

Revised Cookham Plan

**Final Draft Report
by the
Traffic and Transport Working Group**

To

Cookham Parish Council

24th November, 2008

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SECTION 1

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

1 Summary of Findings

1.1 Introduction

This report has been produced to address the Traffic and Transport issues for Cookham in the next 5-10 years.

1.2 Scope

The topics covered are:-

- Road Safety
- Parking (including the Parade)
- Flooding (insofar as it affects roads and access)
- Cycling
- Public Transport
- The Pound

Full reports are attached.

A review of schools parking and related congestion will be undertaken in September.

1.3 Key Assumption

The Group has not adopted a specific target for traffic growth but it is assumed that traffic volumes will not grow substantially. The Parish Council, however, felt that there would be an increase in through traffic as a result of extra homes planned for Maidenhead.

1.4 Key Issues

It is widely accepted that there should be a switch from private to public transport. It is also widely accepted that climate change is likely to increase the likelihood of flooding.

1.5 Conclusions and Recommendations

1.5.1 Road Safety

The purchase of an electronic Speed Indicator Detector for use in Cookham, which could be moved around the area speed “hot spots” – Sutton Road, Whyteladyes Lane, Dean Lane and Maidenhead Road etc.

Section 1 – Summary of Findings

1.5.2 Parking

Optimise current parking (additional capacity is potentially available in Cookham Village and Cookham Rise).

Set up groups to organise funding for and implement refurbishment of the Cookham Moor and Parade car parks.

Investigate ways of reducing long term parking on Lower Road.

Establish the legal position with regard to the Station car park, in order to understand whether car park charges could be introduced.

1.5.3 Flooding

Ensure that in the event of flooding the Causeway can be used by light vehicles for emergency access to Cookham Village. This requires maintaining the Fleet Bridge, carrying out any remedial work, having contingency plans in place to manage traffic flows and keeping the channel clear so that water can flow under the bridge.

1.5.4 Cycling

The Group examined whether it would be possible to extend the cycle way from Lightlands Lane to the Bourne End railway bridge. There are problems with all the potential routes and there are no plans for a cycle track from Bourne End. The Group concluded that it is not feasible to extend the route until the current problems can be overcome.

The Group recommends providing cyclists with lock-up facilities in the Parade/Cookham station area and improving the access point to the Cookham-Maidenhead cycle path.

1.5.5 Public Transport

The Group recognises that the Parish has a limited role in developing public transport. However, it can lobby on behalf of Cookham.

There needs to be encouragement to switch to public transport. This could be achieved by publicising routes and fares. In the future, the bus and train companies need to work together to provide complementary services rather than competing with each other. The existing public transport provision in Cookham Rise and Cookham Village is not adequate to achieve the switch and is virtually non-existent in Cookham Dean.

The Parish Council should liaise with the Marlow-Maidenhead Passengers' Association about public transport.

Section 1 – Summary of Findings

1.5.6 The Pound

A traffic survey was carried out which showed that traffic volumes in The Pound are high and that the current humps are successful in limiting traffic speeds.

After reviewing several options, the Group recommends that a feasibility study be carried out on widening the pavement at its narrowest points, allowing easier passage for pedestrians without narrowing the road itself. This is the best compromise. The Group also recommends that the slope up to the pedestrian crossing (known as the attack angle) is restored and the installation of a fourth hump to further restrict traffic speeds (the fourth hump proposal is not recommended by some members of the Group).

The Parish Council concurs with the recommendation concerning widening the footpath. However, the Parish Council is assured by RBWM that the pedestrian crossing is a legal and legitimate piece of street “hardware”. The Parish Council does not consider that a fourth hump is required.

1.6 Implementation

The Group recommends that a permanent Traffic and Transport Group be set up to implement the recommendations and to monitor traffic in Cookham. This Group could either have a Parish Councillor at its head or could report to a nominated Parish Councillor.

This Group could:-

- Progress the detailed recommendations contained in this report.
- Work with other organisations to improve aspects of Traffic and Transport.
- Assist in practical ways with improving car parks.

SECTION 2

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

2 Introduction and Background

2.1 Background

Following the decision by Cookham Parish Council (CPC) in March 2008 that the Cookham Plan needed to be revisited, the CPC began the process of recruiting members of the Cookham community to undertake this work. The CPC decided that the most urgent requirement was to revisit Traffic and Transport, and accordingly the Traffic and Transport Working Group (TTWG) was established first.

2.1.1 Recruitment

At and after the Pinder Hall meeting on February 12th, the CPC asked people to volunteer to revise the Cookham Plan. By April, twenty-one residents had offered to be involved and the CPC decided that all those who volunteered should be entitled to participate. Subsequently, three of the original 21 have withdrawn, and the remaining 18 are listed in Appendix A.

The volunteers comprise residents from Cookham Village, Cookham Rise and Cookham Dean and broadly reflect the population mix of the three Cookhams.

2.1.2 Remit

A remit was drafted by the group and submitted to the CPC for approval. The CPC made some amendments and the revised version was issued to the TTWG in April. This is attached as Appendix B. The TTWG has followed this remit and has not sought any changes to it.

2.2 Strategic Overview

2.2.1 Time scale

The original Cookham Plan took 20 years as its time scale. In the opinion of the TTWG, it is very difficult to look 20 years or even 10 years ahead. The concerns about climate change, the escalation of fuel costs and new technologies relating to transport in general and cars in particular mean that transport in 20 years time could be radically different.

2.2.2 Key Assumptions

New housing is one of the key drivers to the growth of traffic. Cookham Rise in particular has seen a substantial amount of additional housing over the last five to ten years. The signals for the future are mixed – the RBWM is being tasked with identifying more sites for house building. However a recent statement by Teresa May, MP for Maidenhead, supported greater autonomy at local level (see July 24th copy of Maidenhead Advertiser) so this policy might not survive a change of government.

In preparing this report, the Group has not adopted a specific target for traffic growth but it is assumed that traffic volumes are unlikely to grow substantially.

2.2.3 Key Issues

One of the important issues to be considered is climate change. It is widely accepted that there should be a switch from private to public transport. It is also widely accepted that climate change is likely to increase the likelihood of flooding.

2.3 The scope of the project

The TTWG reviewed the work of the Traffic and Transport section of the previous Cookham Plan (the Group includes one member from the earlier team). As well as the subjects covered previously, the TTWG identified and researched other issues, which are also covered in this report.

2.3.1 Interfaces with other groups

The results from the previous working groups have been studied for interfaces and these have been taken into account as far as they can be. However, the TTWG is the first group to report on the revisited Cookham Plan, so it will be the responsibility of the other working groups to liaise with members of the TTWG team as and when necessary. It is possible that the TTWG report will need some revision after the other groups have reported.

2.3.2 Evidence based approach

The TTWG approach has been to seek evidence and consult widely. Appendix C contains a list of the people and organisations that provided input. Having studied the evidence, the group studied the options and formed an opinion as to which of the options was the most attractive or least unattractive. Where we were unable to reach a consensus, the opinions of the minority are also included and clearly identified.

We have attempted, wherever possible, to reflect the concerns and wishes of the people of Cookham (as analysed in the market research study sent to all Cookham households) in the work and recommendations of the TTWG. Without this, the work of this group would have no legitimacy.

2.3.3 Topics covered

The issues covered by the TTWG are listed below and the report contains sections on:-

- Road safety
- Schools congestion
- Parking (including the Parade)
- Flooding (insofar as it affects roads and access)
- Cycling
- Public transport
- The Pound

2.4 The Cookham Survey

2.4.1 Cookham Residents' opinions and aspirations

A survey was carried out as part of the original Cookham Plan. A questionnaire was mailed to all Cookham households. The response rate was 23% (good for a postal survey) and the sample of 644 is sufficiently robust to give confidence that the results do reflect the opinions of Cookham residents.

In summary, the Group regards itself as working for the CPC on behalf of the residents of Cookham.

The full results of the survey are on the Cookham website. An extract of the relevant results is as follows:-

General attitude to Cookham

Q4. What do you like about living in the Cookhams	Count	% of all respondents
Pleasant rural environment	627	97.4%
Convenient geographical location	464	72.0%
Good transport links	297	46.1%
Facilities in nearby towns	286	44.4%
The village primary schools	148	23.0%
A caring community	299	46.4%
Local employment opportunities	30	4.7%
Plenty to do	173	26.9%
Other	94	14.6%
Total number of respondents	644	

These results show that Cookham residents above all value the pleasant rural environment. Its location and transport links are also major attributes that Cookham residents like. With regard to future development, the following statements are relevant.

Section 2 – Introduction and Background

Future development

The Cookhams should remain a semi-rural environment with a strictly limited increase in housing stock		In general, the undeveloped open areas should be protected from development	
Q8A	%	Q8B	%
Strongly Agree	79%	Strongly Agree	81%
Agree	16%	Agree	14%
No opinion	1%	No opinion	1%
Disagree	1%	Disagree	0%
Strongly Disagree	0%	Strongly Disagree	0%
None	4%	None	3%
Total	100%	Total	100%

These results indicate that Cookham residents would like future housing development to be strictly limited and open spaces sustained.

This was reinforced by the responses to question 11 which asked:- “**Do you think there are areas that should be protected from development?**”. This was an open-ended question which was completed by 466 respondents (72%), and the overwhelming majority of responses were concerned with protecting the green belt/green areas in general and Poundfield in particular.

It follows from the above, that solutions to traffic problems that would lead to or be likely to lead to housing and building on open areas would not be acceptable to Cookham residents, unless there were overwhelming benefits for the village.

Section 2 – Introduction and Background

With regard to traffic and transport, the relevant results are:-

Q15 To what extent do the following affect you?

Traffic congestion		Safety (speeding, accident blackspots etc.)		Lack of parking	
Q15A	%	Q15B	%	Q15C	%
Significant	24.70%	Significant	32.60%	Significant	20.20%
Some	44.30%	Some	40.20%	Some	37.30%
No/none	31.10%	No/none	27.10%	No/none	42.50%
Total	100%	Total	100%	Total	100%

Congestion affects 69% of respondents to a greater or lesser extent. Safety was a greater issue, with 72.8% expressing concern. Finally, 57.5% of residents were to some degree concerned about parking. However, the questionnaire did not ask for the specific location of the problem areas.

SECTION 3

ROAD SAFETY

3 Road Safety

3.1 Remit

The main topics investigated by this group were road safety in general, speed limits, road signs and the extent of footways in the Cookhams. Related aspects, such as parking, have been dealt with by other groups. For completeness, a survey of pavements was carried out which is shown at the end of this section.

3.2 Summary

Overall, the Cookhams constitute a relatively safe area, having a very low reported accident rate. There are some locations where speeding is felt to be an issue affecting road safety.

Some areas which are perceived by some as dangerous, such as The Pound, appear to have no recorded traffic or traffic/pedestrian incidents and only one incident involving vehicles. In The Pound, in particular, this is felt to be due to the restricted width, which obliges drivers to proceed slowly and with caution, thus lowering the possibility of collisions and allowing pedestrians and drivers time to take evasive action when necessary.

The Dean has many narrow lanes and few pavements, but again it seems that low traffic speeds, plus the inhabitants' awareness of danger spots have resulted in a statistically safe road environment.

An analysis of reported traffic accidents in the Cookhams, for the five years up to 31 May 2008, was obtained from the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead. This can be summarised as follows:

There were a total of 36 reported accidents, of which:

- None involved fatalities.
- 2 involved serious injury.
- These were vehicle to vehicle incidents and did not involve pedestrians or cyclists.
- 5 involved pedestrians, of which 3 were the result of cars reversing into pedestrians.
- 2 involved cyclists at junctions.
- 1 involved a person being clipped by a wing mirror in the High Street.
- 1 occurred when a family was crossing the road leading up to the bridge on the road to Bourne End.
- 2 involved drivers who either were, or were suspected to be, inebriated.
- 2 involved drivers who were using mobile phones.

Section 3 – Road Safety

- The vast majority of accidents were the result of inattention. e.g. rear shunts, vehicles turning right.
- 3 occurred in Whyteladyes Lane, all involving vehicles turning. Speed was not a factor. There have been no accidents in Whyteladyes Lane in the last three years.
- 1 occurred in the Pound, when a motorcyclist and a car collided at the junction with Terry's Lane. Again, speed was not a factor.
- Over the reported period, Winter Hill Road, Switchback Road and Sutton Road had slightly more accidents than other locations.

The conclusions drawn from the data are that:-

- a) The Cookhams enjoy a statistically lower accident rate than other parts of the Borough; although this should not be a cause for complacency.
- b) There is no statistical evidence of actual risk to pedestrians using The Pound.
- c) There is no statistical evidence of actual risk to pedestrians in Whyteladyes Lane.
- d) Neither of the roads has been the site of any accidents in the last three years.

Discussions with PC de Haan, drawing on his experience over a longer time frame, indicated that there are, however, a number of locations where he feels that excessive speed is potentially dangerous and in some of which there have been serious accidents.

3.3 Suggestions

1. Sutton Road

Historically, this seems to have incurred a relatively high accident rate.

The TTWG recommends that thought be given to starting the 30mph speed limit further from Cookham Village, and lowering the speed limit across Widbrook.

2. Maidenhead Road

The section of Maidenhead Road to the east of the cemetery is quite narrow.

The TTWG suggests that the speed limit is reviewed.

3. Whyteladyes Lane

As detailed above, none of the three accidents reported during the last five years was considered speed related or classified as "serious". Nevertheless, the Group understands that there has been some concern about speeding in Whyteladyes Lane, and a survey carried out by RBWM in April 2008 showed that approximately 50% of traffic exceeded the 30mph limit. The majority of speeding traffic is in the 31mph – 35 mph range.

The Group suggests enforcement of the speed limit, possibly by Speed Indication Displays (SIDs).

4. Dean Lane

Dean Lane is currently a 40mph zone, which is arguably too fast for a narrow, winding, through road carrying a substantial volume of traffic. The Group understands that RBWM will shortly impose a 30mph restriction, which it is hoped will improve road safety. {subsequent to the preparation of this report, this has been implemented}

Anecdotal evidence suggests that parking on the road near Cookham Dean Village Hall has caused several near misses. The Group suggests that the provision of alternative parking be investigated, with a view to banning roadside parking near the hall.

5. Speed Indication Display

The Parish Council might consider acquiring a Speed Indication Display, which could be sequentially sited at perceived speeding hot spots for appropriate periods. It is understood that these are most effective if not left in one place for too long.

3.4 Issues Covered Elsewhere in this Report

Other concerns which have been noted, but which fall within the remit of other working groups (relevant groups in brackets):-

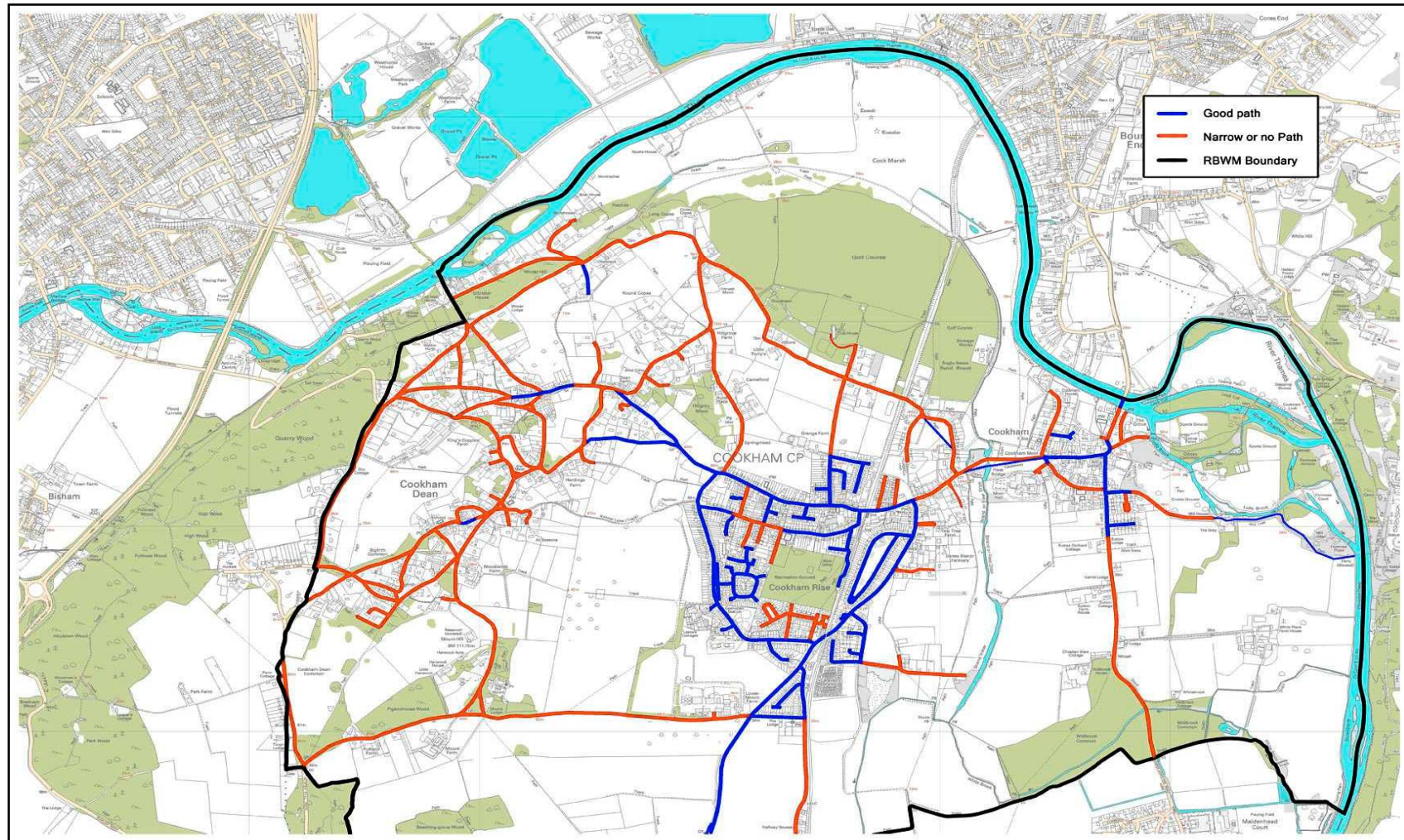
- The parking situation in Lower Road seems to have deteriorated, possibly as a result of new housing development, which does not appear to have adequate parking spaces. (Parking)
- Sometimes several large vehicles delivering to Countrystore arrive simultaneously, parking on both sides of the road, with predictable adverse effects. (Parking)
- As noted above, The Pound is perceived as dangerous to pedestrians, particularly in respect of the restricted pavement width at some points. (Traffic Flow and The Pound)

3.5 Conclusion

Notwithstanding the recommendations above, the TTWG has not been able to envisage any major initiative, within our remit, that would greatly improve road safety in the Cookhams, without harming the pleasant, semi-rural aspect which is so valued by the residents.

Section 3 – Road Safety

Survey of Cookham's Pathways



SECTION 4

SCHOOL PARKING CONGESTION

4 School Parking Congestion

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SECTION 5

PARKING AND THE PARADE

5 Parking and the Parade

5.1 Background

Parking was reported to be a significant problem for 20% of Cookham residents, with a further 37% reporting some problems. The Parade was mentioned as being an area that needed a facelift. It is recognised that Cookham needs its retail outlets, and shop viability is the key to maintaining the range of retail outlets in Cookham Village and Cookham Rise (this is less of an issue in Cookham Dean). Solutions to parking problems need to recognise this, and the proposals contained in this report should not damage the viability of existing retail outlets.

Responsibility for the enforcement of parking regulations was transferred from the police to RBWM earlier this year. It is too early to evaluate whether this has resulted in a change to parking behaviour.

5.2 Remit

The remit of this working group was parking and the Parade, but please note that it did not include parking problems related to schools. These are being reviewed by a different team.

The Group has identified areas where parking could be better utilised. This would require an agreement between the Parish Council and the site owners/operators. Such an agreement is beyond the scope of this team and the authority of the Parish Council would be required prior to any discussions taking place.

5.3 Methodology

The team reached its conclusions and recommendations having:-

- Surveyed the three areas comprising the three Cookhams.
- Observed when and where parking is problematical.
- Interviewed those directly involved (e.g. retailers), with the exception of the National Trust, whose opinions had been obtained by the previous working group.

5.4 Specific areas

The parking “hot spots” are:-

- Cookham Village.
- The Moor.
- The Parade and the Station car park (including Elizabeth House).
- Lower road, particularly around the Medical Centre.
- Around Cookham Dean Village Hall.

Section 5 – Parking and the Parade

5.4.1 Cookham Village

There is a general shortage of parking in Cookham village. Parking is required by shops and businesses, residents, shoppers and tourists, particularly those visiting the Spencer Gallery. While some businesses do have their own parking (King's Arms, the Crown, the Ferry, Malik's), the majority do not. A partial solution for residents had been agreed prior to this study that would allow the introduction of residents' permits, in return for a small increase in on-street parking.

There is a small public car park on Sutton Road for 18 cars, and private parking for approximately 25 cars behind the Parish Centre (for use by the Parish Centre) as well as some on street parking. Parking is allowed on the north side of Cookham High Street, but not on the south side. Nevertheless, delivery vans and others frequently park on the yellow lines on the south side, creating congestion.

There are no opportunities to increase parking in Cookham Village itself. However, the car park behind the Parish Centre is sometimes underused. Provided that the Parish Centre agrees, parking on the High Street could be eased if more local retailers were allowed and encouraged to park here rather than elsewhere in the Village, and particularly on the High Street. Signage to the car park is non-existent, so it is unlikely that many visitors use this car park. The car park does not have parking bays marked out, so the parking space is not efficiently utilised.

Subject to the agreement of the Holy Trinity Parochial Church Council, the recommendations of the group are:-

- To mark out spaces on the Parish Centre car park.
- To encourage more local retailers to use this car park.

5.4.2 Holy Trinity School

The previous Cookham Plan recommended a feasibility study into a new road and car park from Sutton Road to the field behind the school. As mentioned above, issues related to parking and Holy Trinity school (essentially drop off and collection of pupils) will be dealt with separately.

This Group does not recommend a feasibility study for the following reasons:-

- The parking and congestion problems relating to drop-off and pick-up of pupils do not require the construction of a permanent car park.
- The Stanley Spencer Gallery does not support a car park in that position as it is too far away and is not acceptable for disabled access. Coaches park away from the village in

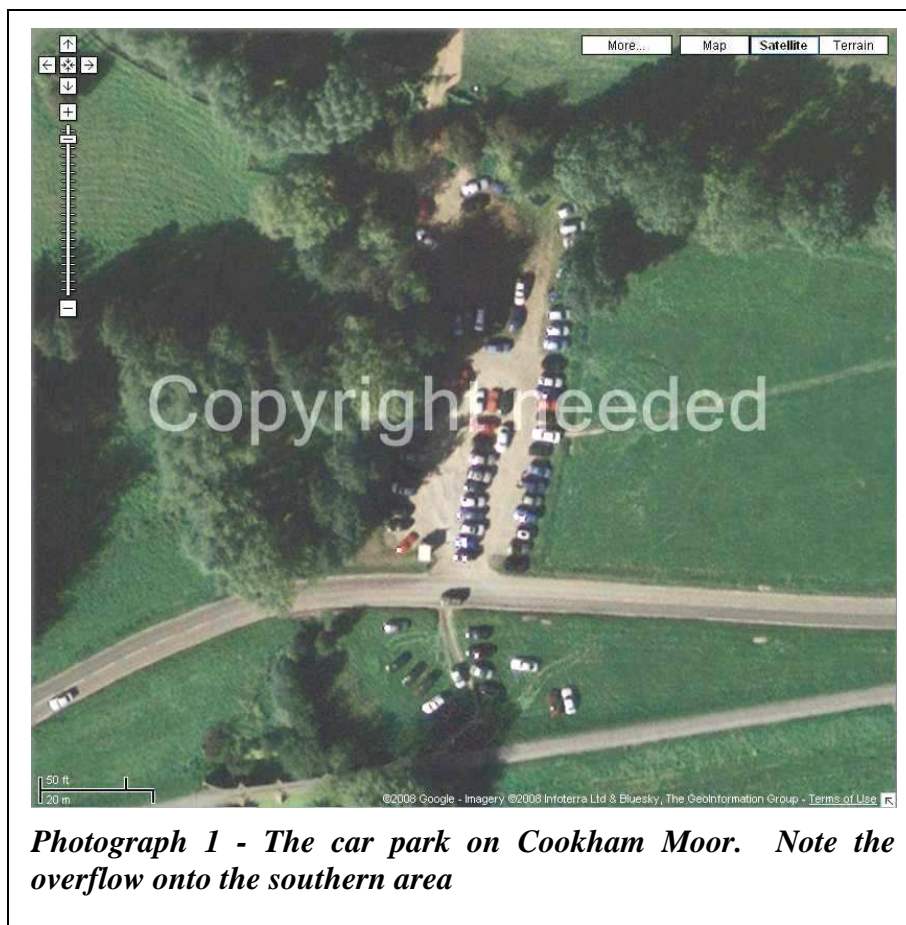
Section 5 – Parking and the Parade

Boulter's Lock car park and satisfactory arrangements are in place. Appendix E is a letter from the Stanley Spencer Gallery stating their position.

- The car park would be too far away from the village, so usage would be likely to be minimal while alternative parking (e.g. on Sutton Road and Cookham Moor) is closer to the village.
- The construction of the road and car park would be on green belt land and therefore would bring with it the threat of housing development.

5.4.3 Cookham Moor

The car park on the Moor has the parking capacity for about 35-40 cars. It appears to be primarily used by people heading for the river, but it is also used as an “overflow” car park for visitors to Cookham Village. The capacity of the car park is adequate the majority of the time but it is not adequate to meet peak demand. This occurs from late morning to late afternoon on Saturdays and Sundays (and Bank Holidays), when the weather is fine and/or sunny. At these times, cars use the north end of the car park (this can accommodate around 10 cars), and on the Moor opposite the entrance to the car park. The photograph below shows these areas.



Photograph 1 - The car park on Cookham Moor. Note the overflow onto the southern area

Section 5 – Parking and the Parade

There is a gate at the north end of the car park, which leads into Marsh Meadow. This entrance is occasionally used for events such as the Cookham Regatta, when parking is permitted on parts of Marsh Meadow.

The Moor car park has been criticised as being unsightly. It is owned by the National Trust, which is responsible for its maintenance. It is recognised that the National Trust has opposed extending the car park (even though it is used as one on an ad hoc basis), and that funding is an issue.

A previous proposal recommended a new car park on Marsh Meadow, behind the Fire Station, and the closure of the Moor car park.

Because parking problems are limited to weekends when the weather is fine and sunny, the proposals of the group, which would be subject to the agreement of the National Trust, are as follows:-

- Extend the car park to incorporate the area immediately north of the car park, up to the gate leading into Marsh Meadow (outlined on **photograph 2**).
- Resurface the car park and mark out parking spaces. This needs to be done using the appropriate materials and markers – the group is not recommending tarmac. The way forward could be for the Parish Council, the National Trust and local residents to find a way of funding improvements, in return for extending the car park.
- It is not recommended to proceed with the Marsh Meadow car park as previously proposed.



Section 5 – Parking and the Parade

5.4.4 The Parade and the Station Car Park

The capacity of the car parks is as follows:-

Network Rail – west of the station:	50 places.
Network Rail – east of the station:	21 places (it appears that an additional 8 places could be made available).
The Parade:	42 places.
Total:	113 places (potentially 121)

This area is the commercial heart of Cookham Rise. Ownership is complex. Network Rail owns the car park west of the station, together with the area east of the station and the road leading up to the station. The remainder of the car park is owned by some of the retailers, the principal one being the owner of Country Stores. As the land is privately owned, the RBWM have no responsibility for parking.

The Group has spoken to some of the retailers, but has not been able to contact the owner of Country Stores.

A summary of the issues is as follows:-

- The capacity of the car park is generally considered to be adequate. Nevertheless, there are times when parking overflows onto the surrounding roads.
- The retailers do not have the income or incentive to pay for the car park to be improved. They pay a sum per annum to the owners whose responsibility it is to do this.
- It is generally agreed that the Parade car park is in need of resurfacing. The surface has potholes, the pavements are cracked and the car park spaces need better marking. However, the appearance needs to be balanced against the viability of the businesses.
- Since the introduction of car parking fees at Bourne End station, it is alleged that some rail commuters are driving over to Cookham, where they can park all day free of charge in the Parade car park. As a result, retailers on the Parade have been monitoring parking and have left polite notes on cars parked all day, pointing out that parking is for customers and is limited to two hours. The ultimate threat is clamping and a release fee of £125. This appears to be being effective.
- It has been rumoured (no more) that Network Rail will introduce parking fees at Cookham. This would put pressure on the Parade parking, if commuters then park in these spaces rather than opt to pay the fees. The situation is further complicated by uncertainties with regards to the status of the car park west of the station. This is

Section 5 – Parking and the Parade

reported to be protected by a Covenant allowing residents facing the car park to use it for free. At the time when the current restaurant was the Railway Tavern, the car park sign included a reference to being also for the use of Railway Tavern customers.

- The Parade also provides access to parking at the rear of the shops and flats. There are recycling bins at the south-western corner.

The proposals of the group are as follows:-

- As with the Moor car park, a group comprising the owners, the retailers the Parish Council and local residents should be convened to draw up plans for upgrading the car park (please note that upgrading the shops themselves is outside the remit of this group), and devise ways of funding the work (section 106 funds could be one source). This would probably need to involve Network Rail. The drawings contained in the previous plan could provide a starting point, but the current number of places should be maintained or increased.
- The status of the Network Rail car park west of the station needs to be established, so that the legal position is clear should Network Rail propose to introduce charges. This will probably require the services of a lawyer, and is beyond the remit of this group.

5.4.5 Elizabeth House

Elizabeth House is the day centre for the elderly in Cookham. Cookham Voluntary Services provides transport for the elderly and disabled to and from Elizabeth House and to local hospitals and other services. It is important, therefore that the area in front of Elizabeth House is kept clear. The entrance is frequently used as a U-turn and occasionally as parking for people using the cash machine outside the Nationwide office. The manager of Elizabeth House has raised this with RBWM in the past but has never received a reply.

It is recommended that the Parish Council raise this issue with the RBWM.

5.4.6 Lower Road

This is the area with the most intractable parking problem. It contains the Medical Centre, two halls and several retail outlets, including the chemist. There are double yellow lines along the south side of Lower Road from the junction with High Road to the chemist, and on the north side from the railway to the Post Office and from the Medical Centre car park to the junction with New Road. There are double yellow lines at the entrances to Grange Road and Coxborrow Close. As these are public roads, responsibility for parking enforcement lies with the RBWM (except for the Medical Centre, which is private property).

The Medical Centre car park is for the use of patients and medical staff and there is a formal agreement with the Pinder Hall Management Committee that users of the Hall can also park there.

Section 5 – Parking and the Parade

The surrounding roads, Coxborrow Close and Grange Road, are used for parking, if no spaces are available on Lower Road itself. There is anecdotal evidence that the Medical Centre car park is used by non-patients and that some car owners park all day on Lower Road. On one occasion, a car was left for two weeks, while the owners went on holiday. This has resulted in retailers leaving polite notices on cars, similar to those by Parade shopkeepers, but without the threat of clamping.

There is no way that parking capacity can be increased on Lower Road or in the immediate vicinity. However, the Catholic Church has indicated that it would be willing to allow parking in its car park when it is not in use by the Church. This is less than five minutes walk from the Medical Centre.

Long term day time parking needs to be discouraged. The group, therefore, would like the following proposals to be considered:-

- Clarification regarding parking in the Catholic Church car park needs to be discussed with members of the Church. If agreement can be reached, the availability of parking would need to be publicised.
- The Parish Council should consider the introduction of day-time parking limits to discourage all day parking, which would be enforced by the RBWM. This would apply during office hours (say 8a.m. to 6p.m.) – parking outside these hours would not be affected. Discussions with residents and retailers would need to take place.

5.4.7 Cookham Dean

Parking problems at Cookham Dean Junior School and Herries School are the subject of a separate study. The only other area of Cookham Dean with a parking problem appears to be outside Cookham Dean Village Hall and the Women's Institute Hall.

There are blind bends on the road approaching Cookham Dean Village Hall, and the road is narrow. Beyond the Village Hall, the road is more open but is still too narrow to allow two way traffic to pass if there are cars parked along the road. When events are held at the Village Hall, cars park along the road and on Cookham Dean Common.

Although there are no reported accidents involving injury, it would be prudent to formalise parking and ensure that traffic negotiating the blind bends approaching the Village Hall are not confronted with parked cars on the left and oncoming traffic. As this is primarily a road safety issue, it is covered in the Road Safety report.

SECTION 6

FLOODING – IMPACT ON TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT

6 Flooding – Impact on Traffic and Transport

The last significant floods in Cookham were in 2003, after the Jubilee River was built. For a time, the only access to Cookham Village, other than by boat or helicopter, was across the Causeway and Cookham Fleet Memorial Bridge (also known as the Causeway Bridge). The roads across Widbrook Common, the Moor and into Bourne End were all impassable.

Although it is not possible to say for certain that there will be floods in the future, contingencies for flooding need to be in place and in any case, the impact of climate change may mean that there is an increased risk of flooding in the future.



Commercial vehicle crossing the Fleet Memorial Bridge. 2003

The Fleet Bridge was inspected in 2001 (Babtie Group report B1236/AR), and the conclusions were that some remedial work was required. These repairs have subsequently been carried out. The bridge was found to be capable of carrying only 3 Tonnes Assessment Live Load, because of the limitations of the capacity of the side spans. The bridge could therefore be used, in a flooding emergency, to carry traffic not exceeding 3 Tonnes.

It is essential that this link is maintained, as a contingency, to allow access to Cookham Village in the event of a flood cutting off access via other roads. Traffic lights would be required to control alternate traffic movement – this has been done in the past, although there were problems because of the distance between the traffic lights. It is understood that the RBWM stores signage and temporary traffic lights at the Tinkers Depot.

Section 6 – Flooding and the Impact on Traffic and Transport



Drivers ignoring the 2-way alternate traffic flow

During the last floods, the signage did not alert drivers to the flooding, resulting in non-essential traffic crossing into Cookham Village. These provisions would be unlikely to be required for more than two or three days.

The recommendations of this group are:-

- that the bridge is inspected on a regular basis, say every five years or immediately after flooding.
- that any necessary repairs resulting from the inspection **are** carried out in order to maintain the bridge as an emergency link to Cookham Village.
- that RBWM Highways Dept. provides suitable temporary traffic controls and signage.
- that the Fleet is kept free of weed and obstructions to enable the water flow.

SECTION 7

CYCLING

7 Cycling

7.1 Background to the suggestion of a Sustrans Cycle Route through Cookham

The previous Cookham Plan proposal, now under review, recommended an extension of the existing Sustrans' cycle track from Maidenhead to Cookham, with the plan to continue its course through Cookham to Bourne End and beyond. The track currently ends at its most northerly point, at the Strande Lane/Lightlands Lane junction. There is no official cycle track in Bourne End.

Sustrans, which is an organisation promoting cycling, wants a track to run northwards into Bucks as part of a plan for a network of cycle routes throughout the country. An extension from Lightlands Lane to Bourne End has been discussed with Sustrans in the past. Although there is no legal obligation to provide such a route, Cookham attempted to co-operate. However, there were objections about the potential impact of cyclists upon the riverside and other amenity routes already widely used by residents, ramblers etc. Consequently, meetings over several years between Sustrans, Cookham Parish Council, The Cookham Society, the National Trust, other countryside organisations and the landowners have never been able to establish an agreed route. The Ramblers' Association representatives were unhappy at the prospect of walkers sharing existing footpath routes with cyclists and issues have also arisen about the construction of such a cycle track detracting from the timeless and exceptional natural beauty of the Cookham riverside landscape.

Sustrans' own specification is for this cycle route to be two metres wide, with a slightly raised surface (types of surface vary), which should be separated from both pedestrians and motorists. In certain conditions which could also apply here, Sustrans recommend wider, double tracks with a raised division between cycling/pedestrian usage.

7.2 Remit

The new Traffic and Transport Working Group (hereafter called the Group), three-quarters of whom are keen cyclists, has undertaken to review the validity of this proposal and look at possible alternatives to this route and any other ways to help cyclists in Cookham.

7.3 Potential Routes

The Group examined all the previous proposals as well as carrying out its own research into potential routes. All the routes start at the end of the current Maidenhead-Cookham cycle track at Strande Lane and all terminate at the railway bridge linking Cookham to Bourne End. The map at the end of this section of the report shows all the routes.

Section 7 - Cycling

7.3.1 Green Route

The Green Route is the existing aforementioned Sustrans' cycle track, which runs between Strande Lane in Cookham, and Maidenhead. The other green track shown on the map is an existing route along Switchback Road.

7.3.2 Red Route

This is the previous Cookham Plan proposed route, which would leave the Green Route in Strande Lane and continue northwards along Maidenhead Road, crossing the roundabout to continue up Poundfield Lane. At the north end of the Lane, the route would cross Terry's Lane diagonally to reach the track leading towards the golf course. Before reaching the golf course, it would turn eastwards and proceed downhill towards Marsh Meadow to connect with the Sustrans' Blue Route (see below and on map), eventually diverting towards the railway line and running northwards, parallel to it, until reaching the railway bridge crossing.

The north end of this designated route remains distant from the towpath until it reaches the river railway bridge, so would cause minimal disruption to pedestrians using the towpath. It would also be largely out of sight to pedestrians and river users. However, the landowner has raised objections on the grounds that this area is dedicated as a nature conservation area and is also boggy, which he believes would make a cycle track impractical.

7.3.3 Blue Route

This is Sustrans' own preferred route through Cookham, and the preferred choice of The Cookham Society.

It leads from Strande Lane, across the fields near the site of Strande Castle to Cookham Moor, continuing from the north side of the Moor and along the existing footpath around the golf course. From this point, the route diverts to the towpath on the riverbank, where it proceeds until reaching the railway river bridge crossing into Bucks.

However, the Group was informed that no agreement to the plan can currently be made with the owner of the field south of the Moor, which means that the Blue Route will contain a gap (dotted in Blue on the map) until such time that this becomes possible.

7.3.4 Mauve Route

This is the route from the Moor car park to the river crossing, which is favoured by the land owner. It runs along the line of an existing footpath crossing the centre of Marsh Meadow towards the riverbank, then runs westwards along the entire length of the towpath from Marsh Meadow to the railway/pedestrian river bridge crossing to Bourne End.

7.4 Evaluation of the routes

Bearing in mind Sustrans' own specification for a cycle route, the Blue Route could potentially be acceptable. The link between Strande Lane and Cookham Moor could be established, were it not for the objections of the owner of the field south of the Moor. At its northern end, a compromise would be for the cycle track to be routed behind the pollarded trees parallel with the towpath at the approach to the Bourne End river railway bridge. This would avoid the marshy route alongside the railway line, while the riverbank path would be for the use of pedestrians.

The Red Route would not achieve the Sustrans' specification. The route is initially along Maidenhead Road, which would also require cyclists to cross this road, and is therefore not separate from traffic. The Poundfield footpath is very narrow, is well used by walkers, and a cycle track would require the destruction of trees and hedgerows. There have recently been instances of groups of cyclists riding dangerously fast down the hill of the footpath in Poundfield Lane, resulting in near-collisions between cyclists and pedestrians. There are similar potential problems with the section of the route downhill alongside the edge of the golf course. The long crossing point across Terry's Lane, from the end of Poundfield Lane, is diagonal and uphill, which would be dangerous for a young family pushing cycles to cross, due to traffic using Terry's Lane and a blind bend in each direction. Finally, the Red Route proposes to follow the railway line, which the land owner believes is too boggy and is a nature conservation area.

The Mauve Route would be likely to produce the same objections from countryside organisations as did the original proposals.

In short, there are problems with all the potential routes, which would appear to be why no agreement was ever reached.

7.5 The Bourne End Link

The Group has been in contact with Bucks County Council Footpaths Officer and Wooburn and Bourne End Parish Council regarding possible plans for continuation of the proposed Sustrans' cycle route from the Bourne End riverside. At present, there are no plans to establish a cycle track from this point through Bourne End and the Group was led to believe that, due to lack of availability of a suitable route, there is little likelihood of such a link being established in the foreseeable future.

Therefore, if an extension of the Sustrans' cycle track was constructed across Cookham, it would terminate at the river bridge crossing to Bourne End.

7.6 Recommendation

For the reasons above, the Group proposes that an extension of the existing Maidenhead-Cookham cycle track should not be pursued at the present time. This could be reviewed if (a) Sustrans provide a complete cycle track link from the river railway bridge, through

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and beyond Bourne End and (b) if the owner of the field at the south side of Cookham Moor is willing to allow the track to cross this area (the Blue dotted route on the plan).

The Group is also concerned that a cycle track should only be built if it does not affect Cookham residents' enjoyment of the river and surrounding countryside in being able to feel safe and unrestricted and allowing children and dogs to roam freely, without danger from cyclists. It is also recognised that construction of a cycle track would bring some urbanising, detrimental changes to the landscape, both through Cookham and by the riverside and that, prior to any decision on this, the public should be made fully aware of the potential visual impact.

The Group recognises that a Sustrans cycle track is likely to be of far more benefit to cyclists passing through Cookham, than to Cookham residents. The Group noted earlier concerns that, once a track through the village is nationally advertised by Sustrans on its maps and websites, the volume of cyclists may irrevocably increase, at the inconvenience of Cookham residents. Another fear, expressed at a meeting with Sustrans, was that cyclists (who are often in groups) would be unlikely to stay on the designated track and would take their own routes along the Cookham riverside, which is also part of the Thames Path.

7.7 Other Cycling matters in Cookham



Barrier requiring redesign

- The Group believes that, to encourage cycling by Cookham residents, there should be adequate lockable cycle parking available, particularly in the area of the railway station and shopping parade.
- There is no other road within Cookham that is suitable for the addition of a parallel cycle track, such as already exists in Switchback Road.
- There have been complaints that the existing Sustrans' cycle track from Maidenhead contains barriers which require redesigning as they do not allow some cycles through. Rectifying this would increase usage and particularly enable parents and children to cycle between home and schools in Cookham and Maidenhead.

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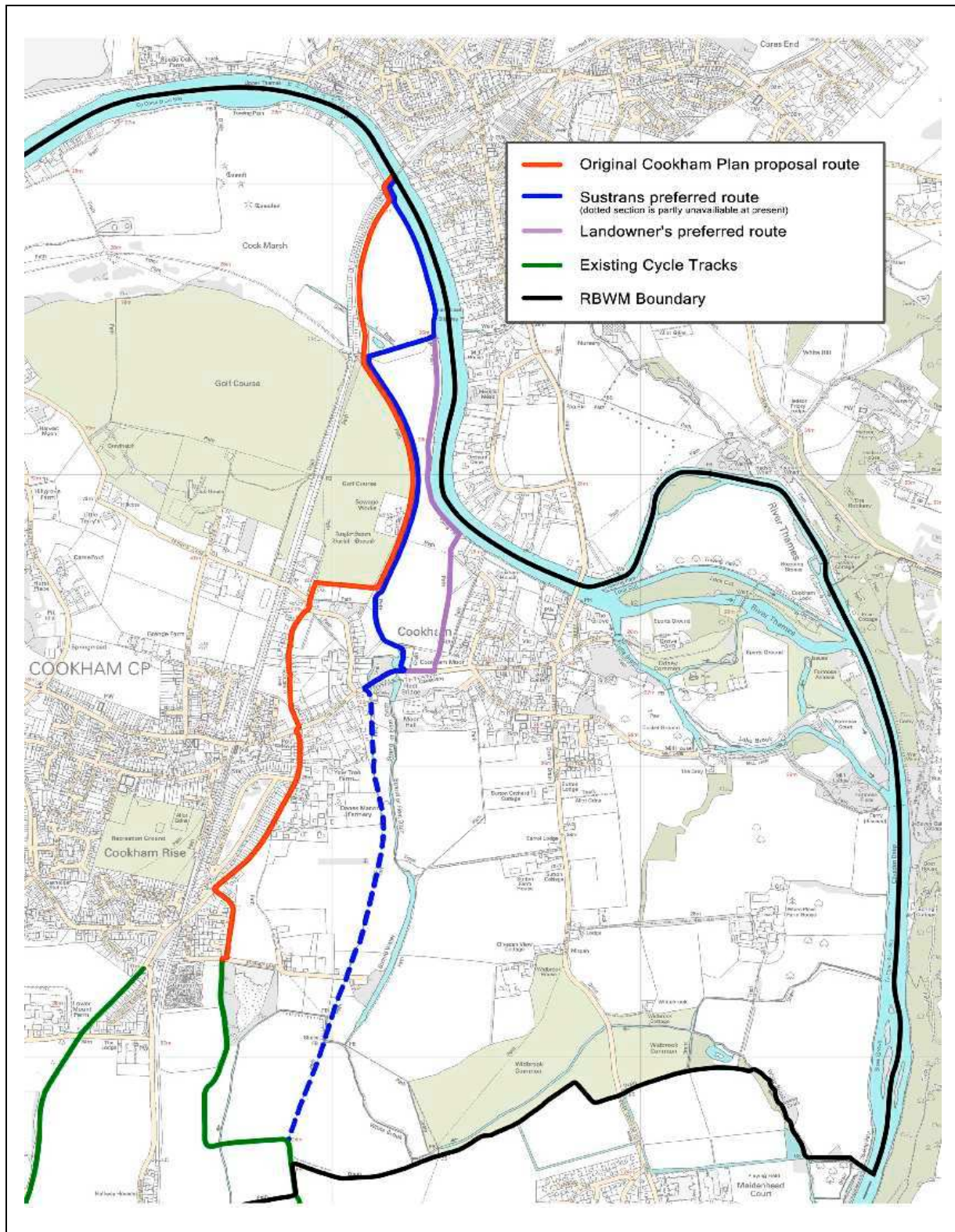
- The Group believes that the matter of cycling training for children is important, but it is understood that this subject is covered in the curriculum at Cookham schools.

7.8 Map of Potential Cycling Routes

Please refer to the next page for a map of potential cycling routes

Section 7 - Cycling

7.8.1 Map of Potential Cycling Routes



SECTION 8

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

8 Public Transport - Report Summary

The TTWG considers the overarching requirement is for Cookham to be provided with an adequate level of public transport facilities.

In general, the TTWG considers that the current level of service, provided by the public transport operators, offers a only a very basic level, barely adequate to local needs and, with the exception of the limited M1 bus service, provides absolutely no coverage to Cookham Dean. We believe that the bus services do not provide a frequency of service that will encourage people to use public transport instead of cars.

The TTWG considers that Cookham's interests in maintaining adequate public transport services can best be met by active co-operation and involvement with the Marlow-Maidenhead Passengers' Association (MMPA) which is a long standing and respected pressure group and has ongoing business-like relationships with the transport providers. With this in mind, we recommend formal representation in the MMPA by the Cookham Society and also the assignment of a Parish Councillor to local transport policy.

In this report we describe the public transport provision for Cookham and how this matches expectations. We also identify specific potential threats to service provision and make recommendations to mitigate these threats.

In Cookham there are two forms of public transport:

Train services

Bus services

There is also a taxi service, which regularly uses Cookham station as a pickup and drop down point.

Additional transport facilities are provided by a variety of schemes, supported by voluntary organisations and the Borough. These include the Borough Taxi Voucher programme, the People to Places and the Cookham Voluntary Services schemes.

Recreational river transport is provided along the Thames during the summer season.

8.1 Summary of Recommendations

The following list summarises our recommendations. We describe in later sections the background to these issues and our findings, as well as a more detailed explanation of the recommendation.

#1: Cookham and the MMPA	Formal representation in the MMPA by the Cookham Society and also the assignment of a Parish Councillor to handle local transport policy matters.
#2: Rail service reliability	Lobby First Great Western for better and reliable connections at Maidenhead
#3: The Bourne End viaduct	Lobby First Great Western for a full programme of maintenance and decoration of the viaduct.
#4: Community Railways	Maintain vigilance of any resurgence of the Department of Transport Community Railway scheme.
#5: Crossrail	Maintain vigilance and review the emerging plans for Cross Rail and provide a rapid response strategy to Network Rail on any adverse impact on the branch line.
#6: Buses – new contracts	Ensure that Cookham’s local transport bus requirements are raised during the re-tendering process, which is already underway.
#7: Transport hub	Recommend that this proposal is not pursued. <i>{the Parish Council, however, wishes to carry out a feasibility study into this proposal}</i>
#8: Bus service & Train co-ordination	No further action on this topic should be undertaken unless Arriva ceases its commercial operation of Route-37, on the Berkshire segment.

8.2 Objectives

The TTWG defined the following objectives:

To identify potential improvements in rail and bus services (possibly supplemented by an on-demand taxi service from the station).

- a) To estimate how the Crossrail project will impact on rail services.
- b) To establish whether rail and bus services can be co-ordinated.
- c) To try to find out whether FGW intends to introduce parking fees at Cookham and whether there are concerns over the viability of the Maidenhead-Marlow line.
- d) To establish whether there should be a “transport hub” outside Cookham railway station.

The TTWG believes that these objectives should be viewed within the general context of the provision of adequate public transport services to Cookham. With this in mind, the Group established contacts with all the major service providers as well as the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM) and the MMPA.

8.3 Findings – Current services

Provision of public transport to Cookham is currently as follows:

8.3.1 Train services:

Rail services to and from Cookham are provided on the Maidenhead to Marlow branch line and are operated by First Great Western. The First Great Western franchise, awarded by the Department for Transport (DfT) commenced in April 2006 and is contracted to run for seven years, plus a possible additional three years.

8.3.1.1 Services



Currently, FGW provides an “each-way” hourly service along the line from Maidenhead to Marlow on a daily basis with a slightly reduced timetable on Sundays. This service is referred to as the “Marlow Donkey”. Onward journeys towards London or Reading require a transfer at Maidenhead, although a “through” service to London Paddington is provided at peak times on weekday mornings with “through” return services operating at peak times in the late afternoons.

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“Marlow Donkey” service	First train from Cookham to Maidenhead	Last train from Maidenhead to Cookham	First train from Cookham to Marlow	Last train from Marlow to Cookham
Monday to Friday	06:19	23:45	05:33	00:11
Saturday	07:20	23:35	06:43	00:11
Sunday	10:14	21:40	09:41	00:05

“Through” service: Cookham-Paddington	From Cookham to Paddington	From Paddington to Cookham
Depart	07:27	17:44
Depart	08:28	18:44

We note that three early morning weekday trains from Maidenhead to Bourne End pass through Cookham (at approximately 05:55, 06:38 and 07:17) without stopping, due to platform length restrictions. This means that there is no service between Cookham and Bourne End between the 05:33 and 07:49 services – a gap of more than 2 hours! However, after discussion with the station manager, we believe that this is not causing inconvenience for Cookham passengers.

8.3.1.2 Facilities

Cookham Station provides a booking office, waiting room and toilet facilities. However, these are only open during the morning periods:

	From	To
Monday to Friday	6:50	11:30
Saturday	8:00	11:30
Sunday	Closed	

Limited parking is provided for rail passengers, currently free of charge. A local taxi service provides a collection service outside the station on a booking basis.

A public telephone booth is not provided within the station buildings or immediate adjacent areas, however a phone booth is available located across the level crossing at the entrance to the Station Car Park.

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8.3.1.3 Service Quality

First Great Western's published performance figures for the period from 25th May to 21st June 2008 are shown below.

London -Thames Valley Service	Punctuality	Reliability
Actual Performance	77.7%	99.0%
Target Performance	92.0%	99.0%
Trigger Percentage	89.0%	98.0%



Manual operation of the points at Bourne End

Note that these figures are for the London-Thames Valley service sector of the FGW zone and not specifically those of the Maidenhead to Marlow branch line. However, it does show shortfalls in punctuality, which is particularly critical to Cookham passengers scheduling connections at Maidenhead.

In particular, we are aware that the technical problems associated with the points at Bourne End cause many delays and cancellations, despite point switching having been recently converted from manual to electrical operation.

Returning journeys from Paddington are also hampered by poor scheduling which can require passengers to deliberately start their journeys 15 minutes earlier to guarantee a connection at Maidenhead. Together with poor and inconsistent signage, as well as the inconvenience of a long (and often last minute) walk to the dilapidated platforms 13/14, the general perception is of a run down service

compared with the more “glamorous” facilities offered to the long distance expresses and the Heathrow bound trains

Commuting to Paddington

Additional criticism concerns synchronisation with London bound trains during the commuter time of day. Frequently, trains from Cookham arrive at Maidenhead only for passengers to watch the scheduled connection to London already leaving from platform 4. Sadly, some commuters are now even travelling to Beaconsfield to use the Chiltern Line as the preferred route into London

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Commuting between Maidenhead and Paddington is not pleasant. Peak-time services between Maidenhead and Paddington operate above their seat capacity with a seating format of three seats on one side of the aisle and two on the other. Seats are frequently narrower in width than their occupants (this is not meant to be a criticism, implied or otherwise, of the occupants). Standing is routine. The on-train environment is noisy.

Almost all trains between Maidenhead and Paddington run on the relief (slow) line and take approximately 34 minutes. Consequently, trains from Cookham to Paddington (and vice versa) are scheduled as approximately forty five minute journeys. In comparison, the fewer non-stopping high speed trains between Maidenhead and Paddington run on the fast line and provide a 20 minute journey. Alas, the branch line connections between Cookham and Maidenhead rarely synchronise with these faster trains. The relatively few “faster” Cookham-Paddington trains, stopping at fewer intermediate stations, still run on the relief line and are routinely held up when slower 'all stops' trains run late.

The Maidenhead-Paddington service is inferior to the Reading-Paddington service; where trains run on the fast line, travel time is very similar to Maidenhead-Paddington. These are much more frequent, the seat format is two seats either side of the aisle and the on-train environment is much quieter. We attach a recent report in the Daily Telegraph (and reported elsewhere in the press) which reports the 7:28 am from Bourne End to Paddington as one of the 10 most overcrowded services in the Country.

8.3.2 Bus services

Cookham is served by a variety of routes, however, the vast majority of bus passenger needs are met via the Arriva Route-37 (High Wycombe, Bourne End, Maidenhead) which passes through Cookham Village and Cookham Rise. Additional services are provided by Courtney Coaches under the auspices of the RBWM.

We have been informed that the Courtney Coaches Contract is up for renewal next year (2009) with tenders due out in July for contract start in January. It is understood that RBWM is using Peter Brett Associates (PBA) as consultants. **The TTWG recommends** that, via the Parish Council and the Cookham Society, Cookham’s local transport bus requirements are raised during this tender procurement

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8.3.3 Services

Route-37



Arriva bus 37 approaching the High Street

Arriva operates this service as an extension to the Route-35 (High Wycombe to Bourne End) service, which operates under registration from Buckinghamshire County Council. The Bourne End to Maidenhead leg of Route-37 is operated by Arriva as a commercial operation and receives no direct subsidy from RBWM. The route passes over Cookham Bridge, along the High Street, past the Railway Station, along Lower Road and then along Whyteladies Lane, to Switchback Road and thence through

Furze Plat into Maidenhead. During the day, an hourly service is operated in each direction, with a slightly more frequent service at peak times. The service operates on weekdays and Saturdays, however, there is no Sunday service. There are no services after 7 p.m. on any day.

Route-37	First bus from Cookham High Street to Maidenhead	Last bus from Maidenhead to Cookham High Street	First bus from Cookham High Street to High Wycombe	Last bus from High Wycombe to Cookham High Street
Monday to Friday	06:30	18:50	07:15	18:15
Saturday	07:03	18:45	07:51	18:15
Sunday	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Route-M1:

Courtney Coaches operates this service (Marlow - Bisham - Cookham - Maidenhead) on Mondays and Thursdays and collects pre-booked passengers only (01344 482200). The route follows the Winter Hill route from Marlow, passing through Cookham Dean Bottom, where it stops to pick up local passengers.

The M1 service was created as part of the Government “Rural Bus Challenge” which started about 5 years ago.

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M1 bus at the Chequers

The project was initially “£pump primed” by central government but is now funded by the Borough. Within this framework, RBWM “shared” a bus (2 days) with Wokingham (3 days) however, Wokingham has since pulled out of the scheme. The service is operated only by pre-booking and will not run unless there are pre-booked passengers. It was designed to provide a **basic service** to the more isolated small communities where there is a “**social need**”, for example

banking / pension, weekly shop. The service never pays for itself, in fact the service is almost 100% used by holders of Concessionary (“free”) bus passes. A small coach, accommodating 8 passengers is used and provides an important, but limited, service within our community.

Route-7S

Courtney Coaches, under the RBWM “Borough Bus” scheme, operates this Sunday-only service as an extension of the other Route-7 services. It provides a link into Cookham from the Woodlands Park area of Maidenhead, with 5 full round trips arriving in Cookham and returning at:

11:00, 12:00, 13:00, 15:00 and 16:00.

This service is intended for leisure, social and family visit purposes.

8.3.3.1 Service Quality

Although Route-37 does not operate during the evening or on Sundays, it is well used by the local Cookham community. Similarly, the M1, albeit a very small and limited service, is also used by the local community – especially elderly passengers. The Group does not have any available utilisation data for the 7S service at this stage.

Despite the importance of these services, Route-37 passengers complain about poor reliability and uncomfortable vehicles. This is based on verbal evidence obtained by limited and informal questioning of passengers waiting for the bus on the High Street and is backed up by direct experience of members of the Group. Arriva has said that it has no

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specific strategy in place to furnish Route-37 with more modern buses from its fleet and there is the real feeling that travelling on Route-37 could be a more pleasant experience. The comfort of the ride is not helped by the poor road conditions that prevail in parts of the Borough. However, aggressive driving is often a major factor.

We do not have any current published figures for service levels on Route-37, however we have received reports from local passengers that the hourly service sometimes fails to arrive. Clearly, this is a major inconvenience to passengers bearing in mind the frequency of the service and total lack of shelters or seating. Arriva is introducing new technology on several of its routes that provide waiting passengers with real-time information, such as the estimated time of arrival of the next bus. Whilst it might not be possible for Arriva to implement the necessary systems to support this in all districts, we would like to investigate the possibility of up to date information using an 0800 number which passengers could call.

8.3.3.2 Environmental impact

It has been observed that large road vehicles, such as coaches have difficulty in negotiating certain areas such as the High Street and the Pound and are responsible for localised congestion. The TTWG encourages the use of smaller road vehicles by public transport providers to lessen their impact on the village road infrastructure.

8.3.3.3 Bus and Train Fares

Contrary to some beliefs, the fares charged on the bus and train services between Cookham and Maidenhead are broadly similar. The following table illustrates this comparison

Arriva #37: Cookham High Street to Maidenhead Town Centre	Single £2.70	Return £2.80	
FGW: Cookham to Maidenhead	Single £2.20	Off peak return £2.50	Open return £2.80

This is not surprising in view of the open competition between FGW and Arriva over the span of this route

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8.3.4 Taxi services



A local taxi operator regularly delivers and collects passengers to / from Cookham station. Although there are many taxis operating in the Borough in general, it is pleasing to see one that provides a service that helps to co-ordinate with the local train services. The poster illustrated is clearly posted at the station office entrance.

We note, however, that there is no public phone facility at the station itself although a phone booth is provided near the entrance to the station car park, across the level crossing.

8.3.5 Special Needs Transport Facilities

Additional transport facilities are provided by a variety of schemes, supported by voluntary organisations and the Borough. These include:

Cookham Voluntary Services:

Based in Cookham at Elizabeth House, this is a local charity, which provides car transport to villagers who have specialist needs, such as visits to local hospitals.

People-to-Places:

This is a charity run scheme where a membership fee is charged and a collection / drop-off is offered by prior arrangement for a small fee per journey.

Taxi Voucher System:

This is run by the Borough on the back of the concessionary fares scheme and is age / disability dependent. It is controlled by the local Social Services. The voucher system as originally implemented was subject to abuse and now is run on the basis of a £100 pa payment into personal bank accounts out of which, the users must pay for all their additional taxi / transport costs.

8.3.6 River Transport

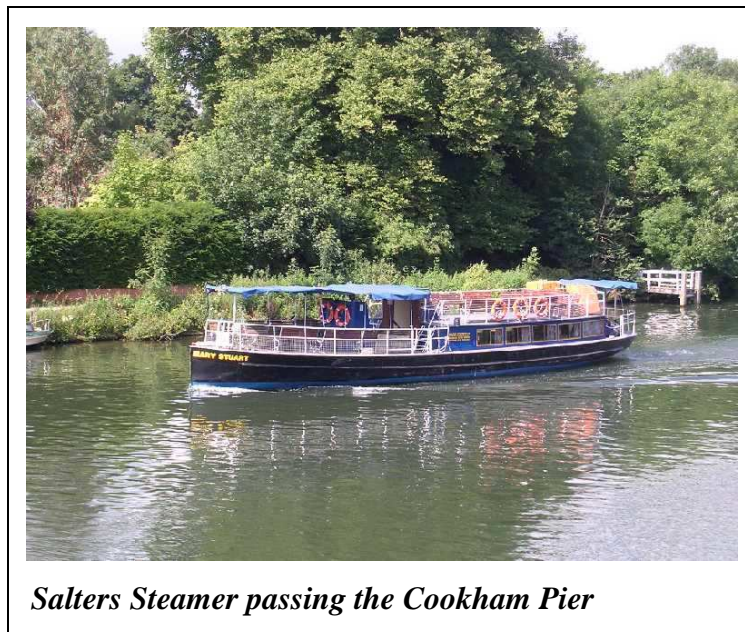
A summertime leisure service is provided by Salters Steamers, linking Cookham to Maidenhead and Windsor and operates on Mondays and Fridays only, from mid-May to Mid-September

The starting point of these services is at Marlow, adjacent to Higginson Park and the boarding point at Cookham is at the small landing stage, which is accessed from the towpath approximately 100 metres from Cookham bridge, near Holy Trinity church.

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This service passes through what is widely considered to be some of the most beautiful scenery on the Thames before finally finishing below the magnificent hilltop castle at Windsor.

It seems amazing that the service does not run at weekends when leisure demand would be at its greatest. Is there a missed opportunity to encourage tourists to arrive by boat? This service could benefit from better signage and advertising of services, times and prices. The Parish Council has recently joined the Thames Alliance and may be able to make use of their services and website to promote the use of Salters Steamers. Increased use may make a weekend service a viable option in the summer.



8.4 Local Authority Responsibilities

8.4.1 Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead

The RBWM implements support for local transport needs through its “Passenger Transport Team”. Neil Beswick is the Principal Officer for Passenger Transport and we are grateful for his help in providing useful background material.

RBWM policy for the provision of local transport within the Borough is set out in its Local Transport Policy (LTP). The following paragraphs summarise the Borough’s published LTP’s objectives and strategy

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8.4.2 RBWM Local Transport Plan

The Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead produced the final version of its Local Transport Plan (LTP) in March 2006 and represents a 5-year strategy and implementation plan for transport in the Royal Borough, covering the period from 2006/07 to 2010/11. It sets out how the Royal Borough intends to work “towards achieving its long-term vision for transport, developed in association with local stakeholders”.

“The Borough anticipates that the LTP will continue to evolve over the coming 5-year period. In particular, the Accessibility Strategy and the Air Quality Action Plan will be the subjects of significant development work. The Council will also seek to respond positively to challenges that may arise and will seek to involve all relevant stakeholders in developing and **implementing effective solutions, informed by public consultation where appropriate.**”

The RBWM further defines its LTP Objectives and Strategies:

Objectives

The objectives for the LTP are consistent with national and regional priorities, namely:

1. To maintain transport assets;
2. To improve safety for all transport users;
3. To improve journey reliability and address congestion;
4. To reduce the impact of transport on the environment;
5. To improve access to everyday facilities.

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Strategy

The strategy has been developed around the following core components:

- **Mobility Management:** A variety of low cost, supporting measures (e.g. information services, ticketing and travel plans), which enhance the effectiveness of investment in primary transport services and infrastructure (e.g. bus services, cycle lanes, etc).
- **Network Management:** Measures designed to increase the efficiency of transport networks, maintain them to a suitable standard, protect sensitive environments and improve road safety for all transport users.
- **Improving Sustainable Transport Options:** Measures designed to improve access to public transport, walking and cycling and reduce dependency on the private car for everyday travel.
- **Demand Management:** Measures that discourage unsustainable transport patterns by limiting parking for new developments and effectively managing public car parking.

8.4.3 Buckinghamshire County Council Local Transport Plan

We have included the following extract from Bucks CC's LTP mission statement because:

- a) Arriva Route-37 (High Wycombe to Maidenhead) falls under its remit.
- b) It provides an interesting comparison with the RBWM LTP

- Travel Planning - Bus
- "We are committed to supporting public transport in Buckinghamshire in a number of ways:"
-
- Providing socially necessary local bus services
- Providing the network of school transport services
- Part-funding the Traveline telephone enquiry service
- Publishing comprehensive timetables
- Supporting community transport schemes

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8.4.4 Local Transport Plans – Comment

Whilst the RBWM's LTP included provision for public consultation is welcome, a comparison with the Bucks CC mission statement is useful. The Bucks CC LTP has very specific statements on the **provision** of transport services, whereas the RBWM is concerned with more abstract (maybe no less worthy) concepts, such as safety, environment and access. We feel, however, that it lacks the conviction of direct support of public transport within the Borough. Additionally, it does not explicitly address the co-ordination of "cross-boundary" routes, such as the Arriva Route-37.

8.4.5 Local Pressure Groups

8.4.5.1 Marlow – Maidenhead Passengers' Association (MMPA).

Elsewhere in this report we have made recommendations for a greater involvement with the MMPA in order to help to address Cookham's public transport requirements. In particular, we note that the MMPA holds a unique position of influence with transport providers and maintains an enormous level of skills and knowledge that would be of great use to Cookham. Specific recommendations are made elsewhere in this report.

Excerpt from the MMPA constitution:

- "The aims of the Association are the retention, improvement and greater usage of the Maidenhead – Bourne End – Marlow branch railway and the retention, improvement and greater usage of bus services in the Maidenhead, Bourne End, Marlow and High Wycombe areas and such other transport aims as appear to the Association's Committee from time to time to be suitable for the Association to support."

8.5 Recommendations

Strategy: The Cookham Society is the best placed and most widely recognised and respected guardian of the interests of all of Cookham's residents. Furthermore the Society has good communications capabilities via its news sheets.

This WG recommends that a senior member of the Cookham Society should also be a member of the MMPA tasked by the Society with responsibility for Cookham residents' interests regarding MMPA business and ensuring that any threats to Cookham's rail services are communicated to Cookham's residents.

The WG formed the view that the current level of public transport service provision is adequate to the very basic needs of Cookham. However, there are areas where improvement is needed.

Rail Timetable: Early morning travel into London is frequently frustrated by the late arrival to Maidenhead station of the 8:00am train departure from Cookham. Note that this should link with the high speed connection into London but is frequently missed. Whilst duration of the Maidenhead to London leg of commuters' (on the high speed service) journey is adequate, the overall journey times (Cookham > London) become excessive.

Recommendation: Within the overall recommendation for greater Cookham participation in the MMPA (Marlow-Maidenhead Passengers' Association), **apply constant pressure on First Great Western for the application of better and reliable connections at Maidenhead.**

8.5.1 Rail and Bus timetable co-ordination

This group has not been asked to establish whether rail and bus services *should* be co-ordinated: in the group's view it is not an imperative. However, whether such co-ordination *could* be achieved is a different matter. This WG has spoken with Arriva, who operate the Route-37 service (High Wycombe to Maidenhead through Cookham and stopping slightly West of the railway crossing) on this matter. Their position is that they operate the Berkshire side of the route entirely on a commercial basis. As such they view the rail services as competition.

Recommendation: As the need for co-ordination has not been established and that Arriva sees the rail service as competition, the WG considers that **no further action on this topic should be undertaken.** If, however, Arriva should cease its commercial operation of Route-37, on the Berkshire segment, then it is highly likely that the RBWM would need to incorporate a Cookham service into the Borough Bus scheme. If this were to happen, then there could be an opportunity to reopen this topic.

8.5.2 A “Transport Hub” outside Cookham railway station.

The Group considered various ideas put forward for the implementation of a transport hub outside Cookham railway station.

Relocation of westbound bus stop

The current Maidenhead bound bus route stops on the Western side of the level crossing and has resulted in passengers, alighting for the station, to miss their connection due to barrier closures. Westbound buses pass over the level crossing, requiring alighting passengers to walk back over the crossing to the station platform.

Constructing a bus stop alongside the station buildings, for example a lay-by on the immediate approach, from the East, to the level crossing. However, it is highly unlikely that this idea would meet safety requirements due to the proximity to the crossing gates.

Improved access to Taxi Services

The Group considered whether the availability of local taxis could be improved, for example by providing a taxi booking service from the station or nearby. However, the Group has not been able to identify any demand for additional taxi facilities from the station. There is currently one taxi that regularly provides services to rail users and probably meets local needs satisfactorily.

Even in an era where most of the population carries a mobile phone, there may be occasions when passengers need access to a traditional phone outside the station. The current phone facility is located at the station car park on the other side of the track and its position is not obvious to passengers alighting at Cookham station. Relocation of this phone to the station buildings would provide better access but the chances of vandalism would be increased. There are reports of “youths hanging around” the station in the evenings. The appearance of graffiti and damage to the platform shelter are evidence of anti-social behaviour. Marlow station equipment has also been subject to late evening vandalism.

Recommendation: The case for a transport hub is not proven at present, but should be reviewed if there was a drive to co-ordinate transport provision so that the emphasis is on providing a service rather than competition. In these days of trying to get people to use public transport rather than the car, surely this makes sense.

8.5.3 Threats

Whilst the remit of this Group is to identify needed improvements to the services, the TTWG considers that there are more serious issues which need addressing and concern possible threats to the future of the line. Those considered are as follows:

8.5.3.1 Threat #1: The condition of the Bourne End Viaduct



The condition of the Bourne End viaduct (“the railway bridge over the Thames”): A member of the Group visited the bridge and has produced photographs showing the poor state of the ironwork. Whilst Network Rail has declared the bridge “adequate for passenger trains” and “no significant renewal work is planned”, it has stated that “a proposal has been made for the viaduct to be painted but that it is the subject of funding approval”. The WG is not aware that such funding has yet been approved which raises our concerns on the future of the viaduct. Without the viaduct, there will be no Maidenhead to Marlow rail service.

Recommendation: Within the overall recommendation for greater Cookham participation in the MMPA, apply constant pressure on First Great Western for a full programme of maintenance and decoration of the viaduct.

8.5.3.2 Threat #2: Community Railway Scheme

On its website (<http://www.networkrail.co.uk/aspx/983.aspx>) Network Rail lists 24 designated Community Rail routes, excluding the Maidenhead-Marlow branch. Originally it was proposed that the Maidenhead-Marlow branch line should be considered for similar classification. It is understood that these proposals were encouraged under the then Minister for Transport (Alistair Darling) and although the Maidenhead-Marlow

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branch line is no longer in consideration, there is a potential that the policy may be revisited in the future. There is widespread scepticism of this policy in respect to the Maidenhead-Marlow branch line and is perceived by local people as a first step to the running down of this service.

The following extract from the Network Rail surely sends out a warning:

“Assessment of community railway projects gives the opportunity for all concerned to assess whether these lines can be put on a sustainable basis by bringing costs and income closer together. In managing these lines, particular care needs to be taken that they are not over specified”

Recommendation: Within the overall recommendation for greater Cookham participation in the MMPA, **maintain vigilance** of any resurgence of the Department of Transport Community Railway scheme.

8.5.3.3 Threat #3: The Crossrail Project

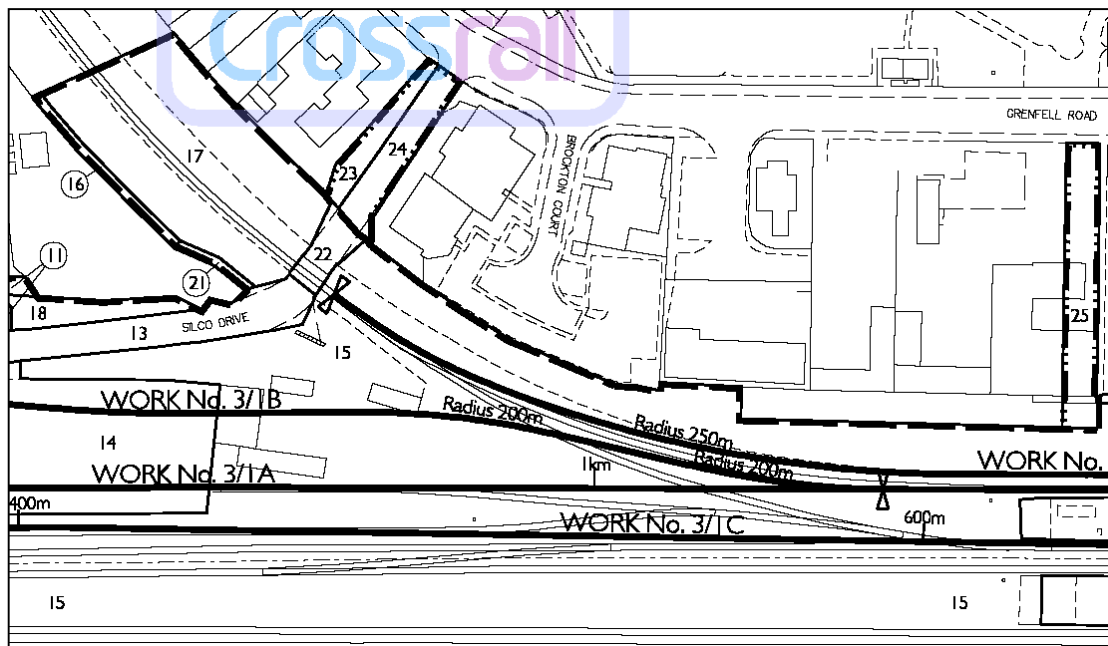
Project Overview

Timescales:	Construction is due to start in 2010 and the first trains should start running in 2017.
Declared Costs:	Taking into account inflation, costs of finance and contingency provisions which provides the cost of building Crossrail estimated at between £7bn - £11bn (2002 prices).
Costs & funding:	The £16bn cost of Crossrail is to be funded from a combination of sources. A substantial portion of the cost will come from central government, with another portion coming from the Mayor [of London]. The remainder is comprised of both a levy on business taxes, and a collection of lump-sum contributions from key beneficiaries - including £800m from Canary Wharf Group, £200m from BAA (the operators of Heathrow Airport) and £250m from the City of London Corporation.

Source: Crossrail

Whilst there is some doubt about the final Western terminal to Crossrail, the current plan is to terminate in Maidenhead (there are strong indications that Reading will be the final choice), there remain concerns and potential threats to the Maidenhead-Marlow branch line. The following extract from Crossrail plans shows the proposed layout of new track to the West of Maidenhead station.

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Whilst the WG has no actual evidence at hand, concern has been expressed that the redevelopment of the network at Maidenhead station to support the Crossrail project could lead to the closure of the local branch line. The WG has been told (again, we have no concrete evidence at hand) that the Crossrail project had considered building a marshalling yard in the general area West of the branch line spur from Maidenhead station. Potentially, this would bring it into conflict with the current branch line route. Certainly the current plan diagrams show track developments in this area but they also show the existing branch line intact.

“Crossrail services will use the relief lines (slow lines) under normal operation. Inter City and outer suburban services use the fast lines.”

“Because of the frequency of Crossrail trains East of Maidenhead, the entire relief line service between Reading and Paddington has to be recast. There are planned to be two trains an hour from Reading to London calling at principal stations (Twyford, Maidenhead, Slough, Hayes and Harlington and Ealing Broadway). Some of these trains could start their journey to the West of Reading (e.g. Oxford). In addition there will be two trains an hour between Reading and Slough calling at all stations. Again some of these trains may originate/terminate to the West of Reading. These services are planned to be complementary to Crossrail services and the expectation is that they will be franchised conventionally by the Secretary of State.” *Source: Crossrail*

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There is also a wider concern that the Maidenhead to London route will take on additional stops and lead to a poorer end to end timetable. Although this is probably strictly outside the remit of this WG we mention this as an additional concern.

Given the service description above, it is inevitable that we would lose direct services to Paddington. There is not likely to be capacity in the timetable and, unless the branch line is electrified (too expensive) our diesel units would probably be too slow to fit in with the other services. The branch line would therefore become an anomaly and susceptible to closure if passenger numbers drop.

Recommendation: Within the overall recommendation for greater Cookham participation in the MMPA, **maintain vigilance** and review the emerging plans for Cross Rail and provide a rapid response strategy to Network Rail on any adverse impact the branch line.

8.5.3.4 Threat #3: Continuation of the Arriva service to Maidenhead

The Arriva Route-37 is an extension of the Route-35 (High Wycombe to Bourne End) service and is contracted by Bucks CC and Arriva chooses to maintain the extension to Maidenhead on purely a commercial basis. Bucks CC does not provide financial support for the “Berkshire” leg of Route-37

The ongoing threat is that, should Arriva no longer consider the Berkshire extension to be commercially viable, the service could be withdrawn. RBWM has indicated that it would have to consider implementing a substitute service to provide Cookham with an adequate bus service. Whilst this could lead to a better service in certain ways (e.g. circular route, smaller vehicles), the loss of a connection into High Wycombe would be an unacceptable loss.

8.5.3.5 Threat #4: Courtney Coaches – contract renewal

The contract between Courtney Coaches (who run most of the Maidenhead bus services) and the RBWM is up for renewal next year (2009).

The threat to Cookham is that the new contracts could have an adverse impact on the provision of the M1 service which, although very limited, does provide a lifeline to some Cookham residents in areas not covered by the Arriva bus and FGW rail services.

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8.6 Timetables and Fares

8.6.1 Courtney Coaches M1 service – Marlow to Maidenhead Timetable

Marlow to Maidenhead			
Marlow (Railway Station)	11:00	13:10
Bisham (The Bull P.H.)	09:25	11:10	13:20
Cookham (The Chequers)	09:30	11:15	13:25
Maidenhead (Frascati Way)	10:00	11:45	13:50

Maidenhead to Marlow			
Maidenhead (Frascati Way)	10:10	12:00	14:00
Cookham (The Chequers)	10:35	12:25	14:25
Bisham (The Bull P.H.)	10:40	12:30	14:30
Marlow (Railway Station)	10:50	12:40	

8.6.2 Arriva and FGW Fares – Cookham to Maidenhead

Arriva #37	Single	Return
Cookham High Street to Maidenhead Town Centre	£2.70	£2.80

FGW Cookham to Maidenhead	Single	Off peak return	Open return
	£2.20	£2.50	£2.80

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8.6.3 River Transport – Salters Steamers, Summer service

Current timetable

Marlow to Windsor		a.m.
Marlow (Higginson Park)	dep.	9:30
Marlow Lock		9:45
Cookham Landing Stage		10:15
Maidenhead (by Boulters Lock)		11:15
Windsor Bridge	arr.	1:15
Windsor to Marlow	dep.	p.m.
Windsor Bridge		2:15
Maidenhead (by Boulters Lock)		4:00
Cookham Landing Stage		5:15
Marlow Lock		5:45
Marlow (Higginson Park)	arr.	6:00

Current fares

	Single			Return		
	Adult	Snr	Child	Adult	Snr	Child
From Cookham						
To: Maidenhead	£6.70	£6.40	£3.50	£9.80	£9.30	£4.80
To: Windsor	£11.40	£10.90	£5.80	£17.40	£16.60	£8.70
To: Marlow	£6.50	£6.20	£3.20	-	-	-

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8.7 Acknowledgements

Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM):

First Great Western (FGW):

Cross Rail Plan

Arriva:

Courtney Coaches:

Marlow - Maidenhead Passengers' Association (MMPA):

Cookham Society:

Photographs:

Neil Beswick - (Principal Officer for Passenger Transport)

Barry Haines – Cookham Station Manager

Anne Edwards – Estates Manager

Text and plan by Crossrail

Clive King – Commercial Manager

Jackie Matthews – Operations Manager

Paul Murphy - Chairman

Georgina Kilner - Chairman

The Bourne End Viaduct by Royston Willcocks

The points at Bourne End Station by the MMPA

All others by John Wagstaffe

8.8 Supporting Material

8.8.1 Web sites:

Bucks County Council

<http://www.buckscc.gov.uk/bcc/>

<http://www.buckscc.gov.uk/bcc/content/index.jsp?contentid=-177623205>

Wycombe District Council

<http://www.wycombe.gov.uk/>

South Bucks District Council

<http://www.southbucks.gov.uk/>

Includes the towns of Beaconsfield, Gerrards Cross, Burnham, Iver and Denham

First Great Western:

<http://www.firstgreatwestern.co.uk/>

Network Rail

<http://www.networkrail.co.uk/>

Community Rail

<http://www.networkrail.co.uk/asp/983.aspx>

Crossrail - Route Plans

<http://www.crossrail.co.uk/>

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Arriva Buses:	http://www.arriva.co.uk/
Courtney Coaches:	http://www.courtneycoaches.com
Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM):	http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/public_transport.htm
Salters Steamers:	http://www.salterssteamers.co.uk/
Marlow - Maidenhead Passengers' Association (MMPA):	http://www.mmpa.org.uk/
Cookham Society	http://www.cookhamsociety.org.uk/
Cookham Web Site	http://www.cookham.com/
Cookham Parish Council	http://www.cookham.com/cookhamnow/parishcouncil/index.htm

8.8.2 Key Documents:

FGW Timetable	FGW Maidenhead to Marlow.pdf
Crossrail plan drawings for Maidenhead:	0011_P_Sheet_No_86.pdf
Arriva Route 37 and 35 timetable	hw37se0308.pdf
M1 Timetable	Courtney Routes - Marlow - Bisham - Cookham - Maidenhead M1.pdf
7S Timetable	Courtney Route 7STimetable1.pdf
Local Transport Plans	td_ltp_chapter_1.pdf through td_ltp_chapter_8.pdf

8.8.3 Report from The Daily Telegraph, 5th August, 2008

The most crowded trains in Britain

Most crowded trains

Operator	Train	% above capacity
First Capital Connect	07.15 Cambridge to King's Cross	76
South West Trains	08.02 Woking to Waterloo	76
First Capital Connect	07.45 Cambridge to King's Cross	64
First Capital Connect	17.45 King's Cross to King's Lynn	64
First Great Western	08.22 Oxford to Paddington	59
First Capital Connect	18.15 King's Cross to Ely	54
First Capital Connect	07.05 Peterborough to King's Cross	53
First Capital Connect	08.55 Bedford to Brighton	51
First Great Western	07.28 Bourne End to Paddington	47
First Capital Connect	17.23 King's Cross to Peterborough	43

By David Millward
Transport Editor

BRITAIN'S most crowded train services have been named, and some carry nearly twice as many passengers as they are designed to handle.

The two worst "cattle class" commuter lines are the 07.15 from Cambridge to King's Cross and the 08.02 Woking to Waterloo, with both services running at 76 per cent above capacity.

Details of the misery suffered by millions of commuters were disclosed by the Department for Transport after a request under the Freedom of Information Act.

On the 7.15 Cambridge to King's Cross service an average 870 passengers are being squeezed into eight carriages designed to carry only 495 people; and on the Woking train 865 commuters are squeezed into space allocated for 492 travellers.

Elsewhere, passengers faced serious overcrowding on the 08.22 Oxford to Paddington and on several teatime services from Waterloo to Portsmouth Harbour.

"Getting a seat is a daily struggle for some passengers," said Anthony Smith, the chief executive of Passenger Focus, the independent rail watchdog.

"Our research shows that having sufficient room to sit or stand is in the top five drivers for passengers' satisfaction or dissatisfaction with value for money."

Stephen Hammond, the

Tories' rail spokesman, said the figures showed that commuters were "being treated even worse than we thought".

"Passengers are already paying above-inflation increases for these services," he said.

Commuters on two of the country's busiest lines will face even more of a struggle sitting down.

Seats are being stripped out of carriages operated by South West Trains into Waterloo and by Southeastern on services from Kent, Sussex and the London suburbs into London.

The plans were disclosed in a Commons written reply by Tom Harris, the rail minister and entail ripping out some seats to make room for more standing passengers.

It will result in commuters being allocated 0.25 square metres each on South West Trains and 0.35 square metres on Southeastern, whereas the figure is 0.45 square metres elsewhere on the network.

Even this figure, when the average weight of a human is taken into account, is less than the EU legal minimum for transporting livestock.

A spokesman for the Department for Transport, which has promised 1,300 extra carriages to ease overcrowding between now and 2014, said: "We recognise that overcrowding is a concern, which is why we are investing £10 billion in increasing capacity, particularly on the busiest commuting routes. Passengers will see longer trains running at the busiest times."

SECTION 9

THE POUND

9 The Pound

9.1 Introduction

The Pound forms part of the B road, the B4447. The Pound has been the subject of many reviews and studies over a long period of time. A few years ago, three humps were installed, at each end and in the middle of The Pound. More recently, the eastern hump was replaced by a raised pedestrian crossing, close to the junction with Terry's Lane.

9.1.1 Road and Pavement

The distance of the road and pavement from Spencers to Anchor Court is around 180 metres. The Group has mapped the pavement width (see chart in widening The Pound section). At its narrowest part, the pavement is 62cm wide, but the width varies at different points along its length.

9.1.2 Traffic Survey

At the request of the TTWG and Councillor Stretton, the RBWM Highways Department carried out a traffic survey. This took place between Saturday 14th June and Monday 23rd June. The most significant data relates to the period from Monday 16th June and Friday 20th June. The survey used digital cameras which not only count the vehicles; they also measure vehicle length and speed. The survey was conducted 24/7 and this was during school term time. The week therefore was typical of peak time traffic. The cameras measured traffic in both directions.

The traffic flows are shown in the table below. These cover the five working days 16-20 June 2008.

9.1.3 Traffic Flows

Westbound

Time	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Mon-Fri	Average
24 Hrs	5198	5154	5207	5505	5642	26706	5341
7-19	4349	4233	4322	4492	4609	22005	4401
8-10	765	750	717	790	776	3798	760
Peak (8-9)	443	440	460	458	482	2283	457
16-18	1011	978	884	1005	1037	4915	983
Peak (17-18)	584	533	494	544	562	2717	543

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Eastbound

Time	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Mon-Fri	Average
24 Hrs	4910	4981	4171	4347	4341	22750	4550
7-19	4157	4183	4171	4347	4341	21199	4240
8-10	891	953	883	971	904	4602	920
Peak (8-9)	496	571	538	593	540	2738	548
16-18	782	730	694	744	841	3791	758
Peak (17-18)	394	382	360	402	430	1968	394

This shows that over a working week, there are 49,000 vehicle movements. 43,000 of these are between 7a.m. and 7p.m. At the morning peak from 8a.m.-9a.m., there were 457 vehicles passing from west to east and 548 from east to west, a total of 1005, or one every 3.6 seconds. At the evening peak between 5p.m. and 6p.m., the west bound flow averaged 543 vehicles and eastbound 394 vehicles, a combined total of 937 vehicles, or one every 3.8 seconds.

9.1.4 Vehicle Length

The figures for vehicle length for the same period were as follows:-

Vehicle length	%
Up to 5.2m	92.7%
5.2-6.5m	7.1%
6.5-11.5m	2.0%
Over 11.5m	0.2%

To put these lengths into context, please note the dimensions of the vehicles below:-

Ford Fiesta	3.9Mtrs
Ford Mondeo	4.8Mtrs
Ford Transit (shortest)	4.8Mtrs
Ford Transit (longest)	6.5Mtrs
42 seat single decked bus (Optare Tempo)	12.6Mtrs

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9.1.5 Speed

The table below shows the average speed for all traffic, plus the % of traffic travelling between 20-25mph and those above 25mph. No traffic exceeded 30mph.

Time	Average speed (mph)	% 20-25mph	% over 25mph
24 Hrs	15.8	7.3	0.5
7-19	15.5	6.6	0.3
8-10	14.9	5.0	0.1
Peak (8-9)	14.5	3.8	0.0
16-18	15.0	5.2	0.2
Peak (17-18)	14.5	4.5	0.2

9.1.6 Conclusions from the traffic survey

- The weekday traffic flows through The Pound are heavy (at peak times around a vehicle every 3.6 seconds) and do not vary substantially from day to day.
- The vast majority of vehicles are cars, and there are very few vehicles over 11.5 metres and only 2% above van size.
- The average speeds are below the speed limit and vehicles exceeding 25mph were less than 1%. No vehicle exceeded 30mph.

9.1.7 Safety

A survey was carried out among parents of children attending Holy Trinity School in 2005. 16 parents reported concerns about the proximity of traffic when walking through The Pound. There were no reports of actual accidents.

The RBWM Highways Department has no reports of accidents involving personal injury, and this was confirmed by PC de Haan. However, there have been reports of pedestrians being clipped by wing mirrors.

The Pound is not on the RBWM list of potential accident black spots.

9.1.8 Conclusions relating to traffic and safety

There is an anomaly between the fears of pedestrians and actual accident statistics. The conclusions are:-

- Traffic for the most part flows steadily through The Pound, at speeds below the 20mph limit. The traffic calming measures are effective.

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- The pavement is narrow in parts, and leads to fears among some users, particularly those with children.
- The narrowness of the road and pavement appears to have created a self-regulating environment.

9.1.9 Objectives and areas for study

It is clear that a safer environment for pedestrians would be desirable, while at the same time maintaining traffic flow and avoiding creating congestion.

The objectives for the team studying The Pound were defined as:-

- To widen the footpath and provide easier access for pedestrians, particularly those with pushchairs.
- To maintain traffic flows.

The potential solutions to be evaluated were:-

- A southern bypass.
- A Gyratory system through Poundfield.
- A footpath north of The Pound.
- Widening the footpath and narrowing the road.
- Limited widening of the footpath at its narrowest points.
- None of the above (the status quo option).

The remainder of this section of the report evaluates each of these options in turn

9.2 Southern Bypass

9.2.1 Background

This was one of the options examined by the previous Traffic and Transport team, which did not recommend that a feasibility study be carried out.

9.2.2 The Route

The previous Traffic and Transport team did not evaluate a specific route. There appear to be two routes to consider.

The first would run west from Sutton Road (A4094), at a point north of Sutton Cottage, joining Maidenhead Road at a point north of Lightlands Lane and to the north of Cannondown railway bridge.

The second would run from the A4094 at a point to the south of Widbrook Common to the B4446 at a point probably just east of the railway bridge to the north of Furze Platt station, and would be a slightly longer route.

Each route would bypass The Pound for traffic not going to Cookham Rise.

Both routes would traverse Green Belt land and the Strande stream, and both would have a minimum distance in excess of 1000 metres. The cost of road building is estimated at between £500 and £1500 a metre for the road alone. Additional costs would be incurred for land purchase and the building of bridges as this route would traverse the flood plain. A southern bypass has been proposed in the past, to be financed by a developer, in return for permission to build houses.

If this road was built, the volumes of traffic through The Pound would be reduced, but it would not, by itself, provide a safer environment for pedestrians, who would still be negotiating a narrow path adjacent to traffic. If traffic volumes through The Pound decreased, traffic speeds might increase, although the traffic calming measures appear to be working, as shown by the traffic survey results which appear earlier in this report.

9.2.3 Summary

9.2.3.1 Advantages

- None. It does not improve pedestrian safety.

9.2.3.2 *Disadvantages*

- It would cut across green belt, with potentially harmful environmental effects.
- It might **reduce** safety in The Pound, if it resulted in higher traffic speeds.
- It would be expensive, well in excess of £1m, especially for the longer southern route.
- It would risk adjacent land being used for housing development.
- Litigation could arise from householders close to either route, whose property values would be reduced.

9.2.4 Recommendation

This group endorses the conclusion of the previous working group that this option would not achieve the objectives and that a feasibility study should not be undertaken

9.3 Gyratory System

9.3.1 Background – Recommendations from the previous Cookham Plan

Pages 10 and 11 of the Cookham plan set out the background and made a number of recommendations:

- No.1: A feasibility study on the construction of a new road across Poundfield to Terry's Lane being part of a clockwise one way Gyratory system.
- No.5: Considerations of the financial implications of the proposals given the scale and that the sites are privately owned.

Page 7 of the Cookham Plan (Summary of Major Recommendation) recommended (Point No. 1) that a comprehensive feasibility study of a road across Poundfield to Terry's Lane be carried out.

9.3.2 Remit

The TTWG was tasked with reviewing the validity and impact of the Gyratory road proposal routing through Poundfield, The Pound and Terry's Lane.

9.3.3 Executive Summary

The Gyratory Road is not a valid solution to the pedestrian safety and congestion problems. It would be difficult to meet the RBWM road width requirements on some sections of the route, namely Terry's Lane.

If implemented, the Gyratory Road would not bring benefits justified by the cost and would significantly urbanise The Poundfield area. It would bring pollution and it would have a detrimental impact on the wildlife, local amenity, heritage, tourism and residents. It would also open up the possibility for the development of the whole of The Poundfield area.

9.3.4 Routing

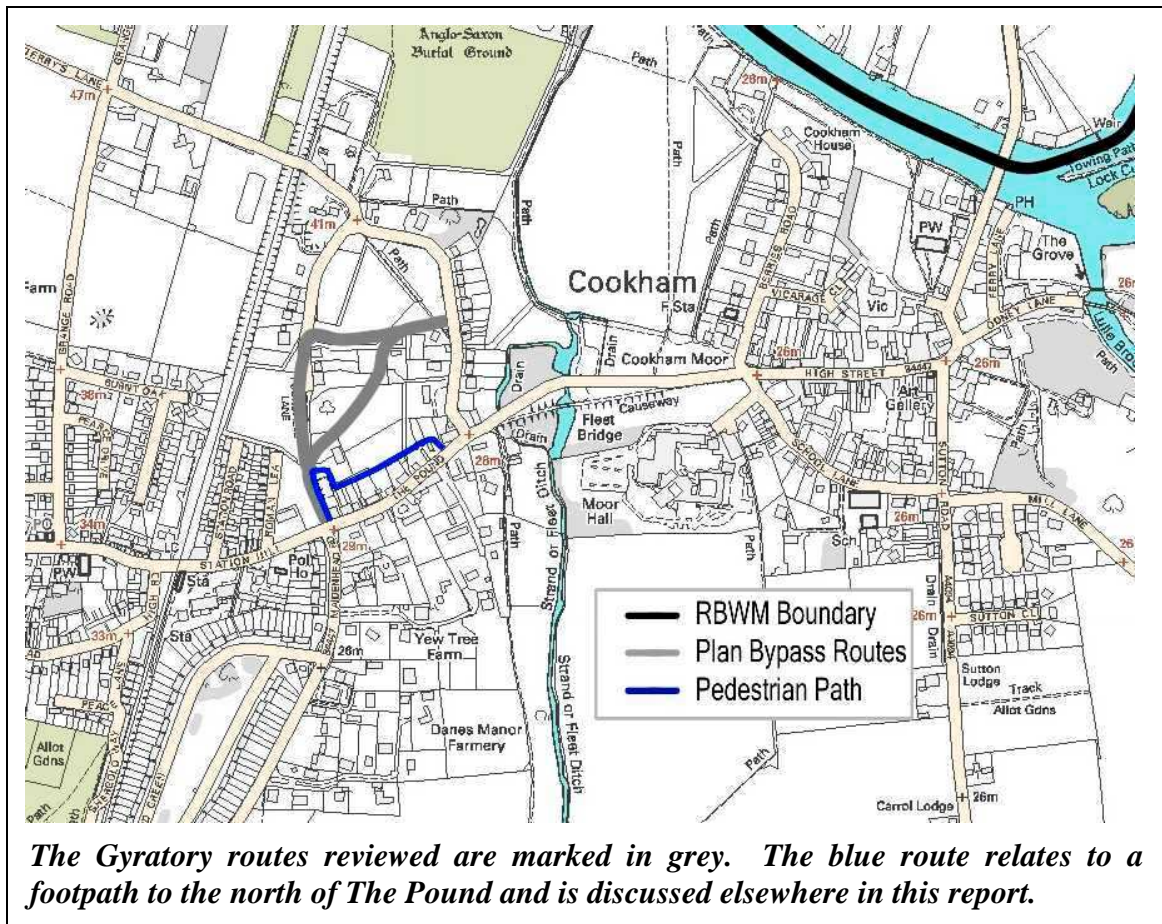
The precise positioning of the path of the new road in the original Cookham Plan is unclear – the map was described as an indicative route. Investigation by this team identified two possible routes.

The first route would run along the existing Poundfield Land past Anchor Court, up the hill, past the front of three houses before bending to the right across open fields and cutting down through several hedges before meeting Terry's Lane. This route runs across land owned by a local farmer. It would also absorb part of the field known as "the pony field".

An alternative route would again commence at the entrance to Poundfield Lane continuing past Anchor Court before bending to the right and cutting across the field in front of Englefield House. It would then pass through privately owned land belonging to several residents to join Terry's Lane. This route is shorter but would involve the co-operation of these residents, who have expressed concern and are opposed to selling land for this purpose. This route would therefore require complex and expensive compulsory land purchase in accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

The arguments presented in this report are applicable to both routes.

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9.3.5 Impact

The proposed Gyratory route commencing at the junction of The Pound and Poundfield Lane was examined. The following points were noted:-

9.3.6 Urbanisation:

1. The proposed Gyratory Road would cut across an existing Conservation Area.
2. Poundfield lane is an unmade road providing access only to residential properties before reducing to a narrow footpath. It is flanked by hedging amongst much of its length. The Gyratory Road would require this lane and footpath to be upgraded to a "B" road, involving removal of hedgerows, to widen it to 6m, plus the installation of a 2m wide pedestrian pavement on both sides (totalling 10m) and would probably require lighting to be installed along its entire length at 10m – 20m intervals to comply with RBWM planning policy (see Appendix A).
3. The mini roundabout near the Nursery school would probably need to be re-sited and enlarged resulting in the loss of green verge on the corner of The Pound and Maidenhead Road.
4. The proposed Gyratory Road would join Terry's lane, which is currently a narrow country lane supporting low traffic volumes. Incorporating Terry's Lane into the

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Gyratory system would require upgrading it to a “B” road, widening it to 6m and installing a 2m wide pavement and also possibly lighting on both sides. In some places, the construction of the road to meet RBWM current width specifications would encroach on residential properties and gardens, restricting their width, with the likelihood of incurring further compulsory purchase and compensation costs.

5. The Gyratory Road would run along the existing Terry’s Lane to join The Pound. The bottom of Terry’s Lane is very narrow and at its narrowest point it is flanked by a listed wall (the boundary wall of the Old Farm House). To accommodate the Gyratory Road the listed wall would have to be moved back several metres and the garage building of The Old Farm House demolished.
6. The proposed Gyratory Road would open the opportunity for the development of the whole of The Poundfield area which has always been strongly opposed and was previously overturned in 1990 by the then Secretary of State for the Environment, Michael Heseltine.

9.3.7 Wildlife:

Poundfield Lane hedgerows and the surrounding meadows are currently designated a conservation area, which is abundant with wildlife including deer, rabbits, foxes and a huge array of birds, butterflies and insects. The proposed Gyratory Road would result in the loss of hedgerows which form the backbone of wildlife habitat.

9.3.8 Amenity:

Poundfield Lane currently provides access to the open space at Poundfield, the golf course and the river beyond. This public right of way is used by many walkers, horse riders, tourists, children walking to school, cyclists and ramblers. The local nursery school uses the lane as a safe nature walk to observe wildlife and the changing seasons. It is an invaluable and important part of the Cookham scene. Upgrading this lane and footpath to a “B” road would greatly reduce the amenity of the lane for the majority of users.

9.3.9 Heritage and Tourism:

The proposed Gyratory Road would cut through the view of Poundfield across to Cliveden captured by the celebrated local artist, Sir Stanley Spencer and threatens to destroy a significant piece of Cookham’s artistic history. Tourists are attracted to Cookham for, among other things, its Stanley Spencer heritage, its views, tranquillity and beauty. This would be compromised by the Gyratory Road.

9.3.10 Pollution:

1. Traffic travelling from Cookham Village and headed for Poundfield Lane and Terry’s Lane would be forced through The Pound by the Gyratory system.
2. All vehicles travelling from Station Hill and Maidenhead Road would drive up Poundfield Lane and down Terry’s Lane, effectively doubling the distance travelled. This would significantly increase pollution from fumes and noise in The Poundfield area and there would be increased light pollution if lighting were installed.

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9.3.11 Residents:

1. The proposed Gyratory Road would run very close to several houses along the route, as well as the Anchor Court flats.
2. Residents living along the route of the proposed Gyratory Road would be significantly inconvenienced by major road works and possibly impacted by light pollution from street lamps.
3. Residents living along the whole route would be significantly inconvenienced by restricted one way access to their properties.
4. Residents living along The Poundfield Lane and Terry's Lane sections of the route would be impacted by noise and fumes pollution from increased traffic volume.
5. Residents living along the north side of The Pound and in any houses in Poundfield Lane or Terry's Lane enclosed by the Gyratory Road would be living on a large traffic island.
6. Several properties would suffer considerable devaluation resulting in probable litigation.

9.3.12 Cost

The RBWM Highways Dept. has provided the Traffic and Transport Group with an estimate of the cost of road building. It is a broad range, from £500 the £1500 per metre. The road length is estimated to be between 490 and 620 metres giving a cost of between £0.3m and £0.9m for the road alone. Additional costs would be incurred for remedial upgrading of the road surface and pavements on The Pound and Terry's Lane, re-siting of the electrical infrastructure and the sewers. There would be further costs from litigation, compulsory purchase and compensation. It is likely that these costs would be prohibitive unless paid for by a property developer in return for building rights in The Poundfield area.

9.3.13 Validity

The Gyratory Road was proposed in the original Cookham Plan as a solution to the congestion and pedestrian safety issue in The Pound. The pros and cons of this are explored below:

9.3.14 Pros:

1. A one way Gyratory Road through The Pound would allow a wider pavement to be constructed.
2. Traffic in The Pound would reduce, because it would be one way.

9.3.15 Cons:

1. The Gyratory Road would have a significant environmental impact – urbanisation, increased light and noise pollution and loss of some habitat, particularly hedgerows.
2. The cost would be high – construction costs, infrastructure costs, compulsory purchase, compensation and legal expenses.

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3. There would be additional risks to pedestrians using The Pound due to the requirement to cross the Gyratory Road at Poundfield Lane and the likelihood of higher traffic speeds in The Pound resulting from one way traffic.
4. The quality of life of residents living adjacent to the Gyratory Road would be reduced.
5. There would be the risk of housing development in The Poundfield area.
6. There would be fierce opposition from the local community.

9.3.16 Conclusion and Recommendation

The Gyratory Road proposal, on balance, has more disadvantages than advantages. This proposal should be dropped. A full feasibility study, as set out in Recommendation No.1 of the withdrawn Cookham Plan, is clearly not justified.

9.4 Footpath North of The Pound

9.4.1 Background

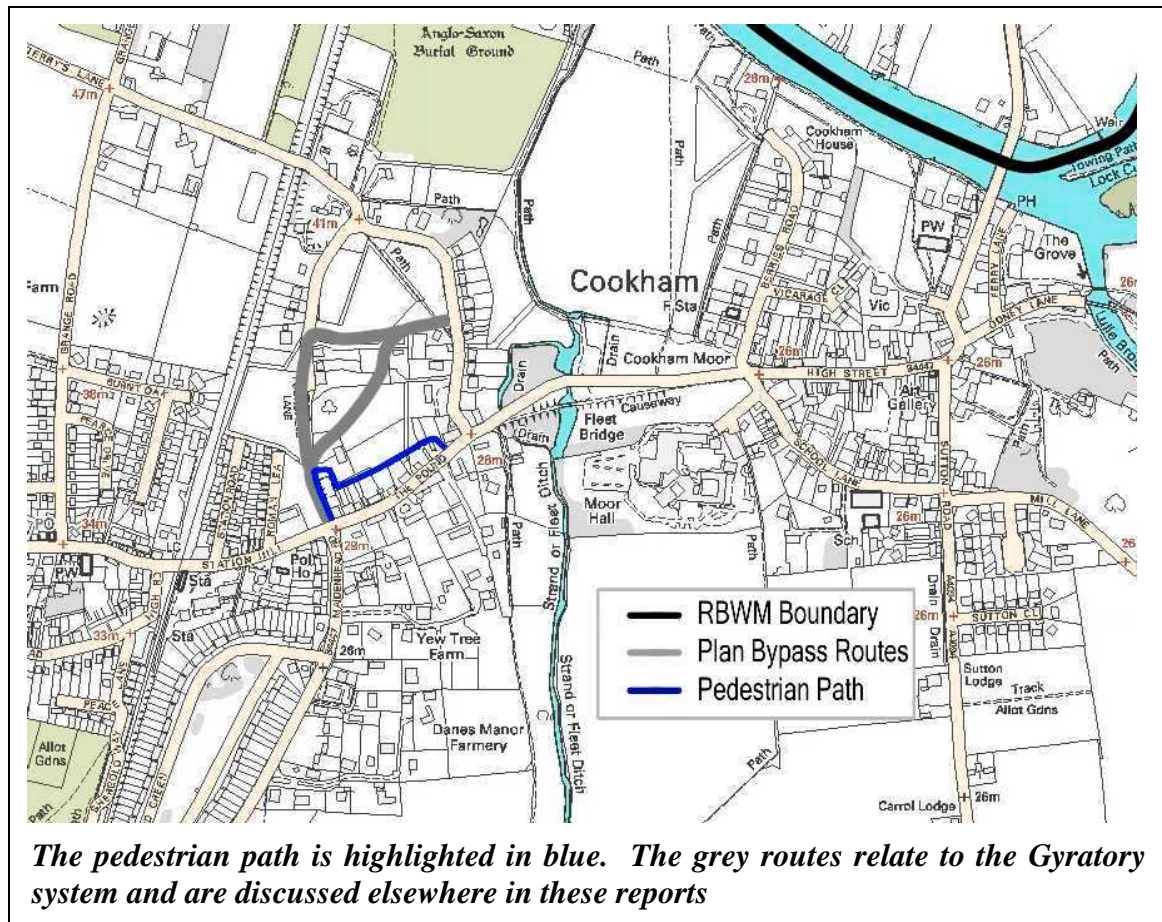
The previous and now withdrawn Cookham Plan investigated the possibility of a footpath to the rear of the properties north of The Pound, across the south end of Poundfield. This was considered because of concerns about pedestrian safety due to the narrowness of the existing footpath. This proposal was rejected due to access problems at the eastern end.

9.4.2 Remit

Despite the original rejection of this proposal, the TTWG undertook to re-investigate the viability of such a path.

9.4.3 Identification of suggested route

Although the precise intended route was not clear, for the purpose of this review it has been assumed that the suggested footpath diversion would begin from the Station Hill/Pound mini-roundabout. It would run up Poundfield Lane to a point beyond the gardens of the Anchor Court flats and the adjacent access lane to properties, then across the southern part of Poundfield, close to properties in The Pound. For practical and safety purposes, it would be necessary for the path to exit the field at the east end at the wide area of The Pound near the roundabout by Spencers, close to the pedestrian crossing.



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9.4.4 Result

The Group, physically and with detailed maps, investigated the area of the eastern end of The Pound and the bottom end of Terry's Lane. The eastern end of The Pound consists of cottages within their gardens, the house on the corner of Terry's Lane and the Spencers public house. It was found that there are no possible gaps, which would serve as an exit route from behind the cottages to The Pound.

The bottom of Terry's Lane is very narrow and without a continuous pavement so, although considered, was a less viable alternative, and again there were properties with no possible exits. One very narrow track which had been suggested was discounted. This is in triple ownership as a drive to three properties, so is in continuous use by vehicles. It was also considered to be too far up Terry's Lane to be of any use for the purpose, particularly as the bottom of Terry's Lane is narrow and without a continuous, safe pavement.

The only open area which could be considered as an exit route at all was the car park of Spencers pub, so the Group contacted Mr. Alan Barwise, Enforcement Officer and Legal Executive at the RBWM, about the possibility and legal implications of this. However, Mr. Barwise and his colleague in charge of RBWM footpaths gave opinions on what they felt would be strong objections from the public, residents, Police and RBWM to the general idea of such a footpath. The main points they made are listed below.

9.4.5 Public Safety and Legal Issues

- Both PC de Haan and Alan Barwise advised that “concealed” footpaths carry a risk of criminal activity, which could affect both residents and the general public. Several footpaths in Maidenhead and one in Cookham have been closed for this reason.
- The RBWM would be likely to advise that the path would be lit for safety reasons, resulting in some light pollution in the Conservation Area.
- There would be strong objections from residents which could involve legal actions.

9.4.6 Access issues:

The Group confirmed that Spencers car park is not directly accessible from Poundfield, and to reach it would require compulsory purchase orders for sections of the gardens of two properties in The Pound. This would be likely to incur a legal battle for which the RBWM would not be prepared to meet the cost. As well as payment, owners could also claim compensation for the devaluation of their homes, due to the footpath.

As for the possibility of using a route through the pub car park, Mr. Barwise advised that breweries are only too aware of property values as, nowadays, they may have to sell a pub as a private house. They would therefore not be likely to part with land as a right of way or want an adjacent permanent footpath which would devalue their property in the longer term, as

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permission could not be rescinded. Spencers pub is about to be extended and the brewery would have even less reason to give up any valuable parking space.

A casual arrangement requesting permission from the brewery for the public to walk through the car park would not be acceptable, as far as the RBWM is concerned, in view of the need for their permanent compulsory purchase of private gardens for access. It could also give the brewery a greater insurance liability.

9.4.7 A possible footpath behind the houses south of The Pound

The idea of a footpath to the rear of properties on the south side of The Pound was also investigated by the Group, but the complications regarding the layout of the various gardens and drives would make such a route impossible.

9.4.8 Conclusion

The former Cookham Plan's T & T team and this Group's research, with the benefit of Mr. Barwise's expert opinion, has confirmed that this suggestion is both impractical and unacceptable. Mr. Barwise advised the Group to work with the RBWM on the subject of pedestrian safety in The Pound.

{The Parish Council supports the idea of this footpath, in principle and would like to retain and explore this idea further at such a time when land ownership makes this a possible option. At present this is not a viable option.}

9.5 Widening the footpath or constructing throats

9.5.1 Introduction and Objectives

It is worthwhile to repeat the objectives of the studies into The Pound and the footpath. These are:-

- To widen the footpath and provide easier access for pedestrians, particularly those with pushchairs.
- To maintain traffic flows.

9.5.2 Options

There are two options:-

1. Constructing a full width footpath and narrowing the road. Three traffic throats would need to be constructed, and sections of The Pound would become one-way.
2. The footpath would be widened at its narrowest points. Traffic flow would not be affected.

Please note that the RBWM Highways Dept. have rejected other options such as traffic lights.

9.5.3 Option 1 – Full width footpath and traffic throats

This option has been partly evaluated by the RBWM Highways Department. Three throats would need to be constructed at The Pound's narrowest points in order to accommodate a wider footpath, but would still be wide enough to allow buses, refuse collection and emergency service vehicles to pass through.

For pedestrians, this would provide a safer route – there would be greater separation from traffic and there would be space for wheelchairs and pushchairs.

There are two problems with this option.

Congestion

For motorists, there would inevitably be additional congestion. The RBWM Highways Department concurred with this judgement. There are junctions at both ends of The Pound, but at the western end, there is the junction of Maidenhead Road, Station Parade (leading to Lower Road) and The Pound itself. There is a level crossing close to this junction.

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The traffic survey has shown that the traffic flow through The Pound at peaks times averaged 1005 vehicles during the morning peak (8-9a.m.) and 937 vehicles during the evening peak (5-6p.m.). The RBWM Highways does not have access to a computer model which would calculate the effect of the throats. However, westbound traffic would back up across the Moor and eastbound traffic would back up along both Maidenhead Road and Station Parade. Traffic turning right from Station Parade into Maidenhead road would be delayed by traffic entering The Pound from Maidenhead Road, which would have priority (box junction hatching might help to alleviate this). If the congestion was severe, traffic would back up across the railway line. Journey times would increase and there would be the risk of gridlock at the western end of The Pound.

Access for residents

A majority of the properties access their properties directly from The Pound. Several more properties enter and leave The Pound by a driveway. Although the residents would be able to enter and exit, the throats would create more continuous traffic and make it harder to negotiate their way out into The Pound.

Residents of The Pound have not been consulted on the traffic “Throats” proposal. However, from informal soundings of several residents, it would seem that there would be strong opposition to the proposal. The reasons are:-

- The present system works well, especially for coming out into The Pound.
- Traffic throats may impede access to their houses, especially for larger vehicles.
- Residents may suffer increased pollution, loss of property value and the scheme could give rise to litigation.

Cost

The cost of this option has not been calculated, but it would be considerably less expensive than the southern bypass, the Gyratory system or the footpath options. It would not involve compulsory purchase.

9.5.4 Option 2 – Widening the footpath at critical points while maintaining two-way traffic flow.

The width of the footpath along The Pound varies considerably along its length, as the chart below shows.

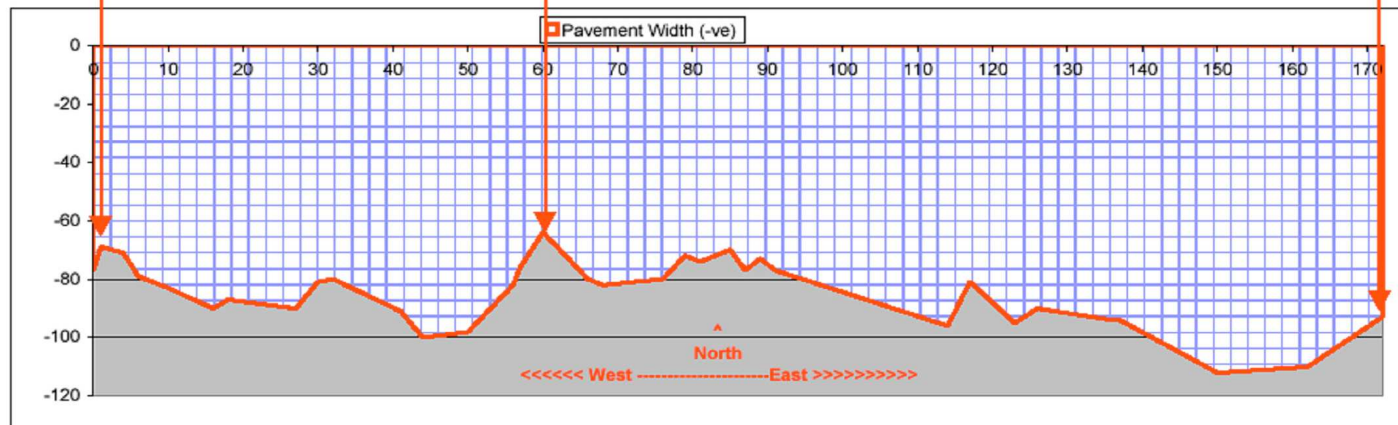
Section 9 - Widening the Footpath or Constructing Throats

View of The Pound (North at the Top) - Note that "Hatched" area of the graph illustrates the Pavement area width - grey area = Road



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Section 9 - Widening the Footpath or Constructing Throats

At its widest, the path is **112cms** wide and at its narrowest it is **62cm** wide. Most of the path does not meet the 1metre criterion, and there are three pinch points. These are at the western end at the entrance to The Pound, outside Hayden's Cottage and there are posts outside the Swan Uppers public house.



The narrowest point along the pathway in The Pound, at Hayden's Cottage

The owners of Hayden's Cottage have volunteered to have part of their wall moved so that the pavement could be widened at its narrowest point. The wall would have to be reinstated using the original materials and bricks and under the advice of the Conservation Officer

There are other parts of The Pound where the pavement could be widened, for example, opposite Spencers where the southern footpath has become redundant since the installation of the pedestrian crossing.

It would not be possible to widen the pavement at Old Oak Cottage, and this section would remain at its current width of 70-80cms. This would be adequate for the majority of pushchairs.

Section 9 - Widening the Footpath or Constructing Throats

The research undertaken by the team indicates that the pavement could be widened at its narrowest points without reducing the traffic flow and that this would improve the feeling of safety for pedestrians.

Costs

The cost of carrying out this work is not known. However, if the residents were willing to co-operate, this could be achieved without litigation or compulsory purchase (with the exception of Hayden's Cottage, the Group has not been in contact with other residents who would be affected). Potentially the improvements to the pavement could be achieved at a reasonable cost, and would certainly be much lower than the Southern Bypass, the Gyratory System or the footpath north of The Pound.

Additional Safety Measures

The Group notes that since the hump adjacent to Terry's Lane was reconstructed to incorporate the pedestrian crossing, the slope of the hump (known as the attack angle) is shallower. This means that traffic can travel across the hump at higher speeds. The Group recommends that both the attack angle (slope) and the height of the table top relative to the carriageway should comply with the recommended standard as specified in the Transport Research Laboratory report (Project Report 18 – Road Humps for controlling vehicle speeds).

The majority of the Group also recommends the construction of a fourth hump mid-way between the pedestrian crossing hump and the one facing Old Oak Tree Cottage. This would mean that the distance between humps would conform to that recommended in the report referred to in the above paragraph.

The Parish Council is assured by RBWM that the pedestrian crossing is legal and legitimate. The Parish Council is happy with the crossing and would not support changes in the attack angle of the slope or any other alteration unless there were safety issues that would justify a case for re-investigation. The Parish Council agreed with the minority recommendation that a fourth hump is not required.

Preferred and recommendations

- 1) The Group concluded that option 2 is the better option.
- 2) The Group recommends that a detailed plan be drawn up with the RBWM Highways Department to establish how a wider pavement could be built.
- 3) The Group recommends that the "throats" proposal is withdrawn.
- 4) The Group recommends that the additional work on the humps as mentioned above be carried out.

10 Appendix A

10.1 Members of the Traffic and Transport Team

Mrs Heather Braine

Mr Roger Davies (as consultant)

Mrs Lilian Dubois

Mr Max Gardiner

Mr Nigel Harvey

Mrs Olivia Harvey

Mrs Jean Hedger

Mr Jeff Hill

Mr Alasdair Kent

Mrs Maureen Kent

Mrs Pam Knight

Mr Jonathan Miall

Mrs Marcell Owen

Mr Jim Peck (also a member of the previous Traffic and Transport Group)

Mr Nigel Topping (Chairman)

Mr John Wagstaffe

Mr Royston Willcocks

Assisted by:-

Mrs Jackie Topping – Minutes Secretary (non-voting)

Thanks to Cookham Parish Council and to the Parish Clerk, Janet Wheeler, in particular for providing access to files, meeting rooms and photocopying.

11 Appendix B

11.1 Organisations and individuals consulted

The Cookham Society

PC de Haan

RBWM Highways Dept. (several members)

RBWM Enforcement Officer and Legal Executive (Alan Barwise)

RBWM Passenger Transport Team

Marlow - Maidenhead Passengers' Association (MMPA)

Sustrans

Arriva

Courtney Coaches

First Great Western (FGW)

Holy Trinity Parish Office

Owners of shops and businesses in Cookham

Cookham Medical Centre

Residents in the Pound

12 Appendix C

12.1 Letter from RBWM – Road Width Design Requirements

Dear Mrs Owen

Reference your inquiry the RBWM design guide states that the width of a new "B" road would be a minimum of 5.5m with a 2m wide footpath on either side in a residential area. If a new road were to form part of a bus route then a width of 6m would be desirable.

Given your address I presume that your enquiry relates to the proposals in the now withdrawn Cookham Parish Plan. If that is the case then I would advise that the proposal relates only to the Parish Council and that the District Council as Highway Authority have not included any such proposal in their programme of schemes.

Whilst there is no formal requirement to install street lighting it is generally accepted practice that on a B road in an urban area subject to a 30mph speed limit that it would be. There is a British Standard for Street light design and the aim is to maintain a constant level of luminance along the road. It is therefore dependent on the alignment of the road and the height of the lamp columns to be used so each scheme is specifically tailored to suit local conditions. The spacing of the lamp columns will therefore not necessarily be constant but as a rule of thumb the spacing would be in the region of 10m to 20m depending on the column height used.

Yours sincerely


Graham Brewster

HDC Team Leader

The Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead Council welcomes the submission of planning applications electronically online via the Planning Portal (www.planningportal.gov.uk).

13 Appendix D

13.1 Car Parking – Letter from Stuart Conlin, The Stanley Spencer Gallery



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Berkshire

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web: www.stanleyspencer.org.uk
e-mail: info@stanleyspencer.org.uk
A registered charity, no. 307985

Mr Roger Davies
16 Sutton Close
Cookham
Berks SL6 9QU


19th March 2008

Dear *Roger,*

The Cookham Plan, Sutton Road, and The Stanley Spencer Gallery

Thank you for your letter of 7th March in which you ask to clarify the Gallery's needs with respect to the proposed car and coach park on Green Belt land west of Sutton Road to which I can respond as follows:

- We do not generally have a problem with parking for cars and at most times it is easy to find a space either in the existing Sutton Road car park, in the High Street, or in Odney Lane. A car park as proposed would for many visitors be too far to walk and they would tend to still park closer to the Gallery. As you are aware, the Gallery refurbishment included fully DDA compliant visitor access to the building and a widening of the footpath at the corner of Sutton Road. This now enables wheelchair users to get from the Sutton Road car park into the Gallery unaided. It would not be feasible for a wheelchair user to get from the proposed new car park.
- A large proportion of our visitors, especially at weekends, arrive on the Thames Path which comes right past the Gallery. There are also substantial numbers of visitors who are boating on the river. Neither of these categories of visitor need parking.
- For those who come in coaches, the driver normally would drop the visitors off at the Gallery and then proceed to Boulton's Lock or other parking area, to be recalled when needed for pickup. We have about 30 coach parties per annum. If a car park per the proposal were to be used for coach parking, this process would still be needed because it would be too far to expect our visitors, many of whom may be elderly, frail, or disabled, to walk. It is therefore hard to justify a new car park on Green Belt on the basis of the Gallery's needs.
- The recent refurbishment of the Gallery will hopefully increase our visitor numbers, and we are seeing a 10-20% increase on earlier years. This would amount to about 1500-3000 extra visitors a year over our recent annual average of 13,000 to 15,000, and at the high end would cause about 2-3 extra cars per day to find a parking space, bearing in mind that many of our visitors do not come by car. Our visitors arrive and leave throughout the day and tend to spend less than an hour in the Gallery, so I would be surprised if more than one extra car is parked in Cookham at any one time as a result of our forecast increase in visitors.



Appendix D

- Having checked with my senior colleagues I find that the authors of the *plan* did not ask for our opinion on these matters. As a preparatory stage to our recent redevelopment we were obliged by our major donor, the National Lottery, to perform various detailed independent *studies* connected with access to and conservation of our art collection. An access audit, access *plan*, and an audience development plan were performed to a high level of detail by independent consultants. None of these documents report parking to be a significant issue. We would be happy *for any* future working groups to have sight of these studies.

I hope the foregoing answers your questions. Please contact me if you *need* any more information.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Stuart Conlin', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Stuart Conlin, Trustee of Stanley Spencer Gallery