



Sharing our Streets Caversham – a vision for the future



Joint public meeting arranged by:

Caversham & District Residents Association and
Caversham Traders Association

This presentation followed a presentation by
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Borough Council

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Sharing our streets – Thameside School
12 November 2013

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Sharing our Streets

The objective of this presentation is to canvass
the opinions of CADRA members, CTA members
and others'.

It is not the intention that solutions will be
presented.

Background

Riverside places	Population
Sonning	1,500
Pangbourne	3,800
Goring & Streatley	4,200
Wallingford	7,000
Henley –on-Thames	11,000
Marlow	14,000
Caversham	32,000
Reading Borough <i>(including Caversham)</i>	145,700

Caversham - the largest town or village locally - 20% of Reading Borough

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Although a suburb of Reading, Caversham is
often considered (mostly by its residents) to be a
village. It is significantly larger than many nearby
towns and villages with road crossings over the
Thames.

The 'Village' centre is smaller than both Henley
and Marlow because of the size and variety of
shops in the centre of Reading.

This table demonstrates the relative sizes of
comparable nearby places.

Caversham then & now



1911



2013

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Caversham has been an important crossing point on the Thames for many centuries.

In 1911, when Caversham became part of the Borough of Reading it had a lightly trafficked two lane bridge and approach road. It now has a four lane bridge with a four (although narrow) lane approach.

Vision for Caversham

- To explore how Caversham could be enhanced
- To make local shops, services and facilities more accessible to residents and visitors
- Produce a better balance between traffic, services and people
- Revitalise the village centre

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The case for changes to the use of the 'Village' centre: is a new 'Vision' required, what might it be and how could it be achieved?

The 'Vision' should be aspirational but not 'pie in the sky'.

The problems

Caversham centre has many conflicting uses

- through traffic
- local village centre with local traffic and parking demands
- a wide variety of shops, small businesses, restaurants, take-aways, etc
- amenities such as the library and health providers

Significant reduction in through traffic is unlikely

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As with other nearby settlements, Caversham originally developed around an important crossing point over the Thames and both Caversham and Reading bridges still have a major impact upon the 'Village'.

Of course, many of Caversham's traffic problems would be solved if through traffic (i.e. traffic with no business in the 'Village') could be removed.

However, by-passing of the 'Village' centre is really one of those 'pie in the sky' aspirations.

Problems - some examples



Pedestrians taking second place

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Typical problems experienced by pedestrians

Problems - some examples



Street?

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Abnormal load at Church Street/Prospect Street roundabout.

Is there a more appropriate place for this narrow boat?

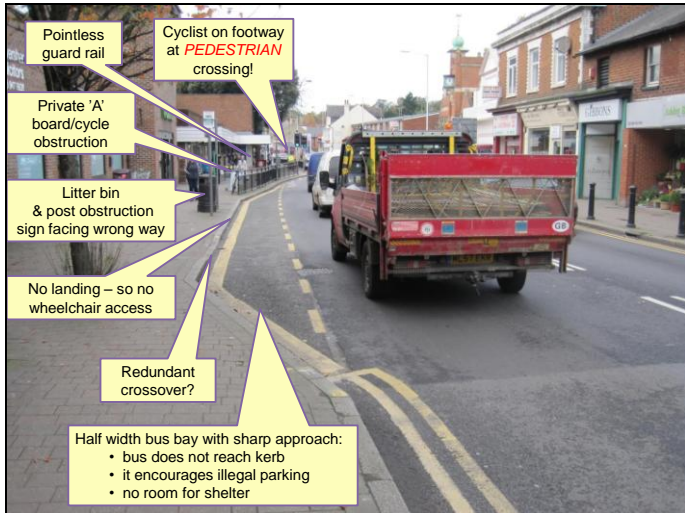
Problems?



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A part of Church Street – problems?



Look closely, not all it seems!

What could be done?

- Achieve a better balance between ALL road users (*pedestrian, bicycle, bus, car, delivery, service*)
- Special consideration for disabled, elderly, young
- Easier local movement in peak periods
- Slower traffic speeds - especially in off-peak periods

Traffic congestion in peak periods likely to remain

Aspirations

A third vehicle bridge for Reading and Caversham would have the potential to remove a significant amount of through traffic from our roads. Many third bridge schemes have come to nothing over the last 60+ years, so a pragmatic acceptance of traffic and congestion during peak periods is probably necessary.

In spite of this lack of progress, people still need to go about their business in the 'Village', whether on foot, bicycle or by bus, during these periods.

What has been done elsewhere?

Other towns have learnt to live with traffic

Roads have been adapted to be 'friendly' to non-motorised users (ie cyclists and pedestrians)

Similar changes in Caversham will not be easy and can be expensive

We believe improvements are necessary and possible

Nearby towns and villages have shown that it is possible to live with traffic.

What has been done elsewhere?

The measures used have:

- Reduced vehicle speeds
- Improved cycle facilities
- Increased pedestrian space
- Reduced congestion and pollution
- Removed barriers to movement caused by traffic
- Improved accessibility by vulnerable road users
- Improved the street scene
- Retained and enhanced the town's unique character

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Success elsewhere

Sonning



Nearest Thames crossing to Caversham

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Sonning suffers from high flows of car traffic in peak periods.

Speeds have been controlled by simple traffic calming measures that have been in place for many years.

Not everyone likes these measures but they are very effective.

Henley-on-Thames



Important Thames crossing - Similar to Caversham

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Henley is more analogous to Caversham in that, despite the reduction in through traffic caused by the Marlow by-pass in the 1970's, it is still a major crossing point over the river and a major crossroads for Thames Valley traffic. With one exception (Hart Street) Henley has narrower streets than Caversham yet significant improvements, to the shopping experience and balance between vehicles and people, have been possible.

Note the bus passing over a speed table and the quality of paving works.

Marlow



By-passed – much local traffic

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Marlow's iconic suspension bridge dates from the 1830's and has never been able to carry modern heavy vehicles. However, the town is an important crossroads for Thames Valley traffic and with the improvements in the town and the construction of the by-pass, in the latter half of the 20th century, it has ceased to be the poor relation of Henley.

Note the narrowed carriageway at the zebra crossing and the double mini roundabout.

Wallingford



By-passed - quieter than Caversham

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The by-pass has resulted in a quiet village centre.

Note the raised informal crossings (ie not zebra, pelican or puffin)

Other places - Brighton



New Road Brighton - before & after

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Brighton: though some distance from Caversham, the treatment of New Road clearly demonstrates how driver behaviour (whether in a car, van or lorry or riding a motor or pedal cycle) can be changed by radical changes to the street's design.

This type of treatment is very expensive but it is very effective.

Some ideas

These ideas would set a benchmark and a target for improving the quality of the public realm in the 'Village' centre.

Create a stronger connection between each side of Church Street and Prospect Street

- A 20mph speed limit in the 'Village' to lower vehicle speeds and encourage on road cycling
- Improved pedestrian crossing points on raised tables
- Improved cycle safety and convenience

Some ideas to think about

Some more ideas

- Additional cycle parking in Church Street and Prospect Street
- Raised-table side road entry-treatments
- Contrasting colour or texture road surfacing to 'break-up' the monotonous black tarmac which reinforces vehicle priority
- Minimalist signs and road markings
- Wider footways
- Reduce the use of traffic signals - replaced with raised zebra crossings and mini-roundabouts

Some more ideas

Large amounts of street furniture and road markings produce an 'urbanised' look and can give drivers the idea that the street is exclusively for their use.

Non-motorised users are pushed to the sides.

Some examples



Minimal - Henley

Road markings



Caversham?

Road markings – an example

Waiting and loading restrictions have been marked with 50mm (2 inch) wide lines in Henley.

In Caversham they are marked with 100mm (4 inch) wide lines.

The narrower lines are still very easy to see by road users yet are aesthetically much improved.

Some examples



Cycle Parking



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Encouraging cycling – reducing car usage

Simple 'sheffield' bike stands are needed in Caversham centre to ensure that bicycles are secure at the rider's destination.

Some examples



Pedestrian space - Royston

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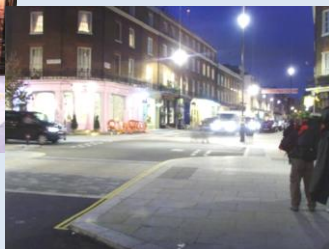
Effective use of pedestrian space – this type of scheme can be expensive

Some examples

Surface colour & texture change



Informal crossings London



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Another way of improving pedestrian crossings and slowing car traffic. The contrasting surface materials, texture and colour indicates the potential presence of pedestrians.

Some examples



Raised speed tables



High Street, Maidstone

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Raised tables reduce vehicle speeds and improve the pedestrian experience.

Some examples



Raised crossings

Pangbourne



London

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Raised crossing points on busy roads – it can be done and has been done.

Some examples

Junction improvements
Poynton



before



after

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The ultimate village improvement?

Could this work at the Bridge Street/Church Street junction?

In Poynton, the scheme saved a failing village.

Caversham is not failing – perhaps we should act now?

Funding

Most measures would cost money to implement

In some cases, maintenance money would be saved
(eg traffic signal removal)

Fewer signs and markings would reduce maintenance costs

Funds may be available from the Local Sustainable
Transport Fund and developers' contributions (\$106)

**Without a 'Vision' it is unlikely that any funding sources
would be identified**

A 'Vision' may be the trigger for improvements to
the centre of Caversham

Your views - first of all

Please fill in the questionnaire

**Do YOU think anything needs to be done in
Caversham Centre?**

**Do YOU think Caversham needs a new vision and a
new approach to traffic?**

Problems - your views

**What do YOU think are the problems for ease of
movement in Caversham Centre?**

For example these might be for:

- Pedestrians
- Cyclists
- Children, Elderly and People with disabilities
- Shoppers
- Delivery vehicles
- Motorists
- Others

Please describe the problem briefly

Solutions – your ideas

How could **YOUR** experience of using, moving around or through Caversham centre be improved?

For example these might be:

- More or changed pedestrian crossing points
- Better cycle facilities
- Slower traffic speeds especially in off-peak periods
- Alternative junction layouts
- A more village oriented 'look' to street furniture and markings.

**Again, please describe your ideas briefly
Don't feel constrained by the examples given**

Summary of your ideas and views

We will try our best to summarise **YOUR views accurately**

We hope to distribute a summary to CADRA and CTA members before Christmas

This will form a basis for future discussions with Reading Councillors and Officers

If you prefer to write your comments after the meeting:
Drop them in to: [Walton's Jewellers](#) or

email to: info@cadra.org.uk or

cavershamtraders@googlemail.com

by 22 November 2013