

Cookham

Village Design Statement

Supplementary Planning Document



May 2013

Joint Sponsors: The Cookham Parish Council and The Cookham Society

Contents list

A message from the VDS Working Group	(iv)	6.9 New development involving several dwellings	26
1 Introduction to the Village Design Statement	1	6.10 Apartment buildings and conversions	26
1.1 About The Village Design Statement (VDS)	1	6.11 Visible spacing of buildings	26
1.2 Status of the VDS	1	6.12 Extensions	27
1.3 Duration, Sponsors and Working Group	1	6.13 Traditional terraced properties	27
1.4 VDS early consultations and Statutory Public Consultation	1	6.14 Primacy of original	27
1.5 The VDS and ‘Sustainability’	1	6.15 Affordable housing	27
1.6 Guidance Points, Recommendations and Advisory Notes	2	6.16 Contemporary, iconic and ‘eco’ buildings	28
1.7 Nomenclature of the VDS	2	6.17 Boundary walls	29
2 Introduction to Cookham’s location and setting	3	6.18 Commercial and retail premises	30
2.1 Parish location	3	6.19 Car parking in new development	30
2.2 Bounded by a curve of the Thames	3	6.20 Village car parks	30
2.3 Dissected by lesser streams and waterways	3	6.21 Gates	31
2.4 Three distinctive settlements within a unified whole	3	6.22 Hedgerows, fencing and trees within residential areas	31
2.5 Green and waterside setting	4	6.23 Screening new development	31
3 Cookham’s historical and archaeological heritage	5	6.24 Gardens	32
3.1 Early settlement in Cookham	5	6.25 Sustainable design	32
3.2 Cookham’s Anglo-Saxon importance	5	6.26 Lighting (exterior)	32
3.3 A thriving medieval market town	5	6.27 Note on traffic and its consequences	32
3.4 Royal manorial estates	6	Summary of general guidance for Cookham’s built areas	33
3.5 The advent of change	6	7 Cookham village	35
3.6 ‘Opening up’ in the nineteenth century - new bridges and a railway branch line	7	7.1 The growth of Cookham village	35
3.7 The twentieth century and onwards	8	7.2 Cookham High Street Conservation Area	36
3.8 Cookham’s archaeological heritage	9	7.3 Cookham’s large developed sites	41
4 “Cookham is defined by its green spaces”	10	8 Cookham Rise and the Station Hill area	43
4.1 The pattern of Cookham’s countryside	10	8.1 The growth of the settlement	43
4.2 Changes in agricultural practice	10	8.2 Nature and pattern of development	43
4.3 Modern diversified farm and land management businesses	11	9 Cookham Dean	51
4.4 Cookham’s smaller farms	12	9.1 Village characteristics	51
4.5 The John Lewis Partnership - another large landowner in Cookham	13	9.2 Green Belt and Conservation Area	51
4.6 The Green Belt and the countryside	14	9.3 From traditional cottages to large detached dwellings	57
4.7 Green fingers, green corridors	15	9.4 Business and agri-business premises	57
4.8 Common land	16	10 Cookham’s riverside development	59
4.9 Woodlands, trees and hedgerows	18	10.1 All of one piece	59
4.10 An abundance of green verges	19	10.2 The ‘ribbon’ of Cookham’s riverside development	59
4.11 Accommodation land	19	10.3 Special considerations for development on the riverside	60
4.12 Green spaces and the community	20	11 Cookham’s homecoming routes	61
5 The River Thames and Cookham’s flood plain	21	11.1 An unusual number of choices	61
5.1 Frequency, causes and impacts of flooding	21	12 Footpaths, bridleways and cycle routes	63
5.2 Flood defence, recovery and escape routes	22	12.1 Many routes but a degree of frustration	63
6 Cookham’s built areas - general guidance	23	12.2 Missing and desired facilities	63
6.1 Introduction	23	13 Agricultural buildings and countryside installations	64
6.2 Key objectives	23	13.1 Agricultural buildings	64
6.3 Context	23	13.2 Polytunnels	65
6.4 Building form and context	24	13.3 Telecommunications masts	65
6.5 Roofs	24	14 A village made in heaven – the Stanley Spencer legacy	66
6.6 Building materials	24	14.1 Sir Stanley Spencer and Cookham	66
6.7 Rural (or semi-urban) character of Cookham’s built areas	25	14.2 Stanley Spencer’s paintings and their significance for the VDS	66
6.8 Built-colour palette	25		

Contents list continued

15 'Special Local Significance' and other protective measures	67	List of text boxes	
15.1 The meaning of 'Special Local Significance'	67	Box	History
15.2 Adding to the register of Listed Buildings	67	1	Cookham's bridges 7
15.3 Creating further Conservation Areas	67	2	Cookham's railway station 8
15.4 Designating 'Village Greens'	67	3	Green spaces
15.5 Obtaining Tree Preservation Orders	67	4	White Place Farm 11
16 Cookham's visitors and tourism	68	5	Copas Farms (including Lower Mount Farm) 11
16.1 Visitor and tourist numbers	68	6	The Copas Partnership (including Kings Coppice Farm) 12
16.2 Implications for the built environment	68	7	The Odney Estate 13
17 Nature conservation and promotion	69	8	The Winter Hill Golf Club 13
18 Opportunities for enhancement	70	9	Between Cookham and Maidenhead - a narrow and sensitive green gap Poundfield 14
18.1 Introductory note	70	10	Winter Hill and Cockmarsh 15
18.2 Nominated eyesores	70	11	Cookham Moor 16
18.3 Elsewhere in the VDS	70	12	Cookham village
Annex A Cookham's three settlements (naming, status and boundaries)	72	13	From Cookham Bridge to Church Gate, Odney Lane and Ferry Lane 36
A.1 Naming and boundaries of the three settlements	72	14	Cookham High Street 37
A.2 Naming decisions reached for VDS purposes	72	15	The Pound, Poundfield Lane and the southern end of Terry's Lane 38
A.3 Status of the three settlements as 'established locations'	73	16	School Lane 39
A.4 Intriguing anomalies	73	17	Berries Road and Vicarage Close 39
A.5 Investigative outcomes summary	74	18	Mill Lane, Woodmoor End and Sutton Close 40
Annex B Relevant Stanley Spencer paintings - further detail	75	19	South of the Pound and east of the Maidenhead Road 40
B.1 Rationale	75	20	The Odney Club 41
B.2 Stanley Spencer paintings that include identifiable or known views, facades or other building detail.	76	21	Moor Hall 41
Annex C Buildings and areas of 'Special Local Significance'	77	22	Cookham Rise and the Station Hill area
C.1 Buildings of Special Local Significance	77	23	Station Hill - the commercial centre 44
C.2 Areas of Special Local Significance	78	24	Station Road and Roman Lea 45
C.3 Orchards and gardens of Special Local Significance	78	25	North of Lower Road 45
Reference list	79	26	Lower Road 46
Photographic permissions / copyright information	80	27	Between Lower Road and High Road 47
		28	High Road 47
		29	Whyteladyes Lane (southern end) and connecting roads 48
		30	Whyteladyes Lane (western end) and connecting roads 48
		31	Alfred Major Recreation Ground 49
		32	Westwood Green 49
		33	Cookham Dean
		34	The heart of Cookham Dean 52
		35	Grubwood Lane (eastern side) 53
		36	Dean Lane, Startins Lane and Jobs Lane 53
		37	Dean Lane, Warners Hill and Alleyns Lane 54
		38	Dean Lane and Hills Lane 54
		39	Winter Hill (east) and Stonehouse Lane 55
		40	Winter Hill (west) and Gibraltar Lane 55
		41	Church Road (south of village centre) and Bigfrith Lane 56
		42	Cookham Dean's southern and western peripheries 56
		43	Homecoming routes
		44	From Bourne End over Cookham Bridge 61
		45	From 'Maidenhead Riverside', Lower Cookham Road and Sutton Road 61
		46	From Switchback to Cannondown Road and the Maidenhead Road 61
		47	From Pinkneys Green, Choke Lane and Long Lane 62
		48	From Winter Hill Road or Quarry Wood Road 62
		49	Homecomings by rail 62
		50	Agricultural buildings
		51	Polytunnels and planning issues 65
		52	Opportunities for enhancement
		53	Cookham Bridge 71
		54	The Thames railway and foot bridges 71
		55	The Tarrystone 71
		56	
		57	
		58	
		59	
		60	
		61	
		62	
		63	
		64	
		65	
		66	
		67	
		68	
		69	
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Foreword

The preparation of this Village Design Statement has been led by local residents; it has been sponsored by Cookham Parish Council and the Cookham Society and has been written by residents.

This is the first time that elected representatives, interest groups and residents have come together in this way and shows that the Borough Council is leading the way in encouraging residents to be instrumental in policy making. I would encourage others with an interest in their environment to follow this excellent example.

Cllr Mrs C Bateson
Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead
Cabinet Member – Community Partnerships

Note from the Sponsors

Cookham Parish Council and the Cookham Society are proud to have jointly sponsored the first Village Design Statement for Cookham.

We are grateful to Dr. Courtenay-Smith and the rest of the Working Group for their efforts in producing this comprehensive depiction of Cookham Parish and we must acknowledge the valuable contribution made by many residents and visitors.

We also offer our thanks to Officers of the Planning and Property Service at the Borough Council for their guidance and to Borough Councillors for their continuing support.

The Parish Council and the Cookham Society have endeavoured to ensure that the contents of the document represent the views of the residents.

We hope that this Village Design Statement, with subsequent updates, will provide continuing significant reference material in its use as a Supplementary Planning Document.

D Fry
Chairman
Cookham Parish Council

D N Ashwanden
Chairman
Cookham Society Planning Sub- Committee

A message from the VDS Working Group

Dear Reader

It was for us a great privilege to be granted the major role in the development of this document.

The aim of the Village Design Statement (VDS) is to provide local guidance for those seeking to make changes to their property or land to help ensure that change is in keeping and protects what people most value.

Throughout its preparation we have been keenly aware that, quite apart from its formal role in support of planning processes, this document will form a small piece of history. The VDS captures Cookham parish as it is today. We have also been reminded how past and present residents have sought to protect what is best and most important about the parish whilst addressing the issues of the day.

There is no doubt in our minds that Cookham parish is an exceptional place to live. Cookham parish is very pretty in built terms and already has two conservation areas and numerous listed buildings. However, the outcomes of consultations left us in no doubt that the three settlements of Cookham cannot be satisfactorily described without invoking the many facets of their relationship with the countryside and riverside setting, which so positively enhances the sense of well-being of residents and visitors alike.

Our grateful thanks go to each and every person who contributed to this VDS - also to our joint Sponsors, Cookham Parish Council and the Cookham Society, and to the Borough Council, whose invaluable advice and support was greatly appreciated. Whilst it would be impossible to acknowledge everyone whose thoughts and ideas we have managed to glean, some of the key contributors are recognized on pages 1 and 2.

The Cookham Village Design Statement Working Group

1 Introduction to the Village Design Statement

1.1 About the Village Design Statement (VDS)

The Village Design Statement (VDS) for Cookham parish has been produced by residents. It describes the character and setting of Cookham's three settlements, with particular reference to the physical and tangible qualities that residents most value. The VDS provides local guidance to those seeking to make changes to their property or land and, where planning permission is required, assist the Borough Council in considering whether the proposed development is sympathetic to the local character.

The VDS does not guide where development should take place in principle and does not designate land for particular purposes. These matters are currently considered through the Borough Council's adopted Local Plan. The Borough Council is currently reviewing the Local Plan.

The VDS provides guidance to support existing planning policy, most notably Local Plan policies DG1 (Design Guidelines), N1 (Areas of Special Landscape Importance), N2 (Setting of the Thames), and H10 and H11 (Housing Layout and Design). The VDS will also assist the implementation of Section 7 of the National Planning Policy Framework which expects developments to respond to local character and history."

1.2 Status of the VDS

The VDS provides design guidance to support existing planning policy. The VDS was adopted by the Borough Council as a Supplementary Planning Document on 23 May 2013. This means that its content and guidance will be part of the suite of local planning policy documents that guide decisions on planning applications within Cookham.

1.3 Duration, Sponsors and Working Group

The preparation of the VDS began in December 2008 as a result of a recommendation made in the earlier Cookham Plan. The project was jointly sponsored by the Cookham Parish Council and the Cookham Society.

The VDS was drafted by a Working Group of residents. The Working Group and its advisers or supporters included all those in the table below. The names of those engaged at any point in elements of VDS drafting and/or review are marked with a red asterisk. Where special support was provided by an individual who was not a member of the Working Group, the nature of the support is indicated in italics.

1.4 VDS early consultations and statutory Public Consultation

The drafting of the VDS was preceded by and interleaved with consultations with Cookham residents, visitors, local businesses and other organisations. Information gathered and assembled for the earlier 'Cookham Plan' (Reference 2), was also extensively consulted. In sum, the VDS consultations prior to formal Public Consultation included:

- Review of information from earlier 'Cookham Plan'
- 'Village characterisation' public workshops.
- Analysis following collection of around 500 completed questionnaires of various types.
- In-depth consultations with 22 members of the Cookham community, each representing a key perspective (see Acknowledgements, page 2).
- Professional surveys of all streets in Cookham parish, each to a prescribed format.
- Additional surveys covering the major areas of green space inside or close to the settlements.
- 'Informal consultations' on the initial draft VDS (individually with all members of the Parish Council and of the Cookham Society Committee – the Sponsoring Organisations).
- Formal Public Consultation on the revised draft VDS, as notified to prescribed organisations, and to residents of Cookham Parish, via press publicity together with local posters and leaflets.
- Consultations with Planning Officers of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead throughout, with modifications and change to drafts as advised.

The draft VDS was published for a 5-week period of statutory Public Consultation from 23rd November to 28th December 2012. Comments received were considered by the Working Group and the Borough Council. Where appropriate, amendments were made to the VDS. The amended VDS was passed to and endorsed by Cookham Parish Council and the Cookham Society as project sponsors before being adopted by the Borough Council. A summary of the consultation process, including the representations made and how they have been addressed in the amended VDS is set out in a separate consultation statement.

1.5 The VDS and 'Sustainability'

At an early stage in the VDS project, a 'Sustainability Scoping Report' was published for consultation (Reference 1). The report, and comments received on it, have helped guide the work of the project.

Dr Shez Courtenay-Smith*, Church Gate, Cookham (Chairman, lead writer/ page designs)	Management consultant	Ms Fiona Hewer*, High Road, Cookham Rise VDS Flood plain and Sustainability Adviser	Environmental scientist
Mrs Jane Davey*, Poundfield Lane, Cookham	Barrister	Mr Tim Downes (non resident in Cookham parish) Street and green space professional surveys contractor	Chartered surveyor
Mrs Lynne Peperell*, Wessons Hill, Cookham Dean	Researcher	Mrs Janet Wheeler, Southwood Road, Cookham Rise (no longer resident in Cookham Parish) Secretariat to the Working Group until January 2010	Clerk to Parish Council until January 2010
Mrs Pam Knight*, The Pound, Cookham	Local historian	Mr Brian Clews, Broomhill, Cookham Rise Special adviser to the Working Group, on ecological matters	Wildlife author and consultant
Mr Nigel Topping, Roman Lea, Cookham (no longer resident in Cookham Parish)	Statistician	Mr Robert Acker, High Road, Cookham Rise Questionnaire analyst. Recorder/ administrator for informal consultations	Qualified audit professional
Mr Roger Davies, Sutton Close, Cookham	Chartered surveyor		
Mr Tom Denniford*, Winter Hill Road, Cookham Dean Initial advice and drafting assistance	Chartered surveyor		

1 Introduction to the Village Design Statement continued

1.6 Guidance Points, Recommendations and Advisory Notes

Guidance Points, Recommendations and Advisory Notes appear in boxes at appropriate points throughout the text, with the following forms and significance.

GUIDANCE Guidance Points in yellow boxes under this heading (all commencing with the letter 'G') are those that should be considered by people contemplating changes to their property and those reviewing planning applications.

RECOMMENDATIONS Recommendations in light green boxes (and commencing with the letter 'R') relate to aspects affecting Cookham parish more generally. Whilst there is an emphasis on the built environment, these Recommendations do not supplement existing planning policy but are provided as suggestions.

ADVISORY NOTES Advisory notes (in light turquoise boxes (and commencing with the letter 'A') provide additional information, usually naming further documents as sources of guidance.



Red roofs of Cookham: clay tiles are prominent throughout the three settlements, although slate dominates in certain areas.

1.7 Nomenclature of the VDS

The following nomenclature applies to areas and place names in the VDS.

- The name '**Cookham parish**' is used to designate the entire area within the parish boundary: that is the three settlements and the surrounding green spaces.
- The name '**Cookham**' is used as the collective term for the built areas that include all three Cookham settlements and outlying properties.
- The phrase '**The Cookhams**' is not used in the VDS. Where it might otherwise occur it is replaced by the name, 'Cookham' or '**the three settlements**'.
- Cookham in its entirety is occasionally referred to as '**the village**', whilst Cookham village is always referred to as '**Cookham village**'.
- The three settlements are designated as follows. All three are seen as part of 'one Cookham'.
 - Cookham village
 - Cookham Rise and the Station Hill area
 - Cookham Dean

The rationale for all nomenclature decisions is provided at Annex A.

Note At all points in the VDS where an individual's role or position is stated, it is their role or position held at the time that they made their contributions to the VDS.

Acknowledgements

Those who have provided contributions to the VDS are too numerous to name. Whilst the few are mentioned here, our thanks to the many are particularly important.

The VDS is fundamentally a document that seeks to represent the views of the community and, without the weight of shared opinion of all who participated in the Consultation Programme, the Working Group would not have been in a position to seek and attain the right balances in the document as finally produced.

We should like to thank the Borough Council for giving their support to the project, dedicating time to review processes, and ultimately providing to the VDS the status of a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). In particular, we thank our key representative, Principal Planning Officer, Mr Ian Bellingier.

We thank our two Sponsors, the Cookham Parish Council and the Cookham Society, each of whom contributed significant funding and provided an invaluable first round of comments.

Our grateful thanks are due to all those who took special roles in support of the Working Group, as are named in the box on page 1. Both individually and collectively, they have made enormous contributions as did the photographers named on page 80.

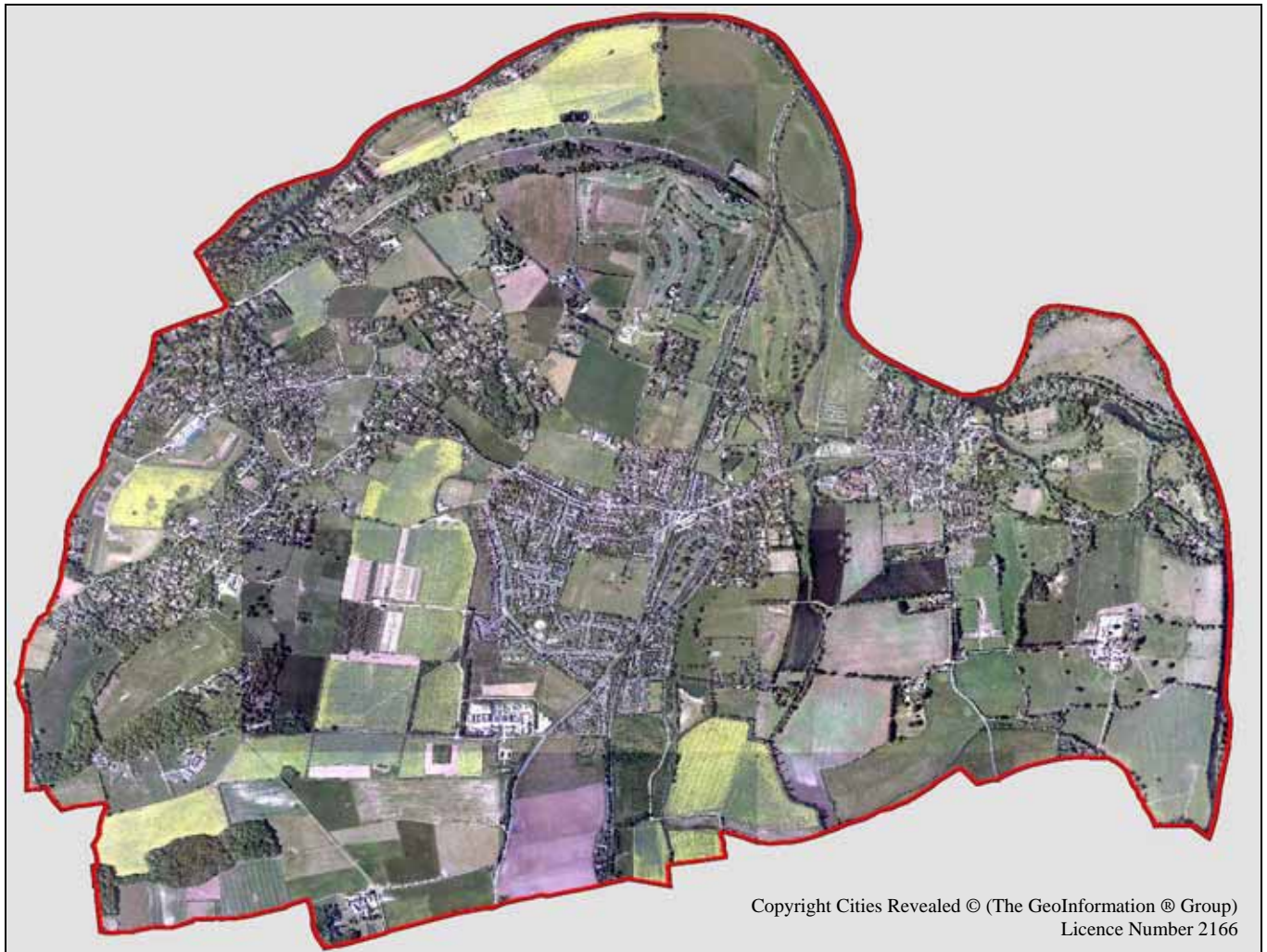
We are particularly grateful to those who participated in the Individual Consultations and provided important insights into Cookham parish as it is seen from widely differing perspectives. The names of these individuals are listed to the right.

So illuminating was much that was conveyed to us during those consultations that we have, where possible, included memorable, pertinent quotations within the VDS text.

Participants in the Individual Consultations for the VDS

- Mrs Carol Austen, Chairman of the Maidenhead and Cookham Commons Advisory Committee
- Mrs Cindy Barnes, for knowledge of 'Transition town' principles
- Mr Colin Berks, Chairman of the Marlow Archaeological Society
- Mrs Amanda Beard, Property Manager for Basildon Park and Berkshire, National Trust
- Ms Sue Bickle, Manager, Odney Club and Winter Hill Golf Club
- Mr Curly Carver, Warden-in-Charge, Maidenhead and Cookham Commons
- Mr Brian Clews, Head, Berkshire County Ornithological Services
- Mr Geoffrey Copas, Head of Copas Farms
- Ms Tanya Copas, Director, Copas Partnership
- Mr Ian Davis, for knowledge of Cookham's sporting activities
- Simon and Pat Davis, Rivertime Boat Trust Charity
- Mr Jon Fisher, Director of Facilities and Events, Chartered Institute of Marketing
- Mr Duncan Gibson, Head of Divisional Planning, Shanly Homes
- Mrs Arlene Kersley, Rural Housing Enabler, Community Council for Berkshire
- Mr Michael Johnson, Chairman of the Friends of the Stanley Spencer Gallery
- Mr Daran Jones, Owner of Country Store and Managing Director of the Station Parade management company
- Ms Liz Kwantes, Cookham Youth Project Leader
- Mr Richard Poad, Chairman, Maidenhead Heritage Centre
- Mr Richard Simmonds, Cookham Dean farmer and Chairman of the Cookham Plan project
- Mrs Jean Stretton, President, Cookham Society
- Mr Michael Wellman, Lifetime resident of Cookham Rise and Member of the Parish Council
- Mr Reg Willsher, Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Elizabeth House

2 Introduction to Cookham's location and setting



An aerial view of Cookham parish with the parish boundary marked in red.

2.1 Parish location

Cookham parish comprises the northernmost part of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead. Its northern and eastern boundaries are formed by the River Thames, with Buckinghamshire lying on the river's opposite bank. To the south are the northern outskirts of Maidenhead, while to the west lies the parish of Bisham.

2.2 Bounded by a curve of the Thames

The River Thames bounds the north and east of Cookham parish for nearly four miles and is fundamental to the history and character of the area. There is little commercial traffic on the river nowadays, but it is widely used by leisure craft, including sailing boats, rowing boats and canoes. The riverside meadows and Thames Path are in constant use for recreational purposes.

After turning to the south-east and flowing beneath Cookham Bridge, the river divides into four channels. The northern channel leads into the privately owned Hedsor Water. The central channels are the lock cut, passing through Sashes Island, and the weir. The southern channel is known as Lulle Brook. It runs adjacent to Mill Lane, bounding the southern flank of Odney Common. All four channels rejoin to the south-east of Cookham Lock, where the river turns south towards Maidenhead.

2.3 Dissected by lesser streams and waterways

A second system of waterways runs across Cookham Moor and southwards towards Maidenhead. This system includes the Fleet Ditch, Strande Water and White Brook.

The Fleet Ditch has links to drainage systems on Cockmarsh and then passes southwards across Cookham Moor, becoming Strande Water. From here it connects to White Brook, which crosses Widbrook Common before joining the Thames to the north of Maidenhead. The stream also continues southwards to Maidenhead's town centre and thence to Bray.

2.4 Three distinctive settlements within a unified whole

Cookham parish includes three significant settlements named as the village, the Rise and the Dean. Parts of the built environment extend beyond these specific nodes and are known simply as Cookham.

Cookham village lies in the north-east corner of the parish. The A4094 road (Sutton Road) passes through it to link Maidenhead with Bourne End. This part of the parish is mostly flat and low-lying, situated as it is within the Thames flood plain.

2 Introduction to Cookham's location and setting continued

To the west of the flood plain, the ground rises towards the north and west and becomes more hilly, culminating in Winter Hill, which is the north-eastern extremity of a chalk formation running along the south side of the Thames. The open landscape gives way to a mixture of woodlands and small fields, the heart of which contains the widely spaced settlement of Cookham Dean.

Cookham Rise is the rising land to the west of the railway branch line. Together with the Station Hill area of Cookham (east of the railway line) these two areas form a settlement at the centre of the parish, providing its commercial centre and largest residential area.



Cookham village lies to the east, close to the southern bend of the river at that point. Historically it includes the Cookham High Street area and the Pound, with the low-lying and flood-prone Cookham Moor between the two.

2.5 Green and waterside setting

Few built environments so close to London and major national motorways can boast the 'glory of greenness' that is Cookham. The expression '**Cookham is defined by its green spaces**' was used by one of the VDS Working Group's Individual Consultees, ecologist Mr Brian Clews. The VDS Working Group thought this expression to be so apt a description of Cookham that Section 4 of the VDS is named accordingly. In that section, many aspects of Cookham's green spaces are discussed: its Green Belt, its farms, its common land, its woodland and wooded hillsides, and its 'fingers of green' stretching to the heart of the built environment, imbuing the community with a sense of peace and calm.

Just as green spaces not only surround the Cookham settlements but also thread through them, so does water in the form of the River Thames and its secondary waterways. Such was the extent to which the flow of water was seen as a characteristic of Cookham that the state-of-the-art extensions to Moor Hall (Section 7.3) incorporated bubbling water flows into the heart of the resulting building complex to echo the 'feel' of Cookham.

Cookham is very pretty in 'built' terms (see the descriptions especially in Sections 7, 8 and 9), and already possesses two Conservation Areas. (*Section 15 highlights the possibility of creating additional Conservation Areas within Cookham Rise and the Station Hill area*). Cookham's architectural value is complemented by the attractive riverside and countryside setting

Cookham is not, and must not be, immune to change, but the best of what Cookham has to offer should be protected and where possible enhanced. As was found during the early VDS consultations, the importance of Cookham's character weighs not only with its resident community but with many who live elsewhere in the Borough, who love to visit Cookham, and also with many more living further afield (Section 16.1). Cookham offers refreshing, peaceful and healthy enjoyment to the visitor. Its major amenities are personally uplifting and largely free of charge.

GUIDANCE: Cookham's location and setting

G2.1 Development should not be allowed to detract from the sensitive inter-relationships between Cookham's built environment, green environment and river or waterways.

Examples of Cookham's built environment.

Top of page: The Holy Trinity Church dating from the twelfth century.

Centre: Varied architecture in Cookham High Street.

Base of page: The junction of Dean Lane and Alleyns Lane in Cookham Dean.

3 Cookham's historical & archaeological heritage

3.1 Early settlement in Cookham

With its steep hills, woodland and fertile soil, all in close proximity to the river and giving access to fresh water, prehistoric Cookham was an attractive place to live. The evidence of occupation has been found in concentrations of stone tools and weapons. During the Bronze Age, Cookham's dead were buried at Cockmarsh and some of the barrows, which would originally have stood on low islands above the water, are still visible.



A late Bronze Age burial mound on Cockmarsh. A missing 'chunk' indicates that this mound has been dug into in the past, probably in the nineteenth century.

Until the beginning of the Roman occupation in 43AD, Cookham was in the territory of a tribe based at Silchester. The Thames marked the boundary with a rival tribe occupying south Buckinghamshire and beyond.

The Romans brought their roads through Cookham. An important military road, now known as the Camlet Way, ran between Colchester, Essex and Silchester, probably crossing the river in the area of Sashes Island. A stretch of another reputedly Roman road ran north-south between Braywick and Cockmarsh. The two roads may have intersected on Cannon Down, where excavation has revealed evidence of a Roman villa or farmstead.

3.2 Cookham's Anglo-Saxon importance

Cookham continued in its role as border territory in the Anglo-Saxon period but, by this time, it was on the boundary between Wessex and Mercia. The high-status graves of six Anglo-Saxon warriors, accompanied by their swords and shields, were discovered buried at a high point in Noah's Ark field on the hill at Rowborrow in 1854, when the railway was under construction.

Historical records show that Anglo-Saxon Cookham was of national importance. By 740 AD, an early royal 'minster' or monastery, had been established, probably close to where Holy Trinity Church stands today. A royal minster was a cultural retreat and the focal point of an economic market, as well as a religious centre, with jurisdiction over a wide area.

Over a century later, Alfred 'the Great' established a large fort in the area of Sashes Island. This was one of a group of thirty-one 'Burghal Hidage' forts which surrounded Wessex as protection against Viking raids.

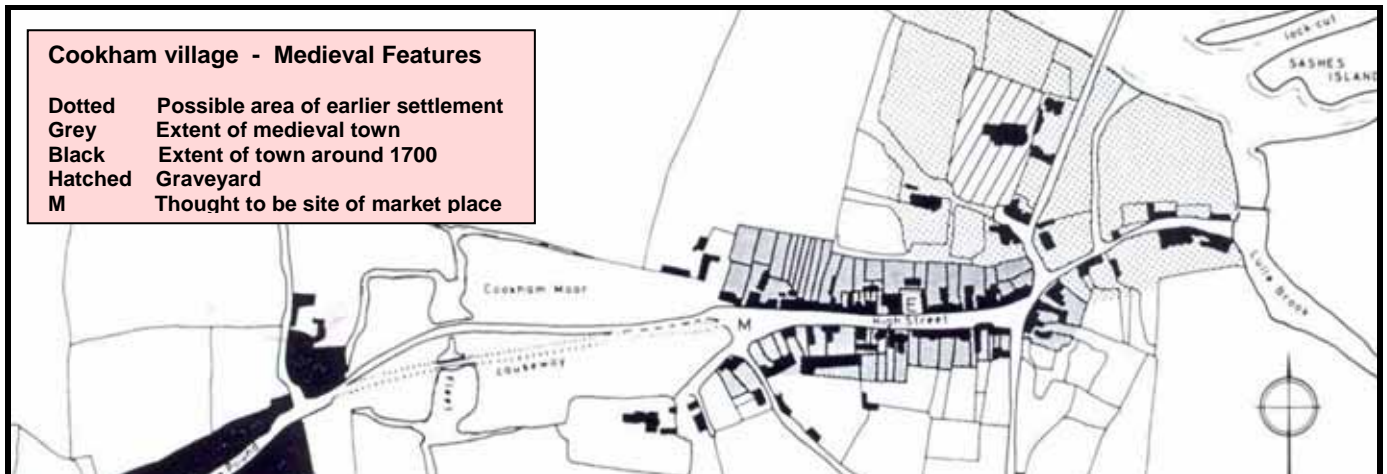
Cookham continued as a royal manor and, in 997AD, a meeting of the King's Witan, convened by the Anglo-Saxon king, Aethelred II (the 'Unready'), was one of three recorded as being held there. A royal manor house, probably close to the minster, would have been a likely venue. Saxon occupation spread to Cookham Rise where there are field names such as Coxborrow, Ham Field and Halldore.

3.3 A thriving medieval market town

After the Norman Conquest of 1066, Cookham's church, along with other churches and lands, was granted to Reinbald, once Chaplain to Edward the Confessor and later Chancellor to William I. In 1133, Henry I granted all Reinbald's holdings to Cirencester Abbey and Cookham's church was largely rebuilt soon afterwards. The ecclesiastical manor of Cannon Court and its lands - some still surviving as Cannon Court Farm - remained the property of Cirencester Abbey until Henry VIII dissolved the Monasteries.

Cookham (now Cookham village) had become a thriving market town and, in 1225, was recognised by the shire court as a borough. The town was formed to a plan typical of the period, where the houses, some being occupied by merchants, had narrow frontages with long rear plots, known as 'burgage plots', to provide space for workshops and stables. Outlines of these plots are recognisable in property boundaries on the north side of the High Street, with traces of a former back lane and ditch.

The main court house for Cookham was at The Lee in Cookham Dean. It served the Manor and Hundred Courts. Another court house, believed to have been in



3 Cookham's historical & archaeological heritage continued

the High Street, may have been used primarily for market disputes. A 'new market' for Cookham, listed in the Domesday Book of 1086, was probably held at the east end of the village, later moving close to the Moor.

The raised ground on which Cookham church was built forms an island, protected from the perennial flooding of the Thames. The adjacent settlement, in the High Street and Odney Lane areas, was also less prone to flooding than were the surrounding meadows. Development of the medieval town progressed westwards, as far as the Moor, but the flood risk on the Moor and marsh was an obvious constraint.

Archaeological evidence suggests that, as far back as the Saxon period, the continuation of Cookham's main street was developed on higher ground, now known as The Pound, on the western side of the Moor. Grocer, baker and butcher shops, two pubs and a forge still existed among older cottages there until the later nineteenth century. Most of these buildings now survive as residences.

3.4 Royal manorial estates

The other areas of the northern part of Cookham parish comprised a mixture of woods, farmsteads and common land, with only the agricultural open fields bordering the long stretch of road between the Pound and Dean Farm. Cookham was on a medieval packhorse trade route with at least two river crossing points, at My Lady Ferry and White Place.

Even in the Middle Ages, location was crucial to economic success and the mid-thirteenth century construction of a bridge over the Thames at Maidenhead, as part of the route from London to Bristol, spelt the beginning of Cookham's decline as a prosperous town. Maidenhead acquired a thriving wharf for barges, and a degree of wealth from the new passing trade.

Cookham's royal associations had continued, as the manor remained with the Crown. The Manor of Bradleys, including Stone House in Cookham Dean, was part of Anne of Cleves' divorce settlement from Henry VIII. Elizabeth I temporarily leased Widbrook with grazing rights to the villagers, who fought hard for its permanent retention, and won.

When Henry VIII dissolved the monasteries in 1536, Thomas Weldon, the king's cofferer, was granted the

Manor of Cannon Court. The estate of Harwoods, on the Mount, was granted by James I to his Secretary of State, Sir John Herbert. The grand house that Thomas Weldon had built there, known as The Place, was briefly occupied by Margaret Clifford, Countess of Cumberland and a former maid of honour to Queen Elizabeth 1. The royal manor was sold into private hands in 1818, although the Bisham Abbey estate continued to hold lands in Cookham Dean.

3.5 The advent of change

The eastern end of Cookham parish had long attracted the gentry and those with aspirations. Grand new houses there began to take on a more classical look. Several Cookham buildings are earlier than their frontages suggest, having been 'gentrified' to raise their status.

Two examples of this are the Kings Arms and East Gate in the village, which have high, rebuilt front walls with parapets and enlarged sash windows, following the fashion of the Georgian period. The Old Farmhouse, formerly Pound Farm, is timber framed throughout but bears a similar high wall. Moor Hall grew in stages from a farm to a grand Victorian country house.

On the west side of the Moor, Melmott Lodge still shows the medieval gabled end of a house which was enlarged in the 18th and 19th centuries to become a gentleman's residence.

The elegant Regency Cottage and West Lodge (now Pound House) also reflect the wealth and social standing of incoming Cookham residents of this period, as do several other later houses built within the curtilage of the medieval village settlement.

Cookham Dean's rural, agricultural community had remained largely unchanged and had always been rather scattered, with no central focal point. The Dean was seen as a somewhat lawless place, as a parish constable's record of the early nineteenth century confirms. However, a religious revival spurred by the growth of Methodism encouraged a proposal for the establishment of a Methodist chapel in Cookham Dean. This, in turn, led to the construction of the St. John the Baptist Church in the 1840s on the advice of the Reverend Thomas Whateley, a Poor Law reformer, who was vicar of Cookham from 1797-1837.



Far left: The Crown Hotel, Cookham village, around 1900. Left: 1833 drawing of the old cottage, still present and just recognisable (photo, page 29), on the corner of Moor Lane and School Lane. School Lane was then the back lane, closed by a cattle gate.

"Cookham residents should be encouraged to develop a deep awareness of our rich local heritage in order to appreciate the positive role it plays in our lives and share in the responsibility for its protection and enhancement."

**Extract from Individual Consultations
Mr Colin Berks MIFA, Chairman of Marlow Archaeological Society**

We would like to thank the private owner of the drawing, above right, who permitted use of the image for VDS purposes.

3 Cookham's historical & archaeological heritage continued

3.6 'Opening up' in the nineteenth century - new bridges and a railway branch line

Despite its relative decline from the later medieval period onwards, Cookham was by no means an isolated community. Historical records show that Cookham's residents have always been in touch with the world outside the parish. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, coaches to Oxford, Reading and London called at the King's Arms. Cookham's farmers sent fruit and vegetables, packed into locally hand-made baskets, to London markets on barges which also carried passengers. Horse manure from London's streets came back on barges, to enrich Cookham's fields, and rags arrived for local paper mills.

Since the early medieval period, Cookham people had crossed the river to Wooburn parish by ferry near the church. The last ferry boat, with its chains, was purchased by the new Cookham Bridge Company and the first bridge was built in 1840 as a toll bridge, in anticipation of the railway. Clearly, this represented a major opening-up of Cookham. However, the new oak bridge was lost within twenty-five years, the result of general decay and the force of the river in spate. It was replaced by the present iron bridge, completed in 1867.

The most important industry in nineteenth century Cookham was shoe-making. A shoe factory, run at The Elms in Odney Lane (now part of the Odney Club), employed numerous outworkers, including children. Some of Cookham's public houses were supplied by breweries located beside the river and in School Lane. There was employment for several men at the paper mill - paper was made in Cookham from the early seventeenth century - but most Cookham men and boys were agricultural labourers.

The year 1854 brought the greatest change Cookham had seen for centuries, the arrival of the railway branch line from Maidenhead to High Wycombe. The trains brought numerous London visitors to Cookham. By 1900, two cottage public houses, The Gate Hangs High and The Crown, were rebuilt as three-storey hotels.

The river became a recreation area and crowds watched as boats with their finely dressed passengers passed through Cookham Lock. Regattas were held and swimming became popular at Odney, despite neighbours' complaints of indecency.

The railway led directly to the construction of terraced cottages along what is now Lower Road and, in High Road, on the hill to the west of the railway line, known as 'the Rise'.

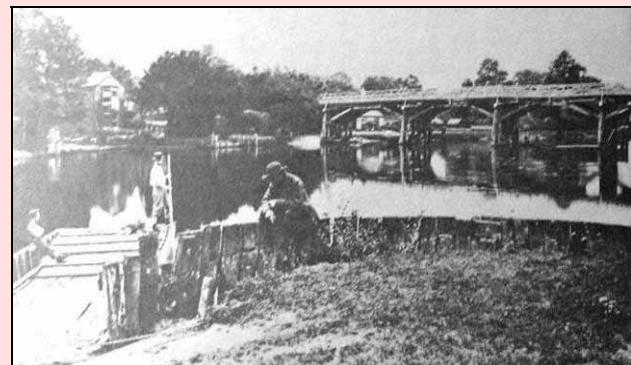
The land surrounding the original village and Rise remained mainly agricultural. Cookham people had fought and held off the threat of land enclosures until the early 1850s, also succeeding in permanently retaining the parish's commons. Seasonal grazing on the low-lying meadows at Cockmarsh, the Moor and Widbrook meant local farmers could use their upland fields largely for arable purposes. Cherry growing in Cookham Dean's orchards became so extensive that people arrived by train to admire the beauty of the cherry blossom.

Cookham's bridges

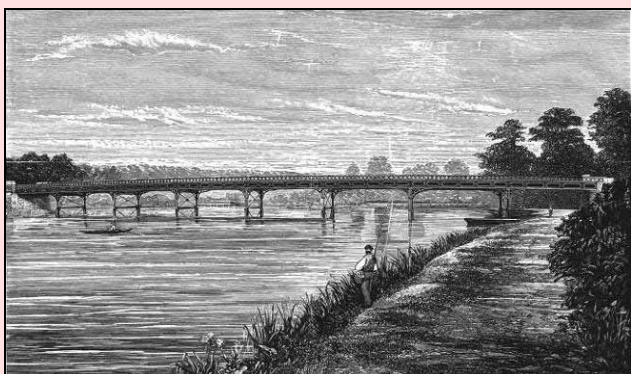
Box 1



A view of the Holy Trinity Church and the ferry in 1834, before Cookham's first 'modern' bridge was built.

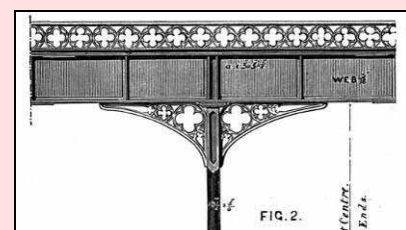


The first 'modern' Cookham Bridge, commissioned by the Cookham Bridge Company and constructed in English oak, was "opened for travack" in 1840 at a cost of £8,274 including £2,565 for buying out the ferry. This was the scene in 1865 however - only half a bridge was left - and the ferry was back in action!



The current Cookham Bridge, erected in 1867, was remarkable for its low cost. It was chosen from 37 designs submitted to the Cookham Bridge Company, with prices from £1,900 to £27,000. The selected offer was from Pease, Hutchinson & Co, Darlington, long-established iron manufacturers and bridge builders. The price was £2,520, complete as the bridge now stands, including the removal of the old structure which it replaced. An offer from Brunel was rejected.

A fragment of the original drawing for Cookham Bridge shows the decorative cast iron quatrefoil motifs topping the superstructure, with ornamental cast iron brackets beneath.



3 Cookham's historical & archaeological heritage continued

Workers' cottage rows were built to support the cherry growing activity. Homes were also built in the area east of the Station, now Station Hill and Station Road.

Not only did the railway make Cookham more accessible to visitors, it also presented potential for commuting to London businesses. Quarry Wood Road was opened, leading from Marlow into Cookham Dean. From the Edwardian period through to the 1930s, this easier access led to the development of larger houses in Cookham Dean, on sites chosen for their views.

3.7 The twentieth century and onwards

Church primary schools were built at each end of the parish in the mid-nineteenth century. Cookham Rise School provided secondary education from its founding in 1908, eventually becoming a third primary school for Cookham's increasing population.

A Methodist chapel was built in Cookham village (now the Stanley Spencer Gallery) as well as a 'tin chapel' in Cookham Rise. In 1905, they were succeeded by the opening of the Wesleyan Church in Lower Road. Nearly sixty years later, further along Lower Road, a Catholic Church was built.

Throughout the twentieth century, the original village settlement continued to grow, but slowly, because of the inherent constraint of the flood plain. Scattered housing increased in Cookham Dean as local farmers sold off land due to economic conditions. Cookham Rise remained relatively static from the Edwardian era until inter-war and post-war periods, when substantial housing development (especially in the latter period) almost doubled its size. The peripheries of Cookham village were also subject to development. A shopping parade was constructed east of the railway station.

In the same period, Maidenhead has expanded, and more rapidly than Cookham. The green gap between the two is now narrow and needs to be retained to protect the separation of Cookham from Maidenhead (see Box 8, page 14).

Employment in agriculture gradually declined, but was mitigated by the growth of jobs in Maidenhead, at Moor Hall and the Odney Club in the heart of Cookham village and across the river.

In 1947, Cookham's toll bridge was sold by the Cookham Bridge Company to Berkshire County Council for £30,000, and the tolls were abolished.

The last forty years have seen major shifts in Cookham's commercial life, reflecting trends in society as a whole. These include the end of convenience shopping in Cookham village, with shop units now occupied by specialist retailers. Also, several redundant farm buildings have been converted into business premises.

"Decisions about the future of a village cannot be soundly based unless they stem from knowledgeable answers to questions such as, 'How did we get here?', 'Why does our village look like it does?'"

*Extract from Individual Consultations
Mr Richard Poad, Chairman of Maidenhead Heritage Centre*

Cookham's railway station **Box 2**

In July 1846, The Wycombe Railway Company was incorporated by an Act of Parliament authorising construction of a single line broad gauge railway from the original Great Western Railway station at Maidenhead to High Wycombe. Construction began in 1852, and the completed line was opened on 1 August 1854. The line had stops at Maidenhead, Cookham, Marlow Road (Bourne End), Wooburn Green, Loudwater and High Wycombe.



Cookham's railway station originally had a main track, passing loop and pedestrian footbridge as seen above.



In this 1902 photograph, signal box, level-crossing gates, sidings and a traffic jam are all evident.



Cookham's railway station today. Following severe cutbacks in the 1970s, affecting track, facilities and services, the Marlow to Maidenhead Passengers' Association (MMPA) works to ensure that present arrangements will not be compromised.

The Millennium Clock on the north elevation of the Station building (and enlarged in the inset) is another small piece of history and a notable 'design offering' for twenty first century Cookham.

3 Cookham's historical & archaeological heritage continued



Left: 'The Boating Party' a painting by Hector Caffieri shows a fashionable scene by Cookham Bridge in the late nineteenth century.

Below: An unfortunate planning decision some years ago allowed the attractive and historic gable-end profile of Coombe Cottage in Cookham High Street to be obliterated from view by a new building. Errors of this type need to be avoided in the future.



3.8 Cookham's archaeological heritage

From the finds of recent years, there is no doubt that Cookham has an important archaeological heritage. As already indicated, there is documentary evidence of Cookham's significance in the late Saxon era as the location of the King's Witan and a fort of King Alfred 'the Great'. There are many more historical trails to be explored, including the early Anglo-Saxon royal minster, river crossings, battles, a Roman farmstead and Roman roads. All around the river and the three settlements are traces of Cookham's past. If any archaeological site should be built upon without recognition of its possible importance, then the opportunity to investigate it further would almost certainly be lost, as everything that might have been uncovered would have been sealed beneath the new development.

ADVISORY NOTE: Cookham's archaeological heritage

A3.1 A well-established set of documents protects the historical and archaeological heritage of a town or village. Not all documents that would contain full information on Cookham's historical and archaeological assets have yet been prepared in connection with Cookham. It is unfortunate that their continued non-availability to planning decision-makers could result in the erosion of some of Cookham's heritage assets. In the absence of these documents, planning approvals must be granted on the basis of advice from 'Berkshire Archaeology', consultants to the Borough Council in such matters.

Details of the documents that should be created or enhanced appear in the Recommendations on this page.

Policies in the Royal Borough's existing Local Plan set out a number of provisions for dealing with Scheduled Ancient Monuments and Sites of Archaeological Importance when these locations may be affected by development proposals. A revised draft Local Plan is anticipated in early 2014. Local Plan policies are important in the protection of archaeological assets, but a critical precursor is the ability to **recognise** that a site is one of archaeological significance, in order that the relevant policies can be triggered.

Cookham, therefore, needs to possess as much information as can be collated to aid in the identification and preservation of archaeologically and historically important sites and buildings. The main body of information is now held within the statutory Historic Environment Register (HER), but this requires expansion and can also be better supported by a 'Local Asset Register', compiled and held within Cookham parish. Such a Register may further be supported by an account of land and buildings in terms of current and historic use, which is known as 'Characterisation'. Without such information, planning authorities cannot always know that archaeological investigation is needed before development proceeds or that there is a particular historical significance to protect. Neither do applicants themselves have the information needed to check the archaeological or historic sensitivity of the site and to tailor their proposals accordingly. This in turn means that the appropriate conditions, such as a preliminary archaeological investigation, or a 'watching brief' for archaeologists, may not be included when planning approvals are granted. Remedies to this situation are proposed below.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Cookham's archaeological heritage

R3.1 Cookham is now served by a Historic Environment Register (HER), a minimum requirement of existing planning policy. The HER is intended to be wider-ranging and with better information dissemination than has been available on previous statutory records. However, the HER still needs to be expanded in respect of Cookham at the earliest possible opportunity, ensuring that there is no omission of any relevant archaeological and historical assets.

R3.2 Cookham has no 'Local List': that is, a local register of all historical assets and matters of heritage-related importance to a parish, so that they are taken into account in any planning decision. English Heritage now encourages communities to organise their own Local List, whose information will later be transferred to the HER. This is an initiative that has now been put in place within the Cookham community.

R3.3 The Local List may be further supported by a 'Characterisation' document - a survey of land and buildings in terms of current and historic use, often of great importance to planning decision-making.

R3.4 Guidelines should be available showing how to operate the HER. These guidelines are not currently in place for respect to Cookham and need to be prepared.

R3.5 It is helpful to devise a plan that sets out how the above matters are to be progressed. Once again, this can be organised within the community.

4 “Cookham is defined by its green spaces”

4.1 The pattern of Cookham’s countryside

One of the principal attractions of Cookham, both as a place to live in and to visit, is the extent of the ‘open space’ surrounding, and interspersed with, the three settlements. This is borne out by the surveys carried out by the VDS Working Group, which have consistently shown that the countryside, both River Thames and green spaces, ranks very highly in the affections of those consulted. Across the parish, the countryside is impressively and rewardingly diverse. It includes:

- The river and riverside meadows
- Flood plain marsh and farmland
- Chalk downland
- Common land
- Streams and wetland
- Hillside woodland
- Upland arable land and orchards
- Accommodation land
- Minor waterways

But it is not only the rich variety of the countryside which is important to Cookham. Also of very great significance is the way in which Cookham’s green spaces inter-relate with its built environment. Even in the more developed parts of the settlement the influence of the countryside is ever-present. Green fingers of land, green corridors, common land, orchards, and often large roadside verges, intertwine with the built environment. ‘Glimpses of green’ are seen between and beyond properties and from numerous vantage points throughout the settlements. Green hillsides curve to the east and west.

A large part of the parish, forming an arc which runs from the Bisham parish boundary around the southern flank of the river down to Marsh Meadow and the edge of

of Cookham village, has been defined by the Royal Borough as an Area of Special Landscape Importance. This means that it possesses exceptional landscape qualities and is protected from any development that would harm its rural character.

4.2 Changes in agricultural practice

In 1950 the parish, and Cookham Dean in particular, were characterised by a patchwork of small farms, each with its buildings and neighbouring fields.

Changes in agricultural practice, in particular increased mechanisation, have resulted in larger fields and a need for different forms of building. In parallel, changes in farming subsidies have introduced rewards for environmental stewardship.

It is widely recognised that one of the best ways of ensuring a healthy long-term future for the countryside is the maintenance of a viable agricultural industry. This means, on the one hand, an acceptance that changes in farming practice will have an impact on the land that farming uses and, on the other hand, responsiveness by farmers to the fact that people can be concerned with how the countryside is changing, particularly if the reasons are not understood.

One of the ways in which a ‘covenant’ between farmers and the community can be maintained is through the continuity of land-owning operations in the hands of family businesses, helping to ensure that farm localities are properly understood by farmers and that change is sensitively integrated.

Good communications and positive understandings between farmers and the community are essential in order that countryside can be protected wherever possible, whilst allowing farm businesses to modernize progressively and to thrive.



Part of the tranquil setting of White Place Farm between Sutton Road and the Thames.

4.3 Modern diversified farm and land management businesses

Only three major farms now operate in Cookham Parish, each of which has become a modern diversified farm and ‘land management’ business. These are: White Place Farm, between Sutton Road and the River Thames; Lower Mount Farm, extending from the Maidenhead Road and Long Lane area around the south western perimeter of Cookham Rise and towards Cookham Dean; and Kings Coppice Farm between Grubwood Lane and Kings Lane in Cookham Dean.

White Place Farm belongs to the Edwards family, who have worked the farm since the late 1960s. Lower Mount Farm and Kings Coppice Farm each form part of larger operations, respectively owned by two branches of the Copas family, who have farmed in Cookham since 1890.



The pick-your-own operation at Lower Mount Farm just off the Maidenhead Road, showing the green swathe of farmland beyond the parking point.

White Place Farm Box 3

White Place Farm is approached from Sutton Road, Cookham and borders one of the most scenic stretches of the Thames. The farm includes arable, grassland and woodland - a total of around 120 hectares (300 acres). It runs a beef herd, but also diversified into equine livery over 25 years ago, and later added bed and breakfast services.

The farm includes 100 acres of permanent pasture fields forming riverside meadows, of which just over 80 acres are grazed throughout the year. During spring and autumn months, when grass can become too abundant for some of the horses, a suckler herd of cattle is run to eat off the new growth before the horses are rotated to their new fields. The livery yard provides stables with modern facilities. On-farm hacking is provided, with certain routes being of a permanent nature and others varying, depending on which fields cattle are grazing and where crops are being grown.

The history of White Place Farm includes a number of planning applications for gravel extraction. At a 1969 appeal (Reference 8.1) the Inspector said, “The appeal site should not be excavated in the foreseeable future ...” and that it should “... go on playing its present role as part of the natural landscape wealth of the county. The site forms an excellent example of green wedge which in my view should be kept open to prevent the coalescence of the two communities” (of Maidenhead and Cookham). Similar comments were made by the Inspector in relation to more recent applications.

Copas Farms (including Lower Mount Farm) Box 4

Copas Farms is a modern, diverse and award-winning farm business with a landholding of some 1280 hectares (3,160) acres in and around the Chilterns and Thames Valley.

Of this area, approximately 2,600 acres is under arable rotation and 90 acres is allocated to two Pick Your Own Farms providing seasonal fruit and vegetables - one of these being at Lower Mount Farm, Cookham, and the other at Iver in Buckinghamshire. 140 acres of the landholding is grass, mainly grazed by horses.

An additional 100 acres is made available as public open space and 90 acres is woodland. The centre of operations is at Hedsor Park Farm, Hedsor, near Taplow.

Copas Farms routinely collaborates with Cookham residents in devising arrangements that work for both. Illustratively, Copas Farms has let redundant farm buildings as business units at Lower Mount Farm in Cookham under temporary planning permissions linked to the provision of Marsh Meadow as an area of Public Open Space.

Planning permission was renewed for a third time in December 2005 for a further 10 years in conjunction with an arrangement to make Marsh Meadow available as an area of Public Open Space until 2015. The local community is involved in the management of this 50 acre riverside field, in the form of the Marsh Meadow Management Committee, which includes representation from diverse elements of the community.



Marsh Meadow, the beautiful riverside land currently made available by Copas Farms as a public amenity until 2015.

4 “Cookham is defined by its green spaces” continued

“Diversification activities are only really possible with the support of neighbours. After a period of consultation with the local Cookham community in 1992, Copas Farms developed a Farmland Management Strategy for land farmed in and around the village. Its purpose was to be ‘a strategy for the management of Copas Farms in a manner which is both beneficial to the local community and compatible with maintaining a viable and sustainable farming business. Copas Farms reviews its Farmland Management Strategy on a regular basis.”

*Extract from Individual Consultations
Mr Geoffrey Copas, Head of Copas Farms*

The Copas Partnership (including Kings Coppice Farm) Box 5

The Copas Partnership operates over 240 hectares (600 acres) of arable land, half of which is farmed in partnership with others, and the other half of which is ‘set aside’. In addition, the Partnership owns approximately 10 acres of woodland, meadows and conservation areas, where stewardship projects include planting of hedges, trees, buffer strips, and provision of beetle banks and wild bird mixtures to enhance the natural environment of its property.

Although The Copas Partnership enterprise was once exclusively of a farming nature, it has grown into a modern diversified land management business, offering locations and facilities in support of the Henley Regatta and other events through the year. It also owns and lets converted farm properties, including the Courtyard Barns on the edge of Cookham Dean, the Old Barn and the Old Stables.

In Cookham Dean, The Copas Partnership rears some 40,000 slow-grown, free-range turkeys per year at Kings Coppice Farm. Produce is now sold to more than 300 retail outlets and many local customers. Commendations have been extensive, both in the national press and in specialist food magazines.



Turkeys free-ranging in historic orchards at Kings Coppice Farm, Cookham Dean. Some of the turkeys are housed in barns, others in demountable buildings which have been the subject of much local debate. See also Section 13.2.

4.4 Cookham’s smaller farms

Sutton Farm is an arable and pasture farm of some 80 hectares (198 acres) between the A4094 and the railway line and forms a significant part of the narrow band of unspoilt open countryside between Cookham and Maidenhead (see Box 8, page 14). It is currently farmed as part of White Place Farm. The farm lies fully within the Green Belt. It was recently purchased by adjacent owners, Summerleaze Ltd., who operate a gravel pit off Summerleaze Road, on the north side of Maidenhead. Summerleaze’s existing holding includes a substantial area of land with planning permission for gravel extraction, which has yet to be worked.

While it seems likely there are significant reserves of gravel at Sutton Farm, proposals to extract gravel from from areas within Cookham parish met with considerable local resistance some years ago and were rejected at

“Whilst all of the Copas farmland is in the Green Belt, it cannot, for that reason be regarded as ‘park land’ or a theme park. Nevertheless, farming is a way of preserving the Green Belt - even though occasionally buildings have to be erected which may not be universally popular.”

*Extract from Individual Consultations
Ms Tanya Copas, Director, The Copas Partnership*

a public inquiry (see Box 3, page 11). Whilst it is outside the remit of the VDS to suggest whether commercial minerals extraction should, or should not, take place in the parish it is difficult to see how such extraction could avoid a highly damaging effect on Cookham’s countryside during the extraction process, with possible ecological damage extending well into the future. For this reason Guidance Point G4.3, page 13 is focused on the minimisation of damage and subsequent remediation.

Watercourses through Sutton Farm include Fleet Ditch, Strande Water and White Brook. All of these water courses and the land immediately at the edge of them are areas of ecological importance (see Section 17).

Woodlands Farm, owned by Mr Richard Simmonds, is situated off Spring Lane in Cookham Dean. Its red brick, gabled farmhouse dates back to the 1800s. Activities include the stabling of horses and the letting of small units to local businesses.

Winter Hill Farm is a mixed use farm with around 27 hectares (66 acres) of land, situated between Winter Hill and Dean Lane in Cookham Dean. It includes the last cherry orchard to remain in Cookham, designated in the VDS as an orchard of Special Local Significance (see Section 15 and Annex C). The farm has recently changed hands and is now owned by Mr Peter Phillips.

ADVISORY NOTE:

Mineral Extraction

A4.1 The Borough Council is responsible for preparing minerals policy. The current minerals plan is ‘The Replacement Minerals Local Plan’ which aims to ensure that there are enough planning permissions in place until the end of 2013 to contribute towards industrial demand.

**4.5 The John Lewis Partnership
- another large landowner in Cookham**

The John Lewis Partnership owns two estates of significant size, the Odney Estate and the Winter Hill Golf Club. Together, these estates occupy 106 hectares (260 acres) of land in Cookham Parish. Both contribute to the local economy by employing large numbers of staff locally and bringing visitors to Cookham.

The Odney Estate Box 6

Situated off Odney Lane at the eastern end of Cookham village, the Odney Estate comprises some 48.5 hectares (120 acres) of land adjacent to the Thames. The Estate runs alongside the river and is bounded at its southern edge by Mill Lane. The Estate’s main buildings are situated in the north-west corner of the site and comprise the former Lullebrook Manor, several properties on the east side of Sutton Road, and properties on both sides of Odney Lane.

The most recent addition to the north west corner area is the Sir Bernard Miller Centre, a state-of-the-art training facility, built to reflect the latest developments in environmentally friendly construction methods (see also Box 19, page 41).

To the south and east lie 100 acres of magnificent gardens (see also Annex C, page 78. The gardens have been identified in the VDS as gardens of ‘Special Local Significance’, a designation which is explained in Section 15.

The Estate also includes Odney Common (whose continued availability to Cookham residents for amenity purposes mirrors the villagers’ historic rights – see also Section 4.8). Situated to the north of Odney Common is Grove Farm, recently redeveloped and converted to create a new John Lewis Heritage Centre.

The Winter Hill Golf Club Box 7

The land for the Winter Hill Golf Club, which lies off Terry’s Lane, was acquired by the John Lewis Partnership in the 1930s.

The land was purchased to create a golf course but, due to the war, it was at first used for arable farming. Development as a golf course commenced in the 1970s.

The Club occupies about 56 hectares (140 acres) of land in an elevated position at the eastern end of the Winter Hill ridge and enjoys extensive views over the river towards Bourne End, Hedsor and beyond. Like the Odney Club, the Club is a John Lewis staff facility, but the course and club house are also open to local golfers.



A glorious view across from the Winter Hill golf course to the River Thames.



View from Odney Common to Odney Bridge and across to Lullebrook Manor, owned by the John Lewis Partnership.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Farm businesses and major land owners

R4.1 The maintenance of a viable agricultural industry in combination with the application of relevant planning processes should be recognised as one of the best ways of ensuring a healthy long-term future for the countryside of Cookham parish. It is important that farmers should continue to farm if existing green environments are to be retained. It is recommended that modernisations of agriculture are supported as far as possible to help maintain the commercial viability of farming businesses and avoid some of the piecemeal development of the countryside which might otherwise ensue. However, modernisations need to be proposed with careful attention to VDS provisions, and with specific regard to the content of Reference 17 or successor statements on ‘sustainability’.

R4.2 Farmers and the community should continue to work together to share knowledge and develop mutual understandings that will allow the needs of each to be recognised and met to the greatest possible extent. Compromises on each side have traditionally been necessary. Planning decisions should be taken in the best interests of Cookham parish as a whole.

R4.3 In the interests of creating and sustaining mutual understandings, it should be very much welcomed if farm businesses or major landowners publish farm or land management strategies to share and discuss with the community.

R4.4 All large landowners or land users in Cookham should have a special role to play in enhancement of the countryside through conservation and biodiversity projects.

GUIDANCE : Farm businesses and major land owners

G4.1 Offers to remove redundant buildings should be recognised as a positive factor in relation to planning proposals made by farm businesses or large landowners. This is particularly true in connection with applications that relate to buildings and installations in the open countryside.

G4.2 Offers to donate needed community facilities may be recognised as a positive factor in relation to planning proposals made by farm businesses or large landowners. In such situations, positive and negative factors should be carefully considered. Whether positive factors are sufficient to outweigh harm should be judged on the circumstances at the time of the planning application.

G4.3 If mineral extraction is to take place in Cookham parish, the process should be designed to minimise damage to the scenic beauty and ecology of Cookham’s countryside setting during extraction, and to institute effective remediation post-extraction.

4 “Cookham is defined by its green spaces” continued

4.6 The Green Belt and the countryside

All of the land in Cookham parish outside the settlement areas of Cookham village and Cookham Rise, including the whole of Cookham Dean, lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt. National planning policy (Reference 4) lists the purposes of Green Belts as set out below.

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

Reference 4 also states that a local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in Green Belt with exceptions as below:

- Buildings for agriculture and forestry.
- Provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation and for cemeteries, as long as it preserves the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it.
- The extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.
- The replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces.
- Limited infilling in villages, and limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the Local Plan.
- Limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed sites (brownfield land), whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purpose of including land within it than the existing development.

Interpretation of these policies in relation to Green Belt land within the Royal Borough is set out in Reference 3.1. References 3 and 4 both emphasise ‘openness’ as a primary attribute of Green Belt land.



The narrow strip of countryside between Cookham and Maidenhead is of great importance in maintaining the separation between the two settlements.

Between Cookham and Maidenhead - a narrow and sensitive green gap

Box 8

Local people consider the narrow band of countryside between Cookham and Maidenhead as being of utmost importance, both as a crucial element of the ‘green swathe’ that exists all around Cookham and as a separator between the two settlements. It is only some 700 metres wide at its narrowest point.

This intervening land is part of the Green Belt, as outlined in Section 4.6. It fulfils the first three purposes set out in that section and enables a clear transition to be made from the urban environment of Maidenhead to the village ambience of Cookham. In so doing it signals the unique, separate identity of Cookham and differentiates it from its larger neighbour.

Since this area of countryside is so narrow, it is important not only that it is not encroached upon, but also that activities within it do not require the erection of buildings that would compromise its openness or damage the setting of Cookham, unless such buildings are absolutely necessary for the continuation of the existing agricultural operations.

This also means that there is a case for the removal of buildings, which are longer required - to avoid the proliferation of redundant structures and the accretion of buildings in a manner which compromises countryside vistas (see Guidance Point G4.1, Section 4).

ADVISORY NOTES:

Green Belt

A4.2 The term ‘Green Belt’ is a planning designation that makes no judgements about existing uses in Green Belt areas. The purposes of Green Belts are not necessarily compromised if land within them is derelict.

A4.3 Land within Green Belt is afforded a considerable level of protection, only limited development being permissible.

A4.4 Planning policy is supportive of farm diversification in the Green Belt, provided that openness is maintained.

A4.5 Readers who wish to check the details of the Borough Council’s local interpretation of national Green Belt policy are referred to Section 2.1 of the Local Plan (Reference 3.1)

A4.6 Whilst the whole of Cookham Dean is within the Green Belt, Cookham village and Cookham Rise have the status of ‘excluded settlements within the Green Belt’.

GUIDANCE:

Countryside

G4.4 The countryside of Cookham parish is highly valued and must be protected from development which detracts from its attractive appearance generally and in accordance with its status as Green Belt.

The narrow strip of countryside between Cookham and Maidenhead is especially important and should not be compromised.

“Cookham is defined by its green spaces” continued

4.7 Green fingers, green corridors

A key characteristic of all three settlements, especially Cookham Dean, is the manner in which built development is interspersed with substantial areas of woodland, fields, commons and other green spaces. This greenness at the heart of the community means that all residents have open land near their homes, a feature of Cookham that was revealed during early VDS consultations to be particularly highly prized and should be carefully protected.

“Specific ‘green corridors’ within Cookham include open and wooded environs (for example, the Commons, the Moor, Poundfield, Rowborough and the old sewage works, plus larger gardens, hedgerows and grass verges, which form a natural chain for wildlife through the parish). It is the continuing maintenance of these natural corridors which allows everything about the landscape and its habitat to flourish. If the existing green chain is significantly blocked by development, then much of our wildlife and landscape in Cookham, as we know it at present, will be lost for ever.”

*Extract from Individual Consultations
Mr Brian Clews, Wildlife Author and Consultant*



‘Pound Field, Cookham’, a southerly view over Poundfield towards The Pound, painted by Stanley Spencer in 1935

© The Estate of Stanley Spencer. All rights reserved. DACS.



Left:
Poundfield stretches between Station Hill, The Pound, the railway line and Terry's Lane.

This aerial view shows blocking, by planted trees, of the line of sight used in the Stanley Spencer painting above.

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GUIDANCE:

G4.5 The role of Poundfield in providing a green wedge separating The Pound from the Station Hill area and Cookham Rise, together with its provision of a setting to the historic environment and the related Stanley Spencer paintings, should be recognised. Proposals should not compromise this role.

Poundfield

Poundfield

Box 9

The fields to the north and west of The Pound are known as ‘Poundfield’ and are shown in the aerial photograph on this page. Cookham residents have fought long and hard to defend this green area, which has been the subject of several major planning applications and appeals.

Poundfield was added to the Green Belt in the 1990s through the Royal Borough's Local Plan process. However, a Court of Appeal decision partly quashed this action, thus confirming that most of the land had never legally been within the Green Belt. Subsequently, Poundfield was incorporated into the adjacent Conservation Area, affording it a considerable degree of renewed protection.

Poundfield's importance derives from a unique combination of ecological, rural, heritage, conservation and culturally-related factors, as follows.

Ecological and rurality-related factors From the south at Maidenhead Road, Poundfield's undeveloped frontage facing Maidenhead Road, and the glimpse of its more distant slope rising to the north are signals of the rural character of Cookham. Poundfield forms a green wedge at the heart of Cookham, dividing the picturesque narrow roadway of The Pound (the edge of Cookham village) from Cookham's more commercial areas (the Station Hill area and Cookham Rise). It is also visible in views from the Moor and from the eastern end of the Causeway. Poundfield is considered to be a valuable wildlife area.

Heritage, conservation and cultural factors Current legislation (Reference 7) refers to the desirability of “preserving the setting” of Listed Buildings and also to the desirability of “preserving or enhancing the character” of Conservation Areas. These points are strongly echoed in national policy documents (References 4 and 5), which offer guidance to Local Authorities and members of the public, and again in the Royal Borough's Local Plan (Reference 3.2). Requirements for Conservation Areas in the Local Plan make plain that any development must “enhance or preserve the character or appearance of the area”, including “the protection of views that contribute to the distinctive character of the Conservation Area”. It is also stated that the Council will “ensure that development proposals do not adversely affect the grounds and/or setting of Listed Buildings”.

In relation to the factors outlined in the above paragraph, Poundfield provides:

- The setting for Englefield, a Grade II Listed Building with strong Stanley Spencer connections, standing in the centre of the area.
- The backdrop to five Listed Buildings on the north side of The Pound.
- The backdrop to several unlisted historic buildings, also located in The Pound, all forming part of the character of the Conservation Area in that locality.
- The foreground to the view, from the Maidenhead Road, of the charming row of Edwardian buildings in Roman Lea, designated in the VDS as a street of ‘Special Local Significance’ (Annex C).
- The subject of several Stanley Spencer paintings, including a series of scenes at Englefield and a panoramic view stretching towards The Pound.

In a 1991 public enquiry (Reference 8.2), the then Secretary of State made clear his position that the setting of listed buildings could be harmed by development within Poundfield and that views inside and across the site were important, both for their amenity value and also for their specific connection with the paintings of Stanley Spencer.

4 “Cookham is defined by its green spaces” continued

4.8 Common land

Few villages in the Thames Valley are blessed with quite so much common land around them as Cookham. The commons of Cookham Dean are collectively major contributors to the open aspect of the built environment and in some instances extend beyond Cookham parish into surrounding areas. They include Cookham Dean Common, the Cricket Common, Biggrith Common, Hardings Green and Tugwood Common, as well as considerable lengths of roadside verge.

In the flood plain, south of the Thames, lies Cockmarsh with the chalk escarpment of Winter Hill rising steeply above. Cookham Moor forms the entrance to the most historic part of Cookham village. Odney Common provides a green setting on the eastern side of Cookham village, and also the link to the lock and Sashes Island. Widbrook Common is an expanse of pasture on either side of the Lower Cookham Road as it approaches Cookham from Maidenhead.

The provision of commons is deeply embedded in the history of the area, arising as it does from the manorial structure of the historic feudal society. The commons were nearly lost many times through the centuries and were saved largely as result of the efforts of local people, who enjoyed ancient rights to graze animals and collect wood for fuel - rights that they were determined to preserve.

There was a strongly contended historic court case during the reign of Charles II, which the villagers won. Later, in 1799, Cookham villagers formed a resistance movement to ‘enclosures’ and established a fighting fund. Again the villagers triumphed.

After many further skirmishes over the years, the Maidenhead and Cookham Commons Preservation Committee (now redesignated ‘Advisory Committee’) was formed in the 1920s and funds contributed by public subscription secured the purchase of the Cookham and Maidenhead commons at a price of £2,800. Title was then passed to the National Trust in 1934, thus protecting the commons into perpetuity*.

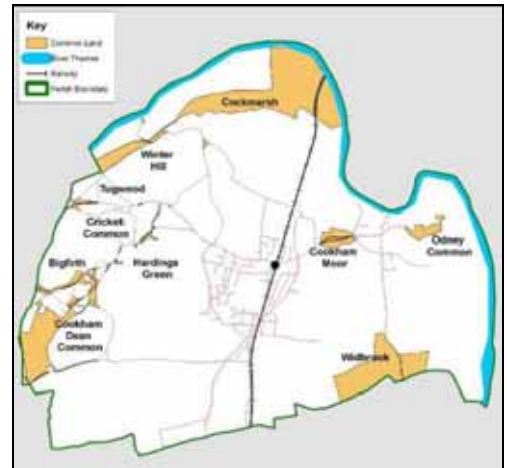
The complexities attached to present day common land include the relationships between land ownership, the separate rights of grazing and other usage belonging to commoners, and the more general rights of public access which have gradually emerged.

Ancient grazing rights are retained by around a dozen properties. It is their owners, including local farmers, who continue to graze their cattle on Cockmarsh and Widbrook, and take hay. There remains, also, a deep-rooted proprietary local interest in the way that the common land is managed

The principal public use of the commons now is for low intensity recreation - walking and horse riding. The commons are available to everyone and are part of the public realm. For this reason, what happens adjacent to them is a legitimate matter of public interest.

* Odney Common was not included in this purchase. It is now owned by the John Lewis Partnership and maintained by Cookham Parish Council.

Right: Major areas of common land around Cookham are shown in orange. There are numerous additional small areas, mostly in the form of wide grass verges.



Winter Hill and Cockmarsh **Box 10**

The Winter Hill ridge extends north-eastwards for about 2 km (1¼ mile). It defines the southern side of the Thames and is a landmark from the Buckinghamshire side of the river since it can be easily seen from places such as Flackwell Heath and, more generally, the southern flanks of the rising Chiltern Hills.

Although the north-eastern part of the Winter Hill slope remains much as it was thirty years ago, the south western end has gradually changed as vegetation has matured and species establish themselves. Whilst larger vegetation helps bind the soil, it also has the effect of both reducing the visual impact of a notable landmark and of blocking some of the panoramic views from Winter Hill Road.

In recognition of all the factors mentioned above, a management plan for the area has been put in place by the National Trust. This will reduce scrub and improve chalk grassland and associated views over a 10 year period.



A beautiful vista showing the Winter Hill escarpment, the wetland grazed commons of Cockmarsh and an arable field, with the river just visible amid the tree line beyond. Two distinct habitats, the steep chalk slope and flat marshy meadows, are rarely found so close together and part of the area has been designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest. Water fowl breed on lower ground whilst kestrels, sparrow hawks and red kites soar above.

4 “Cookham is defined by its green spaces” continued



Cookham Moor forms a defining landscape element in the setting of Cookham village. This view, as seen from the Moor, was consistently identified during early VDS consultations as one of Cookham’s most important.

Cookham Moor

Box 11

The Moor is a most striking area of common land, where the edge of the built environment forms a gentle curve in the distance, that draws in the onlooker. Cookham’s built-colour palette of weathered red, beige, white, brown, grey and black (see Section 6.8) is fully exhibited.

The Moor comprises low-lying land and remains prone to flooding. It was this factor that made the Moor unsuitable for building, such that the historic village was extended into The Pound. The ‘Causeway’, historically the major vehicular access route to the heart of Cookham village in times of flood (see Section 5), is also a popular link in the routes used by walkers.

To the north, the Moor allows views towards the river across Marsh Meadow whilst, to the south, footpaths lead towards Maidenhead.

The Moor is the main point of arrival for many tourists. Its car park is regularly full, as families, couples and dog walkers descend on the village. Predominantly, as it emerged during early VDS consultations, they arrive for a stroll along the riverside, though many also seek the countryside generally, or enjoy the shops and hostelryes of the High Street.



‘The Causeway’ across Cookham Moor



Above left: Tugwood Common at the junction of Dean Lane and Winter Hill Road, Cookham Dean. One of Cookham’s many attractive ‘green fingers’.



Below left: The Cricket Common forms a strong visual focus in Cookham Dean. It is also a gathering point for the community, being the scene of numerous festivities.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Cookham’s Common Land

R4.5 The Moor car park is in poor condition and unsightly. It is a National Trust principle that a car park of this nature should not be ‘urbanised’ with hard standings. However, there are modern materials which might be explored with a view to providing an improved surface. Low hedging or rustic perimeter fencing might also be considered as both of these soften the appearance of parked cars whilst leaving a car park open to public view (see Section 6.20).

R4.6 Winter Hill and Cockmarsh are important parts of the natural assets of the parish. The management of these areas should seek to maintain public views whilst recognising the importance of vegetation to wildlife, erosion and rainwater run-off. It is understood that the current National Trust management programme, approved by Natural England, is in cognizance of all these issues

GUIDANCE: Cookham’s common land

G4.6 The commons are available to everyone and are part of the public realm. Proposals which would adversely affect their amenity value or their setting should not be permitted.

4 “Cookham is defined by its green spaces” continued

4.9 Woodlands, trees and hedgerows

Trees play an important part in creating the ambience of Cookham parish, but the parish cannot be described as ‘wooded’. Its mainly agricultural history led to a predominance of open arable or pasture land through many generations, although the wide green sweeps of this land were often softened by individual trees and extensive orchards, some of which still exist (Section C.3, Annex C).

The largest area of wooded land - the Bisham Woods - lies just outside the western boundary of the parish and is part of the Chilterns Beechwoods Special Area of Conservation.

The Quarry Wood, which adjoins Grubwood Lane, defines the south-western end of Winter Hill and provides a visual backdrop to the western part of Cookham Dean. Both of these lie within the Area of Special Landscape Importance (see Section 4.1). A magnificent easterly arc is created

by the wooded cliff on the northern bank of the Thames, topped by Cliveden. Again, not part of Cookham parish, but this important landscape feature frames the view from several approach roads to Cookham, from the Winter Hill golf course and from many other parts of the village.

Elsewhere, the parish is defined by separate blocks of woodland, mainly comprising broadleaved species with a large quantity of oaks and beeches, which thrive on the local soils. Beeching-grove Wood, Pigeonhouse Wood and the wooded areas around The Mount and the eastern side of Cookham Dean Common signal the higher land in the south-west of the parish.

Hillgrove Wood, off Bradcutts Lane, provides a backdrop to the open area between Cookham Dean and Cookham Rise and conceals much of the housing that was built there in the early twentieth century.



The Sutton Road allotments in the evening sun looking towards Cliveden and the wooded cliff beneath it.

There have been significant areas of new planting in recent years by local farmers, on the southern side of Winter Hill and at Lower Mount Farm in particular. These provide a sanctuary for wildlife, but as they mature those of linear character will break up the open appearance of the adjoining countryside and will block specific vistas. Whilst tree planting is to be welcomed, care should be taken not to harm landscape character and views. In contrast it is difficult to think of situations in which hedgerows would not be deemed an asset, provided they are well-managed and kept at appropriate heights.



Tree plantings at the edge of Long Lane.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Woodlands, trees and hedges

R4.7 We recommend that farmers and land owners should give careful thought to the impact of planned or existing tree lines on the open countryside. Where farm or land strategies are produced, inclusion of factors relating to tree lines and their future impact on important vistas would be helpful.

ADVISORY NOTES: Woodlands, trees and hedges

A4.7 Reference 4 declares the fundamental aim of Green Belt Policy as being to “prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open” and goes on to say that “the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence”.

The policy is not directed at tree planting issues, which are not a planning matter except where landscaping of new developments is concerned. However, it is important to note here that ‘openness’ of the countryside is valued and that planting which maintains this and does not block vistas is preferred.

A4.8 Guidance Point G13.5 in Section 13 concerns tree lines around new agricultural building developments and there are related comments and Guidance Points in Section 6.23.

4 “Cookham is defined by its green spaces” continued

4.10 An abundance of green verges

Cookham is not urbanised and only parts of the village have a semi-urbanised character, where the roads are defined by kerbs and paved footways. Significant areas of the village are characterised by their rural street scene, especially in Cookham Dean.

Wide and ‘very wide’ verges predominate, together with the presence of areas of scrub, small copses and a lack of hard edging. Many such verges form parts of the historic common lands.



Above and below: Characteristic wide grass verges of Cookham Dean. The photos also show the scrub and small copses which help to convey the rural nature of the environment.



4.11 Accommodation land

In the VDS, the term ‘accommodation land’ denotes land on the periphery of the Cookham settlements that was once in use for agricultural purposes, but is now used for the keeping of horses, play areas and other non-farming purposes.

The term also covers land which has been purchased simply to ‘maintain a view’ as a perceived amenity against the possibility of development.

Intended usage is important to the value of land and accommodation land is valued at prices exceeding those for farmland. Although all such land is now used for non-agricultural purposes, it is still in most instances part of the open countryside. While accommodation land may sometimes be relatively hidden from adjacent roads, it is often overlooked from a distance.

To maintain the rural character, accommodation land should integrate with the wider farmland. This can be achieved by avoiding change which introduces features of an urban appearance and, where buildings or other change are necessary, seeking to ensure that their design and materials are sensitively integrated into their location.

ADVISORY NOTE: Accommodation land
A4.9 The Borough Council’s Local Plan (Reference 3.3) contains policies relating to equestrian uses.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Accommodation land

R4.8 The use of tape and wire or plastic fencing to mark the boundaries of accommodation land, or to segment areas within it, should be avoided when this is visible from the public domain. The use of barbed wire, in particular, should be avoided along footpaths and bridleways.

R4.9 The availability of accommodation land to a household may in some cases create an opportunity to implement excellent sustainability projects with low visual impact, such as water storage or ground source heat pumps. All such projects are to be encouraged.

GUIDANCE: Green verges and accommodation land

G4.7 Green verges are characteristic of parts of Cookham. Proposals should not lead to an unacceptable loss of green verges. Opportunities should be taken to reinstate green verges in areas where they are characteristic.

G4.8 Accommodation land should be integrated into the countryside character. In general the use of kerbs, metalled surfaces and solid gates at access points should be avoided or their impacts minimised. Temporary buildings, installations and parking areas should be screened as far as possible. Hedging or post and rail rustic fencing is a preferred boundary.

4 “Cookham is defined by its green spaces” continued

4.12 Green spaces and the community

A point frequently made to the VDS Working Group during the early VDS consultations, concerned the strong link between Cookham’s green spaces and the sense of peace, uplift and community spirit that is shared by residents and visitors alike. The key to this was succinctly expressed during one Individual Consultation (below) and there is little need to say more. This page shows just a few of the many ways in which the internal green spaces of the village encourage and facilitate the strongest possible sense of community.

“The green and diverse environment of Cookham is just fabulous. It creates the most amazing walks, retreats, event and activity areas and it is of huge importance that it is preserved. ‘Greenness’ continues from the surrounds of the village to its very heart. Careful attention should be paid to the specific ‘functionality’ of green spaces. Through the varied activities and events that they support, green spaces play a very significant role in drawing together the community and in bringing in visitors. Existing functionality should not be diminished by any new development. There are possibilities for new and extended functionalities, cycle tracks, for example, but cycles should be kept to agreed spaces, just as horses should.”

Extract from Individual Consultations

Mrs Carol Austen, Chairman of the Maidenhead and Cookham Commons Advisory Committee



Clockwise from top right:
A mobile leisure unit attends for two weeks at the Alfred Major Recreation Ground.



Allotments create community activity in all three of Cookham’s settlements. The winning Cookham Rise allotment in 2011.



Odney Sculpture Gardens in April 2009, open for the duration of the Cookham Festival.

Football at the Alfred Major Recreation Ground.

Doggie show at the annual Scout Fayre on Cookham Moor 2010.

Multiple recreational uses of Marsh Meadow, spring 2010.

Cookham Dean fete on the Village Green, Cookham Dean, March 2012.



RECOMMENDATIONS: Green spaces and the community

R4.10 The green environment of Cookham creates activity areas of all types and it is of very great importance that it is preserved.

R4.11 The *diversity* of the green environment also needs to be preserved. In this process, particular attention should be paid to the continuation of ‘greenness’ from the surrounds of the village to its heart.

GUIDANCE: Green spaces and the community

G4.9 Careful attention should be paid to the ‘functionality’ of green spaces. Existing community uses should not be prejudiced by any new development.

5 The River Thames and Cookham's flood plain



As described by the Maidenhead Advertiser, "Cookham Village became an island for two days (in 1974) ... the route to Bourne End from Cookham bridge was under water and the road across Widbrook Common resembled a sea."

5.1 Frequency, causes and impacts of flooding

Significant Thames floods occurred in Cookham in 1894, 1897, 1904, 1947, 1974, 1990, 2000 and 2003. Flow capacity at Cookham is determined, at first, by the various river channels, including the sluice gates on Cookham and Odney weirs (which are managed by the Environment Agency and are normally fully opened at times of flood). Once the river has overflowed, secondary factors come into play, including the capacity of culverts under the B4447 at the Moor and under Lower Cookham Road and, in an extreme event, the capacity of the arches under the Causeway bridge. The construction of the Maidenhead and Windsor Flood Alleviation Scheme made Cookham flood risks rather more severe, a situation which the Environment Agency's 'Cookham Flood Remediation Works' (Reference 9.1) has been designed to remedy.

The course of the river and its waterways was outlined in Sections 2.2 and 2.3. A large proportion of land within Cookham parish is liable to flooding, All flood events are progressive, the following being the stages which typically occur.

- Flooding at Marsh Meadow.
- Flooding of the northern side of Cookham Moor including the National Trust car park.
- Flooding of the B4447 across the Moor. The Causeway has then traditionally been opened for vehicles, but see Section 5.2.
- Flooding of Widbrook Common.
- Flooding of A4094 to the north of Cookham Bridge.
- Flooding of Strande Lane and nearby properties.
- Flooding of A4094 at Widbrook Common.
- Flooding at Odney Lane and Mill Lane.



Environment Agency "Risk of flooding from Rivers and Sea" map.

Key

- Parish boundary
- Flood defences
- ▨ Area benefiting from flood defences
- Flood zone 3 (Risk of flooding is 1 in 100 years or greater)
- Flood zone 2 (Risk of flooding is between 1 in 100 and 1 in 1000 years)

The most striking and dramatic feature of recent floods has perhaps been the sight and sound of water flowing at a considerable pace across Cookham Moor, submerging the B4447 and reaching as far as the Pound. Numerous properties in Cookham (in parts of nearly thirty streets) are likely to be inundated at such a time, though there is a 'dry island' around the Holy Trinity church and at the eastern end of the High Street.

The RBWM Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (Reference 9.2) suggests that the intensity and frequency of floods is currently increasing due to climate change (though floods in the last half century have been considerably lower than those shown in the historic photograph on the following page). Modern flood defences that were built to a 1-in-100 or 1-in-60 year specification, may in the future be expected to overtop with increasing frequency.

5 The River Thames and Cookham's flood plain continued



Flood water surrounding the Old Farmhouse and the White Hart public house (now White Oak) in 1894, one of the worst known floods on the non-tidal Thames.

In those days the Thames was not engineered and managed as it is today.

5.2 Flood defence, recovery and escape routes

To alleviate the increased flood risk caused by the Maidenhead and Windsor Flood Alleviation Scheme, additional flood defences were built in Cookham in 2009/10 (see also previous page). These form a long grassy bank around Lightlands Lane.

The nature of the catchment geology and weather is such that warnings of river flooding should be available from the Environment Agency three days ahead. However, water can take ten days to drain away, much longer than is typical of many other rivers.

A Highways Safety Audit (Reference 10) conducted by the Borough Council in 2010 concluded that it would be unsafe to open the Causeway across the Moor to

general vehicular traffic in the event of a flood. As this is the only access route for Cookham village in times of deep flood, the decision has caused great concern.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Flood resilience measures

R5.1 It is recommended that any development in areas at risk of fluvial or other forms of flooding should incorporate flood resilience measures such as:

- The use of stone or tiled flooring (unharmable by flood water) throughout ground floor levels
- Electrical wiring placed at raised levels.
- Raised flooring areas where kitchen units and appliances are to be installed
- Tanking of property elements below ground level
- Waterproofing of lower walls and closeable air bricks
- Doorways equipped with demountable flood barriers

ADVISORY NOTES:

The River Thames and Cookham's flood plain

A5.1 Information on the extent of flooding and on access to early warning systems is available on line from the Environment Agency's website. Information on emergency planning is available from the Borough Council's website. A Cookham Community Flood Plain Summary is available from the offices of the Cookham Parish Council. A fuller account of successive flooding stages, as they apply to Cookham parish is contained in Reference 2.1, together with various important recommendations beyond the remit of the VDS.

A5.2 There is national guidance and local planning policy relating to development where there is flood risk. The Borough Council planning policies are set out in the Local Plan (Reference 3.4) and a related Supplementary Planning Guidance document. Additional advice is provided in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (Reference 9.2).

A5.3 In general, development should be directed away from areas at flood risk, but where development is necessary, it should be made safe without increasing flood risk elsewhere. Illustratively but not exhaustively proposals that affect the flow of water in, or maintenance access to, lesser waterways in and around Cookham parish, will need to demonstrate that flood risk in Cookham will not be increased. Such waterways include Maidenhead's North Town ditch or York Stream, White Brook (from Strande Water to the York

Stream), Fleet Ditch and Strande Water, Lulle Brook, and the North Town ditch from Strande Water to the parish boundary at North Town.

For all such proposals, a Flood Risk Assessment will need to be submitted alongside the planning application. Proposals that affect pedestrian or vehicular access routes in times of flood should offer draft amendments to existing flood emergency plans to take account of changes to muster areas and evacuation routes.

A5.4 The Borough Council's planning policies balance flood risk with an individual's right to improve their property by allowing small extensions of up to 30m² to properties which have not been extended since 1974.

A5.5 Landowners whose property adjoins a watercourse are responsible for its maintenance, including maintaining the bed, banks and adjacent vegetation, and clearing any debris. Further information is available in the Environment Agency publication 'Living on the Edge' (Reference 9.3).

A5.6 The Environment Agency seeks to ensure a minimum 8m green buffer strip alongside a watercourse to enable access for maintenance and provide a wildlife buffer. Any proposed works and structures in, under, or within 8m of the watercourse require Environment Agency consent.

A5.7 In addition to flood risks from the River Thames, there may also be flash flood risks in parts of Cookham Dean and Cookham Rise (see Reference 2.2) and Guidance Notes G8.4, page 50 and G9.5, page 58).

6 Cookham's built areas - general guidance

6.1 Introduction

The three settlements of Cookham have their own characteristics, which the VDS addresses in subsequent sections. There are, however, certain themes, which affect all of the built-up parts of the parish and these are dealt with in the present section.

6.2 Key objectives

There is no single unifying design characteristic in Cookham, but the intention behind the general guidance expressed in this section is to:

- Provide guidance to help ensure that change reflects and complements the built character found in Cookham parish, including building, settings, scales, styles, features and materials.
- Provide guidance to help ensure that changes reflect the rural and semi-urban character of Cookham, each where it currently exists.
- Provide guidance to help ensure that change has regard to sustainable design factors (see also Reference 17) with priority being given to the need for energy and water efficiency

6.3 Context

Most of Cookham village and Cookham Dean lie within Conservation Areas, whose extent is shown in Section 7.2 and Section 9.2, respectively. Many other areas in and around Cookham village are situated within the Thames flood plain. Most of the green areas surrounding Cookham village and Cookham Rise, and also the whole of Cookham Dean, are designated as Green Belt. In line with national planning policy, Conservation Areas, flood plain and Green Belt statuses all influence the nature and opportunity for development.

Over the last 10 years the type of development that has occurred in Cookham parish has been small scale changes which include:

- Extensions and other alterations to existing buildings.
- One for one replacements of existing houses.
- Redevelopment of existing houses/gardens to provide a greater number of homes.
- Redevelopment or conversion of local offices or commercial premises.

Whatever the scale of future change, it is important that development takes into account the general character of Cookham and the immediate area.

Right : Clay tiles, red brick, exposed timbers, areas of flint and white washes or render - Cookham's characteristic building materials (see following page), illustrated on four of its community buildings, from top:

The Ferry Public House

The Railway Station

The Jolly Farmer,

Uncle Tom's Cabin



6 Cookham's built areas - general guidance continued

6.4 Building form and context

New buildings, of any kind, should **sit comfortably within their surroundings**. The permissible size of buildings must relate to their context. The most important criterion is they should not appear to be over-dominant, or to possess too great a mass vis-à-vis their surroundings, whether that may be neighbouring buildings or the open countryside. **Scale is of the essence in Cookham**. In Cookham Dean, where individual homes are often larger than those elsewhere in the parish, so also is their separation and seclusion characteristically greater, such that over-dominance has usually been avoided. In general, where larger buildings are essential, and the context in which they will be situated is appropriate to their proposed size, their lines and contours should be varied to create the effect of groupings of smaller buildings.

GUIDANCE:

Building form and context

G6.1 The size of proposed buildings and their plots should be considered in relation to their context. New buildings should sit comfortably in their surroundings.

- The width of frontage, depth and height of a proposed building should be in keeping with other buildings in the area.
- A new building should respect the general building line / set back from the road and the spacing of buildings which characterise the area.

6.5 Roofs

The roofscape is an important contributor to the characteristic appearance of Cookham. In various sections of the VDS, reference is made to the attractiveness of roofs and there are many related photographs, including those on the following page.

Pitched and gabled roofs overwhelmingly predominate, which means that caution should be exercised in the selection of other forms. The importance of reflecting **existing roof depth and pitch** in certain instances is also highlighted (see, for example, Box 20, page 41), as is the merit in other instances of **variation to complement existing harmonies** (Box 13, page 37). For larger buildings, **contrasting roof heights** within a single building may be appropriate. Caution should be exercised, however, over resulting mass where a wide roof pitch angle is proposed in order to increase living space within an upper storey. Extensive **unrelieved areas of flat roofing** should be avoided.

GUIDANCE:

Roofs

G6.2 New buildings should generally use pitched and gabled roofs, incorporating chimneys if characteristic of the area, and should create good harmonies with the appearance of nearby roofs, by subtle matching or by attractive variations.

6.6 Building materials

Red brick and clay tiles are the dominant building materials in Cookham parish. It is important to note that local clays give distinctive colours to brick and tile.

A characteristic 'weathered red' is most typical of Cookham, used as plain brick colour or sometimes melded with bricks of darker hue. Red bricks with grey ends or 'headers' are sometimes used. Decorative tiling patterns are commonly seen, occasionally with tiles also hung vertically. **Victorian yellow stock bricks** are also present on certain houses and walls in the village. What is not traditional for Cookham is a pinkish-beige hue in brickwork, or a pink tone mixed either with red or yellowish hues, seen in certain recently built properties. The traditional hues should, in general, be preferred.

White washes and rendering are very common wall treatments throughout Cookham.

Flint has been used fairly extensively in the parish, as is evidenced on its churches and various other public places, together with certain houses and walls. Despite the availability of local flint, the cost of local extraction and likely objections to that process may dictate that any flint used in future building would have to be brought in from elsewhere or imported from overseas. Given current environmental demands, flint should not be brought from great distances. A compromise might be the use of local flint for decoration only.

Exposed timber framing is very common throughout Cookham, but 'faux' timber framing should not be over-utilized. Timber cladding is not a major characteristic of buildings in the parish, other than black-stained boarding on converted barns and other properties, especially in Cookham Dean. Natural wood finishes are not, in general, characteristic of Cookham, but are seen in certain contemporary riverside buildings.

Cookham has a number of **Welsh slate roofs**, which tend to be limited to particular locations. Slate is now a very expensive material in the UK and in future would probably have to be sourced from overseas. **Clay tiles** are the preferred material for Cookham's roofs, except where there is a particular case for the use of slate.

Thatch is not a common roof treatment in Cookham, although there are fine decorative thatches to be seen on certain larger properties.

Natural surfacings at ground level are also much preferred, with careful attention to sustainability in respect of drainage issues. Where paving is required and justified, small **stone setts**, which are already used to good effect in parts of the village, may be suitable. Tarmac and modern paviers are not preferred for Cookham's driveways or hard-standings.

The use of **reclaimed materials** is preferred for most situations within Cookham's Conservation Areas, and may also be best suited to other contexts within the parish, depending on the immediate vernacular styles.

For contemporary buildings with a degree of seclusion, **sympathetic use of modern materials** in combination with more traditional materials may be permissible.

GUIDANCE:

Building materials

G6.3 Materials should complement those most commonly used throughout Cookham, i.e. red brick, clay tiles, exposed timbers, white washes or rendering and natural surfacings.

6 Cookham's built areas - general guidance continued



Above and right:
Differing locations, differing periods - but attractive, pitched, gabled, and 'varying' roof lines are to be seen in all parts of Cookham.



6.7 Rural (or semi-urban) character of Cookham's built areas

The rural character of Cookham's built areas is a significant factor constraining the nature of new development. Cookham village and Cookham Dean are both rural in nature. Cookham Rise is also rural in nature to a very great extent, though in parts it may be designated semi-urban. The Station Hill area is semi-urban. No area of Cookham should in future take on a more urbanised appearance that it currently possesses. Changes from rural to urban character often occur in small steps and may then be known as 'creeping urbanisation'. Most of the following attributes are mentioned elsewhere in the VDS, but it is helpful to bring them together at this point, since they all play a role in the maintenance of rural character.

- The need to maintain spaciousness of housing layouts together, where possible, with a certain individuality or irregularity, either of which may suggest spontaneity or historical accident.
- The preference for continuing provision of front gardens to new homes, as well as rear gardens, together with green surrounds that include hedged and tree-studded boundaries.
- The need for new housing to be of modest sizing, relative to the neighbourhood and to its plot.
- The need for natural surfacings at ground level and discreet parking arrangements. Correspondingly, the avoidance of tarmacadam and kerbing except where absolutely essential, and the avoidance of visually dominant hard-standings at the front of new properties.
- The need to ensure that exterior lighting is used only where it is essential and is subdued.

- The avoidance of tall, solid gates that block the glimpse of the attractive house or garden beyond.
- The preservation of old walls and the avoidance of harsh modern boundaries.
- The need to retain existing green spaces and green fingers of land that are present throughout the built areas of the parish, together with wide green verges, the latter especially in Cookham Dean. The need to retain natural appearances, where suitable, in such spaces and the avoidance of 'manicuring'.

GUIDANCE:

Rural and semi-rural

G6.4 New development should respect the rural or semi-rural character of Cookham, and avoid 'creeping urbanisation'.

6.8 Built-colour palette

Cookham's built-colour palette is referred to at various points in the VDS. The colours cited are weathered red, beige, white, brown, grey and black.

Complemented by the ever-present backdrop of green, these colours result in a particularly calm and attractive appearance. Clearly, there has been nothing 'enforced' about such a colour palette in Cookham parish. It is simply the way things have evolved. However, once identified, it is very striking that these colours are almost universally adhered to, and there is no doubt that they play a major part in unifying Cookham's diverse architecture.

GUIDANCE:

Built-colour palette

G6.5 New development should adhere as far as possible to Cookham's built-colour palette of weathered red, beige, white, brown, grey and black.

6 Cookham's built areas - general guidance continued

6.9 New development involving several dwellings

It is important that new developments involving several dwellings should be **well-spaced**, with **attractive layouts**. They should relate in a **vernacular** manner to the appearance of the neighbouring parts of Cookham. Proposals deploying **off-the-shelf house designs** are unlikely to be suitable for Cookham parish.

It is characteristic of Cookham for a variety of building types and styles to be present in any one location, and proposals that provide **variations in the size, features and orientation of individual homes** within an overall vernacular scheme may prove very suitable in order to help provide character and **avoid harsh linear effects**. This does not preclude repetition of a single size and style of building in appropriate instances: where, for example, a theme relating to a Victorian cottage row is proposed. **Roof heights** of a group of new dwellings should not normally exceed those of adjacent and nearby dwellings.

To ensure that new estate developments are consistent in size with those estates built in Cookham parish over the last twenty years, any new estate should be **modest in size**, consistent with its locality.

The positioning and design of dwellings in a proposed new estate should be chosen carefully in order to provide a **proper and integrated approach to home security**. Every opportunity should also be taken to minimise the **subtle signifiers of an urban space**. **Identifiable gardens** are preferred in front of houses and **hard surfaces in front of properties should be kept to a minimum**. **'Community space' and focal points** are desirable in larger schemes.

Adequate car parking arrangements for all needs must be provided within the boundary of any new development. This may be a mix of garaging, parking bays and discreetly arranged front-of-house parking.

Proposals for **'garden grabbing'** (the use of existing gardens) for the development of new dwellings must be evaluated with caution, especially because of the difficulty, in such locations, of providing suitably spaced housing layouts, characteristic of the vicinity. It is also necessary to ensure that there is **minimal adverse effect upon neighbouring properties** (see also, for example, illustrative material in Box 24, page 46).

GUIDANCE: Several dwellings

G6.6 New developments involving several dwellings should be adequately spaced, with attractive layouts and building designs that relate in a vernacular manner to the appearance of the neighbouring parts of Cookham. Adequate car parking arrangements for all needs should be discreetly provided within the boundary of any new development.

6.10 Apartment buildings and conversions

The development of new apartment buildings or the redevelopment of existing buildings as apartment buildings requires particularly careful consideration in the

setting of Cookham parish. The key issues relate to the **size of such buildings in relation to their surroundings** and **associated parking needs**. (The amount of additional traffic that would be generated is outside the scope of the VDS).

Issues of **scale and visual harmony** within an immediate locality mean that new apartment buildings will need to be of a modest size. The built form of new apartment buildings should, where appropriate, be **articulated in a manner which reduces the impact of mass** vis-à-vis neighbouring properties. Both new apartment buildings and conversions should exhibit a **subtlety of design**, especially in respect of external door positioning, vehicular access and car parking arrangements, that does not render them instantly and unmistakably identifiable as apartment buildings. **Parking provision** within the boundaries for new or converted apartments must be **adequate for the predicted number of occupants** and their visitors. Parking areas must be **discreet, with appropriate landscaping**.

GUIDANCE: Apartment buildings and conversions

G6.7 New or converted apartment buildings should adhere to modest scale and discreet design, with fully adequate landscaped or screened parking space, and should harmonise with their immediate locality.



Groves Way and Bridge Avenue in Cookham Rise illustrate well-spaced layouts for modest housing in varied types. Note the green frontage to the four-apartment building in the foreground.

6.11 Visible spacing of buildings

Housing density, though a familiar term, is not a useful measure for the purposes of the VDS, since the inclusion of apartments or other forms of multiple dwelling within a single building can produce seeming discrepancies between the visible spacing of buildings and the figures for housing density. In Cookham, the best yardstick for the spacing of new development is usually the **pattern of the immediate and nearby locality**. Outside of areas characterised by terraces or small plots, there should be room for gardens around the property to maintain green space, see also Section 6.24. Achieving this requires a gap between the property and the boundary similar to that characteristic of the area. As a normal minimum the gap should be no less than 1.5m.

GUIDANCE: Visible spacing of buildings

G6.8 Development should be designed to provide gardens and green space. The spacing of buildings should follow the pattern of building in the immediate and nearby area. As a normal minimum the gap between a building and the property boundary should be no less than 1.5m."

6 Cookham's built areas - general guidance continued

6.12 Extensions

Care should be taken to ensure that extensions reflect the design of the original building and use matching materials. In general extensions should **avoid resulting in an overbearing appearance**, either by **creating undue height or mass** or by **un-neighbourly impacts**. The extended appearance of the property should remain consistent with size and scale in the locality. The **conversion of garages should be resisted** if this would be likely to lead to the loss of gardens to hard-standing, or additional cars being parked on the street. Extension of residential space that is likely to lead to an **increased number of occupants**, for whom **adequate on-site parking** cannot be provided, should also be resisted.

GUIDANCE:

Extensions

G6.9a Extensions should be subordinate in scale, should not result in an overbearing appearance or un-neighbourly impact, and should sympathetically reflect the design of the original building.

G6.9b The conversion of garages should only be allowed where there is adequate on-site parking.

6.13 Traditional terraced properties

Any new development affecting rows of traditional cottages, including, but not exhaustively, those designated as being within an area of Special Local Significance (Annex C) or 'especially noteworthy' (Section 9.3), should accord with the following.

In order to retain the traditional appearance of the terrace, there should be no building in advance of the façade apart from the addition of porches, front lobbies, or modest bay windows where such features already exist elsewhere in the terrace. Such additions should be constructed in materials sympathetic to the existing and should be proportionate to the property into which they are to be placed. **Pitched roofs should be covered with slates or tiles** to match the existing main roofs. In terms of general appearance, front gardens should be maintained intact as far as possible. The **painting or rendering of exterior brickwork should be resisted**, except as maintenance work on existing treatments.

GUIDANCE:

Terraced properties

G6.10 The visual integrity of traditional cottage terraces should be protected in the following ways:

- No building in advance of the façade, except for porches, front lobbies and bay windows where such features already exist in the terrace.
- All additions should be proportionate, and sympathetic in style and use of materials.
- Front gardens should remain intact as far as possible.

6.14 Primacy of original

Additional to 6.13 above, any new development affecting terraces or other areas of housing possessing consistency in original design, should be sensitively

treated to **ensure that the original design intentions remain dominant**. In general, integrity should be preserved by avoiding the addition of porches and other forms of front extension, by copying through design features and using matching features and materials.

GUIDANCE:

Primacy of original

G6.11 Where there is general uniformity, new building designs or extensions should match the style of other buildings in the terrace or area.

6.15 Affordable housing

'Affordable housing' is a generic term, which includes social rented housing, key worker housing and shared ownership housing, amongst other categories. There are more than 200 affordable housing dwellings of various types in Cookham Parish. The provisions of Right-to-Buy legislation do not apply to Cookham and, therefore, the level of the existing stock is unlikely to reduce significantly in the short term.

In January 2011, Cookham Parish Council, through the Community Council for Berkshire, commissioned a Housing Needs Survey across the parish to ascertain the extent of local needs and any special requirements of those who qualify. The questionnaire acknowledged that new housing might have to come forward through a special planning process relating to 'Rural Exception Sites': that is, small sites which, for Cookham parish, might be within existing Green Belt on the edge of built-up areas, and as such would not normally receive planning permission. The survey findings suggested that, contrary to expectations, it was young people who most were seeking low cost housing in Cookham. Many Cookham residents, however, believe that pressing needs for additional affordable housing for Cookham's elderly will soon emerge.

It is not within the remit of the VDS to suggest whether more affordable housing should be built in Cookham. However, in terms of design, it is essential to point out that **the criteria of the VDS apply as much to affordable dwellings as to any other type of housing**.

GUIDANCE:

Affordable housing

G6.12 Affordable housing development in Cookham should have regard to the design guidance in this VDS. The need to avoid 'creeping urbanisation' applies equally to affordable housing developments.



Cookham's only Rural Exception Site development to date, in Arthur Close, Cookham Rise. Whilst these designs pre-date VDS guidance, they do exemplify the way in which a modest four-apartment building (left) can harmonise with semi-detached housing (right).

6 Cookham's built areas - general guidance continued

6.16 Contemporary, iconic and 'eco' buildings

Cookham has a small but notable history of architecture that is 'new' for its time. This includes the Studio House (Box 15, page 39), the Nursery School (Box 21, page 44 and Annex C) and a number of developments on the river bank in Cookham Dean. Also at the edge of the river in Cookham Dean, Noah's Boathouse, now Grade II* listed, is one of the oldest surviving works by architect Colin Lucas, a pioneer of reinforced concrete in the building of homes.



Noah's Boathouse, an early British example of 'Modern Movement' architecture

Further contemporary buildings are to be found within the boundaries of the Chartered Institute of Marketing and the Odney Club (Section 7.3)



Another notable building is a large 1960s flat-roofed house in Poundfield Lane, built within a small quarry from which chalk was extracted in the 1870s for the development of the railway. Screened

for the most part from public view, this dwelling would have been both novel and experimental when first built.

In general, there is not a great deal of opportunity within Cookham parish for the introduction of contemporary homes that will complement their particular locality. It is notable that the relatively few such buildings that have been constructed over the years tend to be positioned in rather discreet locations. The river bank is an exception, addressed in Section 10 and related photographs are on pages 55 and 59.

Proposed buildings where building form is highly contemporary, or where **glass, steel or other contemporary building materials** are visually prominent, or that are otherwise 'new' for their time, must **harmonise with existing buildings in the vicinity, and with the landscape.** To this end, the design characteristics discussed elsewhere in the VDS are relevant and should be noted. This is of particular importance for any building intended to stand in a prominent position and/or **against a backdrop of the countryside.**

There may be little appetite in the community for contemporary building of dramatic scale and striking appearance. However, it is recognised that a 'second gallery', for example, might be sought within Cookham parish at some point to represent Cookham's wide and considerable historic and artistic legacies and/or to reflect contemporary artistic vibrancy in the parish. The

VDS does not, therefore, rule out the possibility of a new '**iconic development**' at a future point. It is important to point out that '**iconic must be understood as a building of the highest quality design**' whose line, form and materials are expected to stand the test of time and delight future generations of residents and visitors.

In recent years there has been a push to develop buildings which are to be close to, or fully attaining, a **carbon-neutral** standard. The technology is moving very fast, as are the standards and regulatory timescales being imposed.

Many low-energy buildings offer designs which would not readily sit alongside the traditional structures in Cookham or the village's built-colour palette. Not all, however, are, or would be, unsuitable. The design images below are simply illustrative of the 'softer end' of current eco design and should not be taken as VDS endorsements.

Eco-building need not be stark. This innovative low carbon 'Natural House' has been built by the Prince's Foundation at the Building Research Establishment.

Its pioneering design is said to offer a successful fusion of low energy technology and traditional building styles.



"Cookham currently possesses very substantial architectural variation. New development may add even more variation, but a useful guiding principle would be, 'Design to impress the community, not to impress other architects'."

**Extract from Individual Consultations
Mr Michael Johnson, former Chairman of the Cookham Festival and Chairman of the Friends of the Stanley Spencer Gallery**

GUIDANCE:

Contemporary and eco

G6.13a Proposed buildings where building form is contemporary, or where glass, steel or other contemporary building materials are visually prominent, or that are otherwise 'new' for their time, should harmonise:

- with the existing character of Cookham
- with existing buildings in the vicinity
- with the landscape.

G6.13b Any 'iconic' building which may be proposed in the future should be of very high standard in both design and build, such as to stand the test of time.

6 Cookham's built areas - general guidance continued

6.17 Boundary walls

Cookham possesses many old brick and flint walls, showing a wide range of building techniques, which it is important to preserve. There are also some attractive, recently-built walls that faithfully copy older styles using reclaimed materials.

Old walls adjacent to roads which are part of the village character should be retained and proposals for their renovation or repair welcomed.

New walls which **reflect the neighbouring design vernacular** especially those using **suitable reclaimed materials** should be a welcome feature of planning proposals, provided they will not have the effect of unduly shutting the property off from the street (see also Section 6.21) or unacceptably urbanising the street scene. Many of the roads in the parish are still essentially country lanes, especially in Cookham Dean, where their size, layout, hedges and greenery are fundamental to the sense of rural charm. Stark new walls should be avoided.



A recent extension to a striking decorative wall in Gibraltar Lane links to the gateway (left), very successfully matching the original wall (left again). The extended section is further enhanced by a reclaimed historic door.

GUIDANCE:

Walls

G6.14 Historic walls are a very important feature of Cookham and should be treated with respect.

- Proposals for the renovation or repair of historic walls should be welcomed, as should plans for faithful copies using reclaimed materials.
- Proposed new walls need sensitive design and should not unduly shut the property off from the street or urbanise the street scene.



This old brick and flint wall provides a perfect foil to historic homes on the corner of School Lane.



Blind Gothic arches set into red brick, infilled with flint, and surmounted by a tiled roof create a charming boundary wall to a Victorian house on Winter Hill.



Above: The attractive, buttressed wall of the Old Pottery, once part of The Grove Farm, borders Odney Common.



Left: Ancient flint walls lining the road, together with historic brick walls, are a major feature of the Pound.

Others of Cookham's historic walls are shown elsewhere in the VDS as follows.

Page 36, Ferry Lane. One of Cookham's earliest garden walls which contains bricks dating from the sixteenth century.

Page 39, School Lane. Historic walls surrounding the former brewery.

6 Cookham's built areas - general guidance continued

6.18 Commercial and retail premises

Modest commercial premises are to be welcomed in Cookham, as a village where people both live and work. There are, however, many parts of the parish where commercial operations would not be appropriate because of their proximate impacts (for example the need to accommodate employee parking in otherwise residential areas).

Commercial and retail premises in Cookham should be in **suitable locations** and in styles that **complement this historic village**, whilst acknowledging the business needs that the premises must satisfy. Signage should generally **adhere to Cookham's built-colour palette**, though consideration of those retail and commercial signs currently in use around the village suggests that 'green' is a muted and very acceptable addition to the colour palette for such signage. Not all of the retail outlets in the village, are currently in accordance with the above in terms of styles and signage but opportunities for enhancement may emerge in the future.

Should there be any new development or re-development involving **multiple retail outlets** (Station Parade is an obvious candidate), proposals should achieve **gentleness of form**, which is likely to **include varying roof lines** and **exclude extensive, unrelieved flat roofs, stark linearity and disproportionately large unrelieved areas of glass**. Smaller buildings forming individual parts of a common theme should be preferred to large blocks.

Care should be taken when designing the layout of a commercial building or retail site to ensure minimal **impact of car parking on the street scene**. The appearance of **'urbanisation' should be avoided** as far as is reasonably possible. The use of **natural surfacing wherever possible**, and the division of parking areas into small bays separated by **green fingers of land**, can be very helpful in this respect. The retention of existing **trees of merit**, and provision of **suitable planting**, will be an important element in the design of parking spaces.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Commercial and retail

R6.1 Local employment should be welcomed where appropriate as contributing to Cookham's status as a village where people live and work but any development to support this objective should be in accordance with Guidance Point G6.15a to G6.15c.

GUIDANCE: Commercial and retail

G6.15a VDS guidance for building form, materials and colour palette is equally applicable to commercial and retail premises, whilst recognizing the functional needs that these buildings must satisfy.

G6.15b Parking provision for commercial and retail premises should be discreet with generous screening or landscaping and the avoidance of undue urbanisation.

G6.15c Signage should generally accord with Cookham's built-colour palette, though 'green' is an acceptable addition to the palette for commercial and retail signage purposes.

6.19 Car parking in new development

All new development of whatever type should be expected to provide sufficient car parking space within the site's boundaries to accommodate the requirements of the development. In the case of new housing, this means **provision for residents and their visitors**.

The design of car parking requires particular sensitivity so that **vehicles and unscreened hard-standings do not become a dominant feature**. **Boundary treatment is particularly important** for car parking in new development, such that neighbouring properties do not have to overlook car parking and service areas.

GUIDANCE: Car parking in new development

G6.16 Car parking in all new developments should be sufficient for residents and their visitors. Car parking should be arranged discreetly, avoiding visually dominant hard-standings at the front of houses and providing adequate screening at boundaries.

6.20 Village car parks

Cookham's car parks serve residents and visitors alike. They need to be **rural rather than urban in nature** wherever possible, yet maintainable in good condition (see also R4.5 in Box 11, page 17).

Tarmacadam may be inevitable where there is particularly heavy usage, but **natural surfaces** will be suitable in most instances, as may **modern, durable, porous surfaces which permit the growth of grass**. **Trees and shrubs** help to create a softened appearance, especially when studded around the boundary.

Low hedging can be a suitable boundary for village car parks. **Rustic perimeter fencing** is also a particularly useful technique to soften the harsh appearance of parked cars, whilst at the same time keeping the cars in public view for **security** reasons.

Lighting should be avoided where possible, but if essential should be soft.

GUIDANCE: Village car parks

G6.17 Cookham's village car parks should follow VDS guidance for rural rather than urban character.



An attractive model for Cookham's village car parks is situated at the Odney Club. Here, rustic fencing, intermittent trees at the perimeter and a gravelled surface all soften the appearance of parked cars.

6 Cookham's built areas - general guidance continued

6.21 Gates

During the VDS Consultation Programme, a recognised and appreciated aspect of Cookham was found to be its **open and unthreatened appearance**. It was noted that, in Cookham Dean in particular, there is often a complete absence of gates within otherwise bounded properties, and those gates that do exist are typically constructed in **attractive open work** that does not unduly block the view.

Many gates routinely stand open and though it is not a planning issue as to whether gates are open or closed, the matter is clearly indicative of the general character of a neighbourhood. A similar situation, though less marked, exists throughout the Cookham settlements.

There has been much adverse comment in response to a recent trend for the erection of tall, solid, gates. Local people have expressed the view that this has an anti-social effect, is unwelcoming and eliminates the good feelings caused by a glimpse of an attractive property, garden, or distant view beyond. From the particular perspective of the VDS, any trend towards tall, solid gates also tends to **urbanise the street scene**.

GUIDANCE:

Gates

G6.18 Gates should generally be of an open design to create a welcoming impression and allow views through to the property, garden or landscape beyond. The use of tall solid gates should be avoided.

6.22 Hedgerows, fencing and trees within residential areas

Many of Cookham's existing residential boundaries are based upon hedgerows, often studded with trees. It is generally **undesirable to uproot existing 'living boundaries', or fell mature trees within such a boundary. Hedgerows are a very suitable boundary, also for new developments in Cookham and are to be preferred over solid board fencing or modern brick walls.** Young hedgerows may usefully be backed by wire fences if they will initially form an insufficient boundary. **Wooden picket** or **post and rail** fencing both form alternative attractive boundaries that are seen in various parts of Cookham parish, either standing alone or forming a low frontage to a taller hedgerow.

Tree-planting in residential areas is wholeheartedly supported in the VDS, provided the **size of the tree concerned (or line of trees) when mature, is taken into account.**

Although native species such as oak, beech and ash grow well in particular local conditions, there is a strong history of planting non-native species in local gardens, which can help to add interest.

The VDS also refers to situations where the planting of trees may currently, or in due course, **block important views** (see, for example, Section 4.9 and the photograph above right). The planting of trees that will in due course block important views does not contravene planning policy, but it is poor practice and should be resisted where possible.



Above: The row of trees planted along the approach to Moor Hall is a concern. This was previously an open location and should have remained so, since it is part of the Moor. In summer the trees unbalance the view from the west, by blocking half of the 'welcoming arms of Cookham village' from the gaze.



Above right: An avenue of cedar trees in Cedar Drive, south of the Pound. The wide spacing between opposite residences was designed to accommodate this very tall row of trees.

GUIDANCE:

Hedgerows, fencing and trees within residential areas

G6.19a Existing hedgerows forming residential boundaries should in general be retained.

G6.19b Hedgerows are a very suitable boundary for new developments in Cookham and are preferred over solid board fencing or modern brick walls. Hedgerows may be attractively combined with wooden picket or post and rail fencing in certain instances.

6.23 Screening new development

The screening of new development should not be regarded as a self-evident need. It is far **preferable that the development should be sufficiently attractive not to require screening**, but this must depend upon the particular circumstances. Where screening is contemplated, a **careful balance needs to be struck** between the true need and the risk of creating screening that is over-solid and unattractive. Similar considerations apply to decisions between **evergreen and deciduous trees**. Evergreens can be forbidding in appearance and ecologically unfriendly, but deciduous trees will provide less effective screening in winter. The use of **leylandii and similar** should not be permitted for screening of residential properties.

GUIDANCE:

Screening

G6.20 Where screening is used it should be carefully designed, with due regard to its seasonal and future mature appearance.

6 Cookham's built areas - general guidance continued

6.24 Gardens

Even in Cookham's most built-up areas, gardens have, for the most part, been provided **at the front and rear of houses** consistent with a village environment. It is also relatively unusual in Cookham to find tightly cut boundaries to the sides of houses. Therefore, except in special circumstances, **front and rear** gardens should be included within new developments. To each side of a house, space for greenery should be characteristic of the neighbourhood and proportionate to the building frontage. Generous areas of hedge, shrubs and trees are of particular importance throughout Cookham.

GUIDANCE:

Gardens

G6.21 Except in special circumstances, front and rear gardens should be included within new developments. To each side of a house, space for greenery should be characteristic of the neighbourhood and proportionate to the building frontage.

6.25 Sustainable Design

The Borough Council's 'Sustainable Design and Construction' Supplementary Planning Document (Reference 17) provides a wealth of information on measures that could be incorporated into new development to enhance environmental performance. The information is also useful for improving existing properties.

A very real challenge in Cookham, most particularly but not exclusively in its Conservation Areas, is that of incorporating sustainable design whilst minimising adverse visual impacts outside the property. In supporting sustainable design and technology, suitable balances must be achieved between the advantages of sustainable design and the need to retain the visual attractiveness of Cookham's character. 'New generation' technologies designed to provide greener energy are, therefore, particularly relevant to Cookham. Many of these are specifically focused on the reduction of visual intrusiveness. It is expected that this trend will continue into the future.

GUIDANCE:

Energy efficiency

G6.22 The incorporation of sustainable design and construction techniques and technology is welcomed but care must be taken to balance the advantages of environmental performance with the need to avoid negative impacts on the visual attractiveness of a building or its surroundings.



Already the appearance of photo-voltaic cells can be softened by embedding into clay tiles. It is to be hoped that technological development will further advance the provision of energy saving installations that conserve the appearance of historic tiled roofs.

6.26 Lighting (exterior)

Street lighting is barely compatible with the maintenance of a rural appearance and such lighting could become a form of 'creeping urbanisation' wherever installed in Cookham parish. It is therefore generally discouraged in the VDS, but it is recognised that there may be particular locations at which soft and shielded lights may be suitable or where lighting might usefully be triggered by the movement of a person.

Care needs to be taken when installing lighting for external areas, such as car parks and sports grounds. Lighting columns should be avoided unless there is no viable alternative and should not be installed where there is the possibility that they will be silhouetted against the skyline. There should be no spillage of light outside the area to be lit.

GUIDANCE:

Exterior lighting

G6.23 Exterior lighting should be used only when necessary. Lighting columns, where essential, should be in keeping with the locality and the lighting provided should be discreet.

6.27 Note on traffic and its consequences

The problems of traffic congestion and insufficient public parking provision, though of major importance in Cookham, are outside the scope of the VDS.

Any works which may be considered necessary to alleviate traffic problems should, however, respect VDS guidance, both generally and in the area concerned, and any works to create car parks should follow specific guidance in the relevant sections of the VDS.

The severity of parking problems around Cookham, especially in Cookham village and Cookham Rise, is a reason for very strict adherence to VDS guidance that, for all new developments or conversions, all parking needed for whatever reasons should be inside the boundaries of the development.



The presence of parked cars along Cookham High Street may now be irrevocable, but its outcome is sadly in contrast to the spacious original layout of the High Street.

SUMMARY OF GENERAL GUIDANCE FOR COOKHAM'S BUILT AREAS

Building form and context

G6.1 The size of proposed buildings and their plots must be considered in relation to their context. New buildings should sit comfortably in their surroundings.

- The width of frontage, depth and height of a proposed building should be in keeping with other buildings in the area.
- A new building should respect the general building line / set back from the road and the spacing of buildings which characterise the area

Roofs

G6.2 New buildings should generally use pitched and gabled roofs, incorporating chimneys if characteristic of the area, and should create good harmonies with the appearance of nearby roofs, by subtle matching or by attractive variations.

Building materials

G6.3 Materials should complement those most commonly used throughout Cookham, i.e. red brick, clay tiles, exposed timbers, white washes or rendering and natural surfacings.

Rural and semi-rural

G6.4 New development should respect the rural or semi-rural character of Cookham, and avoid 'creeping urbanisation'.

Built colour palette

G6.5 New development should adhere as far as possible to Cookham's built-colour palette of weathered red, beige, white, brown, grey and black.

Several dwellings

G6.6 New developments involving several dwellings should be adequately spaced, with attractive layouts and building designs that relate in a vernacular manner to the appearance of the neighbouring parts of Cookham. Adequate car parking arrangements for all needs should be discreetly provided within the boundary of any new development.

Apartment buildings and conversions

G6.7 New or converted apartment buildings should adhere to modest scale and discreet design, with fully adequate landscaped or screened parking space, and should harmonise with their immediate locality.

Visible spacing of buildings

G6.8 Development should be designed to provide gardens and green space. The spacing of buildings should follow the pattern of building in the immediate and nearby area. As a normal minimum the gap between a building and the property boundary should be no less than 1.5m."

Extensions

G6.9a Extensions should be subordinate in scale, should not result in an overbearing appearance or un-neighbourly impact, and should sympathetically reflect the design of the original building

G6.9b The conversion of garages should only be allowed where there is adequate on-site parking.

Terraced properties

G6.10 The visual integrity of traditional cottage terraces must be protected in the following ways:

- No building in advance of the façade, except for porches, front lobbies and bay windows where such features already exist in the terrace.
- All additions should be proportionate, and sympathetic in style and use of materials.
- Front gardens should remain intact as far as possible.

Primacy of original

G6.11 Where there is general uniformity, new building designs or extensions should match the style of other buildings in the terrace or area.

Affordable housing

G6.12 Affordable housing development in Cookham should have regard to the design guidance in this VDS. The need to avoid 'creeping urbanisation' applies equally to affordable housing developments.

Contemporary and eco

G6.13a Proposed buildings where building form is contemporary, or where glass, steel or other contemporary building materials are visually prominent, or that are otherwise 'new' for their time, should harmonise:

- with the existing character of Cookham
- with existing buildings in the vicinity
- with the landscape.

G6.13b Any 'iconic' building which may be proposed in the future should be of very high standard in both design and build, such as to stand the test of time.

Walls

G6.14 Historic walls are a very important feature of Cookham and should be treated with respect.

- Proposals for the renovation or repair of historic walls should be welcomed, as should plans for faithful copies using reclaimed materials.
- Proposed new walls need sensitive design and should not unduly shut the property off from the street or urbanise the street scene.

Commercial and retail

G6.15a VDS guidance for building form, materials and colour palette is equally applicable to commercial and retail premises, whilst recognizing the functional needs that these buildings must satisfy.

G6.15b Parking provision for commercial and retail premises should be discreet with generous screening or landscaping and the avoidance of undue urbanisation.

G6.15c Signage should generally accord with Cookham's built-colour palette, though 'green' is an acceptable addition to the palette for commercial and retail signage purposes.

Car parking in new development

G6.16 Car parking in all new developments should be sufficient for residents and their visitors. Car parking should be arranged discreetly, avoiding visually dominant hard-standings at the front of houses and providing adequate screening at boundaries.

SUMMARY OF GENERAL GUIDANCE FOR COOKHAM'S BUILT AREAS continued

Village car parks

G6.17 Cookham's village car parks should follow VDS guidance for rural rather than urban character.

Gates

G6.18 Gates should generally be of an open design to create a welcoming impression and allow views through to the property, garden or landscape beyond. The use of tall solid gates should be avoided.

Hedgerows, fencing and trees in residential areas

G6.19a Existing hedgerows forming residential boundaries should not in general be uprooted.

G6.19b Hedgerows are a very suitable boundary for new developments in Cookham and are preferred over solid board fencing or modern brick walls. Hedgerows may be attractively combined with wooden picket or post and rail fencing in certain instances.

Screening

G6.20 Where screening is used it should be carefully designed, with due regard to its seasonal and future mature appearance.

Gardens

G6.21 Except in special circumstances, front and rear gardens should be included within new developments. To each side of a house, space for greenery should be characteristic of the neighbourhood and proportionate to the building frontage.

Energy efficiency

G6.22 The incorporation of sustainable design and construction techniques and technology is welcomed but care must be taken to balance the advantages of energy efficiency with the need to avoid negative impacts on the visual attractiveness of a building or its surroundings.

Exterior lighting

G6.23 Exterior lighting should be used only when necessary. Lighting columns, where essential, should be in keeping with the locality and the lighting provided should be discreet.

7 Cookham village

This section should be read in conjunction with the Cookham High Street Conservation Area Statement (Reference 6.1)



Cliveden overlooking Cookham Village, a much-loved Cookham view which is restricted to certain seasons of the year.

7.1 The growth of Cookham village

The original settlement was compact, its size constrained by the river to the north and the low-lying land on its other three sides. The only direction in which the medieval village could easily grow was westwards, siting its new buildings on the slightly higher ground beyond the Moor and the Fleet Ditch. Thus, there were two distinct parts to the early village settlement. The concentration of buildings in the area of the church and High Street was followed by the construction of various buildings fronting The Pound. Other buildings which are now of historic importance were added at a later stage and include properties in Mill Lane, White Place Farm, School Lane and Sutton Road.

More recent development has included the construction of large, detached, family residences in Berries Road around 1900, bringing housing closer to the river. The Blackbutts Cottages off Sutton Road were built in the 1930s, the first privately-built 'affordable' rented housing estate in Cookham village. A cul-de-sac of detached houses was built at Sutton Close and, subsequently, small housing developments were laid out at Vicarage Close, at Woodmoor End off Mill Lane, and also to the south of The Pound with access from the Maidenhead Road. Across the village there was considerable infill, with the development of separate properties in larger gardens, together with sub-division of some of the larger properties.



A high-mast view of the High Street and School Lane, together with the area of the War Memorial.

It can be seen that pitched, clay-tiled roofs are particularly important to the character of Cookham village.

7 Cookham village continued

7.2 Cookham High Street Conservation Area

The Cookham High Street Conservation Area was originally designated in 1969 by Berkshire County Council and subsequently extended by the Borough Council. The Conservation Area now includes both parts of Cookham village (that is, the High Street area and The Pound). In the High Street area, most of the streets close to the High Street are included: namely Churchgate, Odney Lane, Mill Lane, School Lane (except for its south east end), Berries Road and that part of Sutton Road that extends from Cookham Bridge to the junction with School Lane. Further west, the Conservation area includes The Pound, Poundfield and the southern part of Terry's Lane. All development in a Conservation Area is subject to special constraints and processes (see Reference 3.2).



The Cookham High Street Conservation Area.

From Cookham Bridge to Church Gate, Odney Lane and Ferry Lane

Box 12

Four interconnected roads forming a vibrant network at the north eastern end of Cookham village display a rich historic and architectural character. The original buildings were constructed over several hundred years and have been subject to many alterations. A high proportion of original architectural detailing nevertheless survives throughout.

The Church Gate precinct, gateway to the Holy Trinity Church from Sutton Road is especially picturesque. The precinct is part of the Thames Path as well as an important centre of activity for church and local community functions. The current church dates from circa 1100, but has been extended and refurbished in each century since then. Churchgate House, backing onto the churchyard, may be the oldest house in Cookham, with evidence to suggest that it was built in the fourteenth century. All houses in Church Gate are timber-framed to a greater or lesser extent, and white-washed or white-rendered, with attractive clay-tiled and timbered porches and deep clay-tiled roofs. Individuality of buildings combines with a common look and feel which it is important to retain. Beyond these houses the precinct becomes a private road to the former vicarage, a red brick Grade 2 listed building which is now the home of the Parish Office and Parish Centre community rooms.

The Odney Estate, owned by the John Lewis Partnership, includes a number of buildings along Odney Lane as well as Lullebrook Manor (see also Box 6, page 13 and Box 19, page 41). Odney Lane and Ferry Lane are both dominated by red brick building lines directly to the street. Stretches of boundary wall link directly to the brick fronts or sides of individually characterful properties, providing a coherent red brick frontage which needs to be respected. Odney Common, off Odney Lane, is an important amenity for Cookham Village and a delightful walker's entrance to the picturesque Sashes Island and Cookham Lock. At its Western end is the former Odney Pottery, now refurbished and extended as the John Lewis Heritage Centre.

On the corner of Odney Lane and Sutton Road is a significant local landmark, a large boulder known as the Tarrystone (see also Box 49, page 71). Tarrystone House, opposite the Tarrystone, is an unusual and prominent red brick building.



Above: Church Gate precinct with Churchgate House at centre right.

Below: Ferry Lane, narrow, brick-walled and rustic.



Left: Opposite the Tarrystone and facing the High Street from Sutton Road is Tarrystone House, an imposing building of both Georgian and Regency character.

7 Cookham village continued

Cookham High Street

Box 13

Cookham's High Street is the result of medieval town planning, in which properties were set out in close proximity on each side of the road, backed by long 'burgage plots' (see Section 3.3). Almost all buildings in the High Street appear to be old, but some are much older than they look. Keeley's Cottage, for example, had several successive floor levels, found on excavation, and may actually date back to the Middle Ages. The Kings Arms has a skin of Georgian brick concealing an ancient timber frame, while Clomburr Cottage is known to have Tudor origins.

The High Street has no single architectural style, although exposed timber framed buildings with white infill, and red brick buildings predominate, as do pitched roofs topped with clay tiles. The street forms a charming assemblage of buildings of differing designs, reflecting their many and varied uses over the years. Few of the buildings stand out by virtue of size - the King's Arms is one of the exceptions. The overall scale of the street is domestic, with many of the properties, especially at the western end, still being in residential use. As the street curves towards its eastern end, the buildings become more substantial and the view is arrested by the imposing buildings facing the High Street from the far side of Sutton Road. On the southern corner of the High Street and Sutton Road is the Stanley Spencer Gallery, a beautifully restored former Methodist chapel. All along the street, individual properties either abut each other or are separated by small entrances that often provide visibility of historic side elevations. Where there is such visibility, it should be protected.

The High Street now comprises a mixture of residential properties, restaurants and specialist retailers, having once been full of local traders, including grocer, greengrocer, chemist and butcher. This shift of business emphasis has probably helped the village avoid many of the brash signs of competitive retailing. It should continue to do so.

Much of the High Street's charm lies in its contrasts. There is no single 'building line', some of the buildings being set slightly forward and others slightly back, with the occasional building set behind low walls or railings. Pavement widths vary considerably; small cottages provide a foil to large villas; white painted or rendered elevations contrast with local brick. Roof depths, heights and pitches also vary, such that attractive transitions prevail, with no long run of unchanging roof lines. This unity in diversity must be closely guarded.

It is unsurprising that in a street containing seventeen Listed Buildings there has been little modern construction. But certain more recent buildings sit uneasily amongst their neighbours and their further visual integration by modest alteration, as and when the opportunity arises, would be a positive step. This is not to say that any future developments should be merely pastiches of the older properties in the street, but new buildings should acknowledge the character and scale of the street as a whole, employ traditional materials and be integral to Cookham High Street rather than a part of an anonymous townscape.

"The atmosphere and commercial vibrancy of Cookham High Street are exceptional and must be retained. The Odney Club depends on these things, but can also contribute greatly to them, not only through its social responsibility policies but especially by virtue of its 120 or so guests each day and night, who love to explore the shops and hostellers."

**Extract from Individual Consultations
Ms Sue Bickle,
Manager, The Odney Club and the Winter Hill Golf Club**



Left: Cookham High Street looking eastwards from the Kings Arms towards Sutton Road.

Right: Timber-framed buildings including Bel and the Dragon, dating from the fifteenth century.



At the west end of the High Street, charming residential properties (above) are seen to the north of the War Memorial, whilst to the south (below) is a backdrop of fine period properties, including Moor End and The Maltings.



Left and right above: These attractive 20th century windows installed in the facades of Cookham High Street retail outlets are in good harmony with more historic building elements.

7 Cookham village continued

The Pound, Poundfield Lane and the southern end of Terry's Lane

Box 14

The Pound is a narrow road running west to east forming part of the link between the Station Hill area and Cookham village. Poundfield Lane runs from the western end of The Pound directly north, becoming a footpath, then a gravelled track cutting in front of residential properties whose vehicular access is through Terry's Lane. The southern end of Terry's Lane runs north from the eastern end of The Pound before bearing west, meeting Poundfield Lane and continuing upwards. The three roads form an approximate triangle through and around Poundfield - which falls in a southerly direction from the top of Poundfield Lane towards Station Hill (see also Box 9, page 15). Collectively these roads display many of the characteristics that give Cookham its appeal - a unique mix of historic and modern architecture within a rural setting that provides both calm and vitality.

The Pound is a particularly narrow through-route possessing two distinct characters. On its north side are some of the oldest buildings in Cookham, of which five are listed. All except the Old Farmhouse face the street, mostly behind low walls. The properties on this side of The Pound exhibit a variety of architecture, which ranges from a modest cottage-style to the somewhat more substantial elevations of The White Oak. A recent Victorian-styled apartment building at the Maidenhead Road roundabout replaced 'The Gate Hangs High' public house (with its once enchanting notion of 'hindering none'), and now defines The Pound's western entrance. A pavement runs along the north side of The Pound, but is not wide enough for two people to pass without one stepping into a gateway or into the road.

The contrast with the opposite side of the road is marked. On the southern side, most of the houses are larger in scale, set behind unusually high walls from which their entrances give onto courtyards and driveways. One gateway leads to a discreet cul de sac of separately designed mature detached homes, scarcely visible from The Pound itself.

Architecturally, The Pound is possibly one of Cookham's most interesting areas, particularly for historic and period buildings. There are examples from each century from the 15th through to the 19th. The principle material is brick, but it comes in different forms with varying colours and detailing. Flint is also used liberally, especially within boundary walls.

The narrowness of The Pound slows the flow of two-way traffic and can cause inconvenience, such that various additional routes have been considered with the goal of eliminating bottlenecks. However, there is a counter-argument, which is that the removal of bottlenecks in Cookham's through-routes would be destructive to the heritage, rural character and visual appearance of the village, since it would inevitably result in larger and faster traffic flows. 'Olde world charm', in other words, may often be linked to a degree of inconvenience, which acts to sustain it. This view is rather supported in the VDS. The inadequate pavements of The Pound do, however, remain a concern and, whilst the relatively slow movement of traffic reduces the risks to some degree, these pavements are not entirely comfortable or safe for the pedestrian.

The construction of a new footpath behind The Pound appears to be ruled out on incontrovertible grounds (Reference 2.3). There remains the possibility, however, of discreet re-positioning of certain walls on the north side of The Pound to provide a small amount of added pavement space. This has kindly been offered by at least one current resident. With suitable resolution of Conservation Area issues, this type of solution may yet be attainable.



Upper right: The Old Farmhouse at the junction of The Pound and Terry's Lane. Above: View looking west along The Pound.



Above: Old Cookham Fire Station, Terry's Lane.



Above left: The view looking north along Terry's Lane. Above right: Edwardian properties in Poundfield Lane.

Poundfield Lane has a mix of mostly twentieth century architecture, including several large Edwardian homes. Houses are set back in generous plots. Large front gardens provide leafy boundaries to the lane. The Grade II listed 'Englefield', painted by Stanley Spencer (see Box 9, page 15, Section 14.2 and Annex B), is of Georgian style and is thought to have been built in 1791.

At the commencement of Terry's Lane there are period properties on both sides, providing a strong visual link to The Pound whilst transitioning to a tree-lined country lane. Further along the southern end of the lane, there is a mix of properties, mostly twentieth century, and most being characterised by 'traditional' features such as gables and leaded windows. On the eastern side of the land there are wide grass verges.

7 Cookham village continued

School Lane

Box 15

School Lane forms an arc from the High Street to Sutton Road. With its many historical buildings, the lane reflects elements of village trades dating from the Middle Ages. At the High Street end of the road, on the eastern side, the Maltings, Brew House, Tannery House, Gantry House and Malt cottage are the oldest buildings - all very distinctive and imbued with rich character. Opposite these properties are small Victorian terraced cottages and villas, tucked behind picket fences and low walls.

Interspersed amongst the historic properties are several that were much more recently built. The notable Studio House, one of few single storey buildings in the lane, was featured as 'ultra modern' in a 1930s Ideal Home Exhibition.

The buildings of the Holy Trinity Primary School, present enthusiastic modern extension around an imposing mid-Victorian, and highly decorative, structure. At the Sutton Road end of School Lane are six more recent, detached houses outside of the Conservation Area boundary.

Most of the houses in the lane are detached, with medium to large plots. Frontages to the street include half timbered gables, dormer windows and hipped roofs. Brick predominates, but is whitewashed in some instances. Decorative flint is also used. Roofs present a variety of styles and heights, predominately topped with clay tiles. The lane is narrow in some places, enclosed by characterful old walls



Above right and below: Historic buildings and distinctive walls, characteristic of the older part of School Lane.



(see also Section 6.17) which form a common building line with the sides of certain of the older properties. In contrast, new buildings have been set back behind hedges and trees, lessening their impact. The lane carries a lot of traffic but at quieter times it reflects country village tranquillity, enhanced by the absence of street lighting. Whilst no single style of building predominates, new development must respect the character, history and relatively low building density of this area.

Berries Road and Vicarage Close

Box 16

Berries Road is a tree-lined cul-de-sac which runs north towards the River Thames from the junction with Cookham High Street and the Moor. At the northern end of the road is Cookham Riverside, a residential care home facing the river, and also the Cookham Reach Sailing Club, built in 1954.

The first homes in Berries Road were Victorian, followed by substantial Edwardian properties, some built on three floors and intricately detailed. Since then, development has occurred steadily in each decade up to and including the 1990s. At present, the unadopted road mostly comprises large, detached family properties, set back about 20 metres from the road, secluded by trees and hedges. The housing is widely spaced, with most of the properties also having large rear gardens. The older houses frequently have rendered upper storeys or gables, together with attic second floors in the roof slopes. In recent years it is the large Edwardian houses with substantial gardens whose redevelopment has been most frequent, such as Glenore, on the west side of the road, where a former nursing home was replaced with an apartment building that successfully replicates the Edwardian styling of its neighbours.

The houses on the west side of the road have a total rear boundary of more than 230 metres to Marsh Meadow, which is greatly used both by local people and visitors (see also Box 4, page 11). The view towards the characterful, mostly Edwardian, rear elevations of Berries Road properties is therefore well within the public domain. Moreover, these houses are clearly visible in the views which Stanley Spencer painted from the higher ground to the west (see also Section 14 and Annex B).

Accordingly, any further redevelopments that may occur in Berries Road need to be sensitive to factors which include spacing, seclusion, sympathetic design, landscaping and views from the west. Depending on styles present in the immediate vicinity, designers should consider the use of



multiple roof slopes and the possible inclusion of verandas, together with attractively featured windows and balconies.

The Crown public house, on the edge of the Moor beside the entrance to Berries Road, was built in the 1930s, replacing earlier versions of the building, which burnt down. With gabled roofs, mock Tudor timbering and white infills, it is an attractive building. The site of the former Fire Station building, adjacent to The Crown, now has planning permission for a large family home.

Vicarage Close is a small residential cul-de-sac developed in the 1970s and running east off Berries Road. Properties are characterised by red brick walls at ground floor level with hung tiles above. Leaded windows add character to the properties and modest front gardens help maintain a rural feel.



Substantial Edwardian homes in Berries Road, showing architectural detailing characteristic of the period together with maturity of trees and seclusion of front gardens and their parking areas.

7 Cookham village continued

Mill Lane and east to the Thames, with Woodmoor End and Sutton Close

Box 17

Mill Lane runs east off Sutton Road towards the River Thames. It is a quiet, tree-lined rural lane and, as part of the Thames Path, a picturesque and important route for walkers. It is significant as the location of Mill House, one of Cookham's former watermills, and also for the historic collection of buildings, Formosa Court, Formosa Place and the renovated Formosa Barns. The nearby Formosa Meadow is a well known Scouting location in Cookham.

The character of Mill Lane benefits greatly from the influence of agricultural land and the close proximity of the Odney Estate, both of which provide high quality landscape views. Buildings are intermittent and all are residential.

At the western end of the road are sizeable 1970s properties built in reclaimed brick, complementing the rural and historic character of the road. Mill House and Mill House West, both adjacent to the mill stream, date to the seventeenth century and display Georgian features. There are several twentieth century properties adjacent to and opposite the Mill buildings, some of which echo the nearby historic building features. Close to Mill House, Mill Lane becomes a private road to be used for access only. At the eastern end of the private road element of Mill Lane is its picturesque crossing of Lulle Brook, on the approach to the Formosa cluster of buildings.

Meanwhile, opposite Mill House, the Thames Path exits from the lane and heads eastwards. Where it arrives at the edge of the river, the view of the Thames and the richly varied treescape of the Cliveden escarpment is spectacular.

There is a small cul-de-sac called Woodmoor End on the south side of Mill Lane with two rows of terraced houses facing each other across a leafy central area. These houses form a striking 1960s scheme combining red brick with dark window frames and a white horizontal linearity - all well within Cookham's built colour palette.

Sutton Close is a 1950s cul-de-sac of substantial detached houses running parallel to Mill Lane. The houses are of



A newly built lodge house alongside the mill stream.



The old Mill, dating to circa the seventeenth century.



The sympathetically converted Formosa Barns

varying size, but share a prominent design theme encompassing features such as mock-Tudor timbered front elevations and leaded windows, all giving a highly individual character to the Close, which should be carefully protected.

South of The Pound and the south along the Maidenhead Road

Box 18

The large houses on the south side of The Pound form the northern end of an area of low density development which extends some 400 metres southwards along Maidenhead Road. The area includes Danes Gardens and Cedar Drive, and is characterised by detached houses standing in large plots, sometimes in groups, which are accessed by private roads and driveways and punctuated by mature and specimen trees. It is important to ensure that this area does not become degraded by over-development in the future.

Further to the south, areas of housing, though outside of Cookham village, are included here for the sake of descriptive convenience. Lightlands Lane and Strande Lane contain intermittent housing, mostly using Cookham's traditional forms and materials (see Sections 6.4 - 6.6), with a very rural aspect as these lanes overlook open farmland. Accessed from Lightlands Lane, Gainsborough is a small higher intensity development of modest homes, built in a pinkish-beige brick, slightly unusually for Cookham. Barnfield Close, of a similar era, is a small, well-spaced estate of largish homes, which has been designed with clear attention to Cookham's traditional building styles and materials. Bass Mead is a small neo-Georgian development of terraced and semi-detached homes, deploying red brick and white infills. All three developments have open plan front



Gabled homes in Barnfield Close, with varying designs in red and yellow brick plus decorative flint.

gardens. At the southern end of Lightlands Lane, Strande Park provides affordable housing in the form of pitched-roof 'park homes' on a well-presented site.

Further south again, on the western side of the Maidenhead Road is Southwood Gardens, a triangular and broadly uniform grouping of red brick homes, mostly semi-detached.

7 Cookham village continued

7.3 Cookham's large developed sites

Cookham village includes two large sites in single ownership, the Odney Club and Moor Hall. Each site possesses a mix of historic and contemporary buildings. The Odney Club is a holiday, training and conference centre for John Lewis Partnership staff. Moor Hall is owned by the Chartered Institute of Marketing and is used as a training and conference centre.

The Odney Club

Box 19

The Odney Club lies between the eastern end of the High Street and the Thames on a site which includes not only the listed Lullebrook Manor, but also the majority of the properties along Odney Lane, together with some properties on the east side of Sutton Road. The size of the site has enabled new development to be accommodated without affecting the historic street frontage or the setting of the Thames.

The newest building on the site, the Sir Bernard Miller Centre, illustrates various positive ways of integrating contemporary with traditional architecture. The building has been joined to existing stables both externally and internally by the retention of tall, wide and visually striking historic doorways. Its front elevation features horizontal lines in a muted grey, combined with glass and red brick. Externally, any 'stark modernity' of the façade is now being softened by greenery.

Capped with a grass roof for insulation, the Sir Bernard Miller Centre collects and re-cycles rainwater and possesses many other energy saving features.



Above: The muted façade of the Sir Bernard Miller Centre at the Odney Club is now being further softened by climbing plants and other greenery.

Right: A contemporary design hidden from public view at Moor Hall. All of the new buildings are individually designed to form part of a unified whole whose overall size is not evident from the Moor or the village.

Moor Hall

Box 20

Moor Hall is situated on the south side of Cookham Moor and is approached from School Lane, close to the War Memorial. It was purchased by The Institute of Marketing (now Chartered) in 1971 and later developed with a series of extensions and new buildings: Cookham Court and Thames House in the 1980s, and the Edinburgh Suite Restaurant, Marlow Court, Cookham Centre, Berkshire Suite and Redgrave Centre at points in the 1990s.

As planning applications came forward, there were certain objections from Cookham residents. However, CIM was recognised as a major Cookham employer and one whose 300 delegates per day contributed significantly to the local economy. Moreover, the proposed new buildings replaced redundant large wooden dormitory billets, were sympathetic to existing buildings, largely hidden from public view and a model for eco-friendliness. The various additions to Moor Hall have in fact proved to possess some exemplary characteristics, fulfilling the opportunity presented to combine traditional with new without compromising external views across the Moor to the CIM site.

- Because modest scale is so important in Cookham, it would have been inappropriate to extend Moor Hall by means of large blocks of new buildings. The array of smaller buildings has allowed individuality, together with some creativity in the design of each addition.
- All of the newer buildings echo the distinctive clay-tiled roof and decorative ridge of the original Moor Hall, most of these matching both its unusual depth and its angle. This prominent harmonizing feature gives a unity to the entire site, which is further enhanced by covered walkways and landscaping.
- Identifying with the significance of the river and lesser waterways in Cookham, the linked ponds, streams and bubbling water of the Moor Hall's landscaping plan help ensure a peaceful and calming environment.
- A further aspect of the Moor Hall complex becomes apparent at dusk. Lighting is present for security reasons, but is subtle and adds to the welcome on approaching the village from the Moor.



The original deep-roofed Moor Hall to the centre and left. The extension to the right fronts Cookham Moor. It is wholly within Cookham's built-colour palette (Section 6.8) and its roof echoes the depth and decorative ridge of the original.

7 Cookham village continued

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Cookham village

R6.1 It is recommended that opportunities should be taken, as and when possible, to bring replacement signage for retail outlets, businesses and other purposes, into closer harmony with Cookham's built colour palette (Sections 6.8 and 6.18). This applies especially to signage within Cookham High Street.

R6.2 It is recommended that, as and when opportunities present, those few buildings in Cookham High Street that sit uneasily in relation to the general character of the area should be further integrated by modest alteration.

R6.3 It is recommended that the High Street, Church Gate and Sutton Road should be treated as 'floral areas' of Cookham village. Residents or business owners would continue to contribute as far as they deem appropriate to the floral decoration of their own street frontage, whilst those who had not previously provided floral decorations to their frontage might also choose to engage with this initiative.

R6.4 It is recommended that owners should give consideration to the provisions of the VDS when making changes to properties that may have visual impact but do not necessarily require planning permission.

GUIDANCE:

Cookham village

G7.1 Any proposals for development in Cookham village should:

- Have regard to the General Guidance of Section 6 and all other relevant Guidance Points in the VDS.
- Have regard to the impact of the proposal on the specific locality with reference to any description of that particular locality in the VDS, including any special constraints noted.

G7.2 The use of cutting edge architecture may be suited to larger self contained sites, provided that the General Guidance of Section 6 is followed and that:

- The proposed architecture will complement the street scene or public realm if visible from these locations.
- The proposed architecture is not of a scale or massing which would increase the impact of the property as a whole upon its surroundings.
- Related development such as car parking, delivery bays and exterior lighting is designed to ensure that it has little or no visual impact beyond site boundaries.



Varying styles and building lines in Cookham High Street.

An understanding of Cookham's unifying built colour palette of weathered red, beige, white, grey, brown and black (Section 6.8) can aid decisions regarding external décor colours.

8 Cookham Rise and the Station Hill area



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8.1 The growth of the settlement

In the mid 1870s, twenty years after the opening of the Maidenhead to High Wycombe railway line, much of the area surrounding Cookham station remained tranquil and undeveloped. From the east, the station was approached by a walk through green fields, whilst to the west, thin threads of houses ran along High Road and Lower Road, with open countryside spreading away towards the Dean.

Following the major improvement in infrastructure that the railway represented, there was, however, bound to be an escalation of development and a transformation of local life. The pace of development increased in the vicinity of the station in the late 1800s, especially along Lower Road and High Road, with Station Road appearing soon after and development also extending to land south of High Road. Roman Lea was built in the early twentieth century and piecemeal development occurred along Whyteladies Lane. There were dramatic changes in the 1950s and 1960s when Burnt Oak, Coxborrow Close, and Westwood Green, amongst other residential developments, appeared. The development of Station Parade in the 1960s confirmed Station Hill as the commercial centre of Cookham.

A hundred and fifty years after the coming of the railway, Cookham Rise and the Station Hill area have become a thriving community in their own right, with housing patterns that form an indelible historical record of the impact of a railway from Victorian times to the present.

Even today, prospective developers seek suitable new housing locations directly in terms of distance from Cookham railway station.

"A developer seeking possible housing sites in Cookham is very likely to take the railway station as a start point and, on a map, draw concentric circles around it at successively greater distances. Proximity to a railway station is a particularly important factor for the sale of houses."

**Extract from Individual Consultations
Mr Duncan Gibson, Head of Divisional Planning,
Shanly Homes**

8.2 Nature and pattern of development

Cookham Rise and the Station Hill area have many rural qualities but, because of their particular history, also show a degree of urbanisation. Whilst Victorian terraces once occupied by Cookham's artisans are prevalent and ensure a great deal of charm, there is an eclectic mix of housing overall, with more compact housing patterns than typify the rest of Cookham.

The character of the settlement is also formed by its unusual layout. With its residential roads for the most part sandwiched between the 5 hectare (14 acre) square expanse of the Alfred Major Recreation Ground and the open countryside, 'greenness' forms either an outward and inward view from most vantage points. The large open space of Westwood Green further contributes to the 'countrified' aspect of this slightly urban environment.

8 Cookham Rise and the Station Hill area continued

Station Hill - the commercial centre

Box 21

The commercial centre of Cookham is located in the Station Hill area to the east of the railway line. At the highest point in this area, the station building, with its brick and flint elevations, is a landmark made even more prominent by its two-storey northern element.



From a closer vantage point than is shown in the photograph (right), however, the area is visually dominated by Station Parade and its car park on the one side of the road, and by the 'colourful' elevation of the Countrystore on the other side.

Approaching from the mini-roundabout on the Maidenhead Road, the first building to the right is the nursery school. Ahead of its time in 1949, its layout was experimental in terms of the 'educational architecture' then prevailing. It attracted visitors from all over the Commonwealth and has been deemed, for VDS purposes, a building of 'Special Local Significance' (Annex C). Opposite the Nursery School is Elizabeth House, a red brick Victorian structure converted to a day-care centre for the elderly from its previous role as Cookham Police Station. In the late 1980s, ten single storey sheltered housing units were built behind it, these being in harmony with the style and materials of Elizabeth House.

Buildings of varying heights between the Nursery School and the railway line, on the northern side of Station Hill, include an unusual single storey office building with decorative roof verge, several detached Victorian properties, mostly gabled, with a more modern gabled property sympathetically interposed between them, and finally the Countrystore and Cookham Social Club. On the opposite side, there are trees around the Station Parade forecourt, though these only partially reduce the impact of the Station Parade frontage. Overall, building styles are very varied in this area, but the building form, materials and built colour palette of Cookham prevail, with significant exceptions in Station Parade and the Countrystore.

Station Parade, when seen from the front, is two storeys tall, though the building has lower levels to the rear. The front is remarkable for its stark block form, barely relieved by its stepped elevations. The canopies, shop fascias, first floor windows and roof line all display uncompromising horizontal linearity. Almost everything about the buildings, including the brick colour, is non-vernacular to Cookham, and the buildings are not generally regarded by residents as attractive (see Section 18.2), even though they are greatly valued in amenity terms. The overall appearance of the site has, however, recently been significantly improved by the resurfacing of the car park and improvement of the flower beds.

Various levels of further action could be considered, in discussion with the owners, in relation to Station Parade. As a first step, urgent work is needed in respect of exterior décor, which is showing dilapidation. It is possible that redecoration could be combined with a change in appearance to bring the buildings, at least superficially, more into line with Cookham's traditional character. A small step in décor terms might be to match the colour of the horizontal panels below the upper windows to the colour of the brickwork. Self-colouring these panels should slightly reduce the appearance of stark horizontal linearity. A rather more radical step would be to leave these panels white, whilst also white-washing all brickwork and painting certain framing elements black. Such a scheme (which would need to be first tested with visual mock-



Deceptively rural view west towards Cookham's busy commercial hub and the railway station building.



Station Parade - of a 1960s design which appears incongruous in relation to the character of Cookham.



The Countrystore, opposite Station Parade, emblazoned with food posters.



Victorian houses, now a dental surgery and a cafe.



Elizabeth House, previously Cookham Police Station.

ups) would be sympathetic to the frequency of black timbering and white infills within Cookham's street scene. If at the same time steps were taken to rationalise signage, whether on the canopy fascias, or beneath these, a significant transition in smartness and 'fit with Cookham' could result.

At a second level of transformation, Reference 2.4 contains an excellent illustrated discussion concerning a more extensive refurbishment throughout Station Parade.

At a third level of action, the possibility of a complete redevelopment of the site, is foreseen during the lifetime of this VDS (see Section 6.18). Currently, however, it seems unlikely that there will be major redevelopment unless or until the whole of Station Parade is in single ownership.

Meanwhile, community financial support to help achieve some of the more immediate positive outcomes is advocated in this VDS in recognition of the existing commercial pressures on the stores concerned (see Recommendation 8.1, page 50).

8 Cookham Rise and the Station Hill area continued

Station Road and Roman Lea

Box 22

Station Road and Roman Lea are two small, unadopted streets containing buildings which exhibit many of the inherent components of Cookham's historical development, both in terms of design and scale. Both are considered worthy of designation as an Areas of Special Local Interest (Annex C). New development in either street should, therefore particularly carefully reflect, and harmonise with, existing characteristics and patterns.

Station Road still contains several fine examples of the Victorian homes which were erected in the late 1800s, varying in scale but predominantly artisans' cottages. Although the street doors and windows of the latter have been replaced in many cases, their brick front elevations and slated roofs are largely untouched. In particular, most of them have shallow arches over their windows with two courses of tiles above to create relief. Elsewhere, some have shallow, splayed bay windows with slated roofs, while decorative brickwork adds interest in some instances. Newer homes have been designed to be sympathetic to the character of the street, especially towards its northern end.

Most of the houses in Station Road are set back behind narrow front gardens. Certain house names refer to views that may well have been adversely affected by later building. Photographs of Station Road are to be found in Annex C.

By way of contrast, Roman Lea is a single-sided street, lined with early twentieth century homes built to house the aspiring middle classes, and only two minutes' walk from the station. Most of the Roman Lea houses are semi-detached and of a similar external appearance to each other. They are of fairly complex form, with stepped frontages and gables to front and side. The houses display attractive harmonies of brick elevations to the ground floors, rendering above, and tiled roofs.



Detail from Roman Lea homes, showing front and side gables, together with square pillared porches.

The 'status' of homes in Roman Lea was enhanced by the builders in several ways that add to their present charm. Substantial front bay windows were incorporated, often to both floors. The gables above the bays are supported by unusual brackets and their roofs are capped with pierced ridge tiles. Distinctive, pillared square porches, of which many remain, were added in corner locations. As in Station Road, narrow front gardens separate the Roman Lea houses from the street. The houses further along Roman Lea enjoy an unobstructed view over Poundfield. The inverse of this is that, as seen from Poundfield Lane, and especially when entering Cookham from the roundabout on the Maidenhead Road, the whole of Roman Lea provides a largely uninterrupted view of a striking and serene row of houses, reflecting a very specific element of Cookham's historical growth.

North of Lower Road

Box 23

Grange Road heads northwards from Lower Road rising towards Winter Hill. It meets with Terry's Lane, crosses it, and continues as Grange Lane, off which is the club house of the Winter Hill Golf Club (Box 7, page 13). The first property in Grange Road was probably Grange Farm.

A number of houses were built on the western side of the road in the 1920s to 1930s, whilst the eastern side of the road includes 1950s architecture and Sleekstone Cottages, a striking row of semi-detached houses with a central (shared) gable and half-hipped roofs. These were built in the 1930s and depicted by Stanley Spencer in his painting 'Cookham Rise 1938'.

There follows a stretch of road bounded by farmland, before the next houses at the northern end of the road, also built in the 1950s but larger in scale. There are some further individually-styled properties in Grange Lane.

Roadways off the lower end of Grange Road form a squarish area, containing newer developments. All of these are quiet, leafy cul de sacs with a suburban feel. Burnt Oak, built in the 1950s contains substantial semi-detached houses, well-



Clockwise from top: A typical home in Wakelins End. Sheltered housing on Pearce Drive. Semi-detached houses on Grange Road.

spaced, with modest front gardens. These houses have an interesting lower lean-to roof feature that extends across bays and also forms porches. Wakelins End, built in the 1970s, has a more modern appearance, with white horizontal boarding beneath a wide gable and above red brick lower walls. Pearce Drive supplements Cookham's supply of sheltered housing with red brick, single storey homes that are nevertheless well provided with green boundaries and wide pavement areas.

Despite the great variety of housing styles in this area there is a predominance of characteristic red brick and white or cream render, providing a considerable degree of unification



Looking south in Burnt Oak.

8 Cookham Rise and the Station Hill area continued

Lower Road

Box 24

The main thoroughfare in Cookham Rise descends from the station before curving along a valley floor to the west. It presents all the elements that give Cookham Rise its diverse range of styles and idioms. Architecturally, the road contains several key features: traditional cottage terraces, typical inter-war housing, shops converted from housing and a range of community buildings. The Methodist Church (photograph, Annex C, page 78) with its squat louvred tower, sprocketed tiled cap and adjacent Wesley Hall is the most prominent building and an important landmark.

On the north side of Lower Road, a terrace of four shops close to the Pinder Hall is designated in this VDS as being of Special Local Significance. With its large first floor bays surmounted with rendered gables, each with an identifying letter and patterned bargeboards, this terrace presents a most unusual and striking frontage (photographs, Annex C, page 77).

Lower Road contains several examples of post-railway artisans' cottage rows. A typical dwelling was single-fronted to the street with front door and single window on the ground floor and a window above. Walls were in local, yellow stock bricks, with decorative red brick banding. Roofs were of grey slate. 'Modernisation' has inevitably taken its toll on the traditional appearance of these cottage rows. Some cottages have had their brickwork painted and certain of the plain doorways now possess canopies. Most prominent has been the replacement of 'front room' windows with cantilevered bow windows. Despite these changes, the terraces still retain their charm (see photograph, page 50) and have also been designated in the VDS as being of Special Local Significance (Annex C). Moreover, it is clear that they continue to provide a very important smaller housing resource for Cookham.

Both visually and environmentally, Lower Road is made more notable by the fine, mature lime trees which line much of its northern side - and those planted more recently on the opposite side. More particularly, it is the relationship of the buildings on the northern side of the street to the land behind which is important. This can best be seen from the rising ground to the south, especially from the streets leading from High Road down towards Lower Road. The views at these points are crucial to reinforcing the impression of this part of Cookham as a village within a countryside setting.



Important views from rising ground to the south, northwards across Lower Road to the hillside meadows beyond, emphasising Lower Road's rural setting. Above, the view from New Road, and below from Halldore Hill.



When the Hatch Garden development, on the northern side of Lower Road, was originally proposed it caused a lot of controversy and it is instructive to review it, now that it is completed and occupied, with its planting growing well. The photographs below, with their captions, provide some interesting pointers.



Traditional terrace cottages on the south side of Lower Road. The Hatch Garden homes were custom-designed to be in sympathy with these.



This view outwards from Hatch Gardens reveals successful harmonies between the new-build and the historic terrace on the southern side of Lower Road.



The rose-coloured building is part of Hatch Gardens. This muted view from Lower Road indicates a good level of harmony between new and older properties.



But from the angle shown above the impression of height and density is conveyed. Space-saving design has created an urban look, augmented by unforgiving roof lines, narrow verges, modern pavements and wide hard-standings in place of garaging.



Garden spaces used for the development of Hatch Gardens. VDS guidance in relation to so-called 'garden grabbing' is provided in Section 6.9.

8 Cookham Rise and the Station Hill area continued

Between Lower Road and High Road

Box 25

A key attribute of the land between Lower Road and High Road is the gradient, descending from south to north, providing important northward hillside views beyond Lower Road as mentioned in Box 24. Whilst certain small groups of houses in this area are Victorian (for example, some of those in New Road), most of the development took place in the second half of the twentieth century when both individual new houses and small estates appeared. Coxborrow Close, a small T-shaped development, was built off Lower Road in the 1950s with houses that were at first known popularly as 'Meccano Houses' because of their steel-frame construction. Rosebank Close was built in the 1970s and Lautree Gardens is a more recent development. Both Rosebank Close and Lautree Gardens possess features that were explicitly designed as sympathetic to the traditional styles of Cookham.

In Rosebank Close, reclaimed bricks and raked (or inset) mortar joints, combined with stepped roofing patterns and scalloped door hoods, give an attractive, weathered appearance. Garaging is tucked away discreetly. In Lautree Gardens the brickwork echoes yellow Victorian stock, muted with grey, with red brick decorative elements, whilst the roadway curves gently around not-ungenerous front garden plots. Doors have an attractive Victorian look with stained glass panels. Within an overall harmonious appearance, there is variation in the sizes and orientations of individual homes. Parking is in single-vehicle inset garages, and to some extent on driveways, but parked vehicles do not dominate the character of the location.



Top and centre:
Lautree Gardens.
Left: Rosebank Close.
Both have garaging
and both were
designed to blend with
the traditional styles
of Cookham.

High Road

Box 26

High Road, the old route to the top of Cookham Dean, still retains much of the character of a narrow country lane, especially in its middle section to the west of Cookham Rise Primary School. Today, it is a mainly residential road, also providing access to other streets. On its southern side, Peace Lane and Shergold Way about the Alfred Major Recreation Ground and provide small single storey red brick homes. Further east, off High Road and on its southern side, several small and charming unadopted roads contain Victorian housing mingled with more recent additions.

At the lower end of the road is one of the first properties to be built in Cookham Rise - the former Railway Tavern. The adjacent archway suggests the commercial uses that would have gravitated to a location close to the station. The Riley Cottages and two of the Elizabeth Cottages in the row nearby were completed only two years after the railway was opened.



Riley Cottages



Nightingale Place

Around the corner, Nightingale Place and the adjacent Elizabeth Cottages are unlike any of the other terraces in the village. Set very well back from the street behind a now communal lawn, they comprise two co-joined rows of small dwellings with rendered front elevations divided into a rectangular pattern by timbering. Their roofs are slated, with those at the northern end being built to a lower pitch than their southern neighbours. Most of the cottages have had front porches added, either in the form of lean-tos with doors in the sides, or with simple double-pitched slate roofs.



To the west of the school, on the north side of High Road, are two further cottage groups, Fairview and Southview Cottages.

The Fairview Cottages exhibit most of the characteristics of their

siblings in Lower Road with stock brick elevations and slated roofs. Contrasting red brickwork is used in the ground floor arches over the windows and doors and the reveals to first floor windows. Once again, a degree of 'modernisation' has altered their appearance, but they retain their charm and help provide the character of this still essentially rural road.

The Southview Cottages form a complete contrast and are the only example of their type in the village. Whereas the other terraces are built under a single, continuous roof, these cottages have roof pitches at right angles to the street and also have patterned bargeboards. Their front elevations are rendered in timber-edged panels but, interestingly, their ground floors are set forward beneath small, continuous lean-to slate roofs, which cover their segmental bay windows and also provide front door canopies.



Fairview Cottages



Southview Cottages

8 Cookham Rise and the Station Hill area continued

Whyteladies Lane (southern end) and connecting roads

Box 27

Whyteladies Lane provides a link between Cannondown Road and Dean Lane, enabling through traffic to avoid Cookham's commercial centre. Despite its rural setting the road is exceptionally wide, in places exceeding fourteen metres.

From Cannondown Road to the site of the former gas holder, Whyteladies Lane is completely residential with many areas of green and notable rural views at almost every point. The view westwards is to green spaces at the top of Cookham Dean. In the opposite direction, the top of Cliveden can be seen. Houses in the estate roads to the south of Whyteladies Lane back onto open farmland and many homes located on connecting roads to the north overlook the green expanse of the Alfred Major Recreation Ground.

There is a fairly uniform style of architecture across this whole area, mostly dating to the 1950s. Many homes were originally built for Local Authority purposes, though a proportion of these are now in private ownership. Dark red brick and clay roof tiles predominate, with a versatile mix of housing types including semi-detached houses, flats and single storey terraces. Despite the compactness of individual homes, overall layouts appear to have been particularly thoughtful. This is a result of the standards applicable at the time, which today we would consider to be surprisingly generous with space. There are wide grass verges, front gardens, rear gardens, garaging (usually separate) and additional car parking areas.



Lesters Road are not dissimilar, though more recently built, with white timber cladding and render. These two roads include some three-storey blocks of flats, which are most unusual for Cookham.

Arthur Close, off Whyteladies Lane to the south, provides affordable homes as a Rural Exception Site' (see Section 6.15), occupying Green Belt space at the edge of the settlement boundary. With red brick, gables and lower projecting roofs to provide shelter and porch space, Arthur Close is designed to tone with the character of the area. However, as a rather intense small development, its hard-standings for car parking tend to dominate, with green space noticeably lacking to the front and between properties.

The site of the former gas holder is about half way down Whyteladies Lane. The northern part of the site is now derelict, but operational plant remains in its southern corner. In 2003, the Borough Council published a Development Brief (Reference 11) for the available part of the site, which may require de-contamination. The document is no longer wholly current, but the undeveloped part of the site continues to have residential potential, as the document indicated.

It was clear from the early VDS consultations that residents believe the gas holder site should be developed. Advisory Note A8.1 explains that this is one of number of sites being considered for allocation through the Royal Borough's Local Plan.



View showing the green and houses beyond, at Penling Close.



Whyteladies Lane with far view to Cookham Dean.

Homes in Southwood Road, Bridge Avenue and Penling Close follow the same broad pattern as indicated above, although Bridge Avenue does contain two-storey apartment buildings on a modest scale (see also Section 6.10). The Shaw and

Whyteladies Lane (western end) and connecting roads

Box 28



As Whyteladies Road curves to follow a northerly direction towards Dean Lane, its character on its western side remains similar to that described above. After Lesters Road, however, two long red brick terraces are to be found, possessing considerable architectural interest. These terraces include multiple window arrays, deep roofs and major stylistic transitions between successive elements. They are noted in Annex C, page 77 as being of Special Local Interest. There is a need to preserve their integrity - and so that the length of them and

the encompassed stylistic shifts can be taken into view and appreciated, the visibility of individual sections should not be allowed to become occluded by tall walls or fences.

To the east of Whyteladies Lane, at this point, is the spacious road junction to Broom Hill and Gorse Road, where housing was developed in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Here, there is a similar mix of accommodation to that described in Box 27 above, but all is constructed in beige brick. Front facades are characterised by large windows and a combination of brick panels with rendering and tiled areas. The development is

spacious by today's standards, with generous front areas of green, as well as rear gardens, garaging and additional open parking areas. An important feature of Gorse Road is Payton House, which became outdated as sheltered accommodation for the elderly. The future of Payton House is uncertain. Whilst it is not within the remit of the VDS to assess the need for sheltered housing, this matter should be addressed within the future Neighbourhood Plan.

A short distance after the entrance to Gorse Road, the houses along Whyteladies Lane become larger and more varied. The northern end of the road displays architectural styles of the early and later twentieth century.

On the west side of the road lie the pitch, practice areas and club house of the Cookham Dean Cricket Club. From here, Kennel Lane, a very old roadway, leads upwards to Cookham Dean.



Housing at Broom Hill, showing generous open and green spaces.

8 Cookham Rise and the Station Hill area *continued*



Alfred Major Recreation Ground **Box 29**

In 1947, fourteen acres of land were given to the village in memory of Sir Alfred Major, subject to the condition that the land be left open and undeveloped. Now known as the Alfred Major Recreation Ground, the land is owned by the Parish Council and is an astonishing asset at the heart of Cookham Rise. Much thought has already gone into the use of this asset and wide-ranging recreational facilities have been provided. An all-weather cricket pitch has recently been inaugurated and a skate ramp has also been added. How the potential benefits of the recreation ground can be fully realised is a subject more for the future Neighbourhood Plan than for the VDS. However, it was suggested in the earlier Cookham Plan (Reference 2.8) that present facilities might be extended to include bowls, tennis and athletics - with a sports centre and parking facilities also being mooted. During the early VDS consultations, one of the Cookham's sports leaders confirmed his view that four tennis courts and one netball court remained essential additions.

From the VDS point of view, it is the visual appearance of the Alfred Major Recreation Ground that matters, together with the ecological opportunities that may be available. At present, there is little in the way of visual focus, most of the land being grassed, with little natural planting and few relieving features. Surprisingly, there are no surfaced footpaths across or around the grassed area, despite essential pedestrian journeys through it, especially to the railway station and the Station Hill shops.

There is unique opportunity here for a 'composite design' that would allow this resource to meet its full potential. With a well-researched 'community vision', skilfully presented, some of the many possibilities for funding might become attainable. Accordingly, the Alfred Major Recreation Ground might be experienced both visually, functionally and ecologically as a true 'jewel in the crown' for Cookham (see also Section 18.3).



A view across the Alfred Major Recreation Ground

Westwood Green **Box 30**

Westwood Green occupies a tapering piece of land between the western side of the Maidenhead Road and the railway. It is a development of ninety-five 1950s semi-detached houses facing inwards around a large green. The houses were originally of a fairly uniform appearance, being built in one of eight design variants depending on garaging arrangements and other factors, but they have gained individuality over the years as refurbishment and extension has occurred. It is important that future changes remain modest.

The communal green has proved to be of great significance in nurturing the 'community within a community' that is Westwood Green. Except for a small utility area, this five acre community space is privately owned by a management company belonging to residents, who organise green maintenance, maintain an arboreal plan, create social events on the green and provide a regular and lively newsletter. Hence, Westwood Green can be added to the examples of Section 4.12 showing how green spaces and 'sense of community' are inextricably mixed.



Left and below: Homes in Westwood Green (in background) are made exceptional by the way in which the green nurtures year round community spirit.



8 Cookham Rise and the Station Hill area continued

ADVISORY NOTE:

Cookham Rise
and the Station Hill area

A8.1 The former gas holder site in Whyteladies Lane is already promoted for development by the Borough Council through an existing development brief and is one of a number of sites being considered for allocation through the Borough Local Plan (Box 27, page 48 and Reference 11).

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Cookham Rise
and the Station Hill area

R8.1 Though the car park surfacing in Station Parade has now been greatly improved, and work has also been undertaken in relation to the beds and plantings, building redecoration remains urgently needed. It is possible, further, that redecoration could become a way of changing the appearance of the buildings to bring them, at least superficially, more into line with Cookham's traditional appearances (see Box 21, page 44). There is also scope for unification of signage within a harmonious overall design.

Whilst it is recognised that Station Parade is a commercial venture in private ownership, it is also believed that current financial pressures on these stores will be considerable. Because of the value placed by Cookham residents on the Station Parade amenity, whilst in general expressing a dislike for its present appearance, it is suggested that there should be due consideration of a possible public/private collaborative project having the goal of upgrading the appearance of this important centre. The VDS recommends that discussions be put in place with a view to exploring whether such a goal can be met.

R8.2 It is recommended that a project be instituted to ensure that the Alfred Major Recreation Ground fulfils its true potential as a 'jewel in the crown' for Cookham. In VDS terms the focus is on visual appearance and ecological opportunity. Such a project, however, would equally embrace the optimisation of community functionality (see also Box 29, page 49). The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 (Reference 12) creates specific public duties in relation to the ecology of parks and open spaces. Case-study projects are available in this connection (Reference 13).

R8.3 It is recommended that owners should give consideration to the provisions of the VDS when making changes to properties that may have visual impact but do not necessarily require planning permission.

GUIDANCE :

Cookham Rise
and the Station Hill area

All new development should take account of the distinctive character of Cookham Rise and the Station Hill area of Cookham as an original Victorian settlement, built in response to the advent of the railway, with subsequent major spurts of development. The existing settlement pattern is more intensive than those of Cookham village and Cookham Dean, but the dates of major development have, in general, ensured generous spaces around individual properties in relation to type. There are very significant protected areas of open space, but long rear gardens and other elements of remaining green space within the settlement boundary will attract the interest of prospective developers. Guidance Points on this page are set within this context.

G8.1 Any proposals for development in Cookham Rise should:

- Have regard to the General Guidance of Section 6 and all other relevant Guidance Points in the VDS.
- Have regard to the impact of the proposal on the specific locality with reference to any description of that particular locality in the VDS, including any special constraints noted.

G8.2 No development should take place that obscures the following important views:

- Existing views from the rising land to the south of Lower Road towards open countryside to the north of Lower Road.
- The view from the Cookham Road roundabout towards Roman Lea.

G8.3 No works should be permitted which might affect the health or survival of the trees in Lower Road.

G8.4 Any new development or extension in the vicinity of Lower Road should take proper account of any particular risk of flash floods in that area.

G8.5 The existing design of Station Parade is out of keeping with Cookham's character and cannot usefully be referenced in support of any proposed development.



Lower Road, the major traffic artery through Cookham Rise, with its mature lime trees and charming traditional cottage terraces.

9 Cookham Dean

This section should be read in conjunction with the Cookham Dean Conservation Area Statement (Reference 6.2).

9.1 Village characteristics

The settlement in Cookham Dean is shaped by the contours of the land within which it is situated. The combination of hill, valley and ridge have created a village full of surprises, with a complex series of constantly changing views, both long-range and intimate, which are enhanced by small pockets of woodland and scrub that create points of anticipation at every corner.

The traditional pattern of small-scale farming which characterised the Dean in the early twentieth century has long since disappeared, but visible outlines of many of the original small fields remain. There are still survivors of the orchards which once made the area famous and Cookham Dean continues to be a place of small lanes with high banks and wide verges, even though most of its original roadside ponds have disappeared.

Apart from the small ancient farmsteads dotted about the village, the historic development of the Dean took place in two principal areas: on the hill around the church of St John the Baptist and in the valley around Cookham Dean Bottom. In each location there still remain the small terraces of cottages originally built for local farm workers, which date from the nineteenth century. These cottages are important, but no longer wholly representative of the village as a whole, which is now mainly characterised by detached houses standing in their own grounds. Many of these homes are considerably larger than those that typify Cookham as a whole, but most remain relatively modest in relation to their characteristically expansive green settings. There is very little departure from Cookham's 'built colour palette' (see Section 6.8). No clear pattern exists to the settlement in Cookham Dean although most of the homes lie in small groups. An



Cookham Dean - a settlement of surprises, with the arrangement of dwellings largely shaped by the landscape.

overall 'unity in diversity' is characterised by the following, which should be respected in any new development.

- **Individuality of design** With few exceptions other than cottage rows, adjacent properties exhibit differing designs or design themes.
- **Dominance of 'country style'** An overall design ethos of Cookham Dean might be termed 'country style' with numerous variations on the themes of:
 - Red brick and clay tiles (frequently including decorative work to both). Yellow Victorian stock brick also occurs from time to time. Flint is also common.
 - Exposed timber framing.
 - Full or partial render, usually in white, beige or soft grey. Black-stained rustic timber part-cladding is also commonly seen in particular areas within the Dean.
 - Windows subdivided into small or larger panes of glass, either leaded or separated by wooden glazing bars.
 - Pitched, tiled and gabled roofs (often complex and deep, including dormers and other decorative features)
 - Hung tiles (usually decorative and 'period') in interesting arrangements) are seen in particular locations.

Though many of Cookham Dean's buildings are Victorian or Edwardian, many also were built more recently. In most cases, however, designs and materials have been chosen to blend with the vernacular country styling.

- **Discreet, tucked-away appearance** Homes are situated, discreetly, usually well back from the road, sometimes fully visible and elsewhere seen more as 'glimpses' beyond open or non-solid gates. Long private driveways to single homes or small clusters of homes are not uncommon.
- **Intermittency and green surrounds** Nowhere in Cookham Dean is there any intense area of housing development. On nearly all roads and lanes, homes are well-separated or sporadically grouped, punctuated by meadows or woodland. Very frequently where groups of homes are situated, they are on one side of the road or lane only. In respect of individual plots, large gardens prevail, usually including generous front and side areas. On boundaries, hedging and wide green verges or green banks are the norm. There are many trees.

9.2 Green Belt and Conservation Area

The whole of Cookham Dean lies within the Green Belt, a status which in practical terms limits new residential development to house extensions and the suitable replacement of existing dwellings (see Section 4.6).



The Cookham Dean Conservation Area

A large part of the Dean also lies within the Cookham Dean Conservation Area, extending from its north edge on the Thames bank to a southerly point at the junction of Church Road and Spring Lane. The Cookham Dean Conservation Area Statement describes the history and heritage of Cookham Dean's buildings. All development in a Conservation Area is subject to special constraints (Reference 3.2)

The heart of Cookham Dean

Box 31

The centre of the Dean is located almost at the highest part of the village, close to where Church Road meets Bigfrith Lane, School Lane and Kennel Lane, and continues downhill in a north easterly direction to the Village Green. The street pattern here makes a splayed junction, with St. John the Baptist Church on its eastern side. There has been no attempt at creating a unified form or a sense of arrival at this point. Instead, the centre is signified by the converging roads, together with presence of the church and The Jolly Farmer public house. The amount of unbuilt land in the immediate vicinity (adjacent to The Jolly Farmer, in the churchyard and adjoining Kennel Lane), helps engender a sense of peace and informality.

The lack of a 'designed' village centre should not be taken as suggesting a lack of community spirit. The Dean has a thriving primary school, four public houses and two well-used halls which are barely sufficient for its many community groups.

The St John the Baptist Church is attractively built in flint, a material which is also much in evidence in walls and housing in the general vicinity of Kennel Lane. There is also a prominence, within this area, of rustic black-stained boarding, giving a particularly countrified appearance.

West of the village centre, School Lane is narrow, curved and intimate, its houses addressing the street in interesting and varied ways, including certain front elevations directly at the street edge, whilst others are set behind hedges, open lawns, or walls. There are several old walls here and also newer walls with a reclaimed, traditional appearance.

Prominent on Bigfrith Lane is the Cookham Dean Primary School. On the south side of the lane, the old Victorian school-room has been supplemented by a former head teacher's house, together with temporary classrooms. To the north of the lane, a 1970s single storey classroom block with large-paned windows is set adjacent to the school's playing fields.

Further to the west, a striking three-storey building originally housed the village's Post Office Stores, which moved into a new extension some 40 years ago and has now closed. The narrowness of the three-storey elevation of the original building once offset any sense of undue mass but the extension has a rather incongruous and bulky appearance which is only somewhat relieved by curved, bay windows to the front and side. More recently, planning permission was granted for change of use to residential. If significant elevational changes are contemplated in future, any steps that can be taken to bring the whole building into an improved vernacular relationship with its immediate locality should be welcomed (see also Guidance Point G9.3, page 58).

The Village Green (also known as the Old Cricket Common) acts as a secondary focus to the village and is still the principal venue for local open air community events, supported by the presence of the single-storey Village Hall and the Women's Institute Hall on its south-east flank. The open green space of the Village Green, together with its position on the side of a hill with views beyond, its focal point of the War Memorial and its soft fringe of surrounding properties built in Cookham Dean's vernacular styles, forms a classic English village scene.

To the southwest of the Village Green, Hardings Green is roughly rectangular in shape, fronting Church Road, with housing on three sides beyond the swathe of grass. The Uncle Tom's Cabin public house adjoins its northern corner. A concrete-framed hay barn at the southern end is partially screened by a tall hedge, but remains very visible when approaching from the Village Green area and, if the opportunity arises, could be screened further. Dwellings set



Left: A retail outlet of the early twentieth century Arts and Crafts style.

Right: The entrance to Cookham Dean Bottom showing the sense of intrigue that this narrow curving lane conveys.



Left: View east toward the War Memorial and the southern end of the Village Green

back behind the Green include a fully timber-clad home with a decorative front elevation, altogether unusual for Cookham.

From the north end of the Village Green, the ground slopes steeply down to the Cookham Dean Bottom and Kings Lane area, a location with a particularly strong sense of historic rural community and great tranquillity. Many house names, such as "Tithe Barn" and "Brewers Orchard", as well as the business premises at "The Old Stables", reflect historic activity.

Cookham Dean Bottom is a curving, narrow, rural lane with eighteenth and nineteenth century properties on both sides, interspersed by the occasional twentieth century home. A charming cottage-style predominates, with more recent buildings embracing the character of their older neighbours by the inclusion of features such as leaded lights or rustic lych-gates and porches.

At the centre of Cookham Dean Bottom, is the start of Popes Lane, a narrow and steepish vehicular route to the Village Green. The character of Popes Lane at the foot of the hill echoes that of Cookham Dean Bottom. Throughout this inviting area, there is a sense of enclosure, lush greenery and a variation of building styles within a unified whole. A little further to the west within Cookham Dean Bottom, a steep rural path provides pedestrian access to the Village Green.

At its western end, Cookham Dean Bottom meets Kings Lane, where trees form a shady arch between high banks. Adjacent to this junction is the chalk pit owned by the National Trust.

The heart of Cookham Dean, as is described here, is a very peaceful, tranquil and quintessentially English village area with pleasing, traditional building designs of rich individuality. Its special character must be respected in all future development.

Grubwood Lane (eastern side)

Box 32

Grubwood Lane lies west of the heart of Cookham Dean and forms the western boundary of Cookham parish. It extends from the top of the Quarry Woods, where it meets a splayed junction with Quarry Wood Road, Dean Lane and Kings Lane, and heads south to a junction with Hockett Lane. Houses on the western side of the road are in Bisham parish (see also Box 39, page 56.). The lane has a rural feel and is notable for its intermittent glorious views over the farmland valley to the east. These views need to be preserved as far as possible. At the northern end of Grubwood Lane, a newly built property is designed in an attractive country style, but larger relative to its plot than the VDS would recommend for the future. However, this is also true of some adjacent properties, so that the small row of properties at this location does possess some coherence of scale. Generally it is particularly important that properties backing onto this valley should be discreetly sized in relation to their plot boundaries (see also Sections 6.4 and 6.11).



Above right: A newly built property in Grubwood Lane showing modern country styling, including deep roofs, dormers and paned windows.



A glorious view eastwards from Grubwood Lane



The view to the east from the southern end of Grubwood Lane across to Bigfrith Lane. Some of Cookham Dean's old orchards are to be seen, and beyond is Coombe End with its fascinating complex roofs. Cookham's built colour palette is very much in evidence.

Dean Lane, Startins Lane and Jobs Lane

Box 33

The upper section of Dean Lane descends through a valley commencing at the top of the Quarry Woods. The lane passes several junctions, including Winter Hill Road, Jobs Lane and Startins Lane to the north. Between the first two of these lies Tugwood Common (photograph, page 17). Kings Lane and Cookham Dean Bottom form junctions to the south of Dean Lane here. This part of Dean Lane includes Victorian cottages, semi-detached and detached properties, the latter being set in substantial plots. The area is very rural with attractive scenery.

The Herries Preparatory School is a focal point of activity, most noticeable because of related car parking along Dean Lane. Herries was once the family home of Kenneth Grahame, author of the famous children's book, 'Wind in the Willows', in part a result of Grahame's spending his early years amid the nearby woods, fields and the Thames riverside. Herries has been much extended in its more recent role as a preparatory school.



Herries school

Another focal point is the Grade 2 listed Chequers Brasserie, which, with its own parking, has less impact on traffic flow.

To the east of The Chequers on the southern side of Dean Lane are the significant Lea View Cottages (see also Section 9.3), whilst on the other side of the road the eye is caught by a row of more recently built homes, with an attractive design theme of rustic boarding on gabled dormers

Startin's Lane and Jobs Lane are narrow and residential. Both have a very secluded feel, with tall fencing or greenery and many properties largely screened from view.



Above: Victorian cottages on Dean Lane and a large Victorian house.

Left: 'The Chequers'. Right: Attractive re-styled 1920s house on Dean Lane with tall, jettied window in the central gable.



Dean Lane, Warners Hill and Alleyns Lane

Box 34

At the middle section of Dean Lane, Alleyns Lane and Warners Hill converge at a splayed junction and a further small rural track extends northwards to a small number of country homes. Even by Cookham Dean standards this locality is exceptionally pretty and it is particularly important for its character to be preserved. It contains various listed properties, together with a wide variety of building types from differing periods of development. There are also some recently built properties that demonstrate particular success in harmonising with the area's traditional rural village character.

Directly where Dean Lane and Alleyns Lane converge, are some of the oldest cottages in Cookham Dean. Cromwell Cottage, dating to the sixteenth century, is of timber-framed construction with brick infill, its long thatched roof creating a 'picture postcard' effect. Other nearby brick-walled cottages are even earlier in origin and are typified by low roofs and crooked timbers, giving them exceptional character. Three newer homes in this group were completed in 2006. Two of the three homes are semi-detached cottages in reclaimed brick, while the other is of barn style, with a brick lower storey and black timber boarding to the upper storey. These buildings have been designed with particular reference to local heritage factors, especially the Dean Farm barns situated just behind them now sensitively converted into a contemporary home. The newer homes use traditional materials and demonstrate successful integration into a rural village style. They may even escape notice by the casual passer-by as a recent development.

Further up Alleyns Lane, there are some old brick-built cottages similar to those in Dean Lane and a number of twentieth century homes. A private road to the left off Alleyns way leads to ten large, well-spaced and characterful homes, individually designed in traditional vernacular styles.

Warner's Hill is a particular example of Cookham Dean's sunken country lanes in which large, detached houses are



At the foot of Alleyns Lane, clockwise from top. Redaways Cottage, Dean Farmhouse. Cromwell Cottage



Above left: Newer homes in local traditional styles. Right: Thatched home off Alleyns Lane.

widely spaced and situated on one side of the road only, enjoying views across the meadow to the west. Dwellings are country-style, including brick-built Edwardian homes and an attractive timber framed cottage. The green banks of such lanes need to be preserved.

Dean Lane, Bradcutts Lane and Hills Lane

Box 35

Dean Lane progresses towards and alongside Dean Meadow, approaching Cookham Rise. It passes a junction at Hills Lane, a steep and winding road leading up westwards to the heart of Cookham Dean. On the south side of Hills Lane are mainly open fields, whilst on its north side are large detached houses. Further west there is a junction to Bradcutts Lane, a narrow and sunken tree-lined lane with intermittent glimpses of attractive, mostly detached, houses. Housing is widely spaced and largely traditional throughout this area. A diversity of building styles reflects widely varying build dates but all of the properties possess the discreet aspect which is so characteristic of Cookham Dean. There are significant driveways to most of the Hills Lane houses, which are also partially hidden by hedges.

The oldest house in this part of Dean Lane is the first cottage on its northern side just before Dean Meadow. It is a traditional thatched cottage, obscured from view of the road.



Above left: Thatched cottage on the northern side of Dean Lane. Above right: Nineteenth century cottages on Dean Lane, sympathetically extended.



Right: Dwellings are glimpsed intermittently on Bradcutts Lane. Those shown here are set behind rustic field gates.



The field north of Dean Lane, known as Dean Meadow, is one of the lane's focal points.

9 Cookham Dean continued

Winter Hill (east) and Stonehouse Lane

Box 36

Winter Hill (east) runs along the top of Winter Hill which drops sharply away to the Thames in the north. The road includes an informal parking strip, where there is a vista across the river towards the Chilterns (but see also Box 10, page 16). Houses tend to be large, detached, separated, and varied in style. They are mostly well set back and rather screened from view.

Stonehouse Lane descends steeply towards the river. The 'look and feel' of the lane has shifted markedly over recent years with the demolition of older houses and their replacement by contemporary homes. It has been an uneasy period, not least because of the sheer quantity of building works ongoing at any one moment and the apparent massing of several of the homes, in particularly close proximity to the lane itself. Ultimately, it will be factors such as scale, design, positioning (complementary or otherwise to plot and setting), the presence of green surrounds and the quality of materials deployed, that will determine whether this very modern trend has 'worked for Cookham'. Section 10 contains special guidance for Cookham's riverside homes.

Homes to the north and west of Stonehouse Lane are viewed on opposite sides from both the land and the river, resulting in a particular need for their designs and settings to be pleasing from both sides.



Below: Contemporary home in Stonehouse Lane. Here there is a marked contrast between a relatively gentle appearance from the river (left) and a rather more stark appearance from Stonehouse Lane (right).



Winter Hill (west) and Gibraltar Lane

Box 37

Winter Hill (west) runs along a section of the ridge at the top of the Winter Hill escarpment and then turns southwards towards Tugwood Common. The road is quite narrow in places, with passing points for cars, and very rural. It is strongly defined by its outstanding northerly views across the Thames Valley and Buckinghamshire and is a draw for tourists. Houses, many being large and highly individual, are of differing periods and are dotted along the ridge, though often obscured from view by trees, tall hedges and long driveways. Despite their lack of visibility from Winter Hill Road, homes here generally accord with the listed characteristics of Section 9.1.

Gibraltar Lane leads off Winter Hill where the easterly and westerly sections meet and it then runs gently downhill on a diagonal across Winter Hill from north east to south west. It is not a through road, is quite remote from the heart of Cookham Dean and has a secluded and rather protective feeling. Most houses are set on the steep slope down to the river below the level of the lane, accessed by descending drives behind gates. Houses here, despite their river bank locations, are in general less contemporary than those in Stonehouse Lane.

At the end of Gibraltar Lane lies Wootten's Boatyard, home of a family business spanning one hundred years and five generations. It is one of the few boat builders/repairers remaining on the middle Thames.

In the family's own words, "Wootten's Boatyard is located in a truly magical part of England. We are secretly positioned at the bottom of the beautiful background setting of Winter Hill, Cookham Dean, on one of the most picturesque and tranquil stretches of the River Thames". The quality of this location should be safeguarded.



Above left and right: A fine Victorian property and a 1930s property on Winter Hill.



Above left: An attractive Gibraltar Lane property, characteristically situated well below the level of its gate.
Above right: A 1920s or earlier property set at the edge of Gibraltar Lane

9 Cookham Dean continued

Church Road (south of village centre), Bigfrith Lane and Spring Lane

Box 38

The area between Church Road and Bigfrith Lane and southwards to Cookham Dean Common typifies the diversity of the Dean. Set on two hillsides with a central valley, amid its more recent housing development the area reveals some of Cookham Dean's underlying patchwork of small farmsteads, former nursery gardens and cottages, interspersed with pockets of common grazing and copses.

Through the middle of this area runs the unadopted Bedwins Lane with its pairs of early twentieth century cottages, which are typical of the Dean. At the northern end of Bedwins Lane, a modern, yellow-brick, country-style house is rather larger in relation to its plot than the VDS would recommend for the future. However, its present bright appearance, should, in time, will take on the more muted hue of Victorian yellow stocks. At the heart of the area is a small common, where Church Road joins the pretty, sunken Stubbles Lane before continuing to the top of Cookham Dean Common. Discrete housing of many periods is set either side of Stubbles Lane, punctuated by a pony field on the western side. Nearby, 'The Farm' is a reminder of the village's antecedents. The whole neighbourhood is quiet and discreet and its architecture ranges from later Victorian through to the present day.

Bigfrith Lane is a long, picturesque country road, which leads from the village centre to the parish boundary in Winter Hill Road. As it does so, it provides fine views to the north and west, firstly, across Bigfrith Common towards King's Coppice Farm, with the Quarry Woods in the background, and, later, over orchards towards Park Farm, with again the backdrop of the woods. At the foot of the hill towards the western end of the road is the last remaining village pond. Beyond, on the north side, are the apple and damson orchards of Bigfrith Farm (partly in Bisham parish). Across the road from the farm, an old Cookham Dean cottage was sympathetically renovated

and extended about 30 years ago and the adjacent barn is a fine example of a traditional local farm building. On the south side of Bigfrith Lane there is intermittent housing. A particularly striking example of decorative Victorian hanging tiles is to be seen here, cladding several elevations of a property and being exceptionally rich in colour, tile patterning and overall design.



Far left: Victorian workers' cottages in Bedwins Lane.

Left: Victorian property on Church Road with spire.

Above: Impressive hanging tiles in Bigfrith Lane.

Right: Sympathetic restoration in Bigfrith Lane.



Cookham Dean's southern and western peripheries

Box 39

The western end of Hockett Lane, and the western sides of Winter Hill Road and Grubwood Lane are usually identified as being part of Cookham Dean, but lie within Bisham parish just outside the boundary of Cookham parish. *Whilst these areas are included here to help convey the character of Cookham Dean, it is important to note that areas within Bisham parish are not subject to the provisions of this VDS.*

All three roads are intensely rural, with intermittent expansive views across open land. Housing is dotted and clustered. There are many large houses, but also more modest homes. Spring Lane to the south, equally rural, is particularly noted for its sixteenth century country house, The Mount, and the Edwardian Harwood House, now a care home.



Left: Old cottages on the western side of Grubwood Lane with sympathetic extension.

Right: The rural character of Spring Lane.



Hockett Lane, showing plots that are narrower than is usual in Cookham Dean.

9 Cookham Dean continued

9.3 From traditional cottages to large detached dwellings

The typical traditional dwelling surviving in Cookham Dean is a small terraced cottage with red brick walls and a pitched, slated roof. All such terraces need careful evaluation before changes are made. Seven terraces are especially noteworthy, as listed below.

Albion Cottages, off Church Road.
Victoria Cottages, Cookham Dean Bottom.
Wells Cottages, Cookham Dean Bottom.
Lea View Cottages, Dean Lane.
Overton Cottages, Kings Lane.
Upper Ventnor Cottages, Popes Lane.
Lower Ventnor Cottages, Popes Lane.

As is clear from earlier pages, the majority of Cookham Dean's later development has been in the form of detached dwellings, individually designed, but with a common 'country-style' design ethos. The number of properties constructed in a true contemporary style - for example, with large windows, flat roofs and using steel or glazing as principal materials - is negligible, except on the Thames bank (Section 10).

In general, Cookham Dean's 'rural gaps' created often by wide verges to the front of properties, as well as abundant greenery to all sides are a major factor in creating the open appearance of Cookham Dean. The sense of a relaxed and unthreatened environment is further underlined by the frequent absence of gates, or predominant use of 'non-solid' gates, often left standing open. The maintenance of this calm and unthreatened appearance is fundamental to all considerations regarding potential new development.



Left and below: Three examples of the open, welcoming and unthreatened aspect of housing in Cookham Dean. Similar examples exist in all areas of the settlement.



Victoria Cottages, built to celebrate Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee. The front facias contain decorative motifs, handcrafted in plaster, and known as 'pargeting', which is rare in Cookham.

9.4 Business and agri-business premises

Cookham Dean's public houses may be thriving, but it has lost its general store and its two garages. The Dean Farm Garage was redeveloped for housing and the Dean Service Garage was converted to offices. Despite these losses, the Dean has seen considerable recent growth in business activity with sensitive conversions of former farm buildings into smaller business spaces at Kings Coppice Farm, Woodlands Farm and Mount Farm.

Cookham Dean's largest business is probably at Kings Coppice Farm. This has now been developed into a nationally known turkey production unit (see Box 5, page 12), run by The Copas Partnership. The permanent buildings used by the business form a compact group adjacent to the original farmyard, whilst the recent expansion of the business has been achieved through the use of demountable shelters (see Section 13.2). Whilst such shelters are not of attractive appearance, their use has avoided the need for new permanent farm buildings which might otherwise spread undesirably in a south-westerly direction along the valley. In this respect it is important to note that most of this scenic valley lies within the Area of Special Landscape Importance (Section 4.1), contains two footpaths, and is overlooked from higher land in the public realm on both sides.

There has been no public evaluation of the benefits brought to Cookham Dean by the expansion of business accommodation. However, in overall terms the presence of businesses should be positive through the productive re-use of existing buildings, together with the opportunities to create a more balanced local economy and the assurance of a more 'real community' in which people live and work.

Nevertheless, deleterious visual impacts should be avoided. These potentially include unattractive sites or extensions, traffic and parking problems, and damage to vulnerable village lanes by large vehicles.



The Courtyard Barns on Choke Lane, sensitively converted into business premises.

9 Cookham Dean continued

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Cookham Dean

R9.1 Whilst privacy and security are natural goals, it is recommended that owners should take into account the characteristic openness of Cookham Dean, and to ensure that any measures taken are suitably discreet.

R9.2 It is recommended that owners should give consideration to the provisions of the VDS when making changes to properties that may have visual impact but do not necessarily require planning permission.

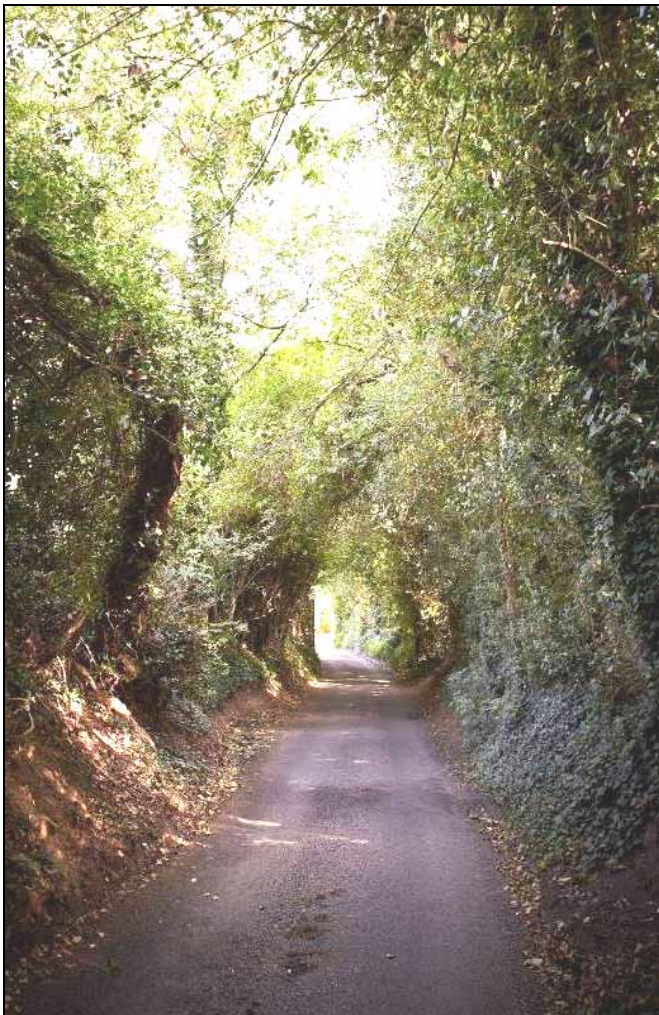
ADVISORY NOTES:

Cookham Dean

The whole of Cookham Dean lies within the Green Belt, where there is a presumption against new residential development except in the circumstances set out in the Local Plan (Reference 3.1). The majority of Cookham Dean also lies in a Conservation Area, subject to special provisions (Reference 3.2).

A9.1 Guidance in respect of all traditional terraced properties in Cookham Dean is to be found in Section 6.13

A9.2 New development that will be visible from the River Thames should take particular note of the guidance given in Section 10.



Kings Lane, a typical sunken lane in Cookham Dean. Many such lanes are ancient routes which were created incrementally by traffic and erosion.

GUIDANCE:

Cookham Dean

Bearing in mind the unique green setting and rural character of Cookham Dean and the dispersed nature of existing development, any new development should be considered in a holistic manner with regard to its impact on the locality. Undue height and massing are particular characteristics to avoid. Importance should be attached to maintenance of the open, informal and unthreatened atmosphere of Cookham Dean, and the preservation of proportionate gardens and green boundaries. In sum, houses must not appear overlarge for their plots and any sense of 'crowding' caused by a new development must be avoided. The unimpaired maintenance of views that are fundamental to the character of Cookham Dean is also important, including both inward and outward views across countryside. Development proposals should provide context wherever appropriate, depicting the proposed development as it will generally be seen in its wider setting. Proposals should also, where appropriate, be considered for their impact from more remote viewpoints in the public realm, especially where the site is on a ridge, bank or hillside, or is overlooked from higher ground.

G9.1 Any proposals for development in Cookham Dean should:

- Have regard to the General Guidance of Section 6 and all other relevant Guidance Points in the VDS.
- Have regard to the impact of the proposal on the specific locality with reference to any description of that particular locality in the VDS, including any special constraints noted.

G9.2 New development and house extensions should not be visually harmful to the countryside, for instance buildings should be stepped back from the boundary to enable the retention or planting of hedges and trees. Existing banks along lanes must be retained intact.

G9.3 Any replacement or modification of the former Post Office Stores building in Bigfrith Lane should take account of the following.

- The desirability of reducing the overall scale and massing of this awkwardly extended building, bearing in mind its position at the crest of a hill, its visibility from the Grubwood Lane area across the valley and its overbearing nature in relation to neighbouring properties.
- The desirability of acknowledging and giving emphasis to the features of the original building, the potential for achieving improved character by articulation of the elevations and roofscape, and possibilities for the replacement of the existing large areas of modern hung tiling by more sensitive treatments, perhaps including some use of reclaimed decorative tiling.

G9.4 The enclosure and very special attractiveness of the triangular-shaped junction at the foot of Alleyns Lane should be maintained intact.

G9.5 Any new development or extension in the vicinity of Cookham Dean Bottom should take proper account of any particular risk of flash floods in that area.

10 Cookham's riverside development

10.1 All of one piece

Cookham's riverside development is rather separate from the three settlements - sometimes because it is at the edge of a residential area, sometimes because it is part-concealed from its own gateway, being at a lower position on a steep bank, and sometimes because it is not within a settlement as such but in open countryside.

Yet, importantly, all of Cookham's riverside buildings are highly visible from the river, where they are seen as a slowly unfurling ribbon, progressively capturing the gaze with the onwards journey of any river craft. Properties on the river bank are closely scrutinised by river users as a source of endless fascination and they play a major role in conveying an impression of Cookham's character.

It was almost inevitable that housing should be built on the river frontage before the days of planning control. This has occurred in several separate locations, each with its own characteristics. In general terms, riverside building exuberance has led to an eclectic mix, where properties of Victorian, Edwardian or contemporary affluence that *'make a statement'* rub shoulders with inexpensively constructed properties, many of which were once holiday homes.

Not all, however, is in quite the harmony that might be preferred. It became clear during the VDS Consultation Programme that a recent flurry of new planning permissions involving the demolition of existing properties and their rebuild in contemporary styles had caused concern to residents over the resulting size and starkness of certain properties and the changing character of the riverside. Not all changes by any means have been for the worse but a rather more measured approach is preferable for the future.

10.2 The 'ribbon' of Cookham's riverside development

Travelling downstream from Marlow, at the Cookham parish boundary lies Wootten's boatyard, followed by the first riverside houses of Cookham parish on the steep bank of Gibraltar Lane. These in are followed by the properties in Stonehouse Lane. The styles of these properties are very mixed, though increasingly there are strikingly contemporary builds, especially in Stonehouse Lane (see also Box 36, page 55).

Continuing downstream, the properties of Spade Oak Reach come into view. Most of these were originally 'weekend retreats' for boat owners, there being no road access until recently. Several were of a simple build, which acknowledged their seasonal use and the perennial threat of flooding. To an extent these have now been replaced by more durable homes, still on the whole modest in size, but rather prominent nevertheless in relation to their glorious Winter Hill backdrop.

Turning south east around the curve of the river, 'Riverside', is a group of eight houses clustered adjacent to The Bounty public house, next to the railway line and facing Bourne End. Most of these have retained more of their original appearance than those of Spade Oak Reach. Rebuilding presents difficulty here since, although 'Riverside' houses front the Thames Path, they have no road access and supplies are brought across the river. Again, 'Riverside' is situated in the flood plain.

Further southward, past the rest of Cockmarsh and Marsh Meadow, the Cookham bank is rural and undeveloped until reaching the Sailing Club, followed by an adjacent residence and the 1960s built Cookham Riverside Nursing Home, set in a walled garden to the



Upper left: An eclectic mix of properties at Spade Oak Reach. The contemporary home on the right includes the pitched roof element to its left, which is its boat-house. Even though this property is larger than the norm in this area, the design is subtle, 'sub-divided' and harmonious, with greenness showing above the property, to the front and both sides, and also between house and boathouse.



Middle and far left: Attractive juxtapositions on Spade Oak Reach. The newer property combines its modern design with deep and characterful roof lines that are in striking sympathy with those of its neighbour. The presence of white render on both properties and other common features extend the harmonies between the two homes.



'Riverside', with The Bounty public house at the centre of a row of small properties.

10 Cookham's riverside development continued

south of Bellrope Meadow. The architecture of the nursing home includes varying roof lines and suggests the goal of a 'softened' appearance. The building is set very well back from the river, beyond Bellrope Meadow. As seen by Thames Path walkers and strollers it remains prominent, but from the river it is less so.

Cookham Bridge is next (see also Box 47, page 71) with a few properties clustered near it, including the Ferry Inn. On a parallel stream, Lulle Brook, unseen by main river users, is the unspoilt river frontage of Lullebrook Manor and the Odney Club (Section 4.5).



Above left: The Riverside Nursing Home, overlooking Bellrope Meadow and the Thames. Above right: On Lulle Brook is the unspoilt façade of Lullebrook Manor.

Cookham Lock next appears on the main stream. Of all the locks on the River Thames, Cookham is considered by many to have the loveliest situation. It is set in a lock cut and surrounded by woods, close to the point at which the powerful waters of the Thames meet with Chiltern chalk. On one side is Sashes Island and on the other is Mill Island, connected to Formosa Island, the largest island on the non-tidal Thames.



Cookham lock beneath the woods of Cliveden.

Passing through Cookham Lock, the traveller enters the famous Cliveden Reach with the wooded escarpment to the east, whilst, to the west, there is the contrasting green plain stretching southwards from Formosa to White Place Farm and the Maidenhead boundary.

10.3 Special considerations for development on the riverside

Cookham's riverside is a very special rural environment which could additionally be described as 'gentle'. The word equally applies to the characteristics that need to be achieved in new or replacement development on the riverside. In order for Cookham's riverside to match the character of the three Cookham settlements, 'starkness' must be avoided in all properties that are visible from the river, whether large or small. Traditional rural building styles are to be welcomed, but materials must be genuine and pastiche is not appropriate.

High quality contemporary designs are not excluded where other contemporary buildings exist close-by, provided that gentleness of form rather than harshness is achieved. For larger buildings, in particular, this may include visual sub-division into separate linked elements, varying roof heights, or curved contours that meld into adjacent greenery in an uncontrived way. It is likely to exclude extensive unrelieved flat roofs,

stark linear forms and disproportionately large unrelieved areas of glass.

In relation to the requirements outlined above, a great deal of improvement could be made to elements of Cookham's existing riverside vistas. Proposals, whether for extension, partial rebuild or replacement, may provide opportunities for enhancement of an existing riverside vista, and such opportunities should be taken. It is very important for applicants to consider the locality's riverside vista as a whole, and its overall feeling of continuity, and to make proposals accordingly.

Riverside properties should not be overbearing within their plots. The retention of views between properties is particularly important. It is recommended that a minimum of 1.5m or (if greater) one sixth of the plot width to each side of a property should be kept open as a minimum. Properties should also be set well back in their plots where possible, providing for generous green spaces between the river and the property.

Replacement development should in general avoid having a greater impact on the riverside environment than the existing. Key considerations should be the scale and bulk of the proposal. In assessing the suitability, regard should be had to the size of the existing building, the nature of the surrounding area (including topography, tree cover, proximity and character of any nearby properties).

For all properties that are visible from the river it is important that designs and settings are pleasing as seen from both the river and the road sides. In this connection it is important that gardens are present between such properties and their access road in addition to gardens between the property and the river (see Section 6.24).

Properties in Spade Oak Reach and Riverside should not start to take on an urbanised appearance, thereby damaging the setting of these properties at the foot of Winter Hill and amid the low-lying fields.

ADVISORY NOTES: Cookham's riverside development

A10.1 Policy N2 and paragraphs 2.2.16 to 2.2.18 of the Borough Council's Local Plan (Reference 3.5) are intended to preserve the setting of the river. It is essential that this reference is consulted in relation to any proposed development on Cookham's riverside.

A10.2 Much of Cookham's riverside development is subject to further constraints relating to development in the flood plain (Section 5 and Reference 3.4).

A10.3 Green Belt constraints (Section 4.6) also apply to the majority of development on Cookham's riverside.

GUIDANCE: Cookham's riverside development

G10.1 Cookham's riverside is a fine and peaceful rural environment and also a special recreational area. Buildings and structures should be designed to sit gently within the countryside setting of the riverside. In general, development should allow for views between properties to the wider countryside, should be set back where possible to provide generous green space between the property and the river and should also include green space between property and road. Proposals that would increase the urbanisation of the riverside or detract from its special qualities should not be permitted.

11 Cookham's homecoming routes

11.1 An unusual number of choices

Cookham has an unusually large choice of 'homecoming routes', each delightful in its own way. For Cookham residents and visitors it can be a real pleasure to approach the village, because the incoming roads traverse beautiful and uplifting environments. In general there is an abundance of 'homecoming joy' to be had for residents, and the pleasure of anticipation for visitors. Boxes 40 to 45 in this Section highlight some major characteristics of Cookham's homecoming routes.

It is worth noting that the same positive characteristics apply to the main links between Cookham's three settlements, especially the open fields between Cookham Rise and Cookham Dean and the route across Cookham Moor. These links are also on the homecoming route for many residents, depending on where in Cookham they live and which approach road they have chosen.

From Bourne End over Cookham Bridge Box 40

The road from Bourne End enters green countryside, rising to the east, about 500 yards before Cookham Bridge. The bridge is a blue-painted Victorian structure of considerable historical interest (Box 1, p7). From its vantage point, a fine Thames vista stretches out to both sides. The road continues past The Ferry public house on its left hand side, with its melding of old, white-washed brickwork and weathered clay tiles. More recent extensions are not apparent when travelling in this direction. Towards the village, Cookham's red, gabled rooftops come into view, interspersed with trees, and the square tower of the Holy Trinity Church is a landmark. The timber-framed buildings of Church Gate and the historic buildings of Odney Lane are glimpsed before the High Street opens out to the right.



Above: The view west from Cookham Bridge is one of the most favoured Cookham views of all (Reference 1.5).



Above: Part of the tranquil pastoral view as Lower Cookham Road traverses Widbrook Common.

From 'Maidenhead Riverside', Box 41 Lower Cookham Road and Sutton Road

Leaving 'Maidenhead Riverside', a charming view of the river and its boat traffic captures the gaze, past the ever-changing scene at Boulters Lock. The road eventually veers away from the river, becoming Lower Cookham Road. In due course it passes through tranquil water meadows of Widbrook Common, where a natural, slow-moving stream, the White Brook, often has cattle grazing at its edges. To the right, rises the wooded escarpment of Cliveden in the distance. The road (named 'Sutton Road' at this point) continues northwards past occasional residences, farmland and allotments until Sutton Close and Blackbutts Cottages signal the approach to a settlement. A 'Cookham' sign showing the village Coat of Arms is located just before crossroads with Mill Lane and School Lane.

From Switchback to Cannondown Box 42 Road and the Maidenhead Road

Switchback Road leaves a suburban scene at Maidenhead and emerges into open countryside as it approaches Cookham. There are views towards the higher land at The Mount and Cookham Dean and, more distantly, across arable fields towards Hedsor and Cliveden. The edge of the built area of Cookham is seen in the distance, where houses extend eastwards against the backdrop of Buckinghamshire's hills. On arrival at that point, however, Cookham's outlying residences are less visible from the road than might be expected. In total, only ten or so houses directly front the road, between Long Lane and the village roundabout, where Cookham's commercial area and The Pound come into view, divided from each other by the green wedge of Poundfield's southern corner.

Below: The approach to Cookham travelling north past arable fields to the side of Switchback Road.



11 Cookham's homecoming routes continued

From Pinkneys Green, Choke Lane and Long Lane **Box 43**

A particularly lovely scenic approach to Cookham is the route from Pinkneys Green via Choke Lane and Long Lane. Not only are the views of the common land in and around Pinkneys Green delightful, but the descent through Long Lane is outstanding for its views, and on a clear day looks spectacular. Long Lane is a partly-sunken lane, possessing many of the characteristics of Cookham Dean roads. To the descending homecomer, Cookham is on the left, whilst in the foreground and to the right is a panoramic view of green countryside that extends far into the distance to Windsor.



Above: The panoramic view as far as Windsor, as seen during the descent into Cookham via Long Lane. Windsor Castle can just be distinguished on the horizon.

From Winter Hill Road or Quarry Wood Road into Cookham Dean **Box 44**

Winter Hill Road approaches Cookham Dean in a northerly direction from the Pinkneys Green area. The road passes the large green expanse of Cookham Dean Common on the right, followed by a further green vista on the left. The homes amid trees on the skyline mark the edge of the Cookham Dean settlement. From that point, several rural lanes ascend into the heart of the village, or the traveller may choose to proceed along Grubwood Lane, meeting Quarry Wood Road which winds its way up through the woods from Bisham. Shortly after, there are further choices of scenic route to the heart of the village.



Above across page: Homes beneath the wooded skyline mark the edge of Cookham Dean from Winter Hill Road.

Above: Detail of the Windsor Castle view at top of page.

Left: A striking panoramic view to the south-east from the top of Quarry Wood Road.



ADVISORY NOTE: Cookham's homecoming routes

A11.1 Section 14 deals with the importance of views, both into and out of Cookham, depicted in pictures painted by Sir Stanley Spencer. This factor needs to be taken into account in the interpretation of G11.1 below.

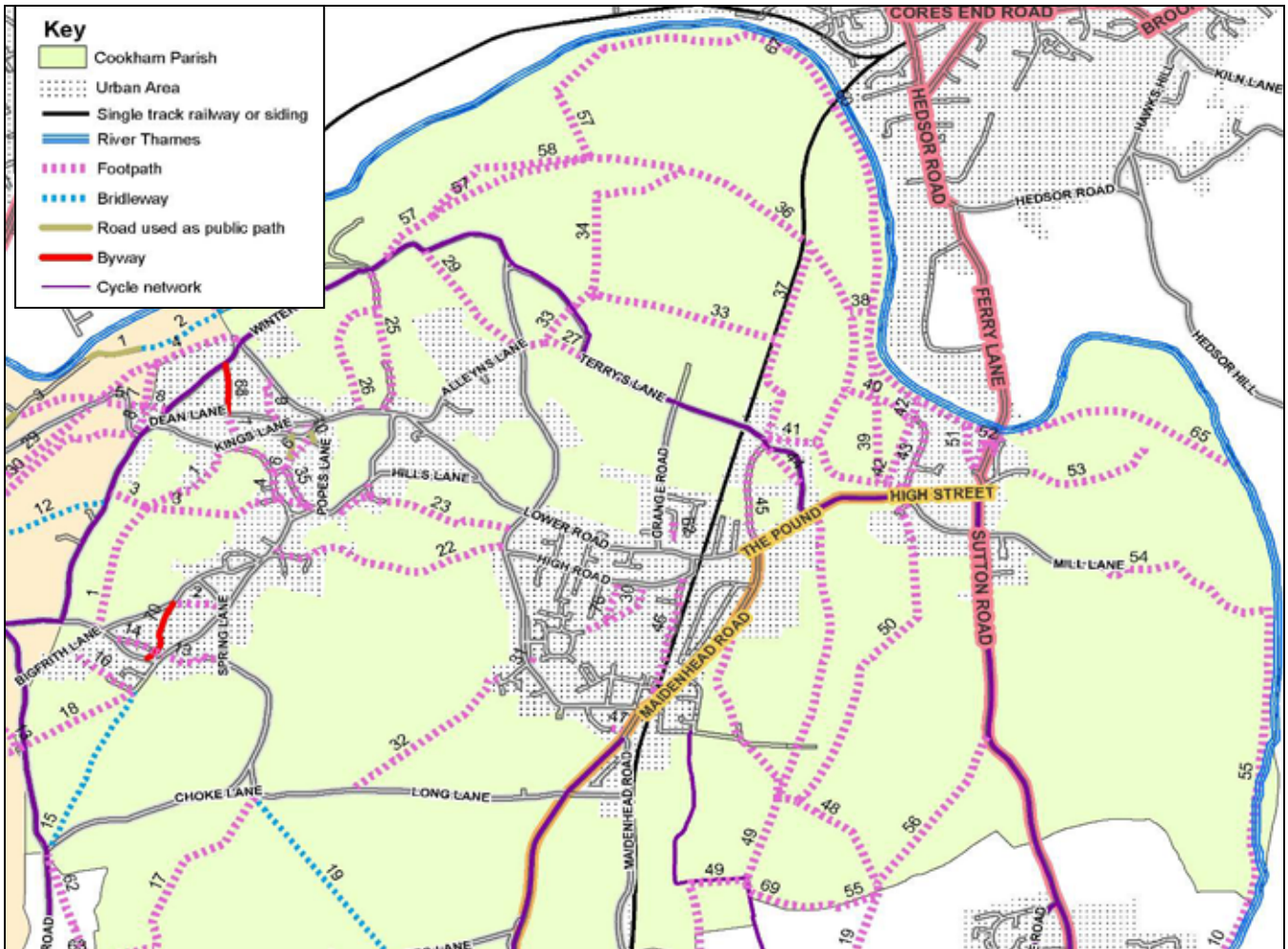
Homecomings by rail **Box 45**

The approaches to Cookham by train from north or south provide additional delights. On the journey from Marlow, with a stop at Bourne End, the line runs parallel to the river for most of the trip and crosses the iron bridge close to The Bounty public house. The train then travels across the sweeping expanse of Cockmarsh and crosses the Winter Hill golf course, providing beautiful views of the green swathes of land and the escarpment. Poundfield is glimpsed as the train approaches the station. From Furze Platt, a vista of Widbrook Common is seen to the east, as well as Westwood Green with its stunning communal green space.

GUIDANCE: Cookham's homecoming routes

G11.1 All of Cookham's homecoming routes are in the Public Realm. Their character and their views help shape what Cookham really is, together with the first impressions of visitors. Any planning proposal which may have an impact on any of the approaches to the village that lie within Cookham parish should be expected to demonstrate that the impact does not detract from, or is a positive enhancement to, the particular approach.

12 Footpaths, bridleways and cycle routes



12.1 Many routes, but a degree of frustration

As the above plan shows there are numerous footpaths through Cookham parish, together with a fair number of bridleways and a certain presence of cycle paths. However, a closer examination of the map also reveals many shortcomings in road-free connectivity and these were echoed during the early VDS consultations.

Strictly speaking the VDS can only concern itself with present or future footpaths, bridleways and cycle paths in so far as these are likely to impact on the built environment. However, these 'alternative routes' cannot be ignored in sustainability terms, and it is proper for the VDS to record key aspects.

12.2 Missing and desired facilities

During the early VDS consultations, concerns became evident about the following aspects, most of which were identified in preceding work on the Cookham Plan (Reference 2.6).

- It has been thought that there is an urgent need to solve the problem of a footpath and cycle path that will by-pass The Pound. However, there appear to be compelling reasons why this cannot be achieved and evidence suggests that existing dangers are reduced by the slow speed of the traffic. The potential solution of widening the pavement only, by the subtle re-positioning of walls, is worthy of exploration (see Box 14, p38.).

- There is a well-known 'missing footpath link' from Sutton Road to the Thames in the south of the parish. Footpaths across Widbrook Common come to a grinding halt at the busy Sutton Road.
- It was suggested during the VDS Consultation Programme that it would be desirable to have a 'boundary walk' around Cookham parish for the greater quiet enjoyment of the countryside. Such a goal and its possible means of achievement may merit further consideration
- The Green Cycle Route from Cookham to Maidenhead requires occasional lifting of bicycles over a gate.
- A lack of cycle-friendliness in Cookham included the absence of secure cycle parking close to the station, as well as issues relating to The Pound. Cycle stands have now been provided, but cycling to school can be awkward throughout the settlements. Whilst improvements are desirable, the introduction of cycle paths would be a fairly major proposition demanding its own evaluation.
- A cycle route has been thought to be needed northwards from Cookham to connect with the footway over the railway bridge and Bourne End. However, it has been suggested (Reference 2.6) that this is not a matter that can usefully be pursued for the time being.

13 Agricultural buildings and countryside installations

13.1 Agricultural buildings

Old farm buildings may look attractive but typically they have become unsuitable for modern farm operations through size and other characteristics, or the disappearance of the farm whose operation they were part of. Consequently, they tend to be subject to change of use to residential or general business purposes. Their modern counterparts are highly functional, versatile and relatively easy to maintain. By necessity they are often erected in places where other forms of building might not be permitted. There is a certain irony in the presence throughout Cookham of glorious traditional farm buildings that are no longer in use for their original farm purposes, whilst some of the starker contemporary forms are the subject of dismay and debate. However, this is part of modern day life and a situation that is replicated in hundreds of villages throughout the UK.

It is important that the impact of modern farm buildings on the wider countryside is kept to a minimum. This is also true of related installations - and of any additional countryside installations not operated by farmers.

Local farmers have successfully shown that it is possible to reduce the impact of new buildings and installations through the careful choice of external materials and judicious use of planting. Despite constraints, recognition that Cookham's farmers need appropriate buildings and installations to manage their legitimate farm businesses efficiently should prevail in reaching related planning decisions. This is in the interests of Cookham parish as a whole.

"In an ideal world farm buildings should be built in a Victorian style (brick with a tiled roof), but today farming cannot justify such high expenditure, especially as farm buildings need to be high with a clear span internally to accommodate large modern agricultural machinery.

Modern agricultural buildings are usually constructed of steel with tin or concrete fibrous roofing material. These buildings can, however, still be sympathetically designed to reduce impact.

Walls should be built to provide contrast between lower and upper sections. Eaves should overhang on all sides of the building to provide shadow. Roofs of concrete fibrous cement will more easily blend in, especially if sprayed with cow manure. Flashing can be in dark brown."

**Extract from Individual Consultations
Mr Geoffrey Copas, Head of Copas Farms**



Two attractive traditional Cookham farm buildings now in general business use.

GUIDANCE:

Agricultural buildings

G13.1 Applicants for new farm buildings should be able to demonstrate that the buildings are required to support operations on the farms where they will be situated and that those operations cannot be undertaken in existing buildings.

G13.2 New farm buildings should, where possible, be positioned as part of existing farmsteads.

G13.3 Design of proposed new farm buildings should such as to reduce and soften the appearance of the building. The following design factors apply.

- **Size and height** should be minimised, consistent with demonstrable operational demand.
- **Materials** should be of good quality, such as to avoid undue dereliction over time.
- **Colours** should be muted to tone with the countryside. Formal planning advice has previously included the use of white as an external colour for farm buildings, but this has been found sometimes to be out of place locally. In particular, white external walls should be avoided on hillsides with distant views.

G13.4 Care should be taken to ensure that the whole extent of any new development, including any related yards, roadways and installations, is planned to blend into its surroundings.

G13.5 Landscaping proposals, where new or replacement agricultural buildings are required, should include planted screening where appropriate. However, such screening should not in all instances be treated as a method by which proposed new agricultural buildings will become acceptable, since it can harm the openness of landscape vistas. Proposals for planted screening should clarify the long-term impact of the screening on a landscape, especially identifying the height of trees, or the height at which hedges will be maintained.

G13.6 Installations planned to generate energy should not detract from the relatively unspoiled beauty of the countryside in Cookham parish. In general, installations should not be located where they are widely visible from the public realm.



A characterful Victorian working farmhouse still to be found in Cookham.



Smart modern farm buildings. White, however, is no longer a preferred colour for walls (see G13.3 above)

13 Agricultural buildings and countryside installations continued

13.2 Polytunnels

Polytunnels, de-mountable buildings or walk-in plastic tunnels, as they are variously known are the subject of countrywide debate and Cookham is no exception to this. Cookham's most keenly debated polytunnels are those at Kings Coppice Farm, which house a large part of the annual flock of some 40,000 turkeys, and the smaller installations at Lower Mount Farm.

Both of the sites are particularly sensitive in Green Belt terms - the Kings Coppice site because of its glorious expanse of undulating countryside, and the Lower Mount farm site because of the narrowness of the green gap between Cookham Rise and Maidenhead.



Above: Polytunnels for turkey rearing at Kings Coppice farm. Below: The polytunnels at Lower Mount Farm.



Polytunnels and planning issues **Box 46**

Few would regard polytunnels as good-looking buildings, but nearby dwellers tend to be reassured by the fact that polytunnels are seen as 'temporary' buildings, where 'permanent' buildings in the same locations would be an even more invidious proposition.

Planning rules regarding polytunnels are complex. They depend on whether the particular polytunnels are judged to be an 'unbuilt way of using land' (which corresponds with treating the structures as temporary in their construction and usage), or a 'building operation' (which corresponds with treating the structures as permanent). This matter is decided by such factors as type, scale, size, fixing depth, and degree of year-round presence.

Polytunnels that are assessed by Planning Officers to be 'temporary' do not need planning permission. However, 'temporary' refers to construction-type and utilisation (as outlined above), not to duration of their presence on the land. No time limits apply to the presence of polytunnels that have been assessed as 'temporary'.

Polytunnels judged to be of permanent construction need planning permission unless this is granted automatically under 'permitted development' legislation. They are classed as an 'appropriate development in the Green Belt', but the granting of permission remains subject to a consideration of impact in relation to Green Belt purposes (Section 4.6) and local amenity issues.

RECOMMENDATIONS: **Polytunnels**

R13.1 It is the view of the VDS Working Group that, if there was sufficient will to succeed, an agreement could be reached by farmers and the community to provide farm buildings which have the appearance of being traditional in certain situations where polytunnels currently exist (not necessarily in exactly the same locations).

A VDS is not the appropriate vehicle to suggest the nature of any solutions that might be reached, but we note with interest the American concept of 'Community Supported Agriculture', where some sort of share in costs incurred is exchanged for some sort of partial interest in the outcomes. In this particular situation, it might be that the 'interest in outcomes' was little more than the assurance of enhanced views but this is not the place to pre-judge such an issue.

The whole community could take immense pride in placing Cookham on the cutting edge of such initiatives locally. Ventures of this nature are now promoted in the UK by the Soil Association.

Reference 14 contains information and case examples.

13.3 Telecommunications masts

Telecommunications masts have been erected in several rural locations within Cookham parish. There are also masts within the built areas, for example adjacent to the railway line off Maidenhead Road and at the pumping station off Whyteladies Lane, which for convenience, we include in this section.

It is acknowledged that further masts may be necessary to provide adequate coverage as demand for services increases - and also that chosen locations may be in the countryside to avoid causing concern to local residents. This being the case, care needs to be taken to ensure that masts are blended into the landscape as far as possible.

Plantings at Lower Mount Farm have significantly reduced the collective impact of the three masts which are located there and the positioning of the mast close to wooded land near Alleyns Lane and Winter Hill has provided a backdrop which has muted its visibility. By contrast, the Leylandii planted beside the mast in Kennel Lane merely serve to highlight its intrusiveness.

ADVISORY NOTES: Telecommunications masts

A13.1 Reference 4 states that "... planning authorities should support the expansion of electronic communications networks" (whilst minimising number of masts and visual impact). Siting and erection of telecommunications masts locally within Cookham parish is regulated in Reference 18.

A13.2 Numerous issues relating to masts concern health and safety. A good preliminary account is available in Section 6 of the Housing and Development Group report for the Cookham Plan (Reference 2.7).

GUIDANCE: Telecommunications masts

G13.7 Masts should always be visually integrated into their surroundings to the maximum possible extent. To this end they should:

- Not be sited in open countryside where other options are available.
- Be grouped and/or shared where so doing reduces their cumulative prominence
- Be designed in a minimalist way, muted in colour and accompanied by sensitive planting where appropriate.

14 A village made in heaven – the Stanley Spencer legacy

14.1 Sir Stanley Spencer and Cookham

Sir Stanley Spencer RA (1891-1959) was born in Cookham and painted extensively in the village. He is recognised as one of the greatest British painters of the twentieth century with a canon of works which cover the period from before the First World War until shortly before his death.

Spencer is well-known for his paintings in and around Cookham, but these represent only part of a far more extensive collection of works, ranging in location from Macedonia to the Clyde shipyards, and in subject matter from landscapes to crowded activity scenes, portraits and intimate flower studies.

Locally, Spencer painted more than a hundred pictures, the many of these being listed at Annex B. But it was, in part, Spencer's extraordinary feeling for his home village as a 'village made in heaven' and a place where divine intervention has occurred, which singled him out from his contemporaries. The exceptional quality of the planning and execution of his works and the sometimes bizarre yet utterly human nature of his figurative studies underlined his genius.

Stanley Spencer's death, at the end of the 1950s, coincided with the post-war sea-change in British life. Spencer now seems to speak to us from a different age and the recollections that older residents possess of him pushing his old pram full of artist's materials around the village signify a quieter and less materialistic era. This may be why many of Spencer's works have a timeless quality. We are looking at a world which was to be overtaken by the imperatives of modernity, which were consigning it to memory.

14.2 Stanley Spencer's paintings and their significance for the VDS

Some of Spencer's Cookham-related works have no direct connection with VDS subject matters, but many others depict views, scenes, facades and other detail which are highly relevant. Among the works with the greatest relevance are the landscapes painted from the ridge which extends from Woodlands Farm down to The Mount, looking across the valley towards Hedsor, Cliveden and Taplow Court, together with the various paintings around Poundfield and Englefield (see also Box 9, p15). Several works provide views of the river, including the series: 'Christ Preaching at Cookham Regatta', and there are many which show parts of Cookham village and specific buildings. Annex B provides further detail.

Most Cookham residents today do seem to believe that the village has an ongoing stake in the preservation of views and scenes depicted in Stanley Spencer paintings. The safeguarding of Spencer scenes is also of considerable importance to the Stanley Spencer Gallery, where visitors arrive from all over the world and are offered walks and guided tours to help enhance their understanding and enjoyment of Stanley Spencer's paintings. There is a counter-argument, that since so many Stanley Spencer scenes have already been lost to building development, it does not make

sense to create a compelling need for the retention of others. However, scenes that have now disappeared were lost under a different planning regime. The VDS goes with the majority view - that Stanley Spencer scenes are of importance to modern-day Cookham and its visitors, most especially the visitors to the Spencer Gallery.

Spencer's exceptional love for Cookham, his astonishing and emotionally moving output in relation to the village, and the special role of the Spencer Gallery, all seem to impose a significant responsibility on 'modern Cookham' and on the VDS. Despite this general stance, the situation regarding individual planning applications and their acceptability in relation to 'Stanley Spencer scenes' is, of course, a matter for case-by-case consideration.



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Left: 'Barley sugar' ironwork detail depicted in 'Villas at Cookham' in School Lane. Above: The same detail today, changed in colour, but unspoilt



'From the Artist's Studio' shows the clustering of pitched, tiled roofs that are still a prominent feature of Cookham.

© The Estate of Stanley Spencer. All rights reserved. DACS.
Image from Carrick Hill Trust, Adelaide, South Australia, Hayward Bequest

GUIDANCE:

Stanley Spencer scenes

G14.1 The views, facades and other building detail depicted in paintings by Sir Stanley Spencer are part of Cookham's cultural heritage and contribute to the understanding both of the history and character of Cookham and of Sir Stanley Spencer's celebrated works. Proposals should carefully balance the need to protect this cultural heritage with the aims of creating sensitive change. Proposals having an adverse impact, especially in relation to the direct visual linkage which is possible between the painting and the present day scene should not be permitted.

15 'Special Local Significance' and other protective measures

15.1 The meaning of 'Special Local Significance'

During the early VDS consultations, it was put to the Working Group that they should consider whether there are elements of Cookham outside of the two Conservation Areas that may benefit from an enhanced level of protection known 'Special Local Significance'. Listed buildings already have a high degree of planning protection, as does the overall character of a Conservation Area. However, 'Special Local Significance' is a category that the community itself may designate. The following extract from the VDS consultation with the Borough Council's Conservation Officer sums this up succinctly.

"It is important to understand the differences between what is 'listed' (in future to be described as 'Registered Heritage Assets'), what is highlighted in Conservation Area Statements (but not necessarily listed), and what is known within the community to be of 'Special Local Significance'. Local people have the benefit of truly knowing what is important and why it is important.

By identifying, in the VDS, buildings and areas that are of 'Special Local Significance' and, most particularly, clearly stating the reason for such significance or importance, a considerable level of protection can be anticipated once the text of the VDS has been agreed by the Borough Council and its status has become that of a Supplementary Planning Document."

*Extract from Individual Consultations
Ms Elizabeth Long, Conservation Officer,
Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead*

A building or area that is of 'Special Local Significance' would always be one that is not listed and not within a Conservation Area. There may be many differing reasons as to why something is of 'local significance' or 'local importance'. Illustratively, the designation of 'Special Local Significance' might attach to:

- Buildings or streets with historical, interesting, or otherwise important features - or with notable historical or cultural links.
- Named orchards where something of their history is known, or named gardens that have won significant awards or are the surviving work of a famous garden designer.
- Characterful walls, gates, signposts, pub signs, or other street furniture or embellishments.

A list of Cookham elements designated in this VDS as being of Special Local Significance is contained at Annex C.

15.2 Adding to the register of Listed Buildings

It is open to any member of the Cookham community to propose that any local building or site should be listed. Additional listings will act as a further safeguard to Cookham's heritage. Listing is undertaken by English Heritage on behalf of the Secretary of State for the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and requires the submission of a comprehensive case.

15.3 Creating further Conservation Areas

At Annex C, the VDS designates various elements of Cookham Rise and Station Hill as streets or areas of Special Local Significance. It is open to residents to apply for these or any other areas to become additional Conservation Areas within Cookham Parish. This invokes a significant process for which details are available from the Borough Council.

15.4 Designating 'Village Greens'

It is possible to designate certain areas as 'Village Greens' under S15 of the Commons Act 2006 (Reference 15). Residents of any part of Cookham may wish to investigate this process for the safeguarding of an area of green in their locality.

15.5 Obtaining Tree Preservation Orders

A Tree Preservation Order (TPO) is a legal document which makes it an offence to wilfully cut, uproot, top, lop or cut the roots of trees without permission from the local authority. TPOs exist to protect trees that significantly enhance local surroundings. They may be created as an additional protection in Conservation Areas, as well as providing protection in all other localities. It is open to any member of the Cookham community to propose that any tree should be subject to a TPO.



The view from north to south along Roman Lea, named in the VDS as being a street of Special Local Significance.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Special Local Significance and other protective measures

R15.1 Protections additional to those provided through the existence of this VDS are very much in the hands of local residents and the Parish Council. It is possible to add to the list of 'Special Local Significance' (normally through revisions to this VDS) or to enter into any of the other processes mentioned on this page. We recommend that these matters should be carefully debated - especially the possibility of increasing the number of Cookham's Conservation Areas - whilst recognising that the goal is not to prevent all forms of change. Protective measures relating to archaeological heritage are identified in the recommendations of Section 3.

GUIDANCE :

Special Local Significance and other protective measures

G15.1 Proposed measures to reinstate lost original features of buildings should be seen as a positive element in any planning application.

16 Cookham's visitors and tourism

16.1 Visitor and tourist numbers

Cookham is fairly discreet about its visiting population, with the avoidance of brash signs and undiscerning 'attractions'. Nevertheless, Cookham is a very popular destination and the visitor-count in the parish is much higher than might easily be realised. Many visitors arrive to enjoy Cookham's natural charms - the river and its green spaces – as well as its historic buildings, boutique stores and variety of hostelrys. Numerous other visitors come specially to visit the Stanley Spencer Gallery and to see for themselves the particular 'Cookham' that they perceive through the Spencer paintings. In terms of numbers and specific destinations the following provide an indication.

- Up to 120 people stay in the Odney Club each night. The Odney Club specifically relies on the ambience and commercial vibrancy of the High Street (see, for example, Box 13, p37).
- Up to 300 training delegates are in residence each day at the Chartered Institute of Marketing. Cookham's special characteristics are a major factor in CIM's success (see quotation, right).
- The Stanley Spencer Gallery receives around 100 visitors per day on a summer weekend, with a total of around 15,000 visitors per year. Many of these visitors use public transport.
- Around 60 cars are parked on the Moor car park throughout the day on a summer weekend, many carrying families. Assuming 2-3 persons per vehicle and a stay for 2-3 hours this would suggest usage of the Moor car park by at least 450 people on each such day. A weekend survey undertaken during the early VDS consultations established that only 7% of those questioned at the car park came from Cookham. The rest were visitors, roughly half of these from nearby towns and villages and the others from more distant locations. The overwhelming majority at that car park had come to enjoy river walks, countryside and the picturesque nature of the village.
- Additional to all of the above, visitors help fill the public house car parks in Cookham village and the Dean. The riverside public mooring points are also well-utilized, with 20 or more boats moored in the Bellrope and Marsh Meadow areas during fine summer periods, bringing many further visitors into Cookham parish.

16.2 Implications for the built environment

In respect of Cookham's future goals regarding visitors and their needs, the VDS must confine itself to any implications for the built environment and the physical appearance of Cookham. Whilst there is an obvious lack of a tourist centre, and parking facilities are also generally thought to be inadequate, these are matters for the future Neighbourhood Plan. There may be a need for

extra provision of helpful information to steer visitors and, whilst elsewhere in the VDS (see, for example, Recommendation RA.3, page 73), it is noted that existing road signage is cluttered and inconsistent, there may nevertheless be a case for a small number of discreet local signs pointing to Cookham's major attractions, with additional well-designed map boards. These, too, are matters for an integrated approach within the Neighbourhood Plan but new facilities should be in accordance, visually, with VDS guidance.

The main points to make about the impact of visitors on the built environment (and vice versa) underline the 'virtuous circle of mutual benefit' mentioned in the quotation lower on this page.

- Visitors come to Cookham because it is perceived to be a special place, in which the charm of the built environment plays a significant role.
- The physical attractiveness, commercial vibrancy and high standards of upkeep of such intensively visited areas as Cookham High Street may only be possible as a result of the number of visitors and their contribution to the local economy.

If visitor numbers are to be maintained, or even enhanced, it is important that development decisions should not jeopardise the attractiveness of Cookham's built environment. VDS guidance should make a significant contribution to the maintenance of Cookham's character, helping it to continue, with its special distinctiveness, to be a major attraction for visitors and tourists.

"Business delegates like to go to places that give them a good feeling. The picturesque nature of Cookham, and the river in particular, are therefore significant factors in CIM's success. The great variety of pubs and restaurants is very welcome to delegates, even though CIM itself provides bar and restaurant facilities. CIM delegates contribute to the local economy, creating a virtuous circle of mutual benefit."

**Extract from Individual Consultations
Mr Jon Fisher, Director of Facilities and Events,
Chartered Institute of Marketing**



Two of Cookham's contrasting visitor destinations.
Above left: The Stanley Spencer Gallery in Cookham High Street.



Below left: The Bounty public house in the self-proclaimed 'People's Republic of Cockmarsh', a muddy boots location and strollers' paradise.

17 Nature conservation and promotion

Many of the landscapes and green spaces of Cookham are areas of ecological importance, with Bisham Woods and Cockmarsh being of national importance. The main areas are listed below.

- Bisham Woods is predominantly beech woodland but has areas of grassland and scrubland. The area has a rich ground flora and supports many species of national interest including the stag beetle. The site is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest and forms part of the Chiltern Beechwoods Special Area of Conservation.
- Cockmarsh is a wet grassland, made all the more distinctive by its proximity to the steep chalk slope of Winter Hill (see also Box 10, page 16). The area supports a number of nationally important marsh grassland species. The site is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest.
- Strande Water, an area of inherent natural beauty, is a slow-moving stream which sustains a wide range of aquatic plants and insects. Its reed beds create a rare micro habitat.
- The River Thames and other waterways, together with their adjoining land, provide an important network, allowing the movement of species.
- The old sewage treatment works at the foot of Winter Hill golf course provides habitat for insects and small mammals, which in turn support Dragonfly, Damselfly, breeding birds and birds of prey.
- Sashes Island, is a special area, with reed beds which encourage particular flora and fauna that are threatened elsewhere in the parish, including some increasingly rare ground-nesting birds.
- The southern part of White Place Farm includes wetland with a good aquatic floor within a wild, rambling copse.
- Other special areas include parts of Widbrook Common - and the water feature on Marsh Meadow, which is currently sensitively managed in a way that encourages subterranean insects, together with moth and butterfly larvae on certain plants. These in turn attract rare birds.
- More generally, large open or wooded areas in the vicinity of built up areas and small green fingers of land (Section 4.7), streams and ditches, large wooded gardens, green verges, trees and hedgerows, all of which contain and link wildlife, form further elements of a natural chain through the parish.



Strande Water, Cookham



White Brook, Widbrook Common

ADVISORY NOTES: Nature conservation and promotion

A17.1 There is national legislation and planning policy relating to matters of nature conservation.

A17.2 Wildlife Heritage Sites are areas recognised for their local importance to nature conservation. In addition, general biodiversity should be considered in planning decisions. The Borough Council planning policies are set out in the Local Plan and the Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document (References 3.6 and 17).

A17.3 All development is expected to maintain or enhance biodiversity. Existing habitats such as trees and hedges should be retained, including protective measures during construction.

A17.4 Nest boxes, bat boxes, loggeries, green and brown roofs, the planting of native and wildlife-friendly species, and the insertion of ponds can all improve biodiversity.

A17.5 Where potentially significant impacts on biodiversity are foreseeable, an ecological assessment is required to be submitted alongside the planning application.

A17.6 Information on local biodiversity is available from the Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre. Information on national designations is available from Natural England.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Nature conservation and promotion

R17.1 It is important that parish councillors and others involved in Cookham's planning processes should be well-informed on these matters. To this end the provision of regular expert presentations on Cookham's ecology is recommended.

R17.2 It is recommended that the Borough Council should introduce its own Biodiversity Record/Action Plan to which it can refer for planning applications. This would be similar to those developed by local authorities in West Berks and Bracknell Forest and will help ensure that, where development occurs, measures are put in place to safeguard local ecology.

R17.3 It should be considered whether there is a need for a planned treescape in Cookham parish, with protection for trees on both public and private land.

R17.4 All landowners should be encouraged to continue maintaining existing hedgerows and trees and to plant additional hedgerows and trees over time where suitable. However, see also R4.7.

R17.4 It should be recognised that chemical measures to control ragwort can kill other important flora and fauna, and that chopped rubber as a ground surface can be ecologically damaging, as may be other artificial ground surfaces.

18 Opportunities for enhancement

18.1 Introductory note

This section identifies elements of Cookham's built environment that could benefit from enhancement. It does not supplement existing planning policy but is provided to highlight opportunities which emerged during the preparation of the VDS.

18.2 Nominated eyesores

During the Public Meetings of the VDS early consultations, attendees completed questionnaires, which asked, amongst other questions, 'What are Cookham's eyesores?' Two particular 'eyesores' were each nominated by 10 or more of the 62 attendees. These were: the Station Parade area (named by 43 attendees) and the site of the former gasholder, Whyteladyes Lane (named by 12 attendees).

Station Parade area was by far the dominant nomination, though respondents were often careful to emphasize that it was the **appearance** that troubled them, not the facility itself, which was greatly valued (see also Box 21, page 44). Since those Public Meetings, significant work has taken place in respect of re-surfacing the Station Parade car park, with major benefits in both visual appearance and customer safety. The VDS Working Group is of the opinion that, in order to facilitate other remedial action needed, and in recognition of the presumed modest incomes of most Station Parade store-holders, some sort of community contribution might be offered, on an agreed footing, in order to help meet goals which are of direct benefit to Cookham residents (see Recommendation R8.1, page 50).

The site of the former gasholder has already been noted (Advisory Note A8.1) as one being currently promoted for development by the Borough Council.

18.3 Elsewhere in the VDS

Elsewhere in the VDS there are occasional mentions of visual aspects of Cookham where enhancement would be of benefit. Key amongst these are:

- **Enhanced visual integration of Cookham High Street** Certain more recent buildings in Cookham High Street currently sit uneasily amongst their neighbours for reasons of starkness of design, and others for choice of commercial colour scheme. It was recommended in Box 13, page 37 and R6.2, page 42 that, as and when opportunities present, these should be brought more into line with the otherwise harmonious appearances.
- **Visual, ecological and functional enhancement of the Alfred Major Recreation Ground** Improvements to aspects of the 14-acre 'Alfred Major' are suggested in Box 29, page 49 and in Recommendation R8.2, page 50, whilst noting the work already applied to the optimisation of this important community asset. A study to develop an 'enhanced vision' for the recreation ground, responsive to changing needs and to the spirit of recent legislation, would be an essential first step.
- **Improvements to the Moor car park** The Moor car park is in poor condition and unsightly. Recommendation R4.5, page 17 suggests the exploration of modern

materials that might provide an improved surface. Low hedging or rustic perimeter fencing (see Section 6.20) might also be evaluated with a view to softening the appearance of parked cars whilst leaving the area open to public view.

- **Tidying and harmonisation of riverbank vistas** Cookham's riverside vistas currently present mixed messages to river users about the character of Cookham. The subject is discussed in Section 10. Generally, there is a lack of harmonisation, and even a degree of dereliction in some instances, that could be remedied as and when opportunities present. It is recommended that owners should give consideration to the provisions of the VDS when making changes to properties that may have visual impact but do not necessarily require planning permission.
- **Winter Hill** The south-western end of Winter Hill has gradually changed as vegetation has established and become more mature. The 10 year management programme currently being undertaken by the National Trust, as outlined in Box 10, page 16, and Recommendation R4.6, page 17, is understood to be cognizant of the need to achieve a proper balance between restoration of grassland and associated views, on the one hand, and issues of rainwater run-off and erosion, on the other hand.
- **Rationalisation of Cookham's main signposts and the need for fewer road signs** At Annex A, Recommendation RA.2, page 73 concerns anomalies in Cookham's main signposts. These could helpfully be rationalised, but not with too strict an approach, since some of the existing anomalies contribute to Cookham's visual charm. A more serious problem is the sheer number of road signs and road surface paintings (Annex A, Recommendation RA.3, page 73), especially at the approach to Cannondown railway bridge, heading into Cookham. Further along this road, the profusion of poorly positioned signs at the roundabout blocks important views across Poundfield and towards Roman Lea.



Early Spring 2013 view north from the more easterly of two parking areas on Winter Hill.

18 Opportunities for enhancement continued



Cookham Bridge

Box 47

Cookham Bridge (Section 3.6) was described by Fred Thacker, author of 'The Thames Highway' (1920) (Reference 16) in the following humorously acerbic terms: *"It has been described as the cheapest bridge on the river for its size ... Its appearance is not unfavourable to the statement ... But it is at least white ..."*

It is thought that the bridge was originally a steely-grey, but it is known to have been white (or off-white) for most of the twentieth century, if not longer. There was some consternation in the village when the bridge was painted bright blue, but the colour has now faded to something more acceptable to most people. Some residents love the present colour, but others do not. From the point of view of the VDS, the gentle beauty of the bridge as an entrance to Cookham and symbol of the village would be enhanced if it was returned to a muted hue within Cookham's built-colour palette (Section 6.8). Whatever the colour, it is unarguable that the bridge décor is currently allowed to be in a poor state and its cleanliness leaves much to be desired, greatly detracting from the attractive detail of its iron quatrefoils. Future possibilities may include bridge cleaning by volunteers and a vote on preferred colour prior to the next major repainting.

Below left: The Tarrystone, as positioned from 1909 until the 1950s. The photograph clearly shows its greater height than is presently visible, whilst the circular plinth was an attractive way of further ensuring the stone's prominence.

Below right: In its present setting, the Tarrystone has either been turned onto its side, or set deeply into its concrete base. The adverse impact of loss of height is further worsened by the effects of severe cluttering, to front, sides and rear of the stone. The imposing bench seat and wall-mounted commemorative plaque are also victims of this uninviting assemblage.



The Thames railway and foot bridges

Box 48

The linked Thames railway and foot bridges are important entrances to Cookham from Bourne End. Both their décor condition and their cleanliness have been serious embarrassments for a considerable number of years. The situation is now being remedied.



The Tarrystone

Box 49

The Tarrystone, a mysterious, polished sandstone boulder, geologically foreign to Cookham, stands a foot lower than it did in 1900. The stone has a long and intriguing history, including several re-positionings within Cookham village. Whilst now located near one of its former positions (where it is thought to be correctly placed as part of an ancient boundary), it stands in a cluttered streetscape where it almost wholly lacks visual impact. Once regarded as a 'defining symbol of Cookham', it is now so elusive in the first thoughts of residents that it received only one mention throughout the entire VDS Consultation Programme. Action to restore the former glory of the Tarrystone, by re-setting the stone to reveal its true height - and mounting it on a prominent plinth, against a clear backdrop, with uncluttered surrounding space - are strongly advocated.



Annex A Cookham's three settlements (naming, status and boundaries)

A.1 Naming and boundaries of the three settlements

During the initial VDS consultation period it emerged that the naming and boundaries of Cookham's three settlements was far from straightforward. Most notable amongst the matters that had to be resolved for descriptive purposes in the VDS were firstly the issue of **'one Cookham' versus 'the Cookhams'**, and secondly **the extent of Cookham Rise**, concerning which markedly differing views had been identified. It was important to ensure that the nomenclature used in the VDS was as 'right' as it could be, and also to ensure that any 'boundaries' mentioned were correct. To this end a significant amount of investigation was undertaken.

As a result of these enquiries, it became clear that not everyone who lives in Cookham parish considers themselves to live Cookham village, Cookham Rise or Cookham Dean. There are many who regard themselves as simply living in 'Cookham', particularly those whose homes are somewhat outside the 'core' areas of the three settlements (roads such as Lightlands Lane, Strande Lane, Southwood Gardens, Burnt Oak and Grange Road, to name just a few). For this and other important reasons (see Investigative Outcomes Summary, page 74), the VDS Working Group took the view that it was most appropriate to think and write in terms of 'one Cookham' rather than 'the Cookhams'. That is to say, **all** residents live in Cookham, whilst **some** residents choose to designate their home location more specifically as being Cookham village, Cookham Rise or Cookham Dean.

It also became clear during our investigations that, whilst the area between the Maidenhead Road and the railway line (including Station Hill, Station Parade, Station Road, Roman Lea and Westwood Green) is thought by certain Cookham residents, and especially by outsiders, to be part of Cookham Rise, it is **not** known as Cookham Rise to those who live or work there. Those consulted who live or work in this area overwhelmingly regard it as being simply 'Cookham'. Many referred to the address on their deeds in affirming that the area surrounding Station Hill was Cookham and not Cookham Rise. Longer term residents emphatically related the history, as recounted on page 74.

Despite the distinction between the Station Hill area and Cookham Rise, inspection of an Ordnance Survey map clearly shows a central Cookham settlement that includes both of these areas. However, people are understandably very sensitive about the naming of the place where they live. For this reason the VDS Working Group took a decision to name Cookham's central settlement as **'Cookham Rise and the Station Hill area'**.

A.2 Naming decisions reached for VDS purposes

Following their consultations, the VDS Working Group agreed the following for naming in the VDS.

The name **'Cookham parish'** is used to designate the entire area within the parish boundary: that is the three settlements and the surrounding green spaces.

The name **'Cookham'** is used as the collective term for all three Cookham settlements. This tallies with the Land Registry's use of the name 'Cookham' (only) in addresses across all three settlements - and therefore it tallies with the deeds of all residents.

Accordingly the phrase **'the Cookhams'** is not used in the VDS as it was not, in the light of investigative outcomes, considered to be a correct reflection of the true situation. Where it might otherwise occur it is replaced by the name, 'Cookham' or, where appropriate, 'the three settlements'. Cookham in its entirety is occasionally referred to as 'the village', whilst Cookham village is always referred to as 'Cookham village'.

In summary, the three settlements discussed in the VDS are designated:

- Cookham village
- Cookham Rise and the Station Hill area
- Cookham Dean

All three are seen as part of 'one Cookham', recognising that many residents consider themselves to live in Cookham and not specifically in one of the three settlements named above.

Despite the treatment of Cookham as 'one Cookham', it is recognised in the VDS that the name 'Cookham Dean' possesses clearer 'separateness' and a more definite status as a place name, than does 'Cookham village' or 'Cookham Rise'. This has come about because of Cookham Dean's separate historic ecclesiastic boundary, its further 'separateness' as being wholly within Green Belt, the wide usage of the name 'Cookham Dean' in the addresses that people actually employ (even though the Land Registry gives all 'Cookham Dean' addresses as 'Cookham' only) and the widespread presence of the name 'Cookham Dean' on signposts.



Entry to Cookham village is preceded by 'Cookham' signs. Above: The sign on Sutton Road includes a Cookham emblem. Below: The sign to the north of Cookham bridge, incongruously attached to the back of the Buckinghamshire sign. There is clutter at this point and nothing to signify the enchantment of the village.



Annex A Cookham's three settlements (naming, status and boundaries)

A.3 Status of the three settlements as 'established locations'

There are some important differences in the status of the three settlements as 'established locations'.

The Ordnance Survey Explorer map 172, shows Cookham Rise and Cookham Dean by name, but not Cookham village, giving only the word 'Cookham' in that location. 'Cookham Village' does not exist as a recognised place name in Ordnance Survey terms and it is in part for that reason that the VDS does not use an upper case 'V' in naming Cookham village.



Intriguing anomalies are seen on this signpost at the end of Popes Lane in Cookham Dean. This is one of only two signposts in Cookham that points to Cookham Rise. It also points to Cookham Dean Bottom, strictly speaking a road name, but also sometimes recognised as an area.



A messy set of signs on the roundabout west of the Pound obscures the views of Poundfield and the attractive homes in Roman Lea. Intriguingly the main sign points left to Cookham Dean (but not to Cookham Rise), and right to 'Cookham' in the direction of Cookham village exclusively.

In terms of signposting, Cookham Dean is well signposted by name. For Cookham Rise, just two signposts seem to exist, with Cookham village, as such, not signposted. Despite the signposting of Cookham Dean and Cookham Rise, however, no place-name sign tells the traveller that they have *actually arrived* in those locations.

Entry to Cookham village is preceded by 'Cookham' name-place signs, but these, too, do not appear to exist elsewhere.

Further differences of status between the settlements are caused by the inclusion of Cookham village and Cookham Rise, but not Cookham Dean, in the 'Townscape Assessment' of the Royal Borough on the grounds that Cookham Dean is 'rural'. In contrast, all three settlements are within the 'Designated Rural Area' for the purposes of affordable housing.

Along yet another dimension it is noted that the whole of Cookham Dean lies within the Green Belt whilst Cookham Rise and Cookham village have the status of 'excluded settlements within the Green Belt'.

A.4 Intriguing anomalies

It is clear from the various descriptions in this Annex that the naming, boundaries and status of the three Cookham settlements are full of intriguing anomalies. Whilst all this takes effort to understand, there do not appear to be any particular negative impacts, but simply a 'quirkiness' that helps make Cookham as enchanting as it is.

What the VDS Working Group eventually designated the 'one-Cookham' concept and 'the Cookham-ness of Cookham' were threads that appeared and re-appeared through the various outcomes of our investigations.

A summary of the VDS Working Group's findings on these and related matters is provided overleaf.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Cookham and its three settlements

RA.1 The sense of 'one-Cookham' would be gradually strengthened if efforts were made to replace the expression 'the Cookhams' wherever it occurs with the single name, 'Cookham'.

RA.2 A degree of rationalisation of Cookham's main signposts may be helpful. In particular, greater use of Cookham's emblem would add to Cookham's ambience on entry. On the Sutton Road sign, the colours of the emblem have currently disappeared and need to be restored. Any reconsideration of main signposts needs to be undertaken in conjunction with an appraisal of any requirements for added small local street signs to help tourists (see Section 16).

RA.3 Improvement is needed to the signage shown on the Maidenhead Road before the roundabout at the western end of the Pound and at the roundabout itself. In respect of the latter, it is important not to obscure the view at this point of entry to Cookham.

Annex A Cookham's three settlements (naming, status and boundaries)

A.5 Investigative outcomes summary

Land registration

All addresses in Cookham Parish of registered properties are listed at the Land Registry as Cookham (not village, Rise or Dean). Cookham is therefore the official address of all properties, but not necessarily the address that their residents or proprietors choose to use (see below).

History

Historically, the ancient village of Cookham included the area surrounding the High Street, together with the area of the Pound. The village was split in two by the need to expand without building on the flood plain of the Moor.

Cookham Rise was the area to the west of the railway line, that grew up after the coming of the railway in the 1850s. The word 'Rise' referred to the top of the hill west of the railway station, broadly what is now the top of High Road.

Cookham Dean had more definite separateness from Cookham Village or Cookham Rise as it had its own ecclesiastic parish boundary.

Where people think they live and how they choose to present their addresses

Many Cookham residents do not feel that they live specifically within one of the named settlements. Consultees emphasised, 'not everywhere in Cookham is village, Rise or Dean'.

People living in the area immediately surrounding Cookham High Street in general consider that they live in Cookham village, though most appear to present their addresses as just Cookham. People on the periphery of that area do not necessarily feel that they live in Cookham village, but just in Cookham.

People living to the west of the railway line may in general consider that they live in Cookham Rise, though views do differ as to the precise extent of Cookham Rise within that area. Some of those consulted regarded Cookham Rise as being all or most areas to the west of the railway line, but others were adamant that it is strictly the top of the hill, west of the station. People living to the west of the railway line appear to split about 50:50 as to whether they choose to use Cookham or Cookham Rise in their addresses.

Cookham Dean residents largely choose to present their addresses as Cookham Dean.

To the west of the Maidenhead Road, between the Maidenhead Road and the railway line, residents and shopkeepers overwhelmingly consider that they live in Cookham, not Cookham Rise. They present their addresses accordingly, with particular emphasis by very long-term residents. This area includes Station Hill, Station Parade, Station Road, Roman Lea, Westwood Green and the houses on the western side of the Maidenhead Road. It was noted that retail addresses in Station Hill and Station Parade are given as 'Cookham Rise' in certain directories. This is incorrect, as is further affirmed by the respective retailers.

Status in relation to Ordnance Survey maps

The Ordnance Survey Explorer map 172, shows Cookham Rise and Cookham Dean by name, but not Cookham village, giving only the word 'Cookham' in that location. It is for that reason that the VDS does not use an upper case 'V' in naming Cookham village.

Electoral Wards

The three electoral wards in Cookham Parish are Cookham Ward (Cookham village), Cookham Rise Ward and West

Ward (Cookham Dean). The wards represent electoral divisions of the Parish as a whole and therefore cannot be expected to tally with the core areas of the three settlements. Rather surprisingly, however, the Cookham Rise Ward extends to the Station Hill area and the Pound and so is unrepresentative of all other indications of the extent of Cookham Rise.

Signposting

There appear to be only two signs to tell the traveller that they have arrived in Cookham. One is on the north side of Cookham Bridge and the other is in Sutton Road.

The Cookham sign in Sutton Road contains the Cookham emblem that came into being in 1994 when Cookham was to be twinned with St Benoit in France. This is shown in indentation form, but appears to have been painted out, at least for the time being.

Cookham Dean is well signposted by name. For Cookham Rise, just two signposts appear to exist, with Cookham village as such, not signposted. Despite the signposting of Cookham Dean and Cookham Rise, however, no sign tells the traveller that they have *actually arrived* in those locations

Conservation Area Status

A major part of Cookham village and all of Cookham Dean are Conservation Areas. The Cookham village conservation area is designated the Cookham High Street Conservation area even though its spread is much greater than the High Street.

Status as per RBWM Townscape assessment

In the 'Townscape Assessment' of the Royal Borough, all of Cookham is included except Cookham Dean on the grounds that Cookham Dean is 'rural'.

Green Belt status

The whole of Cookham Dean is within the Green Belt whilst Cookham Rise and Cookham village have the status of 'excluded settlements within the Green Belt'. This means that Cookham Rise and Cookham village are not subject to the particular development constraints (see Section 4.6) of Green Belt status, such that, in planning language, '*development suitable to those areas is deemed suitable in principle*'. It is understood to be the case that developers will inspect excluded areas within the Green Belt to assess their suitability for strategic housing development proposals. The heart of Cookham village is within the Conservation Area and development possibilities there are limited on that basis. The more outlying areas of Cookham Village are not subject to this particular set of constraints and neither are the built-up elements of Cookham Rise and the Station Hill area.

Status in relation to affordable housing issues

For the purposes of certain affordable housing issues (see Reference 19), Cookham Parish in its entirety is a 'Designated Rural Area'. In some other instances the built environment of a village is excluded from the 'Designated Rural Area' zone even if the village setting is a 'Designated Rural Area' – but not so in Cookham Parish.

Because Cookham Parish is a 'Designated Rural Area', it is subject to 'Rural Exception Policies', which seek to provide a means by which affordable housing for local people can gain planning consent in locations where that would not normally be possible. Another consequence of Cookham's being a 'Designated Rural Area' is that houses built since 1997 by either the Council or a Registered Social Landlord for an affordable rent (Council houses) cannot be sold under 'Right to Buy' or 'Right to Acquire' legislation. Those built since September 2009 as 'shared ownership' properties have no right to enfranchise and the equity is restricted to 80% ownership. Again, this is to ensure that the local stock of 'affordable housing' is maintained where possible.

Annex B Relevant Stanley Spencer paintings - further detail

B.1 Rationale

The paintings listed in this section are those by Sir Stanley Spencer possessing identifiable or known links with views, facades or other building detail within Cookham parish. For the convenience of the reader, the relevant Guidance Point from Section 14 is reproduced to the right, whilst the selected paintings are tabulated below in such a way as to reflect the localities that may be affected in relation to future planning applications.

All applications that could impinge on the current appearance of views, facades or other building detail depicted in paintings by Sir Stanley Spencer should include a list of the painting(s) concerned and provide suitable commentary regarding the impact of the proposed development in the specific Stanley Spencer connection. A design goal should be to avoid detracting from the enjoyment of informed residents and visitors regarding the present scene and its connection to a Stanley Spencer painting.

It may be possible in certain applications to plan for the restoration of particular visual linkages to a Stanley Spencer painting that have more recently been lost or

G14.1 The views, facades and other building detail depicted in paintings by Sir Stanley Spencer are part of Cookham's cultural heritage and contribute to the understanding both of the history and character of Cookham and of Sir Stanley Spencer's celebrated works. Proposals should carefully balance the need to protect this cultural heritage with the aims of creating sensitive change. Proposals having an adverse impact, especially in relation to the direct visual linkage which is possible between the painting and the present day scene should not be permitted.

impaired. Such restoration might involve the removal of blockages to a view, or the reinstatement of a scenic or building feature. Any such offer should in general be a welcome feature of an application - in the same way that proposals to restore lost features of historic buildings are generally seen as positive.

The Stanley Spencer Gallery is the best source of all relevant images, whether on view in the Gallery or within the available literature.

B.2 Stanley Spencer paintings that include identifiable or known views, facades or other building detail

Paintings relating to Cookham High Street and Odney Lane

The Tarrystone (1929)	Former location at east end of High Street looking westwards along High Street from junction with Sutton Road.
Neighbours (1936)	Fernlea, birthplace of Stanley Spencer and his home for many years, showing privet hedge and garden fence at back of house.
Christ carrying the Cross (1920)	View of Fernlea upper front elevation.
Christ's Entry into Jerusalem (1921)	View of Fernlea and, next door, an ivy covered cottage, The Nest, home of Stanley Spencer's grandmother.
Month of April: Clipping Privet Hedge (Chatto and Windus Almanack 1927)	Fernlea lower front elevation, showing front door, bay window., and low wall topped with privet hedge.
The Dustmen or The Lovers (1934)	Front garden of cottage in High Street.
Crossing the road (1936)	Buildings on north side of High Street, from Vine Cottage to Bel and the Dragon.
St. Francis and the Birds (1935)	High Street cottage showing tiled roof.
The Farm Gate (1950)	Gateway of Ovey's Farm, High Street.
From the Artist's Studio (1938)	View south west to pitched, tiled roofs behind southern side of High Street.
Girls Returning from a Bath (1936)	Distinctive circular window of the Odney Club (Lullebrook Manor), Odney Lane.

Paintings relating to locality of the War Memorial, School Lane and Moor Hall

The Jubilee Tree (1936)	Southwards view from near The Crown public house including War Memorial and School Lane.
Adoration of Old Men (1937)	North-western end of School Lane, showing brick, flint and metallic walling.

Paintings relating to locality of the War Memorial, School Lane and Moor Hall continued

Mending Cows, Cookham (1915)	Buildings now free of cows converted into the house at the end of the Malt Cottages and Gantry House.
A Village in Heaven (1937)	By war memorial looking towards School Lane, including flint wall.
High Street, Cookham (1929) / High Street from the Moor, Cookham (c1937)	View eastwards from Moor to High Street with large area of crossroads in foreground. Similar image dated 1937 is believed to be of the 1929 painting, erroneously dated.
Unveiling Cookham War Memorial (1922)	By war memorial with view north-westwards towards Winter Hill.
Love on the Moor (1949-54)	The Moor, looking south to Moor Hall wall.
The Village Lovers (1937)	Base of War Memorial viewed from above.
Miss Ashwanden in Cookham (1958)	View from close to War Memorial towards corner of School Lane and Moor Hall.
Villas at Cookham (1932)	Decorative metalwork detail on School Lane property including bay window and front garden.
The Betrayal (1914)	Buildings behind Fernlea, now the Malt Cottages and Tannery House.
The Betrayal (1922-3)	Flint and brick wall, School Lane.
The Brewhouse, Cookham (1957)	Front elevation of The Brew House in School Lane.
The Last Supper (1920)	Inside The Malt House in School Lane. In the background, the red wall of a grain bin.
Moor Posts, Cookham (1936)	Across the east end of the Moor showing houses close to the School Lane corner.
Cookham Moor (1937)	From the Causeway Bridge looking east towards the built edge of Cookham village, with Cliveden woods in distance

Annex B Relevant Stanley Spencer paintings - further detail

Paintings relating to Cookham Bridge and riverside scenes

Cookham Lock (1935)	View across lock including lockkeeper's cottage and wooded bank of Cliveden escarpment in distance.
The Bridge (1920)	Stylised stone version of Cookham bridge with decorative quatrefoil detail from existing iron bridge.
View from Cookham Bridge: Turk's Boatyard (1936)	View upstream showing Turk's boatyard, church tower and nearby property with river bank in foreground and Winter Hill in background.
Turk's Boatyard, Cookham (1931)	Skiffs pulled up in yard with Thames and toll house in background.
Swan Upping at Cookham (1915-1919)	By Turk's boatyard facing downstream, shows Cookham Bridge with quatrefoil details.
Detail of 'Christ Preaching at Cookham Regatta (1959)	Boats in river by The Ferry Public House.
The Wharf, Cookham (1936)	View to Bucks bank from The Ferry Public House.
Upper Reach, Cookham (1936)	View upstream, under bridge, from The Ferry public house towards Riversdale.
Dinner on the Hotel Lawn (1956-7)	Riverside lawn of The Ferry Public House.
Ferry Hotel Lawn (1936)	View downstream from the lawn of The Ferry Public House towards Sashes Island.
By the River (1935)	Bellrope Meadow, towards Holy Trinity Church.
Bellrope Meadow (1936)	Looking south-east including Holy Trinity Church.
Boat Builder's Yard (1936)	View to river, fish tank in foreground.

Paintings relating to locality of the Holy Trinity Church

Cookham Churchyard, Whitsun (1953)	Gateway view to Holy Trinity Church.
The Churchyard, Cookham (1958)	Side view of Holy Trinity Church.
The Angel, Cookham Churchyard (1934)	View of The Angel statue in Holy Trinity churchyard, with church tower in background.
The Resurrection, Cookham (1923-7)	Holy Trinity churchyard, showing stylised church windows and existing path to river.

Paintings relating to Cookham Rise

Cookham Rise Cottages (1935-6)	Lower Road cottages showing front gardens and wooden picket fences (but possibly the row of cottages in High Road to left of Cliveden View, also known to have had picket fences.).
Cookham Rise (1938)	View from west to Sleekstone Cottages in Grange Road over what is now Burnt Oak/ Pearce Drive and towards Winter Hill.

Views towards Cookham and over the river

Noah's Ark Field, Cookham (1938)	East of the railway: view to Bourne End and Hedsor.
The Scarecrow, Cookham (1934)	Painted in Rowborough gardens with view over Marsh Meadow to Berries Road.
Cookham (1914)	From Winter Hill across railway and Marsh Meadow towards Riversdale and Hedsor.
Cookham-on-Thames (1937)	View from Golf Course towards Cookham bridge.

Paintings relating to Poundfield, Terry's Lane and The Pound

Pound Field, Cookham (1935)	View southwards from upper Poundfield Lane towards buildings of The Pound including former cedar tree.
Gardens in the Pound, Cookham (1936)	View showing north side gardens with metallic fencing looking south east to old walls, gates and buildings on south side.
Magnolias (1938)	Includes views towards Terrys Lane.
Wisteria at Englefield (1954)	Front porch of Englefield.
Englefield House (1951)	South-east corner of house and cedar tree.
Cookham from Englefield (1948)	From the garden eastwards showing former cedar tree and houses in the distance.
Englefield Garden looking towards Hedsor (1950)	View from Englefield to Hedsor.
Lilac and clematis at Englefield (1955)	Showing single storey element of house with paned windows.
Terry's Lane, Cookham (1932)	The Poundfield from Poundfield Lane.

Views to and from Cookham Dean, principally towards Cookham Rise

Landscape, Cookham Dene (1939)	View southwards from property adjacent to Woodlands Farm towards The Mount and woods to the south of Long Lane.
Garden View, Cookham Dene (1938)	View from the same location across Lower Mount Farm towards Cliveden and Taplow Court.
Rock Garden, Cookham Dene (1942)	Over Lower Mount Farm, probably from The Mount.
The Mount, Cookham Dene (1938)	Garden of The Mount. Views over Lower Mount Farm towards Cliveden and Taplow Court, also showing Windsor Castle.
Wheatfield at Starlings (1954)	View southwards from Kennel Lane showing the rear of houses in Whyteladies Lane and the gasholder.
Field of Flax (1948)	Towards Cookham Dean over Lower Mount Farm from the area of Long Lane.
Cookham from Cookham Dene (1938)	Panoramic view towards Cookham Village and Lower Road, Cookham Rise from unknown high point in Cookham Dean.

Cookham's environs

The Bridle Path at Cookham (1938)	Long Lane: view towards Maidenhead down Footpath 19.
Rickets Farm, Cookham Dene (1938)	Pigsty at Dean Farm with view northwards to Bisham Woods (alternatively thought to be pigsty near reservoir above Pudsey Close, Cookham Dean).
The Quarry Woods, Cookham (1920)	Lower part of Winter Hill.
Rowborough, Cookham (1934)	View across the north of Marsh Meadow towards Hedsor and Bourne End.
Cockmarsh Hill, Cookham (1935)	View from Winter Hill across the valley to east of the former Nuttings Farm towards Well End.
Patricia at Cockmarsh Hill (1935)	Eastern shoulder of Winter Hill.
Bathing in Odney Pool, Cookham (1921)	Bridge over the weir and the view towards the wooded escarpment of Cliveden.
Separating Fighting Swans (1933)	Where Lulle Brook meets the main stream of the Thames, the sloping beach of the former 'My Lady Ferry'.

Annex C Buildings and areas of 'Special Local Significance'

C.1 Buildings of Special Local Significance

The following buildings, unlisted and outside of Conservation Areas, are designated in the VDS as buildings of 'Special Local Significance' (see Section 15 for an explanation of this term).

C.1.1 Lock Keeper's cottage



The compact Lock-Keeper's cottage is a modest Victorian building with notable historical and cultural links. The role of resident Lock Keeper is currently in reprieve after threat of termination, though its long term future, and hence the future of the dwelling associated with the job, must be in doubt.



The historic role of the Lock Keeper's cottage at Cookham relates to the knowledgeable and specialist work of generations of Lock Keepers, who not only maintained all the equipment and controlled the passing river craft, but also played a key role in flood management.

The cultural significance of the Lock Keepers cottage is exemplified by the contribution of the Lock Keeper's wife to the **'Three Ferries Walk'**, which was a regular Sunday afternoon walk for villagers and visitors about 70 years ago. The walk was described by one villager, James Hatch, as **"A very pleasant shady walk down to My Lady Ferry, cross on the ferry and walk on the towpath towards Hedsor, then catch another ferry over to Cookham Lock. Have a cream tea in the Lock Keeper's garden. Then walk along the cut and catch the last ferry across to the landing by the bridge."** The Lock Keeper's cottage should endure as an accurate reflection of its historic importance in the life of Cookham.

C.1.2 Terraced housing facing Broom Hill

The two long terraces facing Broom Hill junction are rare examples of an embellished local authority design, with deep roofs, multiple window arrays, and attractive transitions from one style to another within the same terrace. Their integrity should be carefully preserved and their façades protected against incongruous add-ons (see also Box 28, page 48).



C1.3 Cookham Nursery School

Forward-looking when it was built in 1949, the school was designed by architect, John Stillman, as a prototype and early exemplar of a 'new educational architecture' where openness and airiness mattered, with both indoor and covered outdoor play areas, additional to generous garden space.



Developed amid the wave of Britain's post-war reconstruction, it was one of the first purpose-built nursery schools in England.



The original structure remains, though now with added features. The building is steel-framed with a sloping, cantilevered roof providing covered paths as well as sheltered play space. Its large-paned windows are a striking feature, relieving what would otherwise be stark expanses of glass.

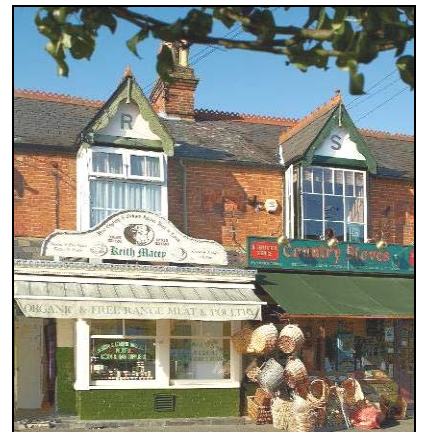
Despite its very modern appearance for its time, the generous green setting of the building, its limitation to a single storey, and its paned windows ensured that it was not 'too startling' for Cookham. It drew in many admiring visitors from the UK and Commonwealth (see also Box 21, page 44). It is a building whose character should be preserved.

C.1.4 Shop terrace between car park and Pinder Hall

This terrace is notable for its prominent first floor rendered, gabled bays, each with an identifying letter relating to its original name. (N, R, S and T), respectively Narcissus (daffodil), Rose, Shamrock and Thistle Cottages. The motifs, symbols of Wales, England, Ireland and Scotland, were once pictorial but then they faded and the letters were deployed instead. Each upper bay of the terrace is set into a wider ground floor lean-to bay roof. Above the lower bay roofs are patterned barge boards and there are other decorative features. The terrace is full of unusual character, which should be retained (see also Box 24, page 46).

Below left: Elements of the terraced housing facing Broom Hill.

Right and below right: Shop terrace between car park and Pinder Hall.



C.2 Areas of Special Local Significance

The VDS designates the following areas and streets as being of Special Local Significance. For any of these, a case may additionally be put forward for the status of Conservation Area if residents or the Parish Council choose to do so (see Section 15.3 and Recommendation R15.1, page 67).

- In Cookham Rise
 - The area to the west of the junction between High Road and Lower Road (edged red on plan)
 - Lower Road cottages (edged in red on plan)
- In the Station Hill area
 - Station Road and Roman Lea

C2.1 West of the High Road / Lower Road junction



The properties in this area were among the earliest to be developed - in the 1850s - soon after the arrival of the railway and they are still among the most visible to rail passengers. They include some typical examples of mid-nineteenth century artisans' dwellings, the row forming Nightingale Place and Nightingale Place Cottages being particularly distinctive.

The appearance of the eastern frontage could be improved when the empty former public house/restaurant is brought back into use. On Lower Road, a curve and rise in the street create a point of anticipation, emphasised by the prominence of the Methodist Church.

C.2.2 Lower Road cottages



Much of the early development of the Rise was small-scale housing. This is typified by the successive cottage terraces fronting the western end of Lower Road (photograph, page 50). Although most front gardens of these dwellings have been paved over recently, the homes still convey their nineteenth century heritage, while their linear form is counterpointed by the four gable-fronted pairs of semi-detached houses to their west, shown below.



West of Halldore Hill, in unusual echelon arrangement, four semi-detached homes, the leftmost still conveying its particular history as 'The Old Butchers Shop'.

C.2.3 Station Road

Station Road was described in Box 22 on page 45. It contains several fine examples of the Victorian homes erected in the late 1800s and at the turn of the century. These include Hedsor View Cottages, Alandale Cottages and the three storey 'West View', the latter adding an interesting variation in height without undue mass because of its slimmness. The road has a unified character with a strong sense of enclosure, especially northwards of West View. Cookham's characteristic red brick hue is broadly consistent throughout the street, whilst decorative roof ridges and coloured Victorian glass are also prominent features of the homes. New development should reflect careful observation of, and respect for, the characteristics of this street.



Left to right: Hedsor View in Station Road, showing shallow arches over windows. A modern property echoing the style of the street. The three-storey West View.

C.2.4 Roman Lea

Roman Lea (see also Box 22, page 45) is a particularly attractive single-sided street, lined with early twentieth century homes possessing status-enhancing features including bays and gables, stepped frontages, unusual brackets, pierced ridge tiles and square porches neatly set into corner locations. Like Station Road, and despite open views at first floor level, at street level Roman Lea has a real sense of enclosure. The harmonies of its facades and its physical presence as a focal point of views from the Maidenhead roundabout and elsewhere should not be compromised by new development.



C.3 Orchards and gardens of Special Local Significance

The Winter Hill cherry orchard covers an area of 1.9 hectares (4.8 acres). It is the last cherry orchard to remain in Cookham and the only such orchard between Cookham and Banbury. It is now an unspoilt wildlife habitat, important to the cultural heritage of Cookham Dean. The orchard should be carefully protected.

The glorious gardens of the Odney Club, with their strong Stanley Spencer connections, are designated as a garden of Special Local Significance, which, though ever-changing, should be protected. This 120-acre site beside the Thames includes riverside walks, specimen trees, magnificent wisteria, herbaceous borders, spring bedding and an ornamental lake. The gardens were a favourite with Sir Stanley Spencer, who featured a magnolia tree, still present in the gardens, in his work.

Reference List

Reference 1 Draft Scoping Report for the Sustainability Appraisal, Village Design Statement for Cookham Parish, July 2009

Reference 2 The Cookham Plan (2007)

- 2.1 Description of stages of flooding in Cookham, Housing and Development Section, of which, Section 7, Flooding, 7.4.3 (VDS page 22)
- 2.2 Flash floods (low risk of recurrence), Housing and Development Section, of which, Section 7, Flooding, 7.5.2 (VDS pages, 20, 50 and 58)
- 2.3 Footpath north of the Pound, Revised Traffic and Transport Section, of which, Section 9, The Pound, 9.4 (VDS page 38 and 63)
- 2.4 Refurbishment of Station Parade, Business and Economy Section, of which, Section 6, Appendices 6.4 (VDS pages 32, 38 and 69)
- 2.5 Community views on gasholder site for development, Housing and Development Section, of which Section 10, Future Developments, 10.5 and preceding questionnaire. (VDS pages 23, 48,50,71)
- 2.6 Cycle routes, Revised Traffic and Transport Section, of which, Section 7, Cycling, 7.1 - 7.8 (VDS page 63)
- 2.7 Issues concerning the siting of telecommunications masts, Housing and Development Section, Section 6, Mobile Telephones, especially 6.8. (VDS page 65)
- 2.8 Issues relating to Alfred Major Recreation Ground, People and Places Section, of which Sport, Leisure and Open Space Section. (VDS pages 49 and 50)
- 2.9 Assessment of affordable housing needs, Housing and Development Section, of which, Section 8, Housing Demand and Affordability, 8.6 – 8.9. (VDS page 27)

Reference 3 Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Local Plan (1999, amended 2003)

- 3.1 Green Belt policy, Section 2.1 (VDS page 14)
- 3.2 Matters relating to Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings Section 2.3 (VDS page 15)
- 3.3 Equestrian policy, Sections 2.1.28 - 2.1.31 (VDS page 19)
- 3.4 Development within the flood plain (VDS page 22)
- 3.5 Preserve setting of river, Section 2.2.16 – 2.2.18 (VDS page 48)
- 3.6 Local nature heritage reserves and wildlife heritage sites, Policy N9 (VDS page 69)

Reference 4 National Planning Policy Framework

(2012)

Reference 5 PPS5 Planning for the Historic Environment: Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide.

(Revised edition June 2012)

Reference 6 Conservation Area statements

- 6.1 Conservation Area Statement, Cookham High Street, Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead , November 2002. (VDS page 35)

- 6.2 Conservation Area Statement, Cookham Dean, Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, November 1998. (VDS page 51)

Reference 7 Planning, (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

(VDS page 38)

Reference 8 Appeal outcomes

- 8.1 Appeal report 21st April 1969, Inspector, KM Sergeant Also letter 15 December 1969, from SH Norris, Ministry of Housing and Local Government to Messrs Linklaters and Paines (VDS page 11)
- 8.2 Secretary of State Decision letter 21 February 1991 (VDS page 38)

Reference 9 Flood-related documents

- 9.1 Letter dated 18th August 2008 from Mr Jon Freed of the Environment Agency to Mr Daniel Gigg, Principal Planning Officer of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead concerning, the Cookham Flood Remediation Scheme. (VDS page 21)
- 9.2 RBWM Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (Revision 04), April 2009. (VDS page 22)
- 9.3 Environment Agency - Living on the Edge, August 2012 (VDS page 22)

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- 10 Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, Engineering and Transport Unit, Safety Audit/Risk Assessment Report, Proposal to utilise the Causeway across Cookham Moor for vehicular traffic during times of flood, February 2010. (VDS page 22)
- 11 Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, Gas Holder Station Development Brief, June 2003. (VDS page 48 and 50)
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- 13 Case study projects relating to Reference 12. <http://www.sbap.org.uk/library/index.php?page=NERC> (VDS page 50)
- 14 Soil association re community supported agriculture. <http://www.soilassociation.org/Takeaction/Getinvolvedlocally/Communitysupportedagriculture/tabid/201/Default> (VDS page 65)
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- 16 The Thames Highway – Locks and Weirs, Fred S Thacker (1920 – republished 1968) (VDS page 71)
- 17 Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead. Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document, June 2009 (VDS page 23, 32, 66,69)
- 18 Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead. Telecommunications Supplementary Planning Document, May 2008 (VDS page 65)

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Page 4 Cookham Church, Dean Lane/ Alleyns Lane, Page 5 Burial Mound, Page 8 Railway station, Millennium clock, Page 10 White Place Farm, Page 12 Turkeys free-ranging, Page 13 View from Winter Hill, Page 16 Winter Hill escarpment, Page 17 Tugwood Common and the Cricket Common, Page 18 Tree plantings, Long Lane, Page 23 The Ferry public house, the Railway Station and the Jolly Farmer public house, Page 25 Housing in Terry's Lane, Housing around the Village Green, Cookham Dean, Cookham High Street, Page 38 The Old Farmhouse and Old Cookham Fire Station, Page 39 Edwardian homes in Berries Road, Page 41 Contemporary design, Moor Hall (<i>with kind permission of the Chartered Institute of Marketing</i>) Page 44 Station Parade, Countrystore, Page 45 Pearce Drive, Burnt Oak, Page 48 Whyteladies Lane, Page 49 Alfred Major Recreation Ground, Page 52 Cookham Dean Bottom, Retail outlet in Arts and Crafts style, View toward War Memorial Page 54 Dean Meadow, Page 57 Victoria Cottages, Page 58 Sunken Lane (Kings Lane), Page 59 Properties at Spade Oak Reach, Page 60 Cookham Lock, Page 62 Homes beneath wooded skyline, Cookham Dean, Page 65 Polytunnels at Kings Coppice Farm, Page 67 Roman Lea, Page 68 The Stanley Spencer Gallery, Page 73, Sign at Maidenhead Road roundabout Page 77 Lock Keeper's cottage (upper photo), Cookham Nursery School (upper and lower), Shop terrace, Page 78 Methodist Church.	<i>Patrick Blake,</i> <i>Popes Lane,</i> <i>Cookham Dean</i>	Page 13 View from Odney Common to Odney Bridge Page 18 The Tarrystone historic photograph Page 20 Odney Sculpture Gardens, Page 41 Sir Bernard Miller Centre, Odney Estate Page 20 Mobile leisure unit on the Alfred Major Recreation Ground, Cookham Rise allotment, football on the Alfred Major recreation ground, Scout Fayre on Cookham Moor, Cookham Dean Fete on the Village Green, Cookham Page 21 Cookham Moor flooded, with traffic on Causeway, Page 25 Gabled roofs, Cookham Dean Village Green, Page 37 West end of high street (upper photograph) Page 28 'Natural House' (upper and lower) Page 35, High mast view of High Street and School Lane area	<i>Lesley Curley,</i> <i>Westwood Green,</i> <i>Cookham</i> <i>Chrissy Rosenthal and Ann Danks from their book, The Archive Photographs Series, Cookham, Tempus Publishing Ltd, 1998.</i> <i>The John Lewis Partnership</i> <i>Cookham Parish Council</i> <i>Dennis Palmer*, The Pound, Cookham</i> <i>The Prince's Foundation for Building Community</i> <i>John Hollidge*, Universal Sky Pictures Ltd, Marlow</i>
Page 8 Traffic jam at the railway station	<i>Chrissy Rosenthal and Ann Danks from their book, The Archive Photographs Series, Cookham, Tempus Publishing Ltd, 1998.</i>	Page 49 Westwood Green (Camping on the Green. Snow scene) Page 69 Strande Water, White Brook,	<i>Matthew Todd,</i> <i>Westwood Green,</i> <i>Cookham</i> <i>Brian Clews, Broomhill, Cookham</i>

INDEX

Numbers in **bold** indicate that the topic is covered in detail.
References **G, R, and A** are Guidance, Recommendations and Advisory notes respectively.

- 14th century, 36
- 15th century, 37, 38
- 16th century, 36, 54, 56
- 17th century, 40
- 18th century, 6, 52,
- 19th century, 6, 7, 9, 38, 51, 52, 54, 78
- 20th century, 8, 18, 37, 38, 40, 43, 45, 47, 48, 52, 56, 78
- 21st century, 8
- 1900s, 35,
- 1920s-1930s, 39, 45, 53, 55
- 1950s, 40, 43, 45, 47, 48, 49, 66,
- 1960s, 40, 43, 48, 60
- 1970s, 40, 45, 47,
- A**
- Accommodation Land, 10,19, **G4.8, A4.9, R4.8, R4.9**
- Acknowledgements, 2
- Advisory notes, 2,
- Affordable Housing, 23, 27, 35, 40, 48, 73, 74 **G6.12**
- Agri-business premises, 57
- Agricultural industry, *see Agriculture*
- Agricultural buildings 8, 11, 13, 14, 57, 64-65 **G13.1- G13.5, A13.1**
- Agricultural machinery, 64,
- Agriculture, 7, 8, 10, 11, 13, 19, 51, **R4.1, R4.2, R4.3,**
- Albion cottages, 57
- Alfred the Great, 5
- Alfred Major Recreation Ground, 20, 43, 48, 49, 50, 70 **R8.3,**
- Alleyns Lane, 4, 54, 58, 65, **G 9.4**
- Allotments, 18, 20,
- Ancient monuments, 9
- Anne of Cleves, 6
- Anglo-saxon, 5, 6,
- Annex A, 73-74
- Annex B,75-76
- Annex C, Special Local Significance 67, 77-78
- Apartment Buildings, 26, 38, **G6.7**
- Aquatic, 69
- Archaeology, 2, 5-9, 67, **R3.3 - R3.4**
- Architectural character / style, 4, 36, 37, 38, 39, 45, 46, 48, 54,
- Area of Special Landscape Importance, 10, 18, 57,
- Arthur Close, 27,48
- Arts & Crafts style, 52, 78
- Austen, Carol, 20
- B**
- Banks (bordering lanes), 58 **G9.2**
- Barbed wire **R4.8**
- Barges, 7,
- Barnfield Close, 40
- Barrows, 5
- Bass Mead, 40
- Bedwins Lane, 56,
- Bel and the Dragon, 37
- Bellinger, Ian, 2
- Bellrope Meadow, 60, 68,
- Berks, Colin, 6,
- Bernard Miller (Sir) Centre, 13, 41,
- Berries Road, 35, 39,
- Bickle, Sue, 37,
- Bigfrith Common, 16,
- Bigfrith Farm, 56
- Bigfrith Lane, 46, 52, 56
- Bio-diversity, 19, 69 **R17.1-17.5, A17.1-17.6**
- Birds, 69
- Bisham Abbey, 6,
- Bisham Parish, 10, 53, 56
- Bisham Woods, 18, 62,69
- Blackbutts Cottages, 35, 61
- Blocks of flats, 48,
- Boat builders, 55,
- Borough Council *see Royal Borough*
- Boulters Lock, 61,
- Boundaries, 25, 72-74
- Boundary Walk, 63,
- Bounty, the, 59, 62, 68
- Bourne End, 61, 62, 63, 71
- Bradcutts Lane, 18, 54
- Bray, 3
- Braywick, 5
- Brew House, 39,
- Breweries, 7
- Brewers Orchard, 52,
- Bricks/ brickwork, 24, 27, 36, 40, 45, 51, **G6.3**
- Bridge at Cookham, iv, 3, 7, 8, 21, 36, 60, 61, 62, 68, 71, 76
- Bridge at Maidenhead, 6
- Bridge Avenue, 26, 36, 48
- Bridge, iron work railway at Bourne End, 63, 71
- Bridleways, 63, **R4.8**
- Bronze Age, 5
- Broom Hill, 16, 61
- Buckinghamshire, 42, 49,
- Building form / design/ styles, 24, 26, 27, 28, 30, 51, 77 **G6.1a, G6.8, G6.11, G13.2**
- Building materials, 23, 24, 28, 37, 55, 60, 64, **G 6.3,**
- Building height, scale, 23, 24, 26, 27, 37, 41, 55, 60, 64 **G6.1**
- Built Areas – Guidance 23-34
- Built colour palette, 17, 25, 29, 42, 51,71 **G6.5**
- Built Environment, 2, 10, 68, **G 2.1,**
- Burgage plots, 5
- Burnt Oak, 43, 45
- Business Premises, *see also Shops, Commercial,* 8, 19, 64
- C**
- Caffieri, Hector 9
- Camlet way, 5
- Cannondown Road, 48, 61
- Cannon Court, 5, 6
- Cannon Down, 5, 61, 70
- Car Parking *see Parking*
- Carbon Neutral, 28
- Care Home, 56
- Catholic Church, 8
- Causeway, 17, 21, 22
- Cedar Drive, 31, 40
- Chalk downland, 10, 69, 70
- Chalk pit, 52,
- Characterisation of Cookham, 9, 32, 55, 59
- Chartered Institute of Marketing, 28, 68,
- Chequers Brasserie, 53
- Cherry orchards, *see also Orchards,* 7, 8, 12, 78
- Chilterns, 55, 60, 69
- Choke Lane, 62
- Church Gate, 24, 36, 61
- Church Road, 51, 52, 56, 57,
- Churches, 5, 6, 8,
- Churchgate House, 36
- Classical Style, 6
- Clews, Brian, 4, 15,
- Climate Change, 21
- Cliveden, 18, 35, 40, 48, 60, 61, 66
- Clomburr Cottage, 37
- Coat of Arms, 61
- Cockmarsh, 3, 5, 7, 16, 17, 59, 62, 69 **R4.6**
- Colours, 64, 70, 71 **G13.2**
- Commercial Centre, 4, 43, 44, 48, 57, 61,
- Commercial premises, 23, 30, **G6.15 a-d**
- Common Land, iv, 4, 7, 10, 16-17, 19, 20, **G4.6 ,**
- Community, 12, 13, 17, 20, 44 49, 52, 57, **R4.10-11, G4.2, G4.9** Buildings, 52
- Supported Agriculture 65, **R13.1**
- Vision, 49
- Concrete, 28
- Conservation Areas, 4, 15, 23, 24, 32, 36, 38, 51, 67, 70, 74, 77, 78
- Conservation Officer RBWM, 67
- Consultation programme for VDS, (iv), 1, 2, 4, 15, 17, 20, 31, 48, 49, 59, 63, 67, 68, 70, 71, 72
- Individual, iv, 1, 4, 12,
- Contemporary architecture, 24 , 28, 55, 57, 59, 60,64, 77 **G6.13a-b**
- Contributors, iv, 1, 2,
- Conversions, 23,
- Cookham Dean , 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11,12, 14, 19, 20, 24, 48, 51-58, 62, 72-74, 76 **G9.1-9.5, R9.1-9.2, A9.1-9.2, A13.1, RA1-4**
- Cookham Dean Bottom, 51, 52, 57, 58, 46, 73 **G9.5,**
- Cookham Dean Common, 16, 56, 62,
- Cookham Dean Primary School, 52
- Cookham Moor, 3, 4, 6, 7, 15, 16, 17, 21, 31,35, 41, 69, 70 **R4.5**
- Cookham Parish, 63, 72
- Cookham Parish Council, iv, 1, 2, 49
- Cookham Plan, 1, 49, 63
- Cookham Reach Sailing Club, 39,
- Cookham Rise, 4, 8, 14, 43-50, 72-74, 76 **G8.1-4, R8.1-4, RA1-4,**
- Cookham Rise Primary School, 47,
- Cookham Riverside, 60, 76
- Cookham Riverside buildings, 59, 60, **G10.1, A10.1-10.3, G4.6 ,**

- Cookham Riverside Care/Nursing Home, 39, 60
- Cookham setting, 4, **G2.1**
- Cookham settlements, iv, 1
- Cookham Society, iv, 1, 2
- Cookham Village, 4, 14, 16, **35-42**, 61, 66, **72**, **G7.1-7.2**, **R6.1-6.4**, **RA1-4**
- Coombe cottage, 9
- Coombe End, 53
- Copas Farms, 11, 12, **42**, 64
- Copas, Geoffrey, 12, 64
- Copas Partnership, 12, 57,
- Copas, Tanya, 12,
- Cottage/s, 6, 7, 8, 39, 45, 46, 51, 54, 57, 78
- Country style, 51, 53, 54, 57
- Countryside, 10,
- Countrystore, 44,
- Court case (Commons), 16,
- Court House, 5
- Coxborough, 5
- Coxborough Close, 43, 47,
- Cricket Club (C.Dean), 48,
- Cricket Common, 16, 17, 52
- Cromwell Cottage, 54,
- Crowding, 58
- Crown Public house hotel, 6, 7, 39,
- Cycle Routes/ Parking/ Paths, Tracks, 20, 63,
- Cutting edge architecture, 42, **G7.2**
- D**
- Danes Gardens, 40,
- Day Care, 44,
- Dean Farm Garage, 54,
- Dean Lane, 4, 48, 53, 54, 57
- Dean Meadow, 54
- Demolition, 59
- Demountable shelters, 57
- Density (of housing), 25, 39, 46, 48
- Derelict land, 14, **A4.2**
- Design, *see Building form/design/styles*
- Designated rural area, 74
- Detached, 57,
- Development, 1, 2, 9, 12, 15, 19, **23-34**, 39, 43, 66, **G6.1-6.23**
- Brief, 48,
- Commercial, 30, **G6.15a**
- Developers, 43,
- Domesday Book, 6
- Domestic extensions, 2, 22, 23, **27**, 54, **G6.9a,b**, **A5.4**
- E**
- East Gate, 6
- Eco-friendliness, Eco-dwellings, 28, 41
- Ecology, 2, 12, 49, **69**, **A17.1-6**, **R17.1-5**,
- Economy *see Local economy*
- Edwardian, 8, 15, 38, 39, 56,
- Electoral wards, 74
- Elizabeth Cottages, 47,
- Elizabeth House, 44,
- Emblem of Cookham, 72
- Enclosures, 7, 16,
- Energy efficiency, 28, 32, 41, **G6.22**,
- Englefield, 15, 38, 66
- English Heritage, 9, 67
- Enhancement of Built Environment, 70-71
- Environment Agency, 21, 22, **A5.1**, **A5.5**
- Equestrian activities *see Accommodation land*
- Erosion, 70
- Estate development, 26, **G6.6**
- Extensions *see Domestic Extensions*
- Eyesores, 70
- F**
- Fairview Cottages, 47,
- Farm buildings *see Agricultural Buildings*
- Farmers, 7, 10, 12, **R4.7**
- Farming, *see Agriculture*
- Farmland Management Strategy, 12
- Farmsteads, 51, 56
- Fascia, 57
- Fences, 19, 30, 31, **G6.19a-b**, **R4.8**
- Ferry Boat, 7
- Ferry Inn, 60, 61
- Ferry Lane, 36,
- Festival, Cookham, 20
- Feudal society, 16,
- Fields, 61,
- Fire station, 38, 39,
- Fisher, Jon, 68
- Fleet Ditch, 3, 35
- Flint, 24, 38, 52
- Flood adaptation design, 22, **R5.1**
- Floods and flooding, 6, 17, **21-22**, 59, 77, **G8.4**, **G9.5**, **A5.1-7**, **R5.1**
- Flood Plain, *see also River Thames* 3, 4, 8, 10, 16,
- Floral areas, 42, **R 6.3**
- Footpaths, 17, 38, 49, 57, 63
- Forge, 54
- Formosa Court,/Place/ Barns/ Meadow, 40,
- Formosa Island, 60,
- Front Gardens, 25, 47, 48
- Furze Platt, 62
- G**
- Gainsborough Close, 40
- Gallery, 28
- Gantry House, 39,
- Garages, domestic, 27, 46, 47, 48,
- Garages, retail, 57,
- Garden grabbing, 26, 46
- Gardens, 32, 67, 78, **G6.21**
See also Front gardens
- Gas holder site, 48, 49, 70, **A8.1**
- Gate hangs high, 7, 38,
- Gates, 25, 31, 57, 67, **G6.18**,
- Georgian, 6, 36, 37
- Gibraltar Lane, 29, 55, 59
- Gibson, Duncan, 43,
- Glenore, 39,
- Goats, 70
- Golf Club *see Winter Hill Golf Club*
- Gorse Road, 48
- Graham, Kenneth, 53
- Grange Lane, 45
- Grange Road, 45,
- Grazing rights, 6, 16
- Gravel extraction, 12,
- Green Belt, 12, 14, 15, 23, 48, 57, 65, 72, 73, 74, **G 4.4**, **A4.1-6**,
- Green Corridors, 15, 69
- Green Cycle routes, 63
- Green environment 4, **G2.1**
- Green Gap, 8, 11, 65
- Green Spaces, 1, 4, 10-20, 25, 68, 69, 72, **G4.9**, **R4.10-11**
- Grove's Way, 26
- Grubwood Common, 53
- Grubwood Lane, 18, 53, 56, 62
- Guidance, 2, 33-34
- H**
- Halldore, 5
- Halldore Hill, 78,
- Halls, 52
- Ham Field, 5
- Hard Surfaces, 25
- Hardings Green, 16, 52
- Harwood House, 56
- Hatch Gardens, 46,
- Hedgerows and hedges, 17, 18, 19, 31, 69, **G6.19a, b**, **R17.4**,
- Hedsor, 61, 66
- Hedsor Park Farm, 11
- Hedsor View, 78
- Hedsor Water, 3
- Henry VIII, 5, 6
- Heritage, 9, 54, 56, **R3.1-5**, **A3.1**
- Heritage Centre Maidenhead, 8
- Herries Preparatory School, 53
- High Road, Cookham Rise, 7, 43, 46, 47, 78
- High Street, Cookham, 4, 5, 6, 9, 13, 17, 35, 36, 37, 39, 61, 68, 70, 75
- R 6.2**
- High Wycombe, 7
- Highways safety audit, 22
- Hills Lane, 54
- Historic Environment Register, 9
- History, iv, 5-9, 51, 52, 67, 68, 72, 74, 77,
- Hockett Lane, 56, 62
- Holiday homes, 59,
- Holy Trinity Church, 4, 5, 7, 21, 36, 61, 76,
- Holy Trinity Primary School, 39
- Homecoming routes, 61-62, **G11.1**,
- Horses, *see Accommodation Land and Livery*
- Housing density, *see Density of housing*
- Housing Development 8
- Housing needs survey 27
- I**
- Iconic buildings, 28
- Ironwork, 66
- J**
- Jewel in the crown, 4, 49,
- Jobs Lane, 53
- John Lewis Partnership, *See also Odney Estate* 13, 36, 41
- Johnson, Michael, 28
- Jolly Farmer, 52
- K**
- Keeley's cottage, 37
- Kennel Lane, 48, 52, 65
- Kerbs, 25
- King's Arms, 6, 7, 37
- King's Coppice Farm, 11, 12, 56, 57, 65
- King's Lane, 52, 57
- L**
- Land Management Strategies, 13, **R4.3**
- Land Registry, 72, 74
- Landmark, 44, 46, 61

- Landowners, 13, 63, **G4.1-3, R4.4, R4.7, R17.4, A5.5**
- Landscaping and screening, 31, 64, 65, **G6.20, G13.4,**
- Lautree Gardens, 47
- Lea View Cottages, 57,
- Lee, The, 5
- Lesters Road, 48
- Leylandii, 31, 65
- Lighting / exterior / street, 25, 30, 32, 41 **G6.23,**
- Lightlands Lane, 22, 40,
- Listed Buildings, 15, 37, 54, 67
- Livery, 11,
- Local Authority, 48
- Local economy, 41, 57
- Local Plan *see Royal Borough's Local Plan*
- Lock, 3, 36, 60
Keepers cottage, 77
- London, 7, 8,
- Long, Elizabeth, 67
- Long Lane, 18, 61, 62
- Lower Cookham Road, 21, 61
- Lower Mount Farm, 11, 18, 65
- Lower Road, 6, 7, 43, 45, 46, 47, 78,
- Lower Ventnor Cottages, 57
- Lulle brook, 3, 40, 60
- Lullebrook Manor, 13, 36, 41, 60,
- M**
- Maidenhead, 3, 6, 7, 8, 11, 14, 60
- Maidenhead and Cookham Commons Preservation Society, 16,
- Maidenhead and Windsor Flood Alleviation Scheme, 21, 22
- Maidenhead Riverside, 61
- Maidenhead Road, 15, 40, 44, 49, 53, 61, 65 **RA4**
- Malt Cottage, 39
- Maltings, The, 37, 39
- Map Boards, 68
- Marlow, 8, 59, 62
- Marlow to Maidenhead Passenger Assn, 8
- Marsh Meadow, 11, 20, 21, 22, 39, 59, 68
- Medieval, 5, 6, 27, 37, 39
- Melmott Lodge 6
- Methodist Chapel (Cookham Dean), 6
- Methodist Chapel (Cookham Village), 8, 37
- Methodist Church (Cookham Rise), 46, 78,
- Mill House, 40
- Mill Island, 60
- Mill Lane, 21, 35, 36, 40
- Millenium Clock, 8
- Mineral extraction, 12 **G4.3, A4.1**
- Minster, *see Monasteries*
- Modern homes, *see Contemporary*
- Monasteries, 5, 6
- Moor, The, *see Cookham Moor*
- Moor Hall, 4, 6, 8, 31, 41, 75,
- Mooring, public, 68
- Mount, The, 56, 66,
- Mount Farm, 57
- N**
- Naming of Cookham, 72-74
- National Trust, 16, 17, 21, 52, 70
- Nature Conservation, 69, **A17.1 17.6, R17.1-5**
- Neighbourhood Plan, 32, 48, 49, 68,
- New Road, 347
- Nightingale Cottages, 47, 78
- Nightingale Place, 47
- Noah's Ark Field, 5
- Noah's Boathouse, 28
- Norman Conquest, 5
- Nursery School, 28, 44, 77
- O**
- Odney Club, 7, 8, 20, 28, 30, 40, 60, 68, 78,
- Odney Common, 3, 13, 16, 29, 36
- Estate, 13, 36, 40
- Odney Lane, 6, 7, 21, 36, 41, 61
- Old Cricket Common, 52
- Old Farmhouse, 22, 38,
- Old Stables, 52
- Openness, 18, 31, 57, **G9.2, R 9.1,**
- Orchards , 10, 18, 51, 53, 56, 62, 78
- Ordnance Survey, 72, 73, 74
- Overton Cottages, 57
- P**
- Paddocks, *see Accommodation land,*
- Paper mill, 7
- Parade *see Station Parade*
- Targeting, 57
- Parking, 17, 25, 26, 27, 29, 30, 32, 44, 47, 48, 53, 57, 68, 70, **R4.5, G 6.6, G6.16-17,**
- Parish Council, *see Cookham Parish Council*
- Parish location, 3
- Parish office, 36
- Pavements, 38, 63,
- Pearce Drive, 45
- Pedestrians, 35
- Penling Close, 48
- Peyton House, 48
- Philips, Peter, 12
- Photo-voltaic, 32
- Pick your own, 11
- Pinder Hall, 46,
- Pinkneys Green, 62
- Planning appeal, 11, 15
- Planning applications/ permission/ proposal, 1, 2, 9, 15, 41, 65, 66, 75, **G4.2, A17.5**
- Planning control, 59
- Planning Officer(s) 1, 65
- Planning Policy (National), 14, 15, 65
- Play, *see Recreation*
- Plots, 60
- Poad, Richard, 8
- Polytunnels , 65 **R13.1**
- Ponds, 51, 56
- Popes Lane, 52, 57, 73
- Post Office Stores, Cookham Dean, 52, 58 **G9.3,**
- Pound House, 6
- Pound, The, 6, 29, 38, 40, 61, 63, 76 **RA4**
- Poundfield, 15, 38, 45, 61, 62, 66, 69, 70, 73, 76 **G4.5,**
- Poundfield Lane, 28, 38,
- Prehistoric, 5
- Primary School, Cookham Dean, 52,
- Public Conveniences, 68
- Public Enquiry, 15
- Public Houses, 7, 57, 68
- Public open space, 11
- Public Transport, 68
- Q**
- Quarry Wood, 18, 53, 56,
Road, 8, 62,
- Questionnaires, 1
- R**
- Ragwort, 69, **R17.5**
- Railway, iv, 5, 7-8, 43, 44, 47, 49, 62, 68, 78,
- Railway Tavern, 47
- Recommendations, 2,
- Recreation, 16, 49,
- Reddaways cottage, 54
- Reference List, 79
- Regatta(s), 7, 66
- Regency, 6, 36
- Reinbald, 5
- Replacement of houses, 23
- Residents, iv, 1,
- Restaurants, 37, 68
- Retail premises, *see Shops,*
- Riley Cottages, 47
- River Thames, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 13, 16, 21-22, 39, 41, 51, 55, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 68, **G2.1, A9.2**
- River Thames Flood Plain, 3, 4, 23
- River Thames Path, 3, 36, 40, 59, 60,
- River Thames Riverbank, 17, 57, 70,
- Riverside Development 59-60, **G10.1, A10.1-3**
- Road signs, *see Signage*
- Roman Lea, 15, 43, 45, 67, 70, 73, 77, 78,
- Roman Occupation, 5
- Roofs, 24, 25, 41, 44, 46, 47, 51, 59, 60, 66 **G 6.2,**
- Rosebank Close, 47
- Rowborrow, 5, 15, 69,
- Royal associations, 6
- Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead, iv, 1, 9, 10, 68, 73,
Local Plan, 1, 9, 14, 15, 48, 50, 57, 67,
- Royal Manorial Estates, 6
- Rural character, 15, 25, **G6.4**
- Rural Exception Site/ Policies, 12, 23, 27, 48, 74,
- Rural Gaps, 57,
- S**
- St John the Baptist Church, 6, 51, 52,
- Sashes Island, 3, 5, 36, 60, 69,
- Saxon *see Anglo-Saxon*
- School Lane Cookham, 7, 29, 39, 41, 66, 75,
- School Lane Cookham Dean, 52
- Schools, 8, 63,
- Scouting, 2, 40,
- Screening, *see Landscaping*
- Scrub, 70
- Settlements, 3,
- Sewage Treatment Works, 69
- Shanley Homes, 43
- Shaw, The, 48,
- Sheltered Housing, 44, 45, 48,
- Shoe-making, 7
- Shops, 8, 37, 46, 52, 77, *see also Station Parade*
- Signage/ Signposting, 30, 44, 67, 68, 70, 72, 73, 74, **R6.1, RA2, RA3**
- Site of Special Scientific interest, 16, 69,
- Slate, 57
- Sleekstone Cottages, 45
- Soil Association, 65

Southview Cottages, 47
Southwood Road, 48,
Southwood Gardens, 40
Spade Oak Reach, 59,
60,
**Special Local
Significance**, 12, 15, 27,
44, 46, 48, 67, 77,
G 15.1, R15.1,
Sponsors, iv, 1,
Spring Lane, 51, 56,
Stag beetle, 69,
**Standards in housing
design**, 48,
Stanley Spencer, Sir, 15,
38, 39, 45, 66, 75-76,
G14.1, A10.1
Gallery, 8, 37, 66, 68,
75,
Startins Lane, 53,
Station, *see Railway*,
Station Hill, 4, 25, 38,
43-50, 44, 49,
RA2,
Station Parade, 31, 32,
38, 58, 60, 68, 69
G8.5, R8.1,
Station Road, 45, 78,
Stewardship projects,
12
Stone House, 6,
Stonehouse Lane, 55,
59,
Strande Lane, 21, 40
Strande Park, 40
Strande Water, 3, 69
Street lighting, *see
Lighting*
Street surveys, 1
Stubbles Lane, 56,
Studio House, 28, 39,
Styles (over footpaths),
51, 63
Styles (housing) *see
Architectural styles*
Summerleaze Ltd, 12
Sunken lane, 58, 62
**Supplementary
Planning Document**, iv,
1, 2, 67,
Surfacing, 25, 30, 69, 6,
R17.5
Surveys, 1, 10
Sustainability, 1, 63,
R4.9
Sustainable design, 23,
32,
Sutton Close, 35, 40, 61,

Sutton Farm, 12,
Sutton Road, 35, 36, 39,
40, 41, 61, 63, 72,
Switchback, 61,
T
Tannery House, 39
Taplow Court, 66
Tarmac, 24, 25, 30,
Tarrystone, 36, 71
Tarrystone House, 36
**Telecommunications
Masts**, 65
G13.1, A13.1, A13.2,
Terraced properties, *see
also Cottages*, 7, 27,
38, 46, 47, 77,
G6.10, A9.1,
Terrys Lane, 13, 38, 76,
**Thames – see River
Thames**
Thatched roof, 54
Three ferries walk, 77,
Tiles, 1, 2, 4, 32, 51, 56,
Timber clad, 52,
Timber frame, 6, 61,
Tithe Barn, 52
Toll Bridge, 8,
Tourism and Tourists,
iv, 17, 55, 68,
**Townscape
Assessment**, 73, 74,
Trade route, 6
Trades, 39,
Traditional Style, 47
Traffic issues, 32, 38,
63,
**Tree Protection/
Preservation Orders**, 67,
Trees and Planting, 18,
31, 46, 50, 69,
G8.3, A4.7, R4.7, R17.3,
Tugwood Common, 16,
17, 55,
Turkeys, 12, 57, 65,
U
Unadopted roads, 47,
Uncle Tom's Cabin, 52,
Uniformity of buildings,
G6.11
**Upper Ventnor
Cottages**, 57,
Urbanisation, 17, 19, 23,
25, 27, 29, 30, 31, 32, 43,
46,
G6.4,

V
Vehicles, large, 57,
Verges, 10, 16, 19, 25,
38, 48, 51
G4.7,
Vernacular, 26, 51
Vicarage Close, 35, 39,
Victoria Cottages, 57,
Victorian, 6, 26, 38, 39,
43, 45, 47, 52, 53, 55, 64,
78,
Views/ Vistas, 8, 13, 14,
16, 18, 19, 31, 40, 48,
51, 52, 55, 56, 58, 60, 61,
62, 66, 70, 75,
G8.2, R4.7, A10.1
Viking, 5
**Village
Characterisation**, 1,
Village Club, 44
**Village Green Cookham
Dean**, 51, 52,
Village Greens, 67
Visitors, *see Tourists*
W
Wakelins End, 45,
Walkers, 17,
Walls, 25, 29, 39, 52, 67,
G6.14
War Memorial, 37, 41,
52, 75,
Warners Hill, 54,
Water meadows, 61,
Waterways, 4, 12, 41
G2.1
Weirs, 21
Wells Cottages, 57,
Wesleyan Church, 8
Westwood Green, 43,
49, 62
Wetland, 69,
White Brook, 3, 61
White Place Farm, 11,
12, 60, 69
White Oak, 22, 38
White rendering, 24,
Whiteladies Lane, 23,
43, 48, 65
Widbrook, 6
Widbrook Common, 3,
7, 16, 21, 61, 62, 63, 69,
Wildlife, 15, 16, 18, 69,
see also Ecology
Windows, 37, 51, 77
Windsor, 562

Winter Hill, 4, 16, 17, 18,
29, 55, 59, 60, 65, 69,
70,
R4.6,
Golf Club, 13, 18, 45
Golf Course, 62,
Winter Hill Farm, 12,
Winter Hill Road, 53, 56,
62,
Women's Institute Hall,
52,
Woodland / Woods, 4,
18, 62
R4.7, A4.7
Woodlands Farm, 12,
57, 66,
Woodmoor End, 35, 40,
Wooten's Boatyard, 55,
59,
Working Group VDS, 1,
2, 4, 70, 72, 73,
Workshops, 1