

From: [Charles Boundy](#)
To: [Bob Austin](#); [Helena Fickling](#); [Graham Hunt](#)
Subject: Thame Travel Plan - Discussion paper
Date: 17 June 2016 10:45:32
Attachments: [A Thame Travel Plan - discussion paper June 16.pdf](#)
[GLP - Air quality issues in South Oxon notes.docx](#)

Bob, Helena, Graham

I now attach (in PDF to maintain formatting) our discussion paper, taking into account comments made by my colleagues in the RSA Thame Group, together with a copy of the relevant note on Air Quality Issues prepared some months ago.

The discussion paper is effectively in two parts. The first part (in three sections) summarises the comments or recommendations most relevant to travel issues from each of a) the Oxfordshire Travel Plan regarding Thame, b) the TNP itself and c) the recent Town Centre Vibrancy Report. These sections are largely taken verbatim from the relevant reports with square brackets used to link the verbatim extracts. They would seem to be a good basis for developing an action list for the Thame Transport Plan itself. The second part of the paper covers what are called 'Some overall challenges' for this plan. These are issues that we believe are important to consider before the travel plan goes into too much detail. Some, if not most, of the issues are complex, and many interlace with other issues.

For example, ready parking lies at the heart of the recommendations for keeping the town vibrant. But the popularity of the town centre and the desire for handy parking can also increase congestion; congestion in turn damages air quality which is a vital issue for the long-term health of the people of Thame. The bulk of Thame centre parking is in the High Street, which is the very place where slow moving traffic runs through or around the town and where most shoppers go to browse. In this sense the future of the Cattle Market site may be doubly important as a convenient place to park which is *close to* but *not on* the High Street. Likewise the possibility of closing (at least for some of the time) the High Street to through traffic – e.g. in the section outside the Town Hall, possibly also extending the pavement areas – directly affects traffic flows and the convenience of parking. It may depend on how radical Thame is prepared to be.

Similarly, whilst additional road crossings are already very much needed (a need likely to increase in the future), pelican and similar crossing do affect traffic flows. This can usefully limit speeds but can also add to fumes as vehicles stop, wait and start again. And in the main relief road sections, the more stops and roundabouts there are, the more drivers will tend to seek other ways through the town. A key point here is the Aylesbury Road roundabout where there is perhaps the opportunity for an Oxford-style gyratory system that would (once installed (!)) encourage more fluid traffic through this critical area (with the cycle lane aspects built in.)

The Oxfordshire report makes especially interesting reading in that it still: a) advocates improvements in areas like bus services where cutbacks are already taking place and b) encourages new crossings in places despite an apparent reluctance to agree any such measures in practice. To the extent that the Thame Travel Plan involves OCC therefore, it may seem important to assess with OCC feasibility and funds at an early stage, especially where OCC controls the s106/ CIL allocations.

It may be that many of our comments have already been at least discussed or considered, but I hope our paper presents a summary of previous reports plus significant current issues in a convenient format that will help shape the initial stages of the travel plan. Clearly many of the points we have raised are also key issues for the Green Living Plan itself.

It would be good to know how we can help take all this forward.

regards

*Charles Boundy FRSA
RSA Thame Group
Honorary Consultants to The Green Living Plan for Thame
(Home) 01844-218407*