

A vision for the

Grazeley Area

*including Great Lea, MereOak,
Poundgreen and Hartley Court*

Village Character Statement

DRAFT

March 2009

v.1.4

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1. Introduction

This is one of four Village Character Statements covering the Parish of Shinfield. It covers the part of the Parish west of the A33, including the village of Grazeley, Mereok and the smaller settlements of Great Lea, Poundgreen and Hartley Court as well as that part of Green Park that lies within the Parish. The other Village Character Statements are 'Our Villages' – the communities of Ryeish Green, Spencers Wood and Three Mile Cross; Shinfield School Green; and Shinfield north of the motorway.

What is a Village Character Statement?

The purpose of a Village Character Statement is to identify the physical aspects of where we live – the characteristics of the setting of the communities, buildings, roads and street-scene that are considered to be distinctive, significant and important by local residents. These features are generally those that we like and are some of the reasons we choose to live here. The Statement also picks out features that could be improved. The aim is to ensure that future development and change will contribute positively to the future of the local area and protect and enhance its special value.

Once completed the Village Character Statement will form part of Wokingham Borough Council's Village Design Supplementary Planning Document. This will result in its being taken into account when future planning decisions are taken, for example on planning applications for new development. The Statement will also be used by Shinfield Parish Council to help it assess the impact of developments on the Parish and by developers and householders to help them plan developments that are sympathetic to the wishes of the community.

Each of the four Village Character Statements has been prepared by groups of local residents. The groups are independent and run by volunteers but are supported by Shinfield Parish Council and Wokingham Borough Council.

The small group undertaking the work has tried its best to reach all local residents and communities, through surveys of residents and local business. Our VCS describes the local characteristics of the area and defines a series of aspirations leading to specific recommendations for the design of any future development. We hope it can contribute to the growth and prosperity of our communities and help to maintain the high quality of the local environment.

2. Thank you

If you contributed in any way, at any point, thank you for your interest. This Statement would not have been possible without your support. We hope you recognise your views in the Statement.

3. Planning context

This Village Character Statement (VCS) considers matters that relate to and can be affected by the statutory planning process used by Wokingham Borough Council. One purpose of this VCS is therefore to inform the planning authority (WBC) of these characteristic features and link them with relevant planning policies, so that the VCS is incorporated into the WBC Village Design Supplementary Planning Document and can influence future changes in the area. The VCS is intended to set out clear statements for good practice that will be used by developers and others wishing to change or modify the physical characteristics of our communities.

Change is brought about not only by large developments, but also by the smaller day-to-day adjustments to homes and gardens, open spaces, paths and hedges, which alter the look and feel of the whole village. Within the Wokingham District Local Plan of July 2006, with the exception of Green Park, the part of Shinfield Parish west of the A33 has not been earmarked for major development. However, major developments have been proposed in the past and there is increasing government pressure for more house-building and developers hold options on some of this land. Proposals by developers for up to 6,000 additional houses in the area were considered at a public Examination of Wokingham Borough's Core Strategy (which itself precluded such development) in March/April 2009. Local people value their environment and landscape and are greatly concerned to retain the rural character of the villages and the local countryside.

By setting out the aspirations of the local community this VCS will be of use to:

- Statutory bodies and public authorities
- Planners, developers, builders, architects, designers and engineers.
- Local community groups.
- Householders and businesses

4. Setting the Scene

Features [location]

<Map> This Village Character Statement covers the part of Shinfield Parish west of the A33, an area c. 1.5km from east to west and just over 4km from north to south at its maximum. It consists of flat, low-lying farmland drained by numerous streams and ditches, the largest of which is the Foudry Brook that runs north into the River Kennet to the north of the Parish.

On the eastern side, the boundary is clearly defined by the A33 and by the prominent clay ridge that rises to Three Mile Cross and Spencers Wood beyond it. To the north, west and south its boundary is formed by the Parish boundary, which is also the Wokingham Borough boundary; it is in fact the most westerly part of the Borough. However, this boundary is artificial and the flat landscape extends south and west into Swallowfield and West Berkshire respectively.

It is sparsely populated with isolated farmsteads and the hamlets of Great Lea, Poundgreen and Hartley Court and the small village of Grazeley, as well as the more recent settlements at MereOak, all linked together by a network of narrow lanes, tracks and footpaths. While these ancient routes serve to link these settlements together, the modern roads, the dual carriageway A33 and the M4, serve only to isolate it, cutting it off both physically and psychologically from the rest of the Parish, resulting in a highly rural landscape that feels strangely remote. That part of the area to the north of the Motorway is being developed as part of Green Park, a large business park that straddles the boundaries of Wokingham, Reading and West Berkshire.

For most of those who took part in the survey it is this rural environment, the tranquil countryside and the wildlife, that is the main attraction of the area. Many also referred to the sense of community and some to the convenience of Reading and the access to the motorway network. For almost all, the thing that they liked least about the area was the noise pollution from heavy traffic, especially HGVs, and the excessive speed of traffic.

photos:-

General view of farmland with some buildings

A33/M4

wind turbine

5. History and development

photos – Church, school + house; pillbox

The area has a long agricultural history dating back over three millennia. The earliest settlement dates back as far as the Mesolithic period and the first evidence of early agricultural settlements dates back to the prehistoric and Romano-British periods. Local place names Great Lea, Hartley and Grazeley contain the place-name element '-leah', which is associated with woodland settlements in the Saxon period. Hartley derives from stag wood or clearing but the derivation of Grazeley is more problematic; one possibility is 'badger's mire clearing' or possibly just grazing land in the wood. The first mention of Grazeley in the records dates back to the Saxon period, while Hartley is mentioned in the Domesday Book.

During the medieval period the area was part of Windsor Forest, one of the great royal hunting grounds, but by the thirteenth century part of the area seems to have come into the possession of Reading Abbey as the Abbot of Reading enclosed parts of the area in the early years of that century. This early enclosure is supported by early Ordnance Survey maps which show small, irregular shaped fields in the north of the area, usually taken as an indication of early enclosure. There is also evidence for a separate manor of Diddenham Court, dating back to the thirteenth century, while the place names Lambwoodhill Common, Hartley Common and Great Lea Common bear witness to the existence of areas of common land dating back to late medieval and post-medieval period. At this time and subsequently the area would have been characterised by dispersed farmsteads, several of them now listed, and a lack of any villages: Grazeley is largely a nineteenth century development.

Evidence has been found of parkland dating back to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries associated with local country houses at Grazeley Court Farm and Hartley Court. For a short period in the early nineteenth century Grazeley Court was owned by Mary Russell Mitford's father and her first books were written there. Her father rebuilt the house and renamed it Bertram House but was subsequently forced to sell because of gambling debts. The house has now been demolished. The Mitford family subsequently moved to Three Mile Cross, where Mary Russell Mitford wrote her most famous work, *Our Village*, published in instalments after 1824. Hartley Court was purchased by Edward VII at the turn of the last century and his mistress, Lillie Langtry, retired there.

Parliamentary enclosure took place in the first half of the nineteenth century. The growth of Grazeley can be dated to this period. The church, Holy Trinity, was built at Lambwoodhill in 1850, although in the style of the 14th century. Originally a local chapel within the ecclesiastical parish of Shinfield, it was established as a separate parish in 1854 and was extended soon after by the addition of land that had previously been part of Sulhamstead parish. The church closed in 2006.

The parochial school dates to the same period. It was built in 1861 with funds from a local charity, Merry's Educational Foundation, and originally accommodated 100 children, drawn from Spencers Wood, Shinfield and Burghfield as well as locally. It was extended in 1893 and 1913 and the capacity increased to 150; the most recent addition being a school hall opened in 2007. The charity provided clothing for poor children - ten boys and ten girls attending the school. The charity also built a cottage on the school premises for the District Nurse, who lived rent free with heating and maintenance costs being partly covered by dedicated savings left in the bank for this purpose. After years of disuse, the cottage was refurbished in 1996 for use by the school.

The first intrusion of modern, high-speed transit dates to the nineteenth century when the Great Western branch-line was built connecting Reading to Basingstoke. The line passes through the south west corner of the area, shortly before reaching its next stop at Mortimer Station. During the war a line of pillboxes was built along the Foudry Brook, part of the extensive defences against invasion that stretch out westwards along the Kennet Canal. And as noted above the period since the War has seen the construction of the M4 and A33 by-pass.

6. Countryside and ecology photos: Great lea pond & Grazeley pond

Description

The area covered by this Village Character Statement is an area of lowland clay and alluvial deposits forming part of the Thames basin. It is naturally a slow-draining wetland, drained by ditches, channels and small streams. There are also a number of ponds in the area, including Great Lea Pond (a designated Local Wildlife Site) and Grazeley Pond.

The field system that covers this flat landscape is predominantly one of large, irregular-shaped fields, although smaller fields can be found surrounding settlements and on either side of MereOak Lane as it approaches Three Mile Cross. In places, original hedgerows still remain, in some cases punctuated by mature hedgerow oaks, while remnant lines of mature oaks mark former field boundaries.

Agriculture is the predominant land-use with mixed arable farming on better-drained land and pasture on wetter land. Sheep grazing is traditional in some parts and is reflected in local place names such as Lambwoodhill and Shepherdton Lane. Closer to Reading and the M4 the land becomes degraded and is used for paddocks and rough grazing.

There are three Local Wildlife Sites (previously called Wildlife Heritage Sites) in the area, Clay Hill and Norman's Shaw, two small blocks of ancient woodland comprising ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), oak (*Quercus robur*) and hazel (*Corylus avellana*) and Great Lea Pond, mentioned above.

The survey demonstrated strong support for protecting the local environment with more than 90% of respondents recognising the need to protect streams, ponds and ditches, groups of trees and banks and hedges as well as local wild flowers and wildlife. Litter and fly-tipping and damage to roadside verges caused by heavy vehicles were felt to be a particular problem as was noise pollution from the M4 and A33. Approximately 60% of respondents felt there was a need for a local nature reserve to protect the local environment. The most popular site was Grazeley village green, the pond and the fields near the village hall. Other suggestions included the Foudry Brook and Woodcock Lane and Great Lea Common.

Aspirations

- 6 a) The characteristic countryside with its pattern of fields divided by streams and ditches and with roadside banks topped by hedgerows should be retained.
- 6 b) Significant trees in the landscape should be recorded, retained and protected.
- 6 c) The varied biodiversity should be recorded, protected and enhanced.
- 6 d) Local ponds should be recorded, protected and enhanced.
- 6 e) Action should be taken to reduce damage to roadside verges caused by heavy vehicles and car parking.
- 6 f) Action should be taken to preserve the rural night skies by implementing strict control of indiscriminate lighting.
- 6 g) Action should be taken to reduce noise pollution from the M4 and A33.
- 6 h) Action should be taken to limit aerobatic overflying as this is a major nuisance and pollutant in the area
- 6 i) A local nature reserve should be established to protect the local environment.
- 6 j) Access in the immediate countryside and beyond, on foot, by horse and by cycle, should be encouraged with some improved surfacing and clearer signage and reduction in traffic.

Recommendations for WBC Local Plan policies

6.1	Wildlife and ecological surveys should support all development proposals, to safeguard, enhance and create habitats.	Policies WNC1- 7
6.2	WBC should recognise the importance of biodiversity in this area, and follow the recommendations of the 2006 Berkshire Habitat Action Plan for Towns and Villages in assessing the impact of development proposals.	Policy WNC6
6.3	New developments should be obliged to create new wildlife habitats.	Policy WNC8
6.4	The habitat protection offered by the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area in the extreme south-east of the area should be enforced.	Policy ?
6.5	Natural frontages including trees, grass verges, ditches and hedgerows should be retained where possible and provided in new developments.	Policies WOS3, WH11, WOS1,WBE4
6.6	Tree Preservation Orders should be maintained to protect important trees and belts of trees.	Policy WBE5
6.7	The Veteran Trees Survey should be used to identify and protect significantly important and old trees.	Policy ?
6.8	Native trees and hedging should be planted in association with new developments in keeping with the ecology of the area.	PolicyWBE4 & 5
6.9	Wildlife corridors (in particular belts of trees, wide hedgerows, roadside ditch and bank systems and footpaths) should be protected and enhanced.	Policy WNC7
6.10	Footpaths, bridleways, lanes and by-ways that provide access to the countryside should remain open, be well maintained and well defined.	Policy ?
6.11	Existing allotments should be retained.	Policy WR25
6.12	Public open spaces and recreational facilities should be retained and enhanced.	Policy WOS3

7. The Built Environment

Description

The area is characterised by small, nucleated settlements that have grown up around farmsteads. There are however a number of isolated cottages, or pairs of cottages, such as Ostlers and Lea Cottage on Kybes Lane or Hawthorne Cottages off Pump Lane. The farms vary considerably in size and date. The majority are constructed of red brick. Roofs may be slate or clay-tiled with larger farms such as Hartley Court Farm and Diddenham Manor having double roofs.

Houses, originally agricultural workers cottages, were usually set some little way off from the farm itself. Many of them date from the end of the nineteenth century or the beginning of the twentieth and are typically semi-detached, built in red brick patterned with cream or black bricks, characteristic of Reading and the surrounding area, with sash windows and slate or clay-tiled roofs. As there has been less subsequent development, this pattern is easiest to identify at Poundgreen and Hartley Court but can also be seen in Great Lea and Grazeley, although it is obscured by later, in-fill development. More recently a small number of cottages have been extended where space allows. In the mid 1990s a major development comprising 2500 homes was proposed but this was rejected in favour of dispersed development following a public inquiry.

In Great Lea four farms can be identified: to the south, Great Lea Farm, on Great Lea itself, Great Lea Dairy Farm, Great Lea House Farm (the remnants of which remain and appear on most maps) and to the north, Bridgewater Farm, now also disappeared. The earliest cottages are at the corner of Great Lea and Hartley Court Road and on Hartley Court Road, along with the former Plough Public House, with a further two pairs and the village stores in Mere oak. Subsequently in-fill development has occurred along Hartley Court Road and south along Great Lea. In the post-War period two residential caravan sites, Mere oak Orchard and Mere oak Park, a site for the semi-retired and fully-retired, were developed. These, with the nearby housing in Mere oak Lane, represent the greatest concentration of homes in the area. The construction of the A33 by-pass affected Great Lea more than any other part of the Parish. Mere oak Lane and Hartley Court Road became cul-de-sacs and were cut off from each other and from Three Mile Cross, whilst local facilities have since closed.

In Grazeley village, the earliest housing development consisted of scattered cottages and farmsteads, with some large country houses. In 1850 the church and parsonage were built, followed in 1861 by the village school. Subsequent development occurred along the road between Diddenham Manor Farm (now Diddenham Court and Grazeley Manor) and the school, and then on the south-east side of the road with further infill on Bloomfieldhatch Lane. The houses north-west of the road comprise eight semi-detached houses in red brick (Diddenham Cottages) while the houses on the other side of the road are more varied. Further semi-detached and detached housing was built in the red brick with cream patterning characteristic of the area, and constructed on the north-west side of Lambwood Hill west of Lambwoodhill Farm in the early twentieth century. Some infilling has occurred since then. photos: Diddenham Cottages; Hopkiln Farm; examples of red and cream/red and black brickwork and tile hanging

The survey demonstrated that the community is divided about the need for more housing. Whilst half want no more housing development, the other half recognise a need for more housing in the area to meet the needs of under-provided sections of the community, including social housing and sheltered housing or nursing homes for the elderly. In response to the question 'What sort of housing development would be acceptable?' while just under half the respondents felt that no further development was acceptable, a slightly larger proportion felt that some development was acceptable – the most popular types being small scale developments of fewer than 10 houses and the

conversion of redundant buildings. The survey found that the most popular housing types were older, pre-Victorian houses and the red brick Victorian houses, although Edwardian brick-and-tiled houses were also popular. There was also support for a mix of housing types rather than a monoculture of any one type. Gables were the best-liked architectural detail.

Public buildings and facilities

The area has never been heavily provided with public buildings and facilities because of the low levels of population, and increased mobility has led to further losses. The closure of the public house and shop at Great Lea has already been noted, more recently the church and village pub in Grazeley have closed leaving only the village hall and the school, which is successful in attracting children from Spencers Wood and Three Mile Cross as well as more local children. Responses to the survey showed that over 60% of respondents felt that the pub was an important local facility and just under 50% felt that the church was important. The survey also identified a lack of safe play areas for children and a demand for the provision of local recycling facilities.

Industrial and Commercial

The Grazeley and Great Lea area west of the A33 contains a significantly higher level of business presence per head of resident population than the rest of parish. As well as encompassing some 40% of Green Park, one of the largest commercial complexes in Europe, it is home to a host of smaller businesses largely occupying now redundant farm buildings. With the steady decline in the agricultural sector, many of the farmyards that are scattered throughout the area have become the base for a variety of small industrial and commercial units.

There are several industrial estates in Grazeley, located on old farm sites. These are at Gravelly Bridge Farm to the north of the village and Thurley Farm to the south-west of the village; whilst two other farms support industrial activity at Lambwood Hill Farm and Russett House Farm, both situated on Lambwood Hill. A new commercial office development at Diddenham Manor Farm (now Diddenham Court) is small scale and in keeping with the village unlike the earlier developments. Although small scale, collectively these sites represent a significant element of the built environment.

North of the motorway lies one of the largest commercial business parks in Europe at Green Park, where there is also a restaurant and nursery as well as a gym to service the office-workers. When those employed in agriculture and in the units south of the motorway are also taken into account the number employed in the area far outweighs the number of residents. Green Park is also the location of what is now the most identifiable landmark in the area, the new wind turbine which can be seen from a considerable distance.

The main attraction for this location to both large and small businesses has been the rurality and proximity to a thriving part of the affluent Thames Valley/Western Corridor, plus ready access to transport links to that market place. The M4 motorway and nearby Junction 11 provides access to a natural travel corridor, with the main rail-link to London from Reading being close at hand, and the prime international airport at Heathrow being within a half-an-hour journey.

26% of local businesses in the Grazeley VCS area completed and returned the circulated business questionnaire (see appendix for detailed responses). A wide variety of corporate activity is evident, but with a predominance in the professional and business services sector. Employees do not generally live in the local area and mainly travel to work by car. The countryside location coupled with proximity to the motorway was seen as the prime attraction, although the balancing drawback was traffic congestion at Junction 11 and the lack of a local shop in the area.

The survey found that whilst only a minority of respondents were strongly in favour of further commercial or industrial development south of the Motorway, the need for increased employment opportunities was recognised and, with reservations, a majority favoured small business developments, and a slightly smaller proportion, small industrial workshops or farmyard conversions for office-use.

The Future

The majority of businesses demonstrated a stability of trading activity and saw little prospect of significant change in the near future, although this was before the current economic downturn. Much will depend on the outcome of proposals to site up to 6,000 new homes in the Grazeley and Great Lea area, with a variety of options currently before the planners. Were such proposals to transpire, support facilities could well materialise, including the local shop so craved by local businesses.

Aspirations

- 7 a) Listed buildings and their setting should be protected.
- 7 b) Distinctive and significant farm buildings should be retained.
- 7 c) Any new development should be small scale, maintaining the distinctive settlement pattern of small nucleated settlements. Features such as mature trees, hedges and grass verges should be kept.
- 7 d) Relatively low hedges and walls are in keeping with existing boundary features and therefore high brick walls and tall fences should be discouraged.
- 7 e) New housing developments need to be varied in their style but should reflect the style of existing buildings; lower densities should be maintained.
- 7 f) Gated developments should be discouraged as they are not typical of this area and are an urban-style visual intrusion.
- 7 g) Provision should be made for safe play areas for children.
- 7 h) Recycling facilities should be provided locally.
- 7 i) Small business developments, small industrial workshops or farmyard conversions for office-use to provide increased employment opportunities should be encouraged.

Recommendations for WBC Local Plan policies

7.1	New houses should be one or two storeys high, with pitched (not flat) roofs. If terraced, the row of houses should be short.	
7.2	Residential development should use red bricks, patterned where possible and appropriate.	WBC policies WOS3 and WBE1. Existing residential design guide SPG
7.3	Works on listed buildings should have regard to national policy.	National policy PPG15

7.4	Backland and rear garden development should be discouraged. Where it is unavoidable, houses should not overlook each other. Where development is acceptable it should have regard to the character of its location and be appropriate in scale. Reference should be made to the WBC Residential Design Guide.	WBC policies WOS3 and WBE1
7.5	The design of buildings should be energy efficient.	WBC policy WOS9 National policy PPS1 Code for sustainable homes
7.6	Local character and historical context of buildings are to be reflected in new design.	WBC policy WBE4
7.7	New building design and construction must recognise the merit of local traditional materials.	WBC policies WCC1 WCC7 WLL4
7.8	The character and housing density of the surrounding area is an important factor to consider in order to minimize the impact of new development.	WBC policy WOS3
7.9	New buildings need to reflect the proportions of those nearby.	WBC policy WH11

8. Roads, the street-scene and traffic

Features

Excepting the M4 and the A33, there are no main or secondary roads in the area. The principal local through-route is the Three Mile Cross-Mortimer road, passing through Grazeley with turnings to Pingewood via Hartley Court, and Burghfield via Poundgreen.

The extensive improvements to Junction 11 and the Mere oak roundabout, which began in mid-2008, should be completed by summer 2010. The third phase of this development could involve the construction of a major park-and-ride facility at Mere oak, which would as a result become a significant transport node likely to attract journeys from outside the area. These improvements also include the construction of a much-needed cycle route. At the present time there are cycle routes leading to Junction 11 from the north but no routes round the Junction or approaching from the south, although this crossing is regularly used by young people attending Ryeish Green School as well as cyclists commuting to work in Reading. Grazeley lies on the National Cycle Route 23 between Reading and Basingstoke, and constitutes part of the Round Berkshire Cycle Route, although it is incomplete here.

Public transport is inadequate, with just one infrequent bus service through Grazeley (No.154, twice a week); with the only fixed bus stop being on the A33 adjacent to Mere oak Park. However development plans for Green Park include the construction of a railway station, also likely to attract additional journeys from outside the area – as does Mortimer Station. As a result of the lack of public transport, residents are dependent on cars and levels of car ownership are high.

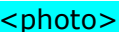
Approximately 90% of respondents identified traffic as the greatest problem facing the area. In Grazeley the principal concern is the speed of the traffic through the village and drivers' disregard for speed restrictions. In Great Lea and Hartley Court concerns focus on the large number of HGVs from the gravel workings which access J11 via Kybes Lane and Hartley Court Road from 4.30 a.m.- 6.00 p.m. on weekdays. The survey identified three junctions as requiring improvement: Kybes Lane/ Grazeley Green Road; Kybes Lane/ Hartley Court Road and Hartley Court Road/Great Lea, all of which are situated on 'blind-corners'. In addition, Mere oak suffers from congestion during rush hour and from parking by Madejski Stadium spectators, as a result of its inadequate parking facilities.

Within the settlements, houses, large and small, tend to be set back from the road on reasonably large sites with hedges separating them from the road. However, relatively few have garages so that cars are usually parked in front of houses. In response to the survey a number of residents identified the lack of pavements as a problem. In Grazeley there are pavements on both sides of the road in the central area, but this does not extend as far as the village hall on the north side and there is no footway along Lambwood Hill-Bloomfieldhatch Lane. As a result residents are discouraged from walking into the village because of the excessive speed of vehicles. There are also pavements in Great Lea on Hartley Court Road and Mere oak but none in the smaller settlements.

There is a network of footpaths and bridleways and enjoyable cycling and horse-riding are possible in this rural area, although some of the bridleways are poorly maintained and byeways abused by motorcyclists and drivers of 4x4s. However, the speed and volume of vehicles discourage cycling and horse-riding, walking or running on the roads.

Aspirations

- 8 a) Roadside verges should be retained and protected from traffic damage.

- 8 b) Speed restrictions should be enforced and, if necessary, traffic calming measures introduced to reduce the speed of the traffic generally and particularly through Grazeley village.
- 8 c) Restrictions should be placed on the movement of heavy lorries on Kybes Lane, Great Lea and Hartley Court Road.
- 8 d) Improvement should be made to the junctions of Kybes Lane/ Grazeley Green Road; Kybes Lane/ Hartley Court Road and Hartley Court Road/Great Lea to improve safety for all road-users.
- 8 e) Road signs and other communication methods should be improved to reduce the growing tendency of drivers - rush hour drivers in particular – to use our narrow country lanes instead of the main connecting roads. This practice is to the detriment of local people, wildlife and the environment.
- 8 f) Match-day parking restrictions should be introduced in Mereoak.
- 8 g) Pavements in Grazeley should be extended on the north side of Bloomfieldhatch Lane to the junction with Church Lane and along Lambwood Hill-Bloomfieldhatch Lane.
- 8 h) Pavements along Great Lea itself should be extended to the junction with Hartley Court Road.
- 8 i) Road signage should be kept to a minimum, amalgamated where possible and be placed carefully and effectively 

Recommendations for WBC Local Plan policies:

8.1	Grass verges should be protected and enhanced alongside existing roads, including both main routes and local minor roads.	WBC policies WOS3 Development Control Principles and WBE1 Design and new development
8.2	In the appropriate settings, grass verges and footpaths should be a feature of new developments.	
8.3	Improvements are needed to pedestrian safety throughout the area. Footpaths should be wide enough for comfortable family use – convenient for a buggy and child together side by side.	WBC policies WBE3 Accessibility and WT8 Pedestrian Routes and Footpaths
8.4	New developments need to include space for a realistic number of cars.	PPS3 includes relevant policies WBC policy WT5 (New residential development and conversion of agricultural buildings) considers the impact of traffic through the Parish. WBC policy WOS7

8.5	Street lighting should be sympathetic to the semi-rural environment with use of down-lighters and softer colours to reduce glare and avoid light pollution. Bright white halogen security lights on residential and commercial buildings should be discouraged.	The approach of Wokingham BC is to seek to use street lighting which limits light pollution.
8.6	Utility and telephone companies should minimise the visual impact of masts.	WBC policies WIC11 and WIC12
8.7	Noise pollution from the M4, A33 and connecting roads should be reduced by the use of quieter surfaces.	Policy ??
8.8	Improvements are needed to facilitate cycling on main routes. New cycle ways should be built linking to main facilities, and into the cycle ways into Reading and the long distance routes.	Policy ??

Appendix 1: Acknowledgments

Contributors

A final thank you

To Jane Ireland, and her colleagues at Wokingham Borough Council, who have supported our work with professional advice and guidance.

Appendix 2: Report on Consultations

Residents Survey

Business Survey

Timetable of consultations

Appendix 3: Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas

photo strip of listed buildings (need to check wrt Hartley court) along the top (as in Our Villages VCS, but named)

LISTED BUILDINGS

Location	date built	listing grade
<u>Great Lea Common</u> Hartley Court, Hartley Court Road	Early C16 th	Grade II (Star)
The Old Farmhouse, Hartley Court Road	Late C17 th	Grade II
Hopkiln Farmhouse, Kybes Lane	C16 th and C17 th	Grade II
Great Lea Farmhouse, Great Lea	Early C17 th	Grade II
<u>Grazeley</u> The Elms, Lambwood Hill	c1840	Grade II
(Former) The Wheatsheaf Inn, Lambwood Hill Common	C17 th & early C19 th	Grade II
(Former) Holy Trinity Church, Lambwood Hill Common	1850	Grade II
<u>Poundgreen</u> Poundgreen Farmhouse	Early C16 th	Grade II

CONSERVATION AREAS

Local Wildlife Sites

Clay Hill (*Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland*)

Norman's Shaw (*Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland*)

Great Lea Pond

photo strip along bottom - of LWS, named

photos for front and rear covers