 tonnes per annum by 2012	Steering Group to be established	Set up by end 2007	Identify people to take this forward  Obtain funding  Publish information and encourage participation  Measure effects

## **5 INFRASTRUCTURE**

### **5.1 Remit**

*Review the adequacy of existing infrastructure and identify how this may affect or constrain development. The review is to be based upon information about parking, public transport and traffic issues provided by the Traffic and Transport group and information about the capacity of schools, medical and similar facilities provided by the People and Places group.*

In addition, we have supplemented this with information obtained directly from service providers and RBWM.

### **5.2 Services**

#### **5.2.1 Electricity**

Southern Electric provide and maintain the high voltage network serving the Cookhams. It is viewed as one area rather than 3 discrete sub areas. They describe the network in this area as already "Well loaded". This means that Infill developments of small numbers of houses can be coped with by the existing network. Larger developments of 50 to 100 houses however would probably require reinforcement of the network (a smaller development of 20-30 houses would depend on each case).

Reinforcement for 50-100 houses would almost certainly require a new substation at approx £50,000 and new cabling and this would have to be paid by the developer. The costs for connection charged by Southern electric apparently add up to about £1,000 per house on average.

Southern Electric have ongoing plans to put in new cabling in Cookham, this being partly to replace a section of problematic overhead cabling between Dane's Moor and Wildebrook Road rather than providing genuinely new capacity.

It is worth noting that overhead cabling has been responsible for causing outages in the Cookham area and underground cabling for the whole network area would be very desirable.

#### **5.2.2 Gas**

National Grid (formerly Transco) are responsible for the gas pipe network supplying Cookham. Transco regard the supply to the Cookhams to be complete and have no particular issues with future developments in principle. As with electricity, each new development has to be reviewed

by National Grid and there will be connection costs to join the main network.

There are several properties in Cookham Dean which are not connected to the main network and use electricity, oil fired heating or calor gas. According to Transco, Cookham Dean is well served by Gas mains pipes and they consider the coverage typical for that size of village. They concede that a few more isolated houses may be a little further from a mains pipe than others and that connection might cost a little more but that connection certainly would be possible.

### **5.2.3 Water and Sewerage**

Thames Water provide sewerage to the Cookhams while provision of drinking water is by South East Water.

There is no provision for sewage treatment in the Cookham area. This is now conducted at the main Maidenhead Stafferton Way works since decommissioning of the old Winter Hill station.

Thames Water advise that, once a proposed development has been given planning permission, the developers should contact both Thames Water and South East Water and ask to be connected to their infrastructure. Before the site is connected the companies will conduct a thorough investigation to see if the current water mains and sewerage systems are adequate. If the services need improvement, or new supplies need to be constructed, this will all be at the developer's expense, the cost of which will depend on the work that needs to be done.

South East Water say that, while there is a connection cost for all new dwellings and other developments, they believe they have plenty of capacity to cope with new developments. They make no mention of how this squares with the water shortages in the form of hosepipe bans Cookham and the surrounding areas have been subject to in recent years.

Residents report that there can be problems in the Village High Street with flooding despite the presence of storm drains. There can also be occasional problems with sewer drains blocking due to outputs from houses and local restaurants in the area. There is a desire for this to be investigated and resolved.

Despite recent extensions to foul sewerage in Cookham Dean, a number of residents reported in their questionnaire responses that they were still unable to connect to mains drainage. The economics of further extending mains drainage should be investigated.

#### **5.2.4 Telecommunications**

The nearest British Telecommunications exchange can be found in Bourne End. Standard fees are paid to connect new developments and properties to the overhead landlines but BT do not foresee there being any particular problems with network capacity for future developments.

The underground cable network (for TV and telecoms) does not reach Cookham. The network currently stops at the railway bridge North of Maidenhead and cable companies report that there are no plans to extend the network in the foreseeable future.

Current broadband internet speeds achievable in the Cookham area are understood to be up to 3MB. This is determined by the distance to the exchange at Bourne End and the nature of the current wire network. It would be desirable if this could be raised to 8-10MB across the Cookhams but BT report that they have no plans in the immediate future to upgrade the exchange or wiring to enable this.

#### **5.2.5 Section 106 contributions**

These are contributions that local authorities can ask for from a developer before planning permission is granted. It is a financial contribution towards local infrastructure; schools, libraries etc to compensate for the extra strain on existing services likely to be caused by the development. These payments were introduced in the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act. They are widely used by many boroughs including RBWM but are not mandatory.

The types of contribution that RBWM ask for and when they apply is laid out in a supplementary planning document<sup>(5.1)</sup> and cover:

- Affordable housing
- Transportation and highways
- Education
- Community facilities
- Library services
- Recreation and leisure

- Town management and improvement
- Economic development
- Landscaping and biodiversity
- Air quality
- Waste disposal
- Archaeology
- Flood risk management & drainage
- Parish projects

At the moment these benefits are not always received by the parish in which the development will occur with the money going into the overall RBWM pot. In the future, the Parish Council and others should put as much pressure as possible on RBWM for 106 monies from developments in Cookham to be spent on facilities in Cookham.

#### **5.2.6 Renewable Energy**

RBWM encourages development of renewable energy sources by providing details of various current initiatives<sup>(5.2)</sup>. This supports the government's stated policy for 10% of Britain's energy to be from renewable sources by 2015.

But are there any examples of renewable or other 'green' energy projects being carried out in the borough?

- There are plans to install water driven turbines in the lower tiers at Romney Lock, on the River Thames near Windsor. The plan is initially supported by a European Union grant and will provide an appreciable portion of the power being used by Windsor Castle. It should be investigated whether such a system of turbines might also be feasible to install in Cookham Weir (possibly in connection with the capacity increases referred to in Section 7).
- Maidenhead and District Housing Association have built the Greenfields sustainable housing development using several of these principles which use 50% less energy and 30% less water than regular housing.
- Other renewable projects in the area include; Solar water heating in Windsor Castle, a straw burning boiler operating in Hurley and a Ground source heat pump at Hurley Canoe club.

We currently do not know of any significant green energy projects specifically being planned for or going ahead in the Cookhams. There are government grants available for improved home energy efficiency and also for use of renewable technologies including: solar panels and water heating, wind turbines, hydropower and bioenergy. There is therefore considerable scope for local action and this could be combined with a wider initiative to reduce carbon emissions – see Section 4.

### **5.3 Schools and Medical Facilities**

Please refer to the People and Places Working Group report for full details of this subject.

#### **Summary of Schools feedback**

- Cookham's schools and nurseries are operating at or very close to full capacity already. It should be noted, however that an appreciable proportion of the pupils come from outside the Cookhams (reportedly more than 40%). Many report that car parking is inadequate and represents a major issue. These two factors combine to make transport problems near many of the establishments. Most report that they would have limited or no scope to expand buildings or car parking so their maximum numbers are effectively restrained.
- The overall conclusion regarding future development is that schools and nurseries would not be able to absorb the pupils from any significant new developments in or close to the Cookham area without removing an equivalent number of pupils from outside the village.

#### **Cookham Medical Centre:**

- The Medical Centre serves approximately 8,300 local residents (NB this includes a significant number of patients from outside the Cookham Parish area where the population is approximately 5,500). It serves significantly more elderly than the average doctors' surgery around the country.
- The Medical Centre considers car parking to be adequate most of the time, only being a problem when Pinder Hall (whose patrons they officially allow to share the car park) is in use. This is not fully born out by the questionnaire in which a number of respondents raised ease of parking and access across Lower Road as being problematical.
- There are plans for two extra administration rooms upstairs but this is to relieve pressure on current facilities and better serve existing patients rather than for expansion in patient numbers. There are no plans to expand further and the current site is restricted. However Medical Centre

management also stress that their contract states they must have an open list for new patients.

#### **5.4 Overall comment on Services and Facilities**

Services such as sewerage, drainage, and power are well used in the Cookham area. Any substantial increase in population would necessitate extra provision of these utilities but this is not likely to be a constraint on development.

It is clear that the schools and medical facilities are operating at or very near their capacity but that much of that capacity is taken up by people from outside the Cookhams. It also seems impossible to increase capacity at most of them without substantial investment in new land and/or buildings. Any substantial new housing developments and subsequent increases in local population would therefore require extra local provision of school, medical and social infrastructure and / or the transfer of current users to new facilities outside Cookham.

#### **5.5 Traffic and Transport issues**

Please see the Traffic and Transport Working Group's report for more detail.

##### **5.5.1 Parking**

###### **Parking Policy and provision:**

Official parking provision policy for new developments was formerly dictated by Government Planning Policy Guidance Note 3 (PPG3) and Planning Policy Guidance note 13 (PPG13)<sup>(5.4)</sup>. These required that any new development must typically have 1.5 parking spaces per dwelling. PPG 3 has now been replaced by Planning Policy Statement 3<sup>(5.3)</sup> and in this no specific figures for parking provision are mentioned. The document states that parking provision should be determined by local authorities and it is not clear if they will continue to apply the old standards or apply ones more specifically tailored to local needs.

###### **Parking in the Cookhams:**

Parking issues are particularly acute in the High Street area of the village and in the Lower Road/Station Parade area of the Rise. There is a severe lack of properly designed car parking in these areas and so "on road" parking is also at a premium. Problems are exacerbated by staff of local businesses also parking on the road when the business does not have its own parking.

Car parking solutions need to be urgently pursued in Cookham and some potential options are suggested in the Traffic and Transport Working Group report.

The severe lack of parking especially in the two areas mentioned makes provision of adequate car parking within planned developments absolutely critical and Parish and Borough councils should have this at the forefront of their minds when reviewing development applications.

### **5.5.2 Congestion**

Congestion can also be severe in Cookham at particular places and times. Particular hotspots include; the Pound through to High Street around rush hours. School and Church Lanes at "School run" times and Station Parade/Lower Road through business hours Monday to Saturday.

Developers are required to provide Traffic movement analyses for a given development by working with the highway authority. The main issue being how many traffic movements will be added to an area by the development.

Clearly any added traffic movements in the congestion hot spots mentioned should be strongly avoided and Parish and Borough Councils should again pay close scrutiny to this when reviewing planning applications.

At present, Cookham's road and parking capacity must be regarded as operating over its reasonable capacity and no developments that add to either traffic congestion or parking problems should be allowed.

### **5.5.3 Public Transport**

Cookham has a relatively poor bus service, main service running between Maidenhead and High Wycombe hourly, but a fairly good local train service which runs between Marlow and Maidenhead hourly with extra rush hour trains running through to Paddington at peak times.

Rail and Bus providers all report that there are no plans to increase frequencies of these services in the foreseeable future and generally see provision of service remaining at current levels. Even if/when Crossrail comes on line it is unlikely to affect the local Marlow to Maidenhead service frequency.

Trains operating at commuter times are always well used and can often be full. Accordingly to Cookham Plan Questionnaire replies of the 11.6% of Cookham residents who work in London about half commute by train. Taken overall over 10% of Cookham residents regularly travel to work by train.

With no increases in provision of local public transport foreseen, any significant developments in the area are likely to further stretch and possibly overload public transport systems at peak times. This means that residents will continue to rely on a high level of car use and this must be recognised in setting planning policy and assessing individual proposals.

## 5.6 Key Findings

- Utilities are well provided for and used in the area and while they do not limit development per se, future developments need to ensure that additional capacity is provided.
- Studies should be undertaken into the feasibility of extending mains drainage to all properties in Cookham.
- Telecommunications networks in the area are sub optimal for future increases in internet use and cable networks are non existent. Steps should be taken to encourage service providers to improve the infrastructure.
- Schools and medical facilities in Cookham have no spare capacity and could not easily cope with extra pupils or patients from new developments without significant expansion and investment.
- Section 106 contributions by developers should be spent on local improvements as a priority.
- Parking and congestion are significant problems in particular areas of the Cookhams and scrutiny of development applications in these locations should be rigorous to ensure there is adequate parking provision and no adverse traffic movement impact.
- Parking standards should be carefully considered by RBWM when developing the LDF and local issues should be addressed through the preparation of a the Village Design Statement (see section 3).
- Overall it is concluded that Cookham does not have sufficient capacity in infrastructure to support any large developments. For this reason, only small scale and in-fill developments should be considered in Cookham.

## 5.7 Action Plan

Ref	Proposal	Purpose	Responsibility	Timescales	What needs to be done
6.	Approach Parish Council and RBWM about the possibility of getting a feasibility study done on installation of electricity generating turbines in Cookham Weir (ala Windsor Romney Lock project)	To have a significant flagship renewable energy project in the Parish. Enable Parish and RBWM to meet future government pledges to reduce carbon and increase the use of renewable energy	Parish Council Cookham Society	Q1 2008	Letters lobbying and later will need a full team.
7.	Lobby RBWM so that all Section 106 monies from a given development go back into the Parish where that development is actually occurring Ideally should become written policy	So Cookham gets something back from developments occurring within it	Parish Council and Cookham Society	ASAP	Consistent lobbying; letters, publicising issue on websites
8.	Lobby BT to make exchange/ network changes to enable 8-10 MB Broadband speeds across Cookham	Encourage home working possibly reducing traffic pressure and congestion in Cookham.	Parish Council / Cookham Society Individuals who support idea	Q4 2007	Letters and phone calls to BT
9.	Lobby Cable companies NTL/Virgin Sky etc to extend cable network to Cookham - get it to top of list of places to connect next	Encourage home working again with possible traffic and environmental benefits	Parish Council /Cookham Society Individuals who support idea	Mid 2008	Letters and phone calls to service providers
10.	Undertake feasibility study into providing full mains drainage capacity for Cookham	Provision of modern infrastructure standards	Thames Water	December 2008	Lobbying by Parish Council, RBWM and residents groups.

## **6 MOBILE TELEPHONES**

### **6.1 Remit**

*Consider the issues associated with the siting of mobile telephone masts.*

### **6.2 Background**

Although mobile telephones are now a widely used and important part of life, the siting of base stations and masts provokes great controversy on both health and aesthetic grounds. Mobile telephone companies are required by their government granted licences to achieve specified levels of population coverage (for example 80% of the UK population by December 2007 for 3G networks) and they are given both access to highway authority land and concessions within the planning process to assist them in doing this. The drive for increased coverage coupled with the relative ease of gaining permission means that mast development proposals are a regular and unwelcome feature of life for many people.

Cookham has been subject to a number of proposals over the years and pressure for further installations is likely to continue in the future. In order to address this issue in the plan, we need to start with a clear understanding of how mobile telephones work, current coverage, potential developments, the planning process and factors affecting the choice of sites for masts.

### **6.3 How do mobiles work?**

The All Party Parliamentary Mobile Group considered mobile phone masts in their July 2004 report <sup>(6.1)</sup>. This provides a useful description of how mobile telephone systems work:

*Mobile phones operate on a system of cells, each cell supported by a radio base station, which is a facility that provides transmission and reception for radio systems. Each of the five mobile phone operators divides the UK into thousands of individual geographic areas or 'cells'. The cells overlap at the edges to prevent holes in coverage. There are three types of cell:*

- *macrocells which provide the main structure for the base station network with a range of up to 35 kilometres;*
- *microcells which infill and improve the main network, with a range of up to a few hundred metres; and*
- *picocells which have a much smaller range and are used in busy areas such as inside buildings, airports and shopping centres.*

*The systems are demand-led, and to achieve coverage, each cell has to be provided with a base station, which hands the calls over from one area to*

*another. If they are too far apart, calls are interrupted or dropped when mobile phone users are on the move. Increased usage of mobile phones also results in a higher demand for base stations, as each has a limited capacity, and this can be expanded by the addition of more base stations within macrocells or microcells.*

*Radio base stations are commonly called masts, and although the terms are used interchangeably, they are in fact two different things. Radio base stations are sites that enable mobile phones to work. They can be big or small, and always have transmitters or receivers in a cabin or cabinet connected to antennas nearby. A base station (i.e. transmitters, receivers and antennas) can be mounted on a large mast or tower, on existing buildings, rooftops or in street furniture. There are currently about 40,000 radio base stations in the UK. Strictly speaking, a mast is the freestanding structure which supports antennas at a height where they can transmit and receive radio waves. A mast is typically 15m high and plays no part in itself in the transmission of radio waves.*

*A mobile phone is a low-powered two-way radio, converting human voice and data messages into radio waves. When making a call, the radio signals are transmitted from the mobile phone to the nearest base station. Once a signal reaches a base station it is then transmitted to the main telephone network where it is transferred to the network of the person receiving the call.*

*The cells in a new third generation (3G) network will be smaller because 3G uses a higher radio frequency. These cells also expand and contract in size depending on the number of simultaneous calls being made. For this reason, 3G cells will have to overlap more than the current 2G cells, and although it is anticipated that operators will be able to re-use some of their existing infrastructure, they will also need to develop a substantial number of new sites.*

There are at present 3 main systems in use in Britain. These are:

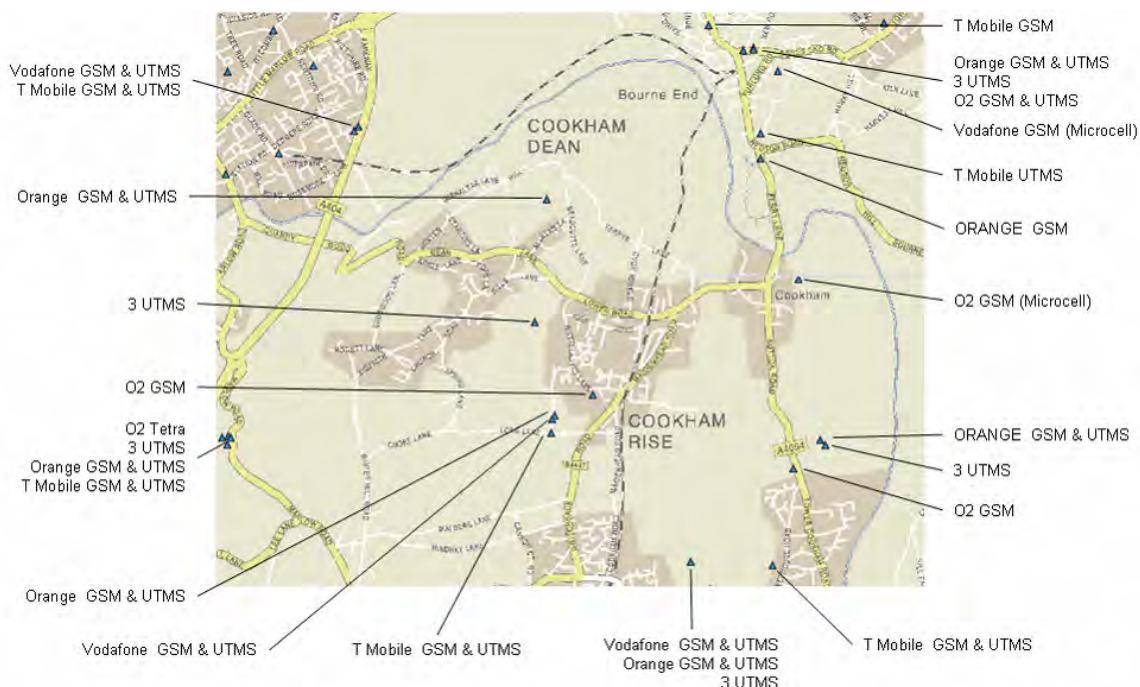
- 3G (technically known as UTMS or Universal Mobile Telecommunications Service) - the latest system which allows video calling and fast access to the internet.
- GSM (Global System for Mobile communications or 2G) - the older digital system on which most mobiles work. 3G phones use GSM when UTMS is not available.
- TETRA (Terrestrial Trunked Radio)- an alternative digital system which covers a range of private networks - e.g. for the emergency services.

## 6.4 Current Coverage

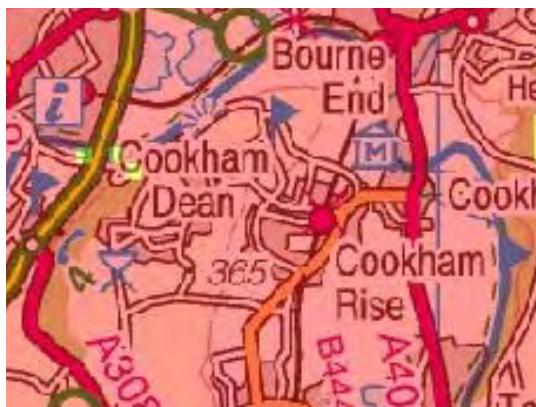
Mobile telephone providers are regulated by OFCOM who provide details of mast locations on their web site at <http://www.sitefinder.ofcom.org.uk/>. Figure 6-1 shows the location of masts around Cookham. The figure includes the positions of masts which service the UTMS (3G), GSM (2G) and TETRA networks.

The mobile telephone companies also produce maps showing their local coverage. These are included in Figure 6-2, Figure 6-3, Figure 6-4, Figure 6-5, Figure 6-6 and Figure 6-7.

**Figure 6-1 Location of Mobile Telephone Masts in and around Cookham February 2007 (Ofcom)**

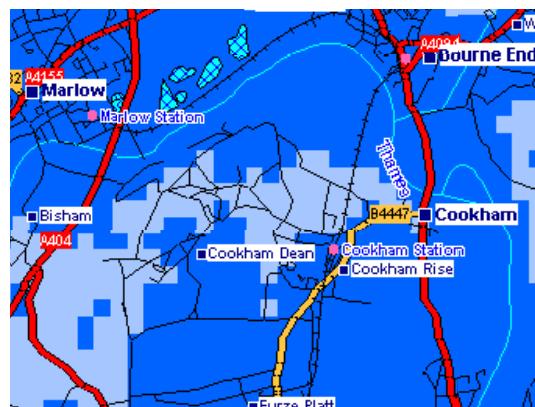


**Figure 6-2 Mobile Coverage – 3  
(3 website)**



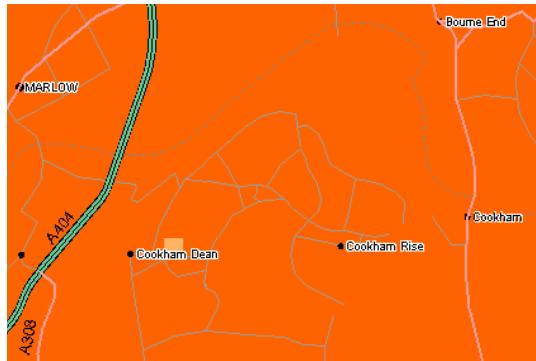
Pink shaded areas indicate UTMS (3G) coverage, yellow indicates GSM only

**Figure 6-3 Mobile Coverage - O2  
(O2 web site)**



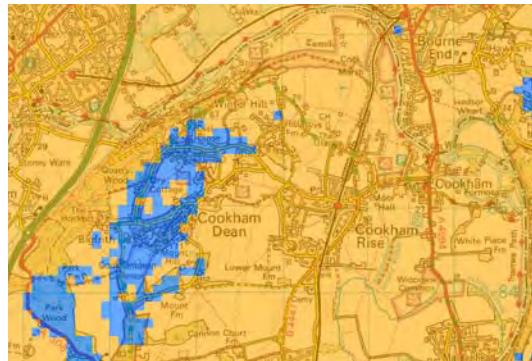
Dark blue shading indicates UTMS (3G) coverage, light blue indicates GSM only

**Figure 6-4 Mobile Coverage – Orange  
(Orange web site)**



Dark orange shading indicates UTMS (3G), light indicates GSM only

**Figure 6-5 Mobile Coverage – Vodafone  
(Vodafone web site)**



Yellow shading indicates 3G, blue indicates GSM only

**Figure 6-6 Mobile Coverage – T Mobile  
GSM (T Mobile web site)**



Pink shading indicates GSM, white indicates no cover

**Figure 6-7 Mobile Coverage – T Mobile UTMS  
(T Mobile web site)**



Dark pink shading indicates UTS, white indicates no cover

As can be seen, reception is generally reported as good within Cookham with almost complete coverage for GSM and most areas being able to receive 3G services.

Residents were asked to confirm their experience of mobile telephone signal strengths in the Cookham Plan Questionnaire. 609 responses were received to question 13 which asked people to report the signal strength for any applicable networks in and around their homes. Responses were expressed as a percentage of the maximum possible signal strength indicated by their handset (e.g. 3 out of 5 bars represents 60%). The results are shown in Figure 6-8 and Figure 6-9. These appear to bear out the operators maps which show that there is generally good coverage across Cookham. Given the extent of choice available to consumers, it seems reasonable that most residents should be able to obtain a reasonable signal strength at home should they need to.

**Figure 6-8 Average Mobile Telephone Signal Strengths (GSM Networks)**

Network	Reported Signal Strength		
	Cookham Dean	Cookham Rise	Cookham Village
3 Mobile	-	75%	-
BT Mobile <sup>1</sup>	100%	4%	100%
Orange	69%	52%	45%
O2	44%	82%	61%
T-Mobile	51%	51%	40%
Tesco Mobile <sup>2</sup>	-	60%	10%
Virgin <sup>3</sup>	43%	31%	64%
Vodafone	46%	59%	58%
Other	-	68%	100%

<sup>1</sup> Uses the Vodafone network

<sup>2</sup> Uses the O2 network

<sup>3</sup> Uses the T-Mobile network

**Figure 6-9 Average Mobile Telephone Signal Strengths (UTMS (3G) Networks)**

Network	Reported Signal Strength		
	Cookham Dean	Cookham Rise	Cookham Village
3 Mobile	-	59%	50%
BT Mobile	-	-	-
Orange	100%	60%	100%
O2	100%	62%	8%
T-Mobile	68%	75%	-
Tesco Mobile	-	-	-
Virgin	-	-	-
Vodafone	64%	49%	80%
Other	-	100%	-

There were only 42 responses for 3G networks which presumably reflects the relative newness of this technology. Nevertheless, this appears to indicate that there is a generally acceptable level of signal for these services.

## 6.5 Potential Developments

### 6.5.1 Demand

It is very difficult to anticipate how the use of mobile telephones may change over the 10 to 20 year period of the Cookham Plan. In the short to medium term, it seems likely that demand for new handsets will slow as the market becomes saturated but against this, new applications may emerge as technology changes (for example, as a part of future road pricing systems). It also seems likely that demand will transfer from GSM to 3G if price levels fall and handsets become more able to access web based material. This suggests that there may be continued pressure to build new 3G masts given the shorter ranges, more limited capacity and reduced cell sizes associated with them.

Further increases in local demand for mobile telephony could come from increases in home working or in the bandwidth requirements of visitors to Cookham (for example the use of mobile computing by visitors to the Odney Club and Moor Hall).

### **6.5.2 Technology**

In the longer term, demand will stabilise and it is likely that there will be some consolidation amongst operators. Such a scenario could lead to a reduction in mast sites as companies seek to cut costs by reducing their infrastructure.

Against this is the likelihood that a new generation of mobile technology will emerge offering higher data download speeds and / or reduced transmission power will emerge. It is to be hoped that such developments could re-use the existing infrastructure rather than needing a brand new network like 3G did.

Over and above these possibilities, there may be step changes in technology arising from (for example) greater integration between WiFi access points and mobile telephony or greater use of satellite systems. The impact of these on Cookham is almost impossible to foresee at this time.

## **6.6 The Planning Process**

Under the Telecommunications Act 1984 and the Communications Act 2003, mobile telephone companies have powers granted to them by Ofcom which allow them to construct infrastructure on public land (i.e. roads and streets) and to take rights over private land. These powers are set out in the Electronic Communications Code (ECC)<sup>(6.2)</sup> and they include certain relaxations of planning requirements where the infrastructure can be classified as 'permitted development'. In general terms:

- Masts over 15 metres in height, and any masts in Conservation Areas, require planning permission.
- Permitted development rights apply to smaller scale telecommunications development. For example, masts up to 15 metres in height require an application for prior approval of the siting and appearance proposed. Prior approval applications have to be determined within 56 days or they are automatically allowed.
- Small scale developments are not subject to planning control. Examples could include the installation of additional antennas on an existing radio mast, base stations on buildings and equipment cabinets with a volume less than 2.5 cubic metres.

Whichever planning route a development follows, there is little doubt that many local residents hold real fears about its appearance, effect on house prices and

on their safety. Unfortunately, the last two of these factors are not taken into account under present planning laws.

## 6.7 Health and Safety concerns

So far, this review has dealt mainly with factual matters but as we move to health and safety concerns we encounter a combination of fact and emotion.

On the emotional side, people are concerned about the potential effect of radio transmissions and of long term exposure to them. Notwithstanding that there has been over 50 years of radio and television transmission from much more powerful antennae and with no reported ill effects and that most people are prepared to use mobile handsets (which produce higher levels of exposure than typically arise from masts), there are still significant numbers of people who hold deep seated concerns about the safety of masts.

To date, the main source of information about the safety of mobile telephones has come from the Stewart Report<sup>(6.3)</sup>. Published in 2000 under the Chairmanship of Sir William Stewart, the report of the Independent Expert Group on Mobile Phones considered the effects on human health of handsets, base stations and transmitters. The report recognised that, with mobile phone technology still in its early stages, potential effects remain largely unknown. Given the impossibility of proving that mobile phone systems are safe and that time will be required to discover if they pose any specific risks, the report recommended a precautionary approach in all matters (including the use of handsets). Findings of particular relevance to the Cookham Plan were:

- The siting of base stations in residential areas can cause considerable concern and distress. Adverse impacts on the local environment may adversely impact on the public's well being as much as any direct health effects.
- There is significant variability in the extent to which mobile phone operators consult the public on the siting of base stations. Protocols should be developed.
- 'Permitted development' rights should be revoked and the siting of all new base stations should be subject to the normal planning process.
- In relation to macrocell base stations sited within or near to school grounds, the beam of greatest intensity from the aerials should not fall on any part of the grounds or buildings without agreement from the school and parents.

- In making decisions about the siting of base stations, radio frequency fields to which the public will be exposed should be kept to the lowest practical levels commensurate with the telecommunications system operating effectively.
- Operators should actively pursue a policy of mast sharing and roaming where practicable to reduce the number of mast sites required.

Although a number of these points would require legislation to be enforceable, they provide a useful framework for considering how mobile telephone infrastructure development around Cookham may be managed in the future.

## **6.8 Factors to be considered in siting masts**

From a telephone company's point of view, the main factors influencing the choice of sites are:

- Coverage - how many customers can be reached? This means that operators generally favour more exposed sites which are not obstructed by buildings, trees, hills etc.
- Cost - what is the cost of the site to buy or rent and of the infrastructure (cabling, roads, fencing etc) required? Under the ECC, permission for the installation of equipment must be given by the landowner and, in the absence of agreement, may be granted by the County Court. For highways land, permission is granted by the relevant 'street manager' which for Cookham is the borough council in its role as highway authority. RBWM were requested to provide details of the criteria used in granting permission during the preparation of this report but failed to respond to our enquiries.
- Planning - national and local planning considerations determine where development will be acceptable.

### **6.8.1 National planning guidance**

National Planning guidance is given in Planning Policy Guidance 8: Telecommunications (PPG8)<sup>(6.4)</sup>. The main factors to be considered are:

- There should be pre-application discussions between the operator and the local planning authority, organisations with an interest in the development and local residents. Local Authorities should ensure there is adequate publicity to give people an opportunity to express their views.

- Both the authority and the operator should consult any schools near to proposed transmitters.
- Protection from visual intrusion is important and planning authorities and operators should work together to find optimum environmental and network solutions.
- Development in the Green Belt is inappropriate unless it ‘maintains openness’. Development may, however, be permitted in special circumstances such as a lack of alternative sites.
- Sharing of masts and sites is strongly encouraged (unless there are technical or environmental problems).
- Operators should demonstrate that existing buildings or structures cannot be used before applying for new sites.
- Local authorities should help operators to identify sites by making their property available and encouraging others to do the same.
- Design and camouflage should be used to minimise the effect of masts on the environment.
- Health considerations are not relevant provided that the development complies with ICNIRP emission standards.
- Local authorities cannot impose precautionary measures beyond those set out in the Stewart Report and accepted by the Government.

Overarching all of these factors is the Government’s general policy on telecommunications which is *‘to facilitate the growth of new and existing systems’* - i.e. where there is a need, some form of development will normally go ahead.

### **6.8.2 Local planning guidance**

Local Planning guidance is given in the Berkshire Structure Plan policy TC1 (adopted by RBWM in 1995) and RBWM’s own policy TEL1. These state:

## **Policy TC1**

*Planning permission will normally be granted for telecommunications development. Where there is potential conflict with environmental objectives telecommunications development will be allowed provided:*

- i) *it is sited and designed so as not to result in significant adverse visual impact, subject to operational and technical requirements;*
- ii) *there are no satisfactory alternative sites for telecommunications available;*
- iii) *there is no reasonable possibility of sharing existing facilities; and*
- iv) *in the case of radio antenna and masts there is no reasonable possibility of erecting antennae on an existing building or other structure.*

## **Policy TEL1**

*The Borough Council will only grant planning permission for telecommunications development where:-*

- 1) *there is no reasonable possibility of sharing existing facilities;*
- 2) *in the case of radio masts, there is no reasonable possibility of erecting antennae on an existing building or other structure where there is little or no adverse environmental damage;*
- 3) *the proposed development does not have significant adverse visual impact and is sited and designed so as to minimise obtrusiveness;*
- 4) *in the case of locations within the green belt, there is no conflict with green belt policies and particularly policy GB2;*
- 5) *there is no conflict with other policies of the plan.*

Details of how the planning department interpret these policies is set out in RBWM's publication Interpretation of Policy TEL1 (Telecommunications Development) Final Guidance (December 2000)<sup>(6.5)</sup>.

## **6.9 Key Findings**

- Mobile telephones are an important part of modern life and society has to accept that their benefits are balanced by a need for supporting infrastructure.
- As a place which supports both an active business community and a significant amount of tourism, it is important that Cookham has an adequate mobile phone service.
- The maps of existing coverage show that, between the various operators' existing sites, there is adequate macrocell coverage for Cookham. Any shortfall in the coverage of individual networks could be made good by sharing existing transmitter sites. There should be no need for any new macrocell sites to be developed based on existing demand.
- There are a number of localised areas where reception is inadequate. Where this is a significant problem for individual operators, microcells (such as the O2 one in Odney Lane) should be installed following the existing planning guidelines.
- Organisations such as the Stanley Spencer Gallery, Chartered Institute of Marketing, Odney Club and the National Trust bring significant numbers of visitors to Cookham and should play a part in meeting the consequent demand for mobile telephony. In particular, they should be prepared to allow base stations to be placed on their land where this provides a less intrusive alternative to sites on public land.
- Similarly, the Parish Council, Fire Service, churches and other institutions should make their property available as potential sites where these would be less intrusive than the alternatives.
- Where there are significant concentrations of mobile phone users (e.g. conference centres, restaurants etc) the property owners should ensure that their facilities do not overload local macrocells by installing picocells within their premises.
- Residents and local businesses should similarly take steps to reduce their demand on local macrocells by using alternatives to mobile phones (e.g. WiFi internet connections for laptops and landline or internet telephony such as Skype or BT Fusion) whenever practical.

## 6.10 Action Plan

Ref	Proposal	Purpose	Responsibility	Timescales	What needs to be done
5.	Form a Cookham Mobile Phone Forum	To provide a focus for mobile phone planning and development in Cookham and a resource for resisting / resolving controversial proposals	Cookham Society and Parish Council	By December 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agree terms of reference.</li> <li>• Co-opt members (e.g. representatives of the Parish Council, major landowners, Cookham Society and the public)</li> <li>• Agree programme of action</li> </ul>
6.	Engage mobile phone operators about future developments	To ensure there is clarity about future needs and dialogue about how they can be met without intrusive developments	Cookham Mobile Phone Forum	Within 3 months of formation of the Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate with RBWM Mast Forum</li> <li>• Development and consultation on long term needs for phone infrastructure</li> </ul>
7.	Engage Landowners to identify site options	To broaden the choice of sites available for any essential developments	Cookham Mobile Phone Forum	Within 3 months of formation of the Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dialogue to identify and resolve issues affecting the availability of sites</li> </ul>
8.	Encourage the reduction of demand	Minimise demand on the existing infrastructure etc to reduce pressure for new developments	Cookham Mobile Phone Forum	Within 3 months of formation of the Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and distribute information packs for home and business users</li> <li>• Encourage the installation of picocells in premises with heavy demand</li> </ul>

## **7 FLOODING**

### **7.1 Remit**

*Consider flood risks to Cookham and how these affect housing and development matters.*

### **7.2 History of Flooding**

#### **7.2.1 Flood Events**

Cookham has a long relationship with the Thames. The village's origins are closely linked with its ancient role as a crossing place and today the riverside scenery and walks are an important part of the village's attraction and an amenity which draws in many visitors.

**Figure 7-1 The Thames at Cookham (Mike West)**



Unfortunately, the river is not just a benign presence and, over the years, Cookham has suffered from flooding on a number of occasions. Whilst the Thames poses the obvious and major threat to the village, other types of flooding such as flash flooding and drainage problems have also caused problems in recent years. Major Thames floods have included those in :

- 2003
- 1990
- 1947
- 2000
- 1974
- 1894

In addition to these events, flash flooding occurred in Cookham Dean and Cookham Rise in 1989 and localised flooding of the High Street has occurred on numerous occasions following heavy rain. Isolated flooding caused by local problems such as blocked drainage gullies or sewer pipes is also a regular source of inconvenience.

Out of 644 responses to the questionnaire, 136 people (21%) considered that their homes could be at risk from some form of flooding. Of those who considered themselves to be at risk, the source of their concerns were:

River Thames	47%
Flash Flooding	27%
Drainage Problems	19%
Other sources	7%

The approximate locations of those expressing concern is shown in The impact of flooding

Flooding of homes and businesses has a devastating effect and can lead to significant emotional and financial trauma. Fortunately there has not been any significant internal damage to properties in Cookham since the 1989 flash floods although a number of homes in the Lightlands Lane area suffered limited damage in 2003.

Apart from damage to property, businesses and personal effects, flooding in Cookham brings the risk of damage to farmland, crops and livestock and disruption to roads and public transport. During significant Thames floods, all roads into Cookham Village can become impassable (apart from the single track Causeway) and bus and rail services are also subject to disruption.

Figure 7-2. As can be seen, concern about flooding from the Thames is concentrated around the main flood plain areas in the Village and the Rise together with properties at the foot of Winter Hill. Flash flooding concerns are surprisingly widely distributed but generally appear to focus on the more steeply sloping areas around Cookham Dean and Winter Hill. There is probably some overlap between concerns about flash

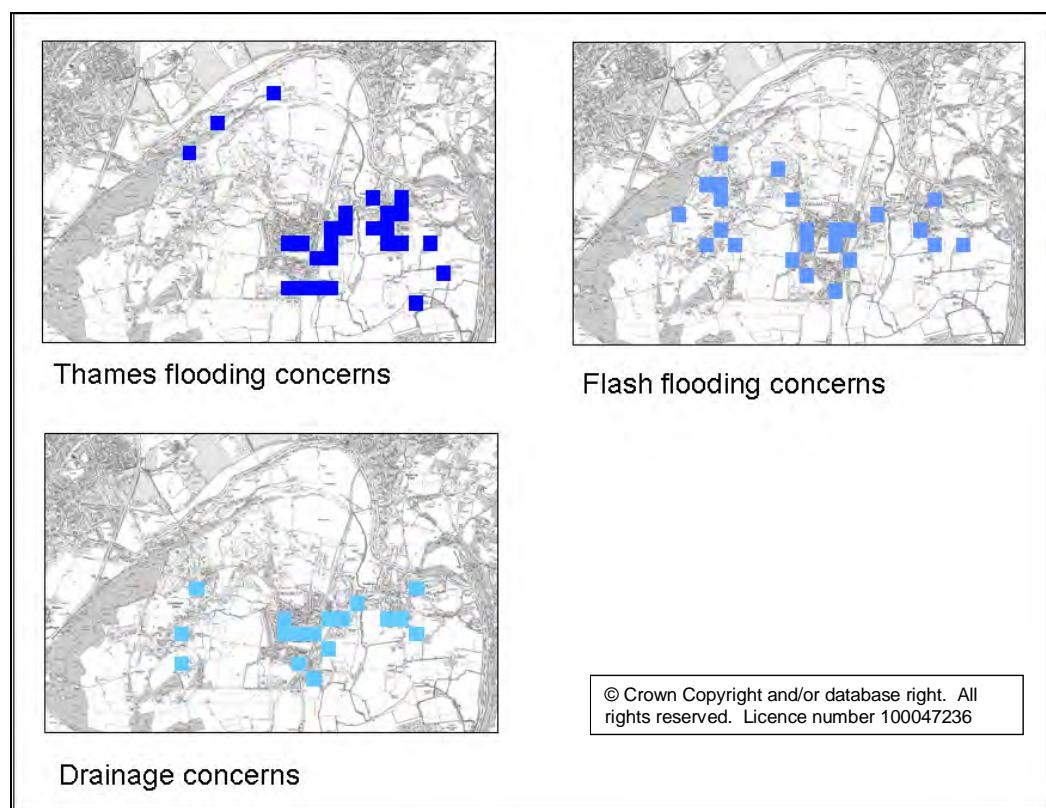
flooding and drainage problems since but we were surprised by the extent that this was a worry to people.

### 7.2.2 The impact of flooding

Flooding of homes and businesses has a devastating effect and can lead to significant emotional and financial trauma. Fortunately there has not been any significant internal damage to properties in Cookham since the 1989 flash floods although a number of homes in the Lightlands Lane area suffered limited damage in 2003.

Apart from damage to property, businesses and personal effects, flooding in Cookham brings the risk of damage to farmland, crops and livestock and disruption to roads and public transport. During significant Thames floods, all roads into Cookham Village can become impassable (apart from the single track Causeway) and bus and rail services are also subject to disruption.

**Figure 7-2 Flooding Concerns**



The maps show the approximate locations of respondents who expressed concerns for each category of risk based on analysis of their post codes (where provided).

When the Causeway is in use, access to the Village is made more difficult by pedestrians sharing this route with traffic and by the presence

of sightseers. This can lead to severe congestion and a significant risk of emergency vehicles not being able to reach the village not to mention the risk of accidents to pedestrians.

The flash floods were caused by thunderstorms which led to high run-off from the fields around Cookham Dean. This was channelled down the dry valley through Cookham Dean Bottom and Lower Road leading to a number of properties being flooded, mainly in the Lower Road and Grange Road areas. In addition, the exceptional rainfall and its drainage through the gravel and chalk strata led to the subsidence of several properties in the High Road area at least one of which was demolished and rebuilt as a consequence.

In addition to physical damage, the threat of flooding has an economic impact by affecting the value and saleability of property and placing restrictions and additional costs on development proposals.

### **7.3 Flood Alleviation Measures**

In recent years, there has been considerable investment in flood alleviation measures in Cookham.

#### **7.3.1 Flood Drains**

Following flash floods in the late 1980s, RBWM spent a considerable amount installing a flood drain along Dean Lane and Lower Road. This has its outfall in the Fleet ditch on Cookham Moor. Further up the valley several bunded balancing ponds were created to hold back the flow in the event of a repeat event.

Fortunately, there has not yet been a repeat of the flash floods. There is no data to indicate whether this is due to the success of the relief scheme or the absence of a similar downpour but, for now, given that this matter was not raised as a significant concern during consultation for the Village Plan, it seems reasonable to assume that the risk has been significantly reduced.

Several respondents to the questionnaire reported that high levels of run-off posed a risk in several roads around Cookham Dean and Winter Hill and we recommend that RBWM carry out detailed studies to identify the risk and what could be done to alleviate it.

### **7.3.2 Improved Drainage to the High Street**

In 2006, RBWM identified the cause of this problem to be the collapse of the highway drain outfall at the western end of the High Street. Work was undertaken to replace this but unfortunately, to date, problems persist after heavy rain. This should be remedied by RBWM as part of normal highway maintenance and does not require action under the Cookham Plan.

### **7.3.3 Maidenhead Windsor and Eton Flood Alleviation Scheme (MWEFAS)**

MWEFAS was a £100m plus project to prevent a repeat of the 1947 flooding of Maidenhead, Windsor and Eton. So far as Cookham is concerned, its main components were:

- The Jubilee River which runs from Boulters Lock to Black Potts Railway Viaduct below Windsor.
- A flood bund on the northern edge of Maidenhead together with an associated weir to control flood flow into Maidenhead Ditch.
- Flood bunding around the western and northern edges of Cookham Village (this and the Maidenhead bund can be seen marked in red dashes in Figure 7-6).

MWEFAS opened in June 2002 amid great expectations that it would solve flooding problems across the area. Unfortunately, these were proved wrong only 7 months later during the January 2003 flood.

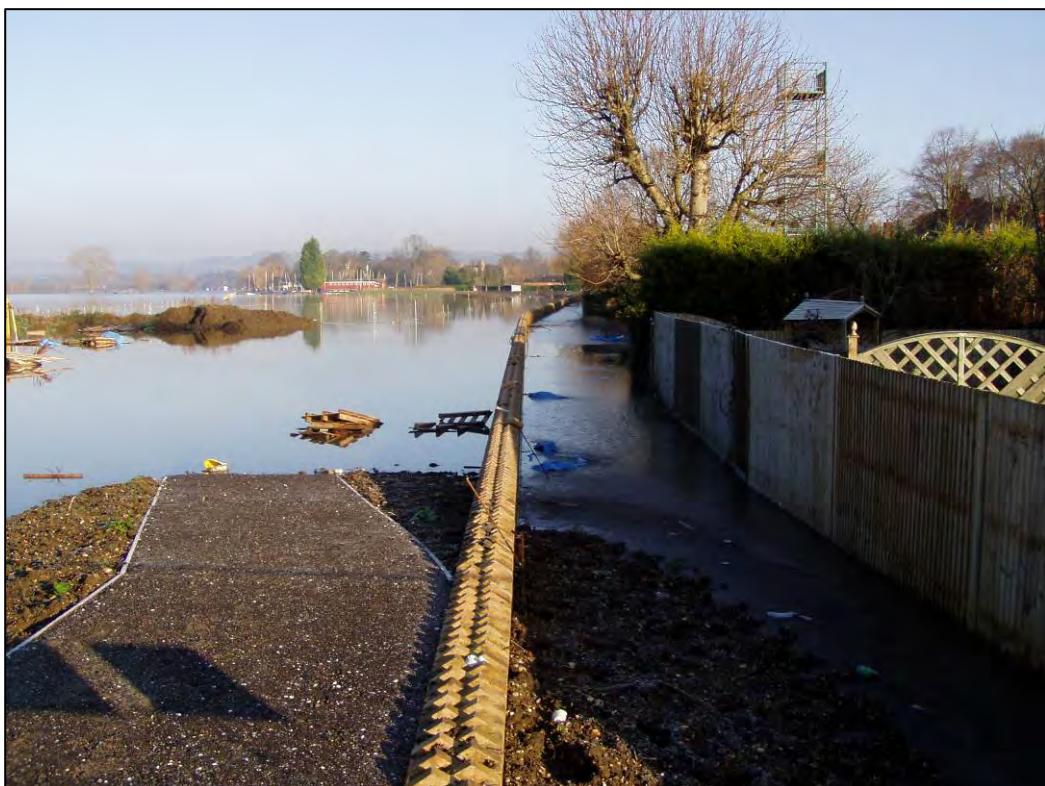
The scheme has attracted much controversy over its failure to meet its design capacity and its impact on the flooding of areas above and below Maidenhead. As far as the Cookham Plan is concerned, there are three key issues:

- The scheme was not intended to reduce flooding around Cookham. Such flooding is caused by capacity limitations through the weirs and channels around Cookham Lock and these limitations were not addressed by the scheme.
- The bunding north of Maidenhead and a consequent reduction in flow through the Maidenhead Ditch raises flood levels in Cookham. Modelling carried out for the Environment Agency<sup>(7.1)</sup> suggested that the increase was 140mm in Strande Lane and 330mm on Widbrook Common in January 2003.

- Concerns which have been raised about the extent and effectiveness of the bunding around the village.

Flooding from the Thames represents the most serious risk to the low lying areas of the village and to understand these matters and their potential solutions better, we need to look at how flooding takes place in Cookham.

**Figure 7-3 Cookham Bund January 2003 (Roger Davies)**



## 7.4 How the Thames Floods

Flooding at Cookham is caused when the flow in the river exceeds the capacity of the channel and the structures within and around it. Once the river has burst its banks, the flood and its effects progress through a number of stages until the flow subsides.

### 7.4.1 Water Flow

The factors which lead to flood conditions are very complex and were outlined in the Mechanisms of Flooding Report <sup>(7.2)</sup> and the Review of Recent Flooding in the Thames Valley report <sup>(7.3)</sup>. In essence, the risk factors are:

- Heavy rain

- Saturation of the catchment area leading to quicker run-off in to the Thames and its tributaries
- Snow or ice melting and producing increased flows.

The 2003 flood involved the first two of these factors whilst the more damaging 1947 flood also involved snow and ice melting.

#### **7.4.2 Capacity Limits**

Prior to the river overflowing, capacity at Cookham is determined by the sluice gates on the Cookham and Odney Weirs and by flow through the Lulle Brook. The weir gates are managed by the Environment Agency and are normally fully opened at times of flood risk. Once their capacity is exceeded and the river has overflowed, secondary factors come into play as the level progressively increases, these include the capacity of the culverts under the B4447 across the Moor and under Lower Cookham Road at Widbrook Common. In an extreme event, the capacity of the arches supporting the Causeway bridge would become the critical factor and if this was exceeded or impaired (e.g. by debris), significant property damage would become likely.

#### **7.4.3 Progressive effects of flooding**

Once capacity of the weirs is exceeded, the river usually first bursts its western bank in the northern part of Marsh Meadow, this leads progressively to:

- Flooding of Marsh Meadow and increased run-off into the Fleet Ditch.
- When flow in the ditch exceeds the capacity of the culvert beneath the Moor, water backs up and floods the northern side of the Moor, the National Trust car park and the southern part of Marsh Meadow.
- When the water is deep enough, it floods the B4447. At this point, the Causeway is normally opened for vehicles.
- Flow increases in the Fleet Ditch. When this exceeds the capacity of Maidenhead Ditch and White Brook, Widbrook Common floods.
- At this stage of a flood, the Thames is likely to have breached its eastern bank, flooding the gardens of the properties on the Buckinghamshire side and leading to the closure of the A4094 to the north of Cookham Bridge.

- As levels rise on Widbrook Common and the surrounding farmland, the water encroaches on Strand Lane and nearby properties. Eventually, the body of water held back by the north Maidenhead bund overflows to the east and closes the A4094 at Widbrook Common.

**Figure 7-4 Flooding on Cookham Moor, January 2003 (Roger Davies)**



- In parallel with the last two events, the Lulle Brooke bursts its banks flooding Odney Common, the Odney Club grounds and closing Mill Lane.
- In an extreme flood, it is conceivable that water levels above Cookham weir could continue to rise leading to flooding of low lying properties to the east of Sutton Road and south of the Moor. Ultimately, this would lead to inundation of the bund and extensive flooding of Cookham Village. This scenario is envisaged on the Environment Agency's flood map (see Figure 7-6).

**Figure 7-5 Mill Lane, January 2003 (Roger Davies)**



## **7.5 Continuing Flood Risks**

### **7.5.1 Thames Floods**

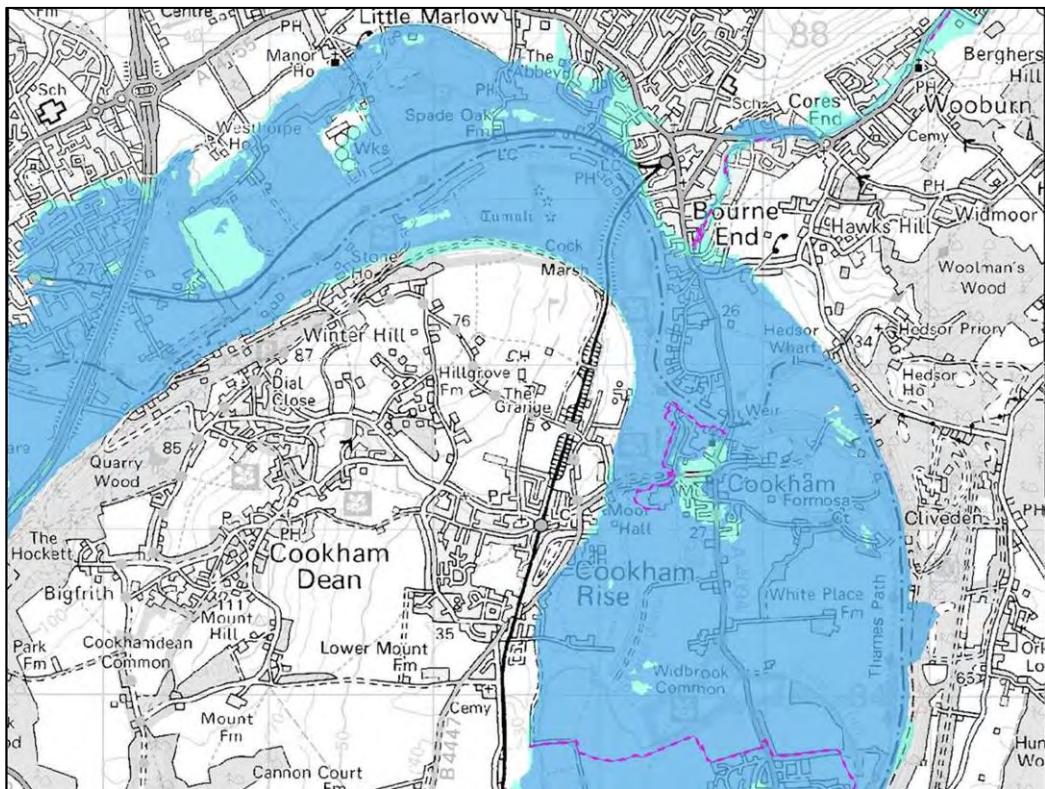
As seen above, flooding from the Thames remains a significant risk which impacts on Cookham Village and its surroundings including (but not necessarily limited to) parts of Strand Lane, Mill Lane, Cock Marsh and riverside properties in Cookham Dean. In addition, large areas of Bourne End and other riverside areas downstream of Marlow are also at risk.

Lower level impacts include disruption to traffic and public transport while (in an extreme event), there is a risk of significant property damage and injury or loss of life. The report by Water Research Associates for the Upstream Group<sup>(7.3)</sup> identified that there were 17 properties in Cookham at risk of flooding in a severe flood whereas the Environment Agency map suggests an even greater number could be affected in extremis (see Figure 7-6).

At the time of writing (January 2007), it is understood that the Environment Agency is examining options for further flood relief works in the Cookham area. Details were not made available to the Working Group but the scope is understood to include work in the Strand Lane area, a potential extension to the bund across the north side of the Moor

and increased capacity at Odney Weir. These works potentially have significant environmental impact and could affect water levels to the north and east of the village. Whilst further protection is welcome, careful scrutiny of their impact and effectiveness will be necessary to ensure that there are no unintended consequences as there were with MWEFAS.

**Figure 7-6 Flood Map January 2007 (Environment Agency website, January 2007)**



Areas at risk from flooding are shaded in dark blue and those at risk in severe events in light blue. Flood defences are shown as purple lines.

### 7.5.2 Flash Floods

There has been no repetition of the flash floods in Cookham Dean and Rise since completion of RBWM's relief measures (this was confirmed by many respondents to our consultation exercise). A theoretical risk of recurrence must remain, particularly with uncertainty over climate change, but at this stage, we have not identified any action required on behalf of the community.

It should, however, be noted that any change in land usage or increase in built or paved areas within the Lower Road / Cookham Dean Bottom catchment area could (individually or cumulatively) increase run-off rates and put the capacity of the relief measures at risk. This should be borne in mind by RBWM when considering planning applications in this area.

### **7.5.3 Drainage Problems**

The questionnaire identified a significant number of concerns about drainage problems across the whole of Cookham. As with flash flooding concerns, we recommend that RBWM investigates and rectifies these issues.

Such a study should also include Thames Water in order to consider associated problems with foul drainage including areas such as the High Street and problems reported in the High Road area where the drains for Worster Road get overloaded and flow into the Alfred Major Playing Field (just by the Primary School playing area).

### **7.5.4 Global Warming**

Climate change is now a recognised factor in environmental matters although its effects remain uncertain. The WRA report for the Upstream Group<sup>(7.3)</sup> compared rises in global surface temperature with reductions in the frequency and severity of Thames floods between 1890 and 2003 and suggested that there may be links – for example, due to milder winters reducing the extent of snow and ice (the third risk factor for flooding). It is impossible to predict how the weather may change in the future and how such changes will affect flooding risk in Cookham. Nevertheless, it is possible to see that there could be more moderate level Thames floods and a greater risk of flash flooding if either summer temperatures or winter rainfall levels rise.

## **7.6 Key Findings**

- Flooding from the River Thames is a significant risk for low lying areas of Cookham and has been made worse by the construction of MWEFAS.
- Although it is almost certainly impossible to prevent flooding of the Thames, further work should be carried out to reduce its risk and impact. This should focus on reducing the effects of mid level floods (such as those in 2003) and minimising the risk of more serious flooding.
- Until the risk and impact of flooding has been reduced, there should be no relaxation of the special scrutiny placed on planning applications for development in the flood risk areas.
- No significant new building should be permitted in the ‘at risk’ areas shown on the Environment Agency’s flood map unless it can be shown to be safe for its occupants and to have no impact on the risk to other properties.

- The village should find ways of working with the Environment Agency to bring forward schemes as soon as possible, however, there must be sufficient scrutiny and challenge to ensure that these are both imaginative, wide ranging and sufficiently well thought through to avoid unintended consequences like those of MWEFAS.
- In particular, in addition to changes to the bunding and relief measures for the Strand Lane area, consideration should be given to increasing capacity at Cookham's weirs, protecting against flooding of the Lulle Brooke and reducing flow by diverting the outfall of the River Wye to below Cookham Weir.
- Traffic Management at times of flood needs to be improved. In particular, the Causeway should be limited to traffic for residential and business access only and suitable signage and traffic management equipment should be stored locally when required. A coordinated plan should be agreed between the parish and borough councils and the police.
- If the Environment Agency's proposals do not remove (or significantly reduce) the risk of flooding of the B4447, its level should be raised to maintain access to the village. Alternatively, consideration should be given to closing and removing this road and upgrading the Causeway to form the main route).
- Until the above item is addressed, there should be regular engineering checks on the Causeway bridge. These should include assessment of the risk of scour from flood waters undermining the foundations. All necessary maintenance work should be scheduled and carried out by the highway authority.
- Arrangements should be made to ensure that drainage problems are identified and resolved without delay. A register of items reported to RBWM should be available on the Internet with target and actual response times visible. A local body such as the Parish Council or Cookham Society should monitor performance and hold RBWM to account if this is inadequate.
- RBWM should carry out a detailed study of the concerns expressed by respondents to the questionnaire about flash flooding and drainage problems across all of Cookham.

## 7.7 Action Plan

Ref	Proposal	Purpose	Responsibility	Timescales	What needs to be done
8.	Identify a comprehensive and prioritised list of flood relief measures for Cookham.	To stimulate progress and to confirm that measures proposed by the Environment Agency are in the best interests of the community as a whole.	Cookham Parish Council  Environment Agency	By 30 June 2008	<p>Discussions with Environment Agency.</p> <p>If no independent review of the options is available, commission a consultant such as WRA to produce a master plan.</p> <p>This should include consideration of flooding of Lulle Brooke, increases in capacity through and around Cookham Weir, reduction in flow across the Moor and the effectiveness of existing bunding as well as measures to address specific local areas of risk.</p>
9.	Implement flood relief measures	To reduce the risk and impact of flooding by the River Thames	Environment Agency	As soon as practical	Construct additional flood relief measures.
10.	Raise level of B4447	To maintain access to the village in times of flood (if not resolved by flood relief measures)	RBWM	As soon as possible	Raise level of road and increase culvert capacity to prevent closure by flooding

Ref	Proposal	Purpose	Responsibility	Timescales	What needs to be done
11.	Improve Traffic Management at times of flood	To minimise disruption to residents and businesses when roads are closed by flooding	RBWM Cookham Parish Council	By 30 November 2007	<p>Agree a traffic management strategy and associated roles and responsibilities.</p> <p>Seek any powers necessary for enforcement.</p> <p>Obtain and store all necessary signage and other equipment.</p>
12.	Engineering surveys and maintenance of the Causeway bridge	To ensure that the bridge remains an attractive part of the Moor landscape and able to carry traffic at times of flood	RBWM	By 31 December 2007	<p>Commission engineering survey.</p> <p>Agree ownership and funding responsibilities</p> <p>Undertake recommended maintenance regime</p>
13.	Publish drainage problems and target / actual response times on the Internet	Enhanced visibility and accountability for resolving local drainage issues.	RBWM	31 March 2008	Establish fault logging and status information on the RBWM Internet Site.
14.	Undertake a study of reported flash flooding risks and drainage problems across Cookham	To clarify the extent of the problem and to identify solutions.	RBWM	31 March 2008	Identify the causes of problems and produce a plan for their management and resolution.

## **8 HOUSING DEMAND AND AFFORDABILITY**

### **8.1 Remit**

*Review demand for housing, its affordability and options to assist young people and essential workers to live in Cookham.*

### **8.2 Issues and Concerns**

The price of housing (particularly for young people) was raised as an issue by many people during the consultation undertaken during preparation of the plan. The main issues raised are summarised below:

- House prices are very high.
- Young, first time buyers cannot afford to live in the villages of Cookham. This makes it difficult for young people to find homes close to their families.
- There is little new building so demand is high for what becomes available and pressure is created to build wherever possible.
- Housing Association stock is dwindling due to occupants buying their homes.
- Land and house prices are high so that Housing Associations have great difficulty in competing with the private developers. This means there is little or no increase in the availability of affordable housing.
- A perception that there is an increase in the number of 'buy to let' properties which could change the balance of the community.
- With the increase in 'buy to let' there is a worry that more flats will be built which are not characteristic of the village.

### **8.3 Housing Stock**

According to the 2001 Census, Cookham Parish has 2,368 dwellings:

- 36% are detached,
- 49% semi-detached / terraced and
- 15% are flats or temporary structures (e.g. mobile homes).

80% of the dwellings are owner occupied and the rest rented: 9% by the public sector and 11% private rentals. The proportion of owner occupation is

significantly higher than the averages in the rest of the borough, the South East region and England as a whole (73%, 74% and 69% respectively).

Tenure data from the 2001 Census suggests that Cookham is underprovided with rented accommodation (20% of dwellings are rented) compared with the borough (27%), the South East region (26%) and all of England (31%). Of the rented accommodation available a significantly greater proportion is provided by the private sector compared to the regional and national averages (54% compared with 46% and 38% respectively). This appears to confirm people's perceptions about the growth of the buy to let sector in Cookham.

#### **8.4 Housing Supply**

One of the central functions of the Borough's Local Plan is to ensure an adequate and continuous supply of land for housing development in accordance with the requirements of the Structure Plan (and, going forward, the Strategic Plan). However the scale and location of new housing development must be consistent with the Green Belt and other environmental objectives of the Plan.

The final housing allocation for the borough has not yet been published but is believed to be between 4,100 and 5,620 new dwellings by the year 2026 (273 to 281 new dwellings per annum) - Core Strategy Policy CS15 will set the proposed level. The council believes housing supply is currently meeting the strategic housing requirement. The council intends to produce Area Action Plans for its main settlements but whether this includes Cookham is unclear and should be followed up.

Policy CS16 details the approach to housing delivery which emphasizes that development should be located on previously developed land in the main borough settlements and land excluded from the Green Belt. However it also states that dwellings should be developed at a scale and density appropriate to the surrounding area and certain criteria should be applied to ensure adequate capacity exists to create sustainable communities.

#### **8.5 Private Sector House Prices and Demand**

A study of Land Registry details for the last 6 years for SL6 9xx shows that house prices in this area have increased strongly in recent years and that the prices in Cookham are higher than the borough average.

Figure 8-1 shows the annual average change in house prices, which includes all house types – detached, semi-detached, terraced and flat/maisonette.

**Figure 8-1 Overall Average House Prices and Sales**

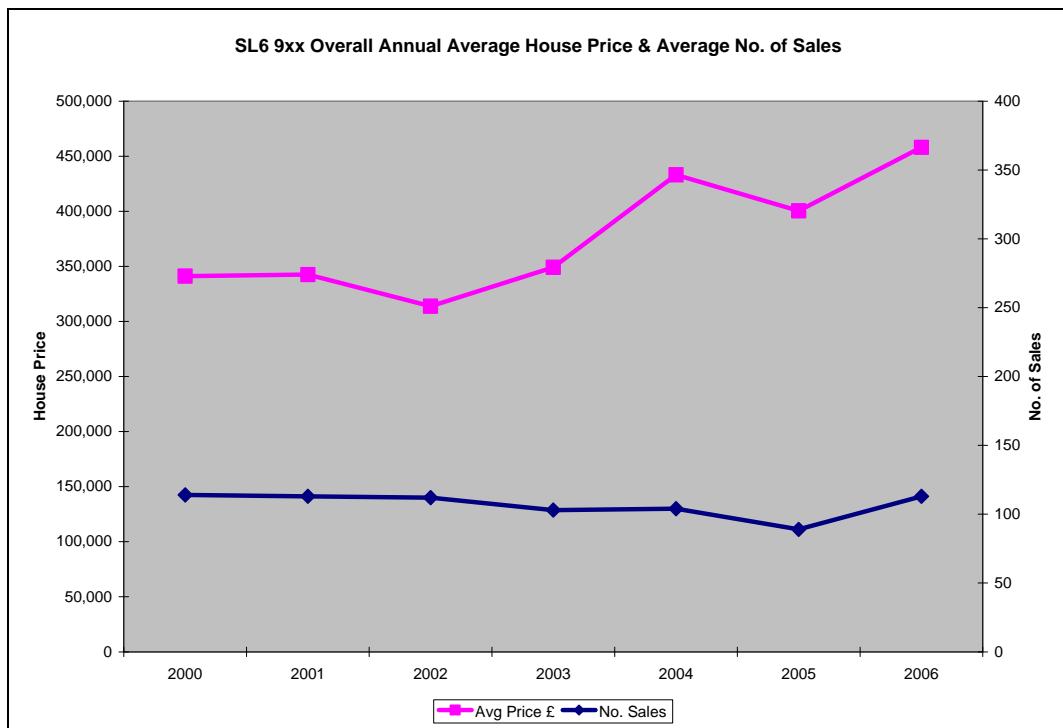
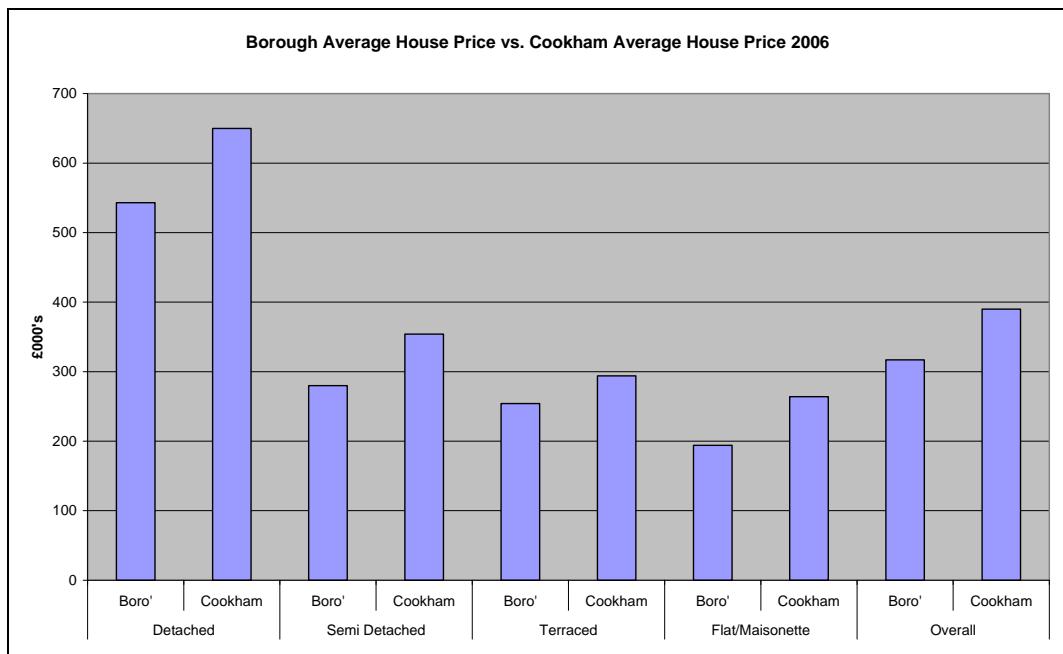


Figure 8-2 shows the differences between Cookham and the borough house prices in 2006. With all house types, Cookham prices are significantly higher than in the rest of the borough (by approximately 23% overall).

**Figure 8-2 Comparison of average house prices between RBWM and Cookham**



This high price of housing will make it difficult for young, first time buyers and many others to live in Cookham.

Figures for the private rental market, taken from the local estate agents show the following average rentals per month:

1 bedroom	£750
2 bedrooms	£950
3 bedrooms	£1,100
4 or more bedrooms	£4,500

Again, this level of cost is likely to restrict access to the Cookham market to those with higher incomes.

## 8.6 Affordable Housing

As described above, Cookham is very expensive to live in and this creates problems for public sector workers and others with lower incomes. Affordable housing is designed to meet the needs of this section of society and is housing which is provided for rent or part sale with some form of subsidy.

As far as we have been able to ascertain, Maidenhead and District Housing Association (MDHA) is the only public sector company owning housing in Cookham. They have properties in Cookham Rise and Cookham Dean – most of these are in Cookham Rise around the Whiteladies Lane area.

The properties include:

**Figure 8-3 Housing Association Properties in Cookham**

# of Bedrooms	Total All Types	Bungalow		Flat		House		Maisonette	
		No	Avg Rent	No	Avg Rent	No	Avg Rent	No	Avg Rent
1	47	26	£85pw	21	£78pw	0	-	0	-
2	78	17	£100pw	35	£89pw	26	£97pw	0	-
3	73	0	-	0	-	63	£106pw	10	£97pw
4	2	0	-	0	-	2	£113pw	0	-
Total	200	43	£91pw	56	£85pw	91	£103pw	10	£97pw
<b>Shared Occupation</b>									
1	4			4	£217pw				
<b>Market Rent</b>									
3	1					1	£600pw		

According to MDHA, there is currently a moderate demand for affordable housing in Cookham. The demand is thought to be on a similar scale to that for housing association houses in Holyport which, like Cookham, is a similar distance away from Maidenhead town centre. Furze Platt on the other hand, which is within walking distance of the town centre has roughly twice the demand of Cookham. However Cookham does have a higher demand than more outlying rural areas e.g. Waltham St Lawrence or Knowl Hill. (It should be

noted that demand relates to people from across the whole Royal Borough, not those with existing connections to Cookham).

## 8.7 Allocation of Affordable Housing

If a person wants to move back to Cookham after study or training they have to apply for a social housing tenancy by signing on to the 'open list' or the 'transfer list'. Anybody who doesn't have an existing tenancy agreement can sign onto the MDHA open list. However this list is extremely long since it is open to almost anyone and therefore not a very realistic option for getting a tenancy. The transfer list is only open to current tenants of MDHA and Windsor HA which would imply that it is not that easy to move counties and still get a social housing tenancy.

Strict criteria apply to placement on the statutory register. The applicant needs to have lived or worked in the borough for 6 months i.e. have a local connection. There are currently no priorities awarded to local residents of one particular area over those from a different area within the borough. In the future, some form of prioritisation for those with local family ties would be of benefit to maintaining the community.

A breakdown of the current waiting list numbers can be seen below:

**Figure 8-4 Current Waiting Lists for Affordable Housing**

<b>Transfer List General Needs</b>				
Beds.	1	2	3	4
Persons on List	17	66	39	9
<b>Statutory List General Needs</b>				
Beds.	1	2	3	4
Persons on List	375	92	47	0
<b>MDHAs General Needs Open List</b>				
Beds.	1	2	3	4
Persons on List	458	124	63	2

## 8.8 Future Policy on Affordable Housing

The need for affordable housing is recognised by RBWM in the draft Core Strategy. Policy CS 18 – Affordable housing states that:

*Such housing will be sought and secured from housing developments of appropriate size and suitability, having regard to the need to provide a mix and diversity of residential development in the borough and the economics of provision. This policy will apply to sites and buildings capable of providing 5 or more units. The expected minimum level of provision will be 40%. Lower levels*

*of provision would only be considered if the scheme was not economically viable.*

Cookham Parish is a designated ‘rural’ area and so may also be affected by Policy CS 19 – Rural Exceptions Affordable housing which states that:

*In exceptional circumstances, limited affordable housing development will be permitted within or on the edge of Recognised Settlements within the Green Belt provided:*

1. *It can be demonstrated that all the dwellings meet a proven local need for affordable housing, within a defined area agreed by the council in close consultation with the local Parish Council, that cannot be met elsewhere;*
2. *The site does not intrude into open countryside and is not essential to the separation of settlements*
3. *The scheme is limited to a small group of dwellings that can be provided in a way which respects the spatial and characteristics of the settlement*
4. *There is adequate access to local services and facilities by walking, cycling or public transport*
5. *The occupation of the dwellings is controlled to ensure the benefits of the affordable housing can be enjoyed by subsequent as well as initial occupants, and that the dwellings remain available to local people.*

In implementing this policy the council say that they will ensure that the LDF’s proposals for the conservation and protection of the environment are not compromised. In order to protect the Green Belt the council must be satisfied that the need for affordable housing cannot be met elsewhere including other urban settlements within a reasonable distance.

So what does this mean for Cookham? On the one hand, there is a clear need for additional affordable, public sector owned housing to bring provision up towards regional averages and to maintain the social mix and continuity of the village. On the other there is limited space for additional development and it is important to maintain the Green Belt and other aspects of the village environment. In the future we would like to see development kept within the existing village boundaries but with greater emphasis put on affordable housing through the planning system. Mechanisms to achieve this need to be identified during development of the LDF.

## **8.9 Key Findings**

- The nature of the housing market is such that there will probably always be strong demand for property in attractive and well located areas such as

Cookham leading to premium prices. It is beyond the scope of the Cookham Plan to be able to ensure that everyone who wants to live in Cookham is able to do so. It is therefore important to ensure that there is a balance of house sizes and public / private ownership to ensure that we maintain a balanced community. Public consultation revealed a desire for young people to be able to establish new households close to their parents.

- The stock of public sector affordable housing in Cookham is low.
- MDHA are having difficulty competing with private developers for land with such high land prices in the area.
- The LDF aims to ensure that any future developments of more than 5 dwellings in the area will include a proportion of affordable houses.
- Despite the lack of affordable housing, new development should not be permitted on the Green Belt around Cookham.
- RBWM should be encouraged to promote the building of more affordable housing through imaginative use of the planning system. Development of the LDF presents an opportunity to formulate new policies.
- Similarly, planning policy should be developed to:
  - Manage the redevelopment of existing smaller homes into larger, more expensive units,
  - Ensure that there is not excessive development of buy to let properties (especially flats).
- Any publicly owned land which becomes surplus to requirements should be considered for affordable housing in precedence to other uses and, if so developed, local people should be given priority for such accommodation.

## 8.10 Action Plan

Ref	Proposal	Purpose	Responsibility	Timescales	What needs to be done
1.	Signpost potential sites for development of sheltered homes and affordable housing	To ensure a balanced mix of accommodation within Cookham which is accessible to the widest possible cross section of society.	Parish Council and RBWM planners	By end 2008 or as otherwise required to support development of the LDF	<p>Identify suitable sites</p> <p>Produce development briefs</p> <p>Develop LDF policies to promote suitable development.</p>
2.	Review publicly owned land to identify current or future opportunities to develop affordable housing.	To ensure that opportunities to develop affordable homes are not lost.	Parish Council and RBWM	By end 2008	<p>Identify potential sites</p> <p>Identify development arrangements (e.g. joint ventures with Housing Associations) which will result in suitable developments</p>
3.	Develop detailed policies within the LDF which promote appropriate developments of affordable housing and which maintain a balanced mix of privately owned housing.	To maintain a balance of housing types and sizes in the long term interests of the community	Parish Council and RBWM  Input and lobbying by residents groups such as the Cookham Society.	As required to support development of the LDF	<p>Develop a clear strategy</p> <p>Take action to ensure that it is included in the LDF.</p>

## **9 HOUSING PROVISION FOR THE ELDERLY AND DISABLED**

### **9.1 Remit**

*Consider the adequacy of housing provision for elderly and disabled people, whether this is being lost to redevelopment and how to ensure adequate future provision.*

### **9.2 Concerns**

During the consultation phase, a number of people expressed concern that there was inadequate housing provision for elderly and disabled people in Cookham and that suitable private accommodation (such as bungalows) was being lost to more intensive redevelopment.

### **9.3 Sheltered Housing Stock**

MDHA have provided the following analysis of their sheltered accommodation in Cookham:

**Figure 9-1 MDHA Sheltered Accommodation in Cookham**

No of Bedrooms	Total No	Avg Weekly Rent
Bedsit	20	£65pw
1	4	£83pw
2	1	£93pw
Total	25	£69pw

In addition, there are three private nursing homes in Cookham providing more intensive care. Cookham Riverside in Berries Road provides 35 bedrooms, Harwood House in Spring Lane has 30 bedrooms and Moor Cottage in the High Street has 13 bedrooms.

### **9.4 Demand**

Across the borough there is strong demand for sheltered accommodation as evidenced by the current waiting list (see Figure 9-2). This is borne out by evidence from the questionnaire:

- 214 respondents (33%) of respondents thought sheltered homes were needed.
- 57 respondents (9%) of respondents thought that homes for people with disabilities were needed.
- 19 respondents cited a lack of suitable sheltered accommodation as an obstacle to them moving within Cookham.

- 4 respondents cited lack of physically accessible accommodation as an obstacle.

**Figure 9-2 Current Waiting List for Sheltered Accommodation**

<b>Transfer List Sheltered</b>		
Beds	0	1
Persons on List	2	8
<b>Statutory List Sheltered Housing</b>		
Beds	0	1
Persons on List	1	21
<b>MDHAs Sheltered Open List</b>		
Beds	0	1
Persons on List	5	51

The working group have undertaken research in order to estimate the level of demand which may be expected from a population with the size and demographic make up of Cookham. This work is described in Appendix 3 and it suggests that:

- Based on the 2001 census and a provision of 6 units per 1,000 people over 65, Cookham's population needs 6 sheltered housing units.
- Projected forward over 20 years, it is possible that local demand could grow to 13 units.

## 9.5 Community Housing

The new Core Strategy within the LDF identifies this type of accommodation as being important. RBWM have developed Policy CS17 – Housing the Community which states that:

1. *New housing developments will be required to provide a mix of tenure, size and type to meet the needs of all sectors of the community, including affordable housing, vulnerable groups and those with special needs*

## 9.6 Key Findings

- We note that all of the current provision for sheltered housing is in the public sector and we consider that there may be an unfulfilled demand for private sheltered accommodation. If all Cookham's future needs were to be met by the private sector, this would require development of a maximum of 13 units.
- If local people are given fair access then there is no case for building more social sheltered accommodation in Cookham.

- The exact level of need for other forms of supported accommodation is unclear but, given that there is no current provision, construction or conversion of a small number of units may be justified.
- Consideration should be given to whether the current types of accommodation meet residents needs. In particular, do they provide a transition from less to greater dependency and do they allow couples to remain together?

## 9.7 Action Plan

Ref	Proposal	Purpose	Responsibility	Timescales	What needs to be done
1.	Confirm the estimated needs for supported accommodation in Cookham and how best this can be provided	To ensure that, so far as is practical, there is adequate provision for local people who wish to remain in Cookham but require support and care to do so. (This applies both to the elderly and to disabled people)	A group of service providers and other interested parties (e.g. medical, social services, existing accommodation providers, Elizabeth House etc).	Needs to be identified as soon as possible to provide input to the LDF.  Beyond that, developments may take some time.	Form group  Identify needs  Provide input to LDF  Promote suitable developments

## **10 FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS**

### **10.1 Issues Raised**

During preparation of the Cookham Plan, a number of potential development sites and proposals have been suggested to the Housing and Development Working Group. These include both a number of well known sites which have been under discussion for several years as well as other proposals ranging from new housing for family members on land owned by their relations, through redevelopment of existing commercial premises to ideas for sites to increase Cookham's housing stock or alleviate traffic or other local problems.

Whilst it is not appropriate for the plan to pre-empt the planning process or the rights of property owners to use their land as they wish (and recognising that some issues have been raised with us on a confidential basis), we endeavour to give broad guidance on these matters based on the views expressed by local people during consultations and the recommendations made within this report.

We consider it inappropriate that any sites should be listed in the LDF as potential development sites without any official consultation. As and when official consultation is undertaken for appropriate policy elements within the LDF, these can be considered but decisions should not be pre-empted.

### **10.2 Developments within the Green Belt**

We believe that there should be no significant new development within the Green Belt. Specifically, there should be:

- No extension of housing into either Poundfield or the area between Whiteladies Lane and Lower Mount Farm.
- No construction of new roads (such as a southern bypass or a relief road for the Pound) within the green belt. Any such development will damage the landscape around Cookham and is likely to lead to future calls for the adjacent land to be developed for housing or other uses.

### **10.3 Extension of Business Premises**

Cookham's business community is an important source of employment and of diversity within the village and should be supported to continue trading here. However, businesses must respect the character of the area and accept that there are limits to what they can reasonably expect to be allowed to do on their sites. In particular, developments which impact on their neighbours or other residents, increase traffic movements, parking requirements or require

additional, intrusive infrastructure (such as power supply or telephone structures) should not be permitted.

#### **10.4 Redevelopment of Cookham Rise Shopping Parade**

Cookham Rise shopping parade is a very important part of the village and the businesses there provide a valuable service for all of Cookham. We have, however, heard much criticism of the quality of the appearance of the parade and we believe that there would be widespread support for proposals for its refurbishment or redevelopment provided that arrangements could be made for continuity of trading for the existing shops.

#### **10.5 The Gasholder Site in Cookham Rise**

There is much support for the early redevelopment of this site with social or starter type homes which are in keeping with the area and with the design brief prepared by RBWM.

**Figure 10-1 New Housing, Cookham Dean Bottom (Mike West)**



#### **10.6 Infill development**

It is inevitable that in any built up area, properties will be demolished and redeveloped from time to time and this process contributes to the long term sustainability of an area provided that it is measured and appropriate. It has been suggested that the plan should seek to place limits on the number of new homes developed in Cookham but we do not consider that this would be practical or enforceable. Rather, we would suggest that planning policy (and public spirit) should strongly discourage the piecemeal loss of garden spaces. Where larger sites are assembled which involve demolition of buildings, their replacement should be designed as an enhancement to the area (such as the

new houses erected on the former garage site at Cookham Dean Bottom or the new cottages adjacent to the railway line on Maidenhead Road) and should not put any pressure on the existing infrastructure or amenities.

## 10.7 Development of Community Housing

Additional social facilities such as residential homes, sheltered housing, housing association developments etc should be encouraged within the framework of planning policy so far as they meet the needs of the local population.

## 10.8 Key Findings

- Whilst it is accepted that Cookham cannot and should not try to prevent new development, the nature of the village and constraints on matters such as traffic and infrastructure taken together with the vital need to preserve the open spaces surrounding the village means that opportunities for acceptable development are severely limited.
- In particular, there should be no new development in the green belt surrounding Cookham. This applies to both housing and roads.
- To assist developers and planners in ensuring that new schemes are acceptable, the matters identified in this section should be developed in more detail and addresses in the Village Design Statement referred to in Section 3.

## 10.9 Action Plan

Ref	Proposal	Purpose	Responsibility	Timescales	What needs to be done
1.	Develop Village Design Statement to give guidance on acceptable forms of development.	To guide developers and planners and to discourage unsuitable forms of development.	The Cookham Society (or other similar body if they are unable to expand their role)	As soon as possible within the timescales for development of the Local Development Framework	Identify structure of VDS, undertake consultation, draft the VDS and negotiate with RBWM to ensure it is adopted.

## 11 COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

### 11.1 Remit

*Identify the stock of business premises in Cookham, their quality, effects on nearby premises and the type of development that may take place in the future.*

### 11.2 Stock

We have identified the following business premises in Cookham.

**Figure 11-1 Business Premises in Cookham**

Use Class <sup>3.7)</sup>	Cookham Village	Cookham Rise	Cookham Dean
A1 Shops - Shops, retail warehouses, hairdressers, undertakers, travel and ticket agencies, post offices, pet shops, sandwich bars, showrooms, domestic hire shops and funeral directors.	32	21	2
A2 Financial and professional services - Banks, building societies, estate and employment agencies, professional and financial services and betting offices.	1	6	-
A3 Restaurants and cafés - For the sale of food and drink for consumption on the premises - restaurants, snack bars and cafes.	4	3	-
A4 Drinking Establishments - a public house, wine-bar or other drinking establishment.	6	-	4
A5 Hot Food Takeaways - for the sale of hot food for consumption off the premises.	-	2	-
B1 Business - Offices, research and development, light industry appropriate in a residential area.	3	12	17
C2 Residential Institutions	4	-	1
D1 Non Residential Institutions	2	3	-
D2 Assembly and Leisure	-	1	-
<b>Totals</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>24</b>

### **11.3 Quality and Impact on Residents**

We have not been able to make any assessment of the quality of these premises.

Their impact on residents is wide ranging. On the positive side, they provide employment and are an important part of the character of Cookham. There have, however been a number of problems associated with business premises in close proximity with residential properties. For example:

- Parking problems where there is insufficient on-site parking for staff or customers (e.g. the offices in the former garage site at Cookham Dean, shops and restaurants in the High Street).
- Congestion caused by deliveries (e.g. pubs and restaurants in the High Street).
- Noise from music, plant and customers from pubs. There are concerns that this will worsen when smoking is banned and more people congregate in the street.
- Smells (e.g. restaurants).

It is important that these negative impacts are minimised if Cookham is to retain its valuable mixed economy.

### **11.4 Specific Planning Policies aimed at businesses in Cookham**

The impact of business operations on certain aspects of life in Cookham is recognised within the adopted plan by the inclusion of several specific policies. These are listed below together with (for completeness) the only other Cookham specific policy which deals with traffic matters.

#### **CKM1 - Cookham Village - Retail Role**

*The Borough Council will not approve proposals which would detract from the character of the Cookham High Street conservation area by:*

1. *Materially altering the existing mix of residential and commercial uses; or*
2. *Attracting additional traffic; or*
3. *Increased noise and disturbance*

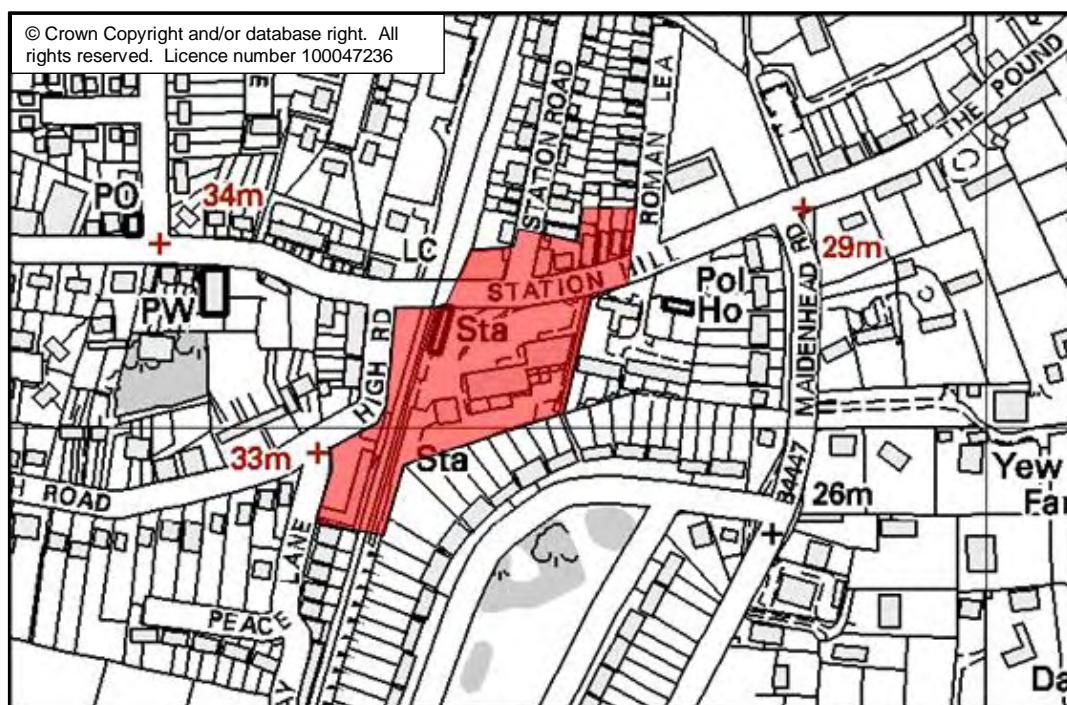
## **CKM2 -Cookham Rise - Retail Role**

*The Borough Council will not approve proposals which would result in a loss of existing retail, - (class A1)<sup>(3.7)</sup> units either through change of use or redevelopment within the commercial centre of Cookham Rise as defined on the Cookham Rise inset map (see Figure 11-2), unless it can be shown that the vitality and viability of the centre will not be harmed.*

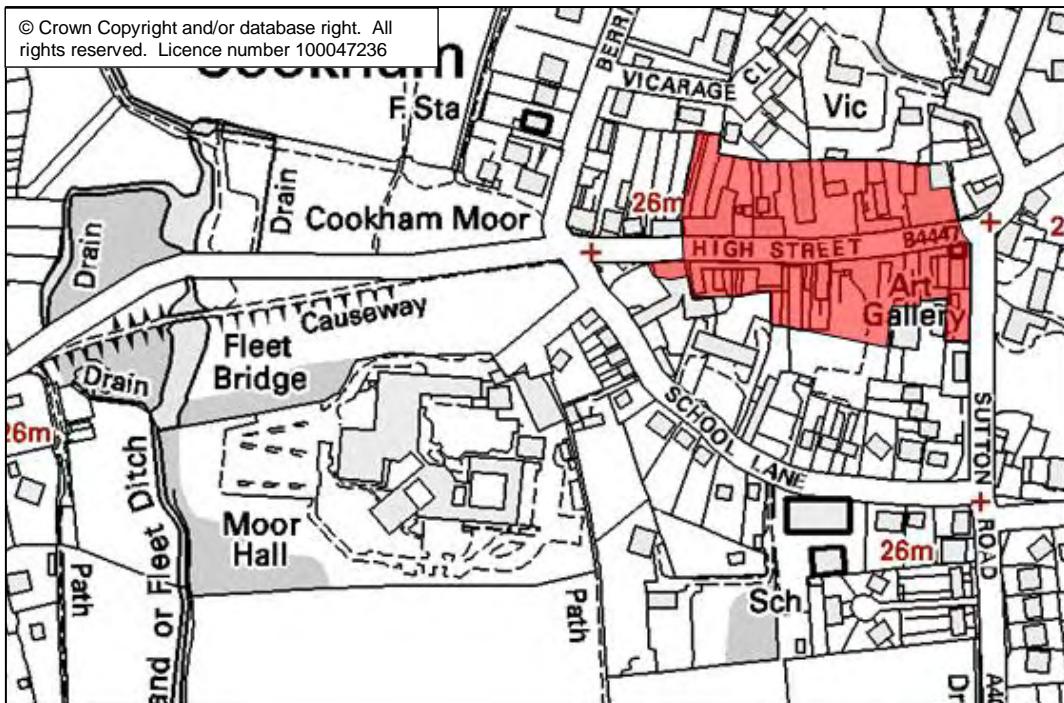
## **CKM3 - Cookham Village - Commercial Development**

*The Council will not permit the change of use to, or development for, additional commercial floor space within Cookham Village centre.(see) this includes uses in class A1, A2, A3 and B1 of the 1987 Use Classes Order<sup>(3.7)</sup> as well as other commercial uses outside those classes.*

**Figure 11-2 Cookham Rise Commercial Centre**



**Figure 11-3 Cookham Village Centre**



#### **CKM4 - Cookham Village - Commercial Development**

*The redevelopment of existing commercial premises in Cookham Village will only be acceptable if:*

1. *it consists of a scheme providing a mix of uses; and*
2. *it does not result in a business use (B1) on the ground floor in a shopping frontage; and*
3. *it includes a residential element where appropriate, and in any case does not involve the loss of a residential unit; and*
4. *the design, materials and landscaping contribute to an enhancement of the conservation area; and*
5. *there is no intensification of commercial uses on the site; and*
6. *adequate car parking is provided in accordance with the council's adopted standards as set out in appendix 7.*

#### **CKM5 - Cookham Rise**

*Proposals for B1 development involving a net increase in floor space of less than 300 sq metres will be acceptable within the commercial centre of Cookham Rise as defined on the inset map, where this does not involve*

1. *the loss of retail floor space or change of use on the ground floor of premises with a shopping frontage; or*
2. *the loss of a residential unit; or*
3. *the loss of a community use (use class d1 - non-residential institutions).*

#### **CKM6 - Highway and traffic management proposals**

*The Borough Council will investigate means of enhancing the Cookham Village Conservation Area and improving the safety of pedestrians and cyclists.*

*Possible measures may include:*

1. *traffic calming measures in the Pound with associated pavement widening;*
2. *the provision of improved facilities for pedestrian safety in Cookham village, including Cookham bridge;*
3. *environmental enhancement measures in the high street and around the war memorial, including a review of on-street parking provision.*

#### **11.5 Key Findings**

- Cookham has a significant business community working from over 120 premises. This forms a welcome and important part of the local scene where appropriately located and responsibly operated.
- Businesses and their customers can, however, have a negative impact on their neighbours. Business owners and the planning department should be sensitive to this and take all practical measures to minimise their interference with nearby occupiers.
- The impact of these business operations on residents should be given serious consideration when making and enforcing planning decisions.

#### **11.6 Action Plan**

Ref	Proposal	Purpose	Responsibility	Timescales	What needs to be done
1.	n/a				

## **12 ACCESSIBILITY**

### **12.1 Remit**

*In addressing the above matters, consider any provision necessary to meet the needs of physical, learning or other disabilities.*

### **12.2 Issues**

Other than the matter raised under section 9, no specific issues were identified for this topic.

### **12.3 Key Findings**

- Not applicable

### **12.4 Action Plan**

Ref	Proposal	Purpose	Responsibility	Timescales	What needs to be done
1.	n/a				

## **APPENDICES**

1. Working Group Remit
2. Planning Processes
3. Estimate of Sheltered Housing Needs
4. Illustration of the effects of Housing Growth on Cookham
5. References and additional material

## **Appendix 1. Working Group Remit**

# **COOKHAM VILLAGE PLAN - REMIT**

## **WORKING GROUP ON HOUSING & DEVELOPMENT**

### **Purpose of the Working Group**

The purpose of the Working Group is to assist the Steering Committee in producing the Cookham Village Plan and completing a Rural Villages Health Check by: researching its designated subject area; consulting with the public and relevant organisations; and preparing a report and action plan.

### **Designated Subject Area**

Housing and development. This covers everything related to existing and new housing, commercial, retail and other buildings and the built environment generally.

The subject area is likely to interface with those of the other Working Groups (People & Places; Environment & Land; Business & the Economy; and Transport & Traffic). The Working Group is to avoid duplication of work by agreeing boundaries with other Working Groups and with the Steering Committee.

### **Methodology**

The detailed methodology for the study is left to the Working Group to agree amongst its members. However, so that the Steering Committee may coordinate the activities of all the Working Groups, ensure that adequate resources are available and complete production of the Village Plan by the target date of 31 March 2007, the following constraints must be met:

#### **1. Objectives**

Review of the draft objectives set out below and agreement of their final content with the Steering Committee by 13 October 2006.

#### **2. Work Plan**

Production and agreement with the Steering Committee of a methodology and target plan for the work to be undertaken by 13 October 2006.

#### **3. Budget**

Drafting and agreement with the Steering Committee of a budget for the work by 13 October 2006.

#### **4. Questionnaire**

Production of any questions required to gather information from a village-wide survey to be organised by the Steering Committee by 27 October 2006.

## **5. Consultations**

The Working Group must identify and consult with all relevant interested parties. Proposed consultations must be agreed with the Steering Committee by 27 October 2006 so that approaches to each party by different Woking Groups can be coordinated.

## **6. Research**

As well as the questionnaire and other consultation, the Working Group should undertake additional research where necessary to obtain material for use in its report. Sources and the copyright status of any research material must be identified and cited in the report.

## **7. Meetings**

The Working Group is to provide a verbal progress report at each meeting of the Steering Committee.

## **Draft Objectives**

The Working Group is required to address the following issues:

### **1. Town Planning**

Review the built environment in Cookham, where and in what form future development should be permitted or prohibited, and how well the planning system works to meet residents' views.

### **2. Infrastructure**

Review the adequacy of existing infrastructure and identify how this may affect or constrain development. The review is to be based upon information about parking, public transport and traffic issues by the Traffic and Transport group and information about the capacity of schools, medical and similar facilities by the People and Places group.

### **3. Mobile Telephones**

Consider the issues associated with the siting of mobile telephone masts.

### **4. Flooding**

Consider the flood risks to Cookham and how these affect housing and development matters.

### **5. Building Quality**

Consider the quality of development and how to identify and encourage good design, the right mix of housing types and sustainable development

## **6. Housing demand and affordability**

Review demand for housing, its affordability and options to assist young people and essential workers to live in Cookham

## **7. Housing provision for the elderly and disabled**

Consider the adequacy of housing provision for elderly and disabled people, whether this is being lost to redevelopment and how to ensure adequate future provision

## **8. Siting of other Facilities**

Support the People & Places and Business & Economy groups by considering siting and other planning related matters arising from their proposals.

## **9. Commercial Development**

Identify the stock of business premises in Cookham, their quality, effects on nearby premises and the type of development that may take place in the future.

## **10. Accessibility**

In addressing the above matters, consider any provision necessary to meet the needs of physical, learning or other disabilities.

## **Report**

The working Group's report and action plan must be produced following the template that will be issued by the Steering Committee. The target date for completion is 26 January 2007.

The report is to be written in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Campaign for Clear English.

## **Action Plan**

For each of the study areas, produce a short action plan setting out:

- What is proposed?
- Why the action is needed
- Who will be responsible for taking the action?
- When will the action be taken forward?
- How the action will be implemented and (if possible) how much it will cost?

The working group must be able to demonstrate that projects it has identified have support within the local community and show that they have, where relevant, discussed projects with other organisations who will be able to assist in carrying out the action.

## **Appendix 2. Planning Processes**

### **1 Overview of planning system**

For detail about the RBWM planning department and the work that they do then please refer to the RBWM web site: <http://www.rbwm.gov.uk>.

In summary as of March 2007 the RBWM Planning Service Teams are:

#### **Building Control Consultancy**

This team helps to maintain a safe and healthy environment in which to live and work, by ensuring compliance with Building Regulations. They provide assistance with pre-application advice and help through the application and site inspection process. The service also deals with demolition notices and dangerous structures.

#### **Development Control**

This team deals with all matters relating to Planning Applications. The department is divided into three teams which deal with: large scale applications, medium scale applications and a "Fast Track" service which handles all the householder and domestic applications.

#### **Enforcement**

If someone has carried out building work, or changed the use of land or buildings without planning permission, or has not complied with conditions attached to a planning permission, the Enforcement section will investigate.

#### **Planning Policy**

This team is responsible for the Local Plan, providing advice on policy matters and developer contributions; the production of development briefs and other plans for specific sites and areas in the Borough, providing Census, demographic and monitoring information; and also advice on Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings and Archaeology.

Within the village the groups that have an interest in planning development are:

- The Parish Council -  
<http://www.cookham.com/cookhamnow/parishcouncil/index.htm>

A copy of their Strategic Plan can be found at this site

- The Cookham Society

## 2 Planning Policy

All building development follows a plan lead system which sets out what we can build and where and is controlled by policies which are created at government, regional, county and local levels. The local planning policy and therefore the Local Development Framework is not a standalone document, it highlights the aims of the Borough Council but when considering any plans the following documentation may also be taken into account:

Document	To be replaced by:	Description	Location
National Planning Policies		<b>Planning Policy Statements:</b> PPSs which are gradually replacing <b>Planning Policy Guidances:</b> PPGs – provide guidance to local planning authorities and others on planning policy and the operation of the planning system. They are about sustainable development, reuse of previously developed sites in areas well serviced by public transport. <b>Planning Circulars:</b>	<a href="http://www.communities.gov.uk">http://www.communities.gov.uk</a> PPS 1 Sustainable Development PPS 3 Housing PPS ? Climate Change PPS 25 Development and Flood Risk PPG 2 Green Belts PPG 15 Planning and the historic environment PPG 18 Enforcing Planning Control
Regional Planning Policy	Regional Spatial Strategy – the South East Plan	Provides framework for LDF for each area. – Regional Planning Policy for South East RPG9 covers the period till 2016. RSS sets out the vision for the region until 2026. Hopes to be published in 2008	<a href="http://southeast-ra.gov.uk">http://southeast-ra.gov.uk</a>
Berkshire Structure Plan	SE plan and the Core Strategy	Provides a broad strategy for managing development throughout the county.	<a href="http://www.berks-jspu.gov.uk">http://www.berks-jspu.gov.uk</a>
RBWM Local Plan	Local Development Framework	Boroughs current planning strategy set out in this document, over time this will be replaced by parts of the LDF. Some policies are to be 'saved' while others superseded – Appendix c of Core Strategy Document	<a href="http://www.rbwm.gov.uk">http://www.rbwm.gov.uk</a>

Document	To be replaced by:	Description	Location
	<b>Other relevant documents/agencies that are used in conjunction with the above policy documents:</b> Community Strategy for the Royal Borough Partnership Neighbouring Authority Plans Highway Authority Utility companies Local Transport Plan Housing Strategy Visitor Management Strategy Local Cultural Strategy Children and Young Peoples Plan Other Strategies		<a href="http://www.rbwm.gov.uk">http://www.rbwm.gov.uk</a>

It should be understood that the planning department use the policies listed above and many others as 'Material Consideration' i.e. the reason(s) given, for accepting or declining a planning application.

For the latest information on the Local Boroughs thinking/interpretation of the policies then refer to the Planning Policy Department.

### 3 Building Control & Licensing

#### 3.1 Building Control

Building Regulations are legal requirements aimed at achieving minimum standards of construction. They are levels of performance laid down by Parliament which deal with the construction of buildings and the installation of some services. The regulations cover a range of requirements including: structural stability, fire safety, moisture resistance and energy efficiency.

Building Regulations usually apply if putting up a new building, extending or altering an existing one or changing the use of a building. Building Regulation approval is completely different from Planning Permission and it does not mean that if you get one you will automatically get the other.

For the latest information on Building Control go to:

[http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/bc\\_building\\_control\\_index.htm](http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/bc_building_control_index.htm)

#### 3.2 Licences

Licenses are required for:

- Premises and Personal licenses - Selling of alcohol – Licensing Act 2003
- Providing entertainment
- Signage and lighting in a conservation area
- Street (pavement) cafes

Local licensing statement policy can be found at:

[http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/licensing\\_2003act.htm](http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/licensing_2003act.htm)

#### **4 Enforcement**

If building work does not comply to building regulations, the Building Control Team can ask the developer to alter or remove the building. If this request is ignored, the Council may serve a notice under Section 36 of the Building Act 1984 requiring the developer to carry out the work. This notice must be served within 12 months of the Building Control Team being involved with the development.

The planning enforcement policy document is available at:

[http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/public/enf\\_policy\\_statement.pdf](http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/public/enf_policy_statement.pdf)

#### **5 Core Strategies within the New Local Development Framework**

RBWM is currently in the process of replacing the adopted local plan with a new Local Development Framework. Central to this is a series of Core Strategies which are currently available in draft form. Those which are relevant to this report are listed below.

CS1- Spatial Strategy

CS2-Green Belt

CS3-Rural communities

CS5-The natural environment and conservation

CS7-Landscape

CS8-River Thames Corridor

CS9-Pollution and Noise Nuisance

CS10-Flood Risks

CS11-Renewable Energy

CS12-Enhancing the Historic Environment

CS13-Achieving Quality Buildings and Spaces

CS14-Safe and Accessible Environment

CS15-Housing Allocation

CS16-Approach to Housing Delivery

CS17-Housing the Community

CS18-Affordable Housing

CS19-Rural Exceptions Affordable Housing

CS20-Managing the Delivery of Housing

CS25-Open Spaces

CS26-Community and Physical Infrastructure

## **Appendix 3. Estimate of Sheltered Housing Needs**

### **Introduction**

Following the meeting of Working Group leaders on 13 June 2007, the Housing & Development Working Group were requested to provide an estimate of demand for sheltered housing within Cookham.

This has proved difficult to do as a result of the apparent lack of published planning norms for such accommodation. We have, however managed to locate an analysis of existing provision across local authority areas in England and this forms the basis for our estimate.

### **Source Documents**

Statistics on 'Extra Care' Sheltered Housing in England (Elderly Accommodation Counsel, April 2005)<sup>(9.1)</sup>

Parish Profile - People (National Statistics, 2001 Census)<sup>(9.2)</sup>

### **Existing provision levels**

The paper by the Elderly Accommodation Counsel (EAC) defines 'Extra Care' Housing as having the following attributes:

- being housing first - not an institution;
- enables people to age in place - appropriate design, plus help and encouragement towards independent living;
- perhaps also providing intermediate care and rehabilitation services.

EAC's analysis takes a broad view of whether existing facilities meet these criteria. The paper seeks to identify the number of units in each local authority area in England and expresses the provision in terms of units per 1000 people over 65. In summary, the findings are:

Minimum Provision (all areas)	0 (in 92 areas)
Maximum Provision (all areas)	30.8 (Richmondshire)
Average Provision (all areas)	3.4
Minimum Provision (Berkshire)	1.6 (West Berks)
Maximum Provision (Berkshire)	8.4 (Reading)
Average Provision (Berkshire)	5.1
Provision (RBWM)	3.6

For the purposes of this estimate, we have assumed that a reasonable provision level is 6 units per 1000 people over 65. This is based upon the Berkshire average plus a 20% allowance to cover the potential under-measurement which EAC acknowledge may be inherent in their data.

## **Cookham's Needs**

The 2001 Census shows Cookham having a total population of 5,519 of whom 569 were aged 65 - 74 and 496 were 75 or over (a total of 1,065 over 65). Using the norm of 6 units per 1000, this translates as a requirement of 6 units.

The census also shows that there are 1,558 people aged between 45 and 64. If we make a very simplistic assumption that, by the end of the 20 year period of the plan, the population of over 65s comprises all those currently in the 45 - 74 age range (and this would need adjusting for mortality rates and population shifts in a more accurate estimate), then the population of over 65s will grow to 2,127 requiring 13 units.

As shown in Figure 9.1 on page 96 of the Housing & Development report, Cookham currently has 25 sheltered units. This suggests that supply is more than adequate for local demand.

This finding is in conflict with views expressed in the questionnaire. We cannot conclusively explain this but possible reasons may be:

- The relatively low overall provision in RBWM puts pressure on the spaces in Cookham from outside the village.
- The accommodation does not meet local people's requirements in some way (perhaps a reluctance to use housing association accommodation rather than private sector provision?).

Taking these factors into account, we can see that there may be justification for a small scale private sheltered housing development in Cookham but that this is unlikely to need more than an absolute maximum of 13 units based solely on local needs.

## **Appendix 4. Illustration of the Effects of Housing Growth on Cookham**

### **Introduction**

During the preparation of this report, it was suggested that the Cookham Plan should include a target for the increase of house numbers in Cookham. The following exercise was undertaken to illustrate the potential impact of adopting such a proposal.

### **Basis of Calculation**

The 2001 census shows that there are approximately 2,300 dwellings in Cookham. The following table shows how these numbers would increase over 10 and 20 years (the theoretical span of the Cookham Plan).

<b>Houses now</b>	<b>2,300</b>					
<b>Growth PA</b>	<b>0.5%</b>	<b>1.0%</b>	<b>1.5%</b>	<b>2.0%</b>	<b>2.5%</b>	<b>3.0%</b>
Extra after 10 years	118	241	369	504	644	791
Extra after 20 years	241	506	798	1,118	1,469	1,854

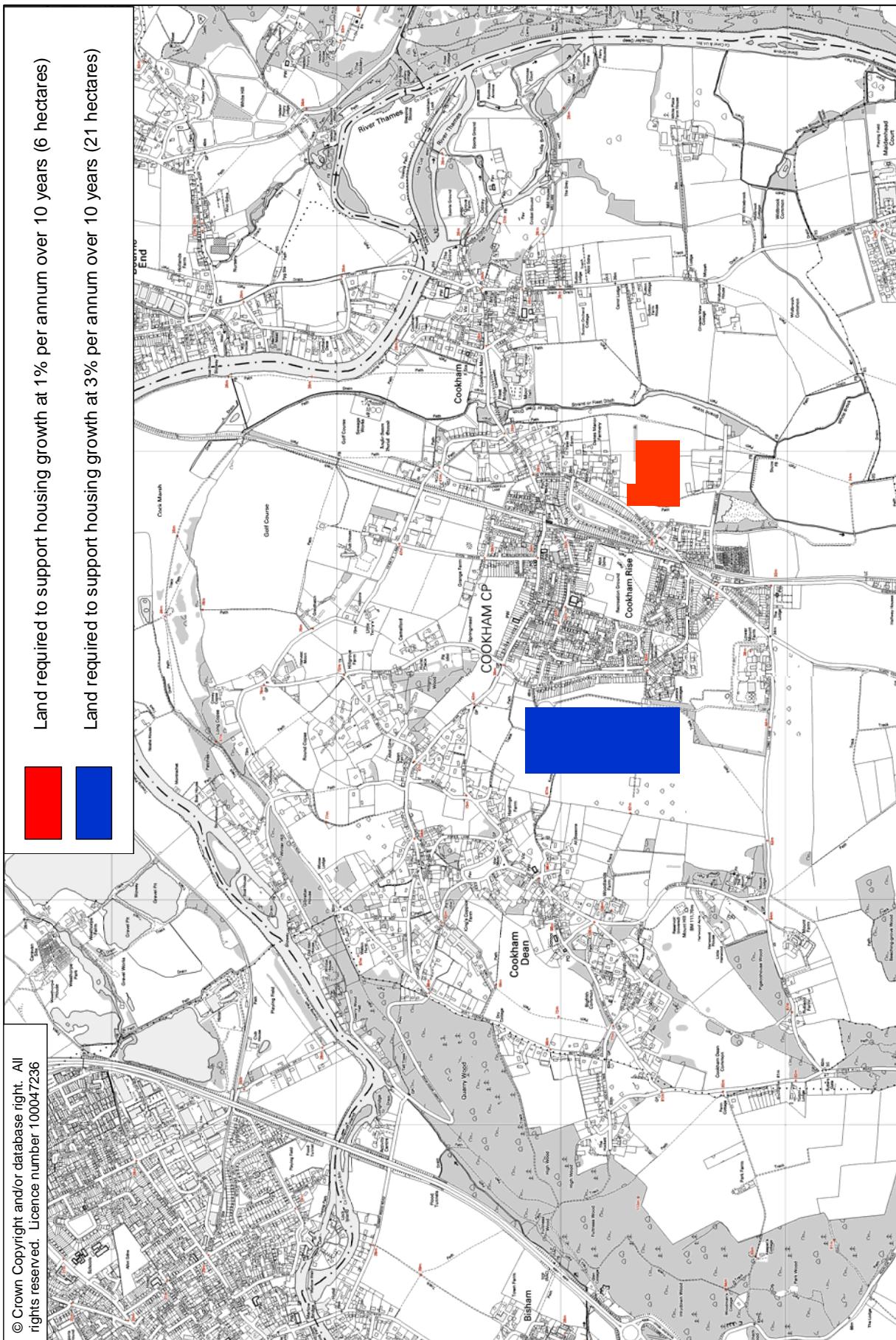
The amount of space required for additional houses depends on the density of development. Typical planning guidelines are:

- Low density (less than 25 dwellings per hectare)
- Medium density (between 25 and 49 dwellings per hectare). Much of Cookham Rise is understood to be of this general density.
- High density (between 50 and 74 dwellings per hectare)

Assuming a mid-range, medium density of 37.5 dwellings per hectare, the additional accommodation shown in the above table would require the following amount of land:

<b>Growth PA</b>	<b>0.5%</b>	<b>1.0%</b>	<b>1.5%</b>	<b>2.0%</b>	<b>2.5%</b>	<b>3.0%</b>
Area required (hectares) after 10 years	3.14	6.42	9.85	13.43	17.18	21.09
Area required (hectares) after 20 years	6.43	13.50	21.27	29.80	39.17	49.44

By way of illustration, the areas required after 10 years of growth at 1% and 3% per annum are shown on the following page.



## **Appendix 5. References and Additional Material**

### **3 Town Planning**

- 3.1 Conservation Area Statement: Cookham High Street – Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead Planning Policy Manager, March 2002  
([http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/public/pp\\_cookham\\_high\\_street\\_conservation\\_area\\_statement.pdf](http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/public/pp_cookham_high_street_conservation_area_statement.pdf))
- 3.2 Conclusive Map of Open Country and Registered Common Land – Natural England  
(<http://www.openaccess.gov.uk/S4/jsp/terms.jsp?search=BNG&mapType=conc&mapRegion=3&for=489500,185500>)
- 3.3 Conservation Area Statement: Cookham Dean – Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead Planning Policy Manager, November 1998  
([http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/public/pp\\_cookham\\_dean\\_conservation\\_area\\_statement.pdf](http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/public/pp_cookham_dean_conservation_area_statement.pdf))
- 3.4 Regional Planning Guidance for the South East (RPG9) – Government Offices for the South East, East of England and London,  
(<http://www.go-se.gov.uk/497648/docs/171301/311174/RPG9March2001.pdf>)
- 3.5 Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Local Plan (Incorporating Alterations adopted in June 2003) – Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead, 2003.  
([http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/pp\\_local-plan-online-version.htm](http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/pp_local-plan-online-version.htm))
- 3.6 Local Development Framework Submission Core Strategy and Policies Development Plan Document – Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead, November 2006.  
([http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/pp\\_core\\_strategy.htm](http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/pp_core_strategy.htm))
- 3.7 Town & Country (Use Classes) Order 1987  
([http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si1987/Uksi\\_19870764\\_en\\_1.htm](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si1987/Uksi_19870764_en_1.htm))

The following classes are referred to in this report:

A1 Shops - Shops, retail warehouses, hairdressers, undertakers, travel and ticket agencies, post offices, pet shops, sandwich bars, showrooms, domestic hire shops and funeral directors.

A2 Financial and professional services - Banks, building societies, estate and employment agencies, professional and financial services and betting offices.

A3 Restaurants and cafés - For the sale of food and drink for consumption on the premises - restaurants, snack bars and cafes.

A4 Drinking Establishments - a public house, wine-bar or other drinking establishment.

A5 Hot Food Takeaways - for the sale of hot food for consumption off the premises.

B1 Business - Offices, research and development, light industry appropriate in a residential area.

D1 Non Residential Institutions

D2 Assembly and Leisure

- 3.8 Interpretation of Policy F1 (Development within areas liable to flood) - Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead, 2004.  
([http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/public/pp\\_Flooding\\_SPG\\_policy.rtf.pdf](http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/public/pp_Flooding_SPG_policy.rtf.pdf))

- 3.9 Wycombe District Local Plan to 2011 – Wycombe District Council, 2004.  
(<http://www.wycombeapps.co.uk/localplan/>)

- 3.10 South Bucks District Local Plan – South Bucks District Council, 1999.  
([http://www.southbucks.gov.uk/environment/planning/local\\_plan/default.asp](http://www.southbucks.gov.uk/environment/planning/local_plan/default.asp))

#### **4 Building Quality**

- 4.1 Household Energy Efficiency: Postnote, Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology, October 2005.  
(<http://www.parliament.uk/documents/upload/postpn249.pdf>)

- 4.2 Average Domestic Carbon Dioxide Emissions Across Britain, British Gas, May 2006  
([http://www.britishgasnews.co.uk/managed\\_content/files/pdf/EmissionsMap.pdf](http://www.britishgasnews.co.uk/managed_content/files/pdf/EmissionsMap.pdf))  
(<http://www.britishgasnews.com/index.asp?PageID=19&Year=2006&NewsID=686>)

#### **5 Infrastructure**

- 5.1 Supplementary Planning Document Planning Obligations and Developer Contributions – Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead, December 2005.  
([http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/pp\\_planning\\_obligations.htm](http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/pp_planning_obligations.htm))

- 5.2 Renewable Energy Resources web page – Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead, 2007.  
([http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/eh\\_renewable-energy.htm](http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/eh_renewable-energy.htm))

- 5.3 Planning Policy Statement 3 Housing – HMSO, 2006  
([http://www.communities.gov.uk/pub/931/PlanningPolicyStatement3Housing\\_id1504931.pdf](http://www.communities.gov.uk/pub/931/PlanningPolicyStatement3Housing_id1504931.pdf))

- 5.4 Planning Policy Guidance 13 Transport – HMSO, March 2001  
([http://www.communities.gov.uk/pub/138/PlanningPolicyGuidance13Transport\\_id1507138.pdf](http://www.communities.gov.uk/pub/138/PlanningPolicyGuidance13Transport_id1507138.pdf))

## **6 Mobile Telephones**

- 6.1 Mobile Phone Masts - Report of an Inquiry by the All Party Mobile Group, July 2004  
(<http://www.apmobile.org.uk/apmobile%20rpt%203.pdf>)
- 6.2 The Electronic Communications Code (Conditions and Restrictions) Regulations 2003, Statutory Instrument 2003 No. 2553  
(<http://www.opsi.gov.uk/SI/si2003/20032553.htm>)
- 6.3 Mobile Phones and Health, Independent Expert Group on Mobile Phones, May 2000 ('The Stuart Report')  
(<http://www.iegmp.org.uk/report/text.htm>)
- 6.4 Planning Policy Guidance 8: Telecommunications, Department for Communities and Local Government, August 2001 ('PPG8')  
(<http://www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1143963>)
- 6.5 Interpretation of Policy TEL1 (Telecommunications Development) Final Guidance, Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead (Planning & Environment), December 2000  
([http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/public/060123\\_telecom-spg\\_467kb.pdf](http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/public/060123_telecom-spg_467kb.pdf))

## **7 Flooding**

- 7.1 Strande Lane Flood Alleviation Scheme Pre-Feasibility Study Summary Report, Environment Agency, March 2004.  
([http://www.frags.org.uk/future/Strande\\_Lane.pdf](http://www.frags.org.uk/future/Strande_Lane.pdf))
- 7.2 Mechanisms of Flooding Report: An Independent Report on the Cause of Flooding Along the River Thames Between Hurley and Teddington in January 2003, Mechanisms of Flooding Subgroup on behalf of the Flood Relief Action Groups, March 2004.  
(<http://www.frags.org.uk/mechofflooding.htm>)
- 7.3 Review of Recent Flooding in the Thames Valley: Phase 1 Final Report, Water Research Associates for the Upstream Group, October 2003.
- 7.4 Environment Agency Flood Map  
([http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/yourenv/eff/1190084/natural\\_forces/flooding/?lang=\\_e](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/yourenv/eff/1190084/natural_forces/flooding/?lang=_e))

## **9 Housing Provision for the Elderly and Disabled**

- 9.1 Statistics on 'Extra Care' Sheltered Housing in England, Elderly Accommodation Counsel, April 2005.

([http://www.integratedcarenetwork.gov.uk/\\_library/Resources/Housing/Housing\\_advice/Statistics\\_on\\_Extra\\_Care\\_Housing\\_in\\_England\\_EAC\\_April\\_2005.pdf](http://www.integratedcarenetwork.gov.uk/_library/Resources/Housing/Housing_advice/Statistics_on_Extra_Care_Housing_in_England_EAC_April_2005.pdf))

- 9.2 Parish Profile - People, National Statistics, 2001 Census.

(<http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/LeadAreaSearch.do?a=7&c=cookham&r=1&i=1001&m=0&s=1195375242703&enc=1&areaSearchText=cookham&areaSearchType=16&extendedList=true&searchAreas=Search>)