20. Chinnor

20.1 Chinnor is in South Oxfordshire on the Icknield Way below the Chiltern Hills. Chinnor is 4 miles southeast of Thame, 19 miles southeast of Oxford, 10 miles northwest of High Wycombe and 12 miles southwest of Aylesbury. Chinnor originates from a smaller settlement that now forms the conservation area at the eastern end of the village. Oakley Conservation Area is to the southern edge of the village. The former cement works lie to the southeast of Chinnor with the surrounding area rising steeply to the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty to the south.

20.2 The 2001 census recorded Chinnor's population at 5,407 (accounting for approximately 4.3% of the district population). Between 2001 and 2004 Chinnor is not estimated to have undergone any population change. The village has a concentration of community facilities at the eastern end of the village but there are also additional facilities at various points throughout the village. Local amenities include two primary schools, community hall, post office, two doctors surgery, grocery store and automobile repair garage and a police station.

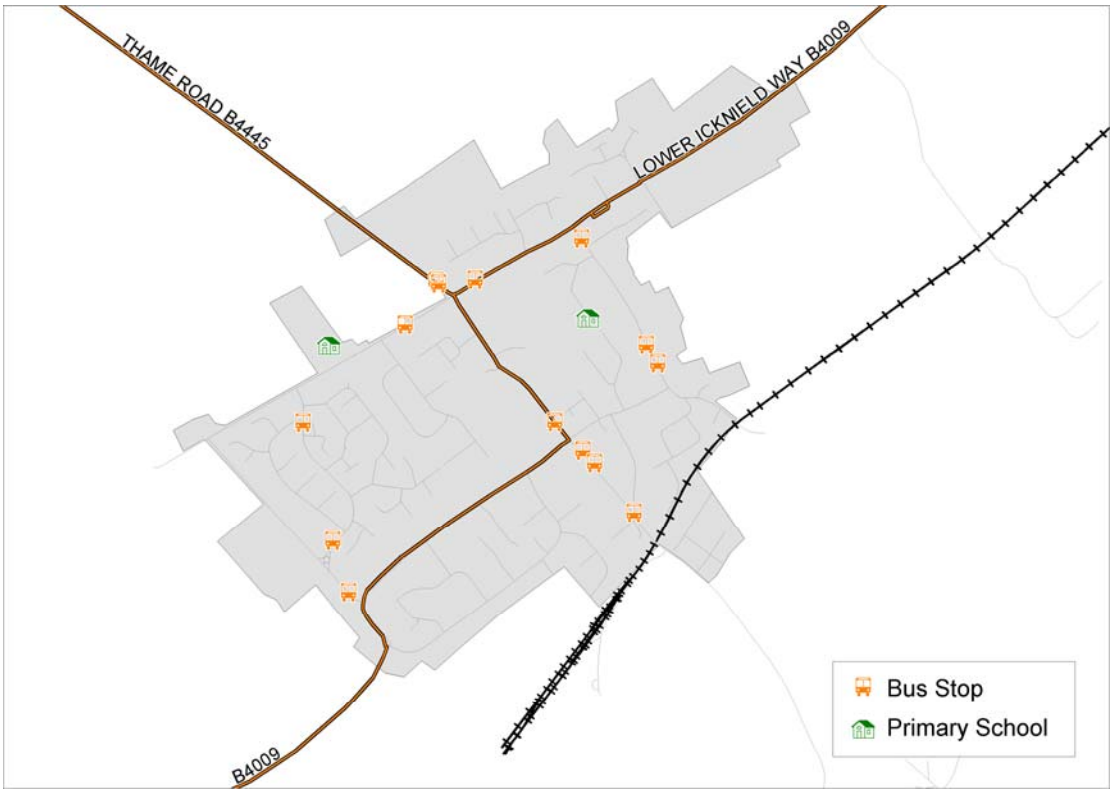

Figure 1 – Plan of Chinnor

Transport in Chinnor

20.3 The Arriva bus service (No. 40) runs from High Wycombe to Thame (stopping in Chinnor) from Monday to Saturday and High Wycombe to Stockenchurch on Sundays and Bank Holidays. The service runs approximately every 30 minutes to one hour. There are also some minor services that run from Chinnor to both Princes Risborough and High Wycombe however these are mainly Monday to Friday services that run in the morning only. There is no direct bus service to Oxford.

20.4 Chinnor is served mainly by minor 'B' roads however the village lies north of the M40 and A40 and west of the A4010. According to the census 2001, of the resident population travelling to work 53.2% drove. This could be contributed to the geographical location of Chinnor and the main employment bases being located in the surrounding towns of Thame, High Wycombe, Princes Risborough, Aylesbury and Oxford.

20.5 Chinnor is only served by B classified roads, namely the B4009 and B4455, which means it is not widely signed across the region. Also the B4009 and B4455 are classified in the Oxfordshire County Council priority 1 list for gritting in ice and snow conditions as the roads are vital links and the only access for the community.

20.6 Access to primary education within Chinnor is ok with two primary schools which are in walking distance of most residential areas. However, there are no secondary schools or colleges in the town therefore pupils have to travel further afield to primarily Thame and Watlington. Access to secondary education requires either public or private transport as the cycle link to schooling in Thame does not extend to Chinnor.

20.7 Employment in the town is limited but access to most sites are within walking and cycling distances of the residential areas of the town. This could be improved with more joined up access routes and better promotion of the available routes. However travel for employment outside of the town, predominantly requires public or private transport.

20.8 Chinnor is linked to the town of Princes Risborough via a non commercial railway that operates most weekends. Promotion of this mode of transport could help to alleviate some of the through traffic problems but may increase the parking problems.

20.9 There is a good range of public rights of way that connect Chinnor to the surrounding countryside. However the network is disjointed in many places where paths meet the road network. Selected

improved management, road crossings and traffic-free links could help enable more people to access the countryside on foot, cycle or horseback.

Problems and Challenges

Walking

20.10 The lack of clear concise signage directing people to main destinations is one of the key issues for pedestrians, particularly within the residential areas. There is also a lack of joined up walking routes from the residential areas to key facilities, amenities and surrounding countryside and publicity of pedestrian routes from residential areas, to local services, schools, employment areas and the town centre is limited.

20.11 There are no real pedestrian environment issues in regard to Chinnor as the shops have reasonable frontages and there is adequate footway space to accommodate the volume of shoppers it attracts. As the amenities within Chinnor attract more local custom than regional (such as those in High Wycombe or Oxford) there is not an immediate need for extensive pedestrian furniture.

20.12 The width of some of the footways in Chinnor are not particularly wide, however they are in proportion to the size of the town and are adequate for the number of people in the area that do choose to walk to key destinations.

20.13 Maintaining and improving links where public rights of way meet urban footways and highways could help to enable more people to feel confident in using alternatives to the private car for local journeys and recreation.

Cycling

20.14 There is significant lack of joined up cycle routes and infrastructure within Chinnor and lack of direct cycle access to key local facilities from the residential areas.

20.15 Apart from the on-carriageway cycle lane on Estover Way, there are no other on-carriageway or dedicated cycle paths within the town. There is also limited publicity of cycling routes from residential areas, to local services, schools, employment areas and the town centre.

20.16 There are a number of unclassified tracks and paths to the north, east and south of Chinnor which are available for walking and cycling however these are not publicised within the town. Although

cyclists can use bridleways, restricted byways and byways (along with horseriders) these often do not connect up safely with roads that are safe to use. The Phoenix Trail route (between Thame and Princes Risborough) lies to the north of Chinnor. There is currently no link from the town to this trail.

Buses

20.17 Chinnor has limited public transport services and none of them operate at a 'turn up and go' level with regard to frequency or hours of operation. The services around the town are more local than strategic with services to the nearby towns of Thame, Princes Risborough and High Wycombe on a Monday to Friday/Saturday basis, there are no Sunday bus services to these towns.

20.18 Chinnor has no direct access to commercial rail services however there is a leisure steam train that operates between Chinnor and Princes Risborough most weekends. There are no plans to operate a commercial service through Chinnor Rail Station.

20.19 Chinnor has no direct services to either Oxford or London. The majority of people travelling to Oxford are using Thornhill P&R to access the city, those travelling to London are either driving to Princess Risborough Station or parking at Lewknor to catch the Oxford Tube coach services.

Roads and Traffic

20.20 Traffic in Chinnor is a mixture of local movements and through traffic. The lack of off-street parking in the area, coupled with some narrow roads can cause localised bottle necks at peak times.

20.21 According to the Chinnor Parish Plan (August 2005), there is insufficient parking space in the village. The entire local through-road network is based on the old horse and cart roads of the 18th and 19th centuries and are not wide enough for two-way traffic and roadside parking simultaneously. This is exacerbated by the fact that many of the older houses, particularly on the main roads, do not have off-road parking.

Transport Strategy

Walking and the Pedestrian Environment

To improve facilities for all pedestrians in Chinnor through developing good clear routes from residential areas to the town centre and other key services and facilities around the town. To join up urban footways with public rights of way for both access and leisure.

20.22 When resources or opportunities allow this is to be achieved by:

* Conducting an audit of current footways. The audit will identify measures to improve way finding by creating formal walking routes to key facilities from residential areas and between certain key facilities by providing new and improved signage, widening, dropped kerbs, and improved crossing points.
* Publicise and promote walking routes by producing information on walking maps, literature and route planners.
* Improve the pedestrian environment in Chinnor by using an audit process to identify areas where footpaths can be improved through widening, providing dropped curbs, and new or improved crossing points thus contributing to greater containment and supporting the town's vitality and economic success.
* Improve connections to the rights of way network particularly where urban footways meet rural rights of way and the countryside.

Cycling and Behavioural Change

To ensure that cycle routes from residential areas link with the local services, schools, employment areas and the town centre and are publicised. To provide a suitable number of good quality cycle stands at the key destinations and appropriate infrastructure where required along the route.

20.23 When resources or opportunities allow this is to be achieved by:

* Conducting an audit of the existing cycle ways and well used routes across Chinnor in order to develop a high quality cycle network. Provision of cycle infrastructure such as cycle lanes/paths, advance stops lines and cycle parking should be made where appropriate, with a particular focus to improve

accessibility to key destinations especially the linking up of Chinnor with the Princes Risborough to Thame Phoenix Trail.

* Publicise and promote cycling routes by producing, in conjunction with local cycle groups and cycle organisations, information on cycling, maps, literature and route planners which can be made available in print and on the electronically.
* Joining up the cycling network across the wider area using public rights of way so that routes for commuting and recreation are improved.

Public Transport

To sustain the existing bus service to Princess Risborough. To work with the bus company to enhance the service to Thame through to High Wycombe.

To make minor local improvements the stop facilities to ensure they are safe and usable.

20.24 When resources or opportunities allow this is to be achieved by:

* Maintenance and minor improvements to existing bus stops
* Increasing the Arriva service 40 to a 30 minute frequency and continue to retain it as a direct service to Thame.
* Improve the marketing of all bus services to encourage travel by public transport.

Traffic Management

To work with the Parish Council to implement appropriate parking and loading restrictions along the main routes in Chinnor to assist in maintaining traffic flow. To ensure through-traffic is appropriately routed.

20.25 When resources or opportunities allow this is to be achieved by:

* Reviewing road safety incidents and conduct speed surveys at sites of concern such as Chinnor Hill and junction reviews at sites such as B4009/B4455 Mill Lane crossroads. Consider road safety measures such as installing Vehicle Activated Signage, lining/surface measures and junction improvements to address any problems.
* Conducting a traffic signage review on the strategic road network particularly from M40 and A40 to Chinnor.