



A vision for

Our Villages

Ryeish Green

Spencers Wood

Three Mile Cross

Character Statement

A Vision for Our Villages: Ryeish Green, Spencers Wood and Three Mile Cross Character Statement – Notification of Amendments (August 2009)

This note serves as an amendment to those planning policies within the 'Our Villages' Character Statement that have been updated or replaced since its adoption. Subsequent notes will be issued as Wokingham Borough Council continues to progress with its Local Development Framework. New Regional or National Guidance will also be included within these amendment notes.

Local Plan policies and National Planning Guidance which is still valid:

- WCC2 – Green Wedges and Gaps
- WCC3 – The Central Berkshire Forest
- WBE3 – Accessibility
- WBE4 – Landscape and Planting
- WBE5 – Trees and New Development
- WLL4 – landscape and New Development
- WR7 – Provision of Public Open Space in new Commercial Development
- WNC7 – The Protection, Enhancement or Creation of Wildlife Corridors
- WNC8 – Creating New Habitats through development
- PPS1 – Delivering Sustainable Development
- PPS3 – Housing
- PPG8 – Telecommunications
- PPG15 – Planning for the Historic Environment

Local Plan policies which are no longer valid:

- WH11 – Design guidance – residential design (repeats PPS3)
- WBE1 – Design and New Development (superseded by PPS1)

Local Plan policies that have been replaced by Core Strategy Policies:

- WOS1 – Sustainable Development – replaced by Core Strategy Policy CP1 Sustainable Development
- WOS2 – Housing Development Principles – *replaced by Core Strategy Policy CP9 Scale and Location of Development Proposals*
- WOS3 – Development Control Principles – *replaced by Core Strategy Policy CP3 General Principles for Development.*
- WNC6 – Nature Conservation in the Wider Countryside – *replaced by Core Strategy Policy CP7 Biodiversity*
- WCC1 – Development in the Countryside – *has been replaced by Core Strategy Policy CP11 Proposals outside Development Limits (including countryside)*
- WT6 – Parking Provision – *has been replaced by Core Strategy Policy CP6 Managing Travel Demand*
- WT8 – Pedestrian Routes and Footpaths – *has been replaced by Core Strategy Policy CP6 Managing Travel Demand*
- WT9 – Development of a Cycleway Network – *has been replaced by Core Strategy Policy CP6 Managing Travel Demand*
- WIC11 – Public Utilities – *has been replaced by Core Strategy Policy CP2 Inclusive Communities*

Policies that have revised numbering in the Core Strategy:

None

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A vision for

Our Villages

Ryeish Green

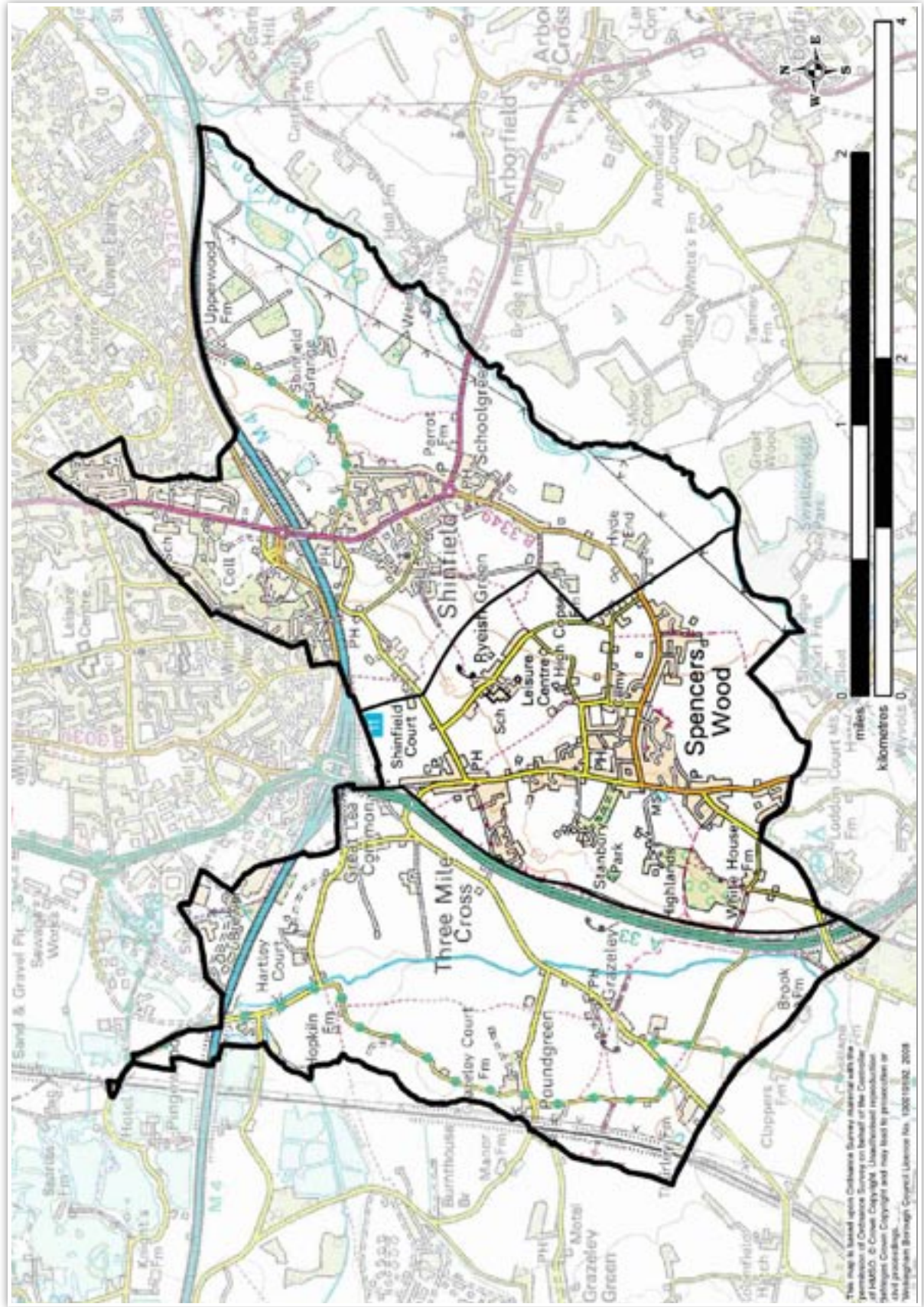
Spencers Wood

Three Mile Cross

The local author Mary Russell Mitford used 'Our Village' as the title of the books published 1824 – 1832 containing her series of articles about life in and around Three Mile Cross. We took the same title to describe the villages and countryside covered by this Character Statement.

Work on this Character Statement was led by Patricia Green and Graham Symonds.

Shinfield Parish



1. Introduction

Early in 2006 a group of interested residents in Ryeish Green, Spencers Wood and Three Mile Cross agreed to support work in Shinfield Parish to develop a Village Character Statement (VCS) for the local area that would 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. The intention is that this Statement be followed by work to identify the social aspects of where we live – such as educational, health, environmental and community issues. These would be described in a Parish Plan which Shinfield Parish Council will use to help determine where to focus its interest and action.

This Village Character Statement is the completion of the first half of that work. The

small group undertaking the work tried its best to reach all local residents and communities, through a variety of methods, to listen to views being put forward, to describe these and produce a fair, balanced view of local people's views. The Statement describes the qualities valued by residents in Ryeish Green, Spencers Wood and Three Mile Cross – termed 'Our Villages' – as they are today, describing the local characteristics of the area and defining 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 Villages, and 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

Changes in the look and feel of Our Villages are 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. This Village Character Statement (VCS) is intended to identify characteristic local features and set out clear statements for good practice that will be used by developers and others wishing to change or influence the physical characteristics of Our Villages, both large and small. It will also inform the statutory planning processes of the planning authority, Wokingham Borough Council, in its determination of planning applications.

Within the Wokingham District Local Plan of July 2006, Spencers Wood and Three Mile Cross are 'Category A' settlements, which means that they are designated by Wokingham

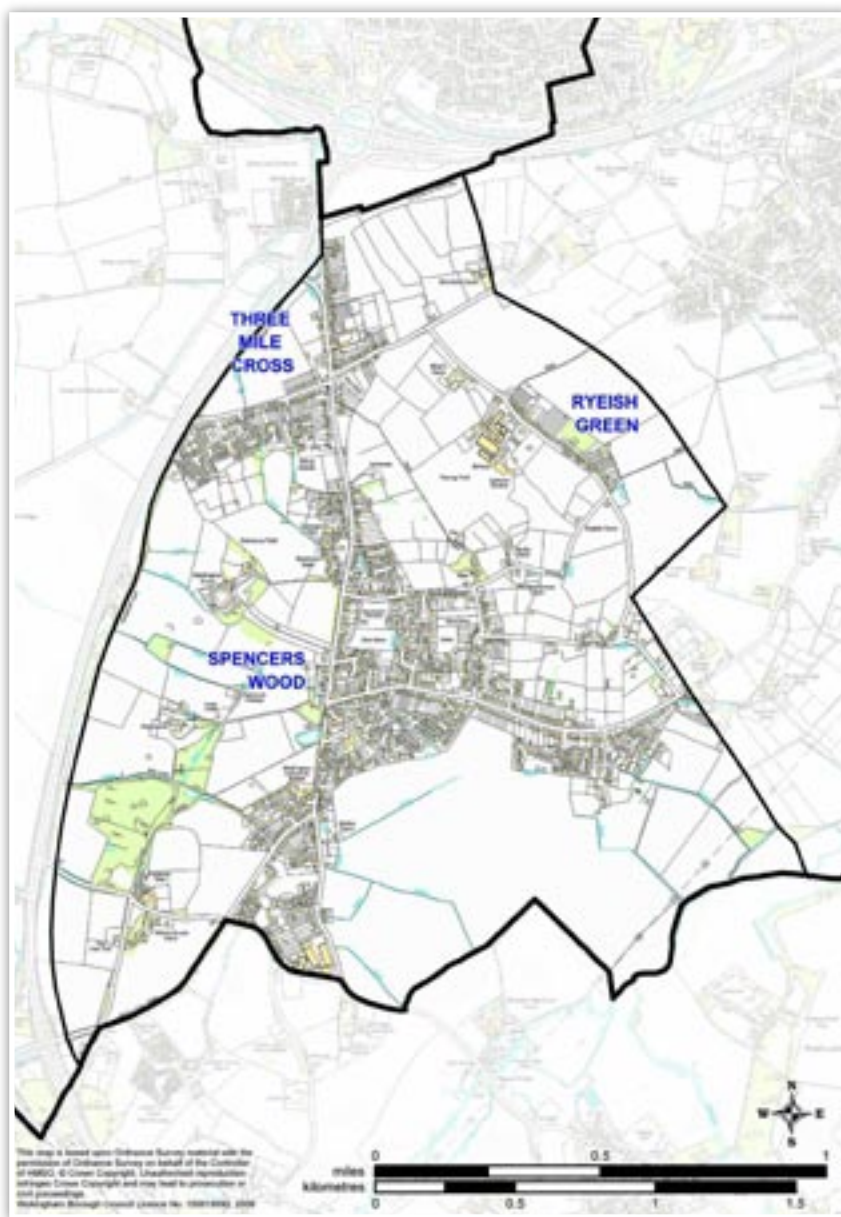
BC to take more development. The fields between Three Mile Cross, Spencers Wood and Ryeish Green, and the surrounding land including fields between Our Villages and Shinfield village, are all designated as 'Green Gaps and Wedges'. However it is acknowledged that developers hold options on much of this land. Whilst some development is inevitable this should retain the semi-rural character of the villages and the countryside in scale and design.



4. The Setting of Our Villages



Our Villages: *Three Mile Cross set around the Basingstoke Road which becomes a tree-lined route uphill then down through Spencers Wood. Ryeish Green is a small settlement to the east.*



Features

Ryeish Green, Spencers Wood and Three Mile Cross form a group of individual settlements in the countryside south of Reading. Countryside and woodlands surround each of the three centres and the outlying small clusters of dwellings and farmsteads. Fields, copses and wide belts of trees lie beside all main roads and frame the villages. Views into and within Our Villages always show the close relationship of buildings and their rural landscape. The land rises to a hill almost half-way along Basingstoke Road, in Spencers Wood, so that from the crest and down to Three Mile Cross there are views towards Reading and the Chiltern Hills to the north, whereas from the hill crest southwards the outlook is through Spencers Wood and across more open country between Farley Hill, Swallowfield and Mortimer.

Our Villages and their countryside setting.



Views in Our Villages: From Spencers Wood the view north is over the M4 to Reading and the Chiltern Hills beyond; within Our Villages views of buildings and their rural landscape are closely linked.

Setting of Our Villages: Aspirations

4a The settlements should remain separated by fields and copses, and the characteristic open countryside, trees and copses should be retained beside the main roads. To maintain the individuality of Our Villages, the approach roads into the area should also be kept free from development – from the north off the M4 junction 11, from the south on the B3349 Basingstoke Road, from the east on Hyde End Road, Croft Road, Hyde End Lane, Ryeish Lane and Church Lane, and from the west at Beech Hill Road.

4b New developments should be screened by shelter belts of trees and hedgerows, and should retain fields and copses between groups of buildings so that they contribute to the patchwork village character.

4c Clear lines of sight over fields, to trees and woodland on the visual horizon, should be preserved between settlements.

Setting of Our Villages: Design Guidelines

4.1 New developments should retain the separation between settlements in line with the Council's Green Wedge and Gap Policy to preserve the semi-rural nature of Our Villages. *WBC policy WCC2*

4.2 The character and housing density of the area should be acknowledged when considering the impact of new development. The Wokingham Borough Design Guide sets out principles for development. *WBC policy WOS3*

4.3 New tree planting should be carried out within older tree belts and young trees be allowed to mature in existing hedgerows, to provide successors for the present older trees. *WBC policy WBE5*



Village Character: Village character of trees, copses and open fields around housing and beside roads.

5. History and Development of the Present Community

Features

Basingstoke Road was the historic route south from the Thames Valley at Reading to Odiham, Farnham, and Portsmouth. The not very fertile land was held by large estates and the mediaeval open-field system was only enclosed by hedging in the nineteenth century. The estates and farms depended on labourers and servants who lived in poor conditions on the common land or in sporadic clusters of dwellings. Ale houses and coaching inns served the travellers on the main road, and Three Mile Cross developed at the junction with the then chief route east to Shinfield parish church and on to Wokingham, and the route west to Grazeley and Mortimer.

Tradesmen and services for agriculture were attracted to Three Mile Cross. By the 1820's the community of farriers, bakers, cobblers, seamstresses and others formed a bustling village that was brilliantly depicted in the series of articles entitled 'Our Village', written over many years by the resident dramatist and author Mary Russell Mitford. The articles made Three Mile Cross so famous that American visitors would come here to look at the village and make Mary Mitford's acquaintance.

Mary Mitford wrote about the people in the village and the countryside around, and many of



Two Decades of Growth: 1890 - 1910: St Michael's Church and the Village Hall were built in response to the earlier Chapels in Spencers Wood and at Three Mile Cross.



Chapel and School Buildings: *The present Library was donated as a village School, and Lambs Lane School opened in 1908, matching the earlier all-age school built at Ryeish Green.*

her descriptions of the fields, streams and copses are valid today. In one article she wrote about Mr. Macadam surveying both Woodcock Lane (the low route) and the high route over the hill to see which of the two should be 'paved' as the major route. He decided on the high road, and this Basingstoke Road determined the pattern of development for the future, and incidentally left space for the by-pass to be built next to Woodcock Lane in the late twentieth century.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century the population increased, housing conditions for ordinary people improved, and professional men and owners of prosperous businesses in Reading sought healthy locations in the countryside for their new houses.

In the early twentieth century there was much activity and employment within Our Villages. There were orchards and market gardens, and allotments at Beech Hill Road (now built on), Basingstoke Road, Clares Green Road and Church Lane. Labourers worked on the farms, and blacksmiths, saddle makers and wheelwrights kept the horses and machinery going. Early garages maintained vehicles and a bus service supplemented the horse and cart journey to Reading.



Shops and post offices: *In the early twentieth century shops opened in Spencers Wood and Three Mile Cross that are still in use today.*

Mains services however were very slow in coming to this area. During the Second World War (1939 to 1945) evacuees were amazed to discover that there was no mains gas or electricity (cooking on wood or coal, lamps for lighting, and batteries for the radio) and mostly water had to be brought from the wells at the bottom of gardens, or the communal wells such as the ones in Three Mile Cross and on the 'common' at Spencers Wood.



Development in late C20th and early C21st Industrial estates and housing with play areas, frequently built over old orchards and market gardens.

Development continued gradually, influenced by external factors such as proximity to Reading and the 'new town' at Basingstoke, and the completion of the M4 and the Spencers Wood, Swallowfield and Riseley by-pass in the 1970's. Ryeish Green School had become a secondary/ comprehensive school, Lambs Lane was the local primary school, and the Library settled into the old school building. Clubs and associations flourished and the village hall was widely used by a community where nearly everyone knew each other.

By the end of the twentieth century the pace of development quickened. Most small shops and businesses were not viable and had to close. Our Villages are under great pressure to accept more housing, and it is felt that the character of the area is also under threat especially when new housing developments bear little or no relation to the existing style and types of housing. The rural atmosphere is greatly appreciated by residents and the proximity of houses and countryside is the reason why most people choose to live here.

History and Development: Aspirations

5a The look and feel of local separate settlements should be maintained.

5b Better provision for recreation should be made.

5c Greenfield development should be used only as a last resort within the parish area.

History and Development: Design Guidelines

5.1 The separate identity of settlements should be respected. *WBC policy WCC2*

5.2 New buildings should reflect the local character and historic context. *WBC policies WBE4, WLL4*

5.3 Recreation facilities should be improved and increased in line with the growth of population. *WBC policy WR7*

6. Countryside

Features

In the nineteenth century the countryside here was extolled by Mary Russell Mitford in her classic writings. Much of the features she described can still be recognised and appreciated – it is still possible to enjoy the fields, streams, and copses of Our Villages. Local countryside is characterised by small fields surrounded with wide hedgerows and belts of trees. Old hedgerows contain many native species of shrubs and trees. Lanes and main roads are bordered by grass verges, some with ditches.



Rural quality: Hedgerows and copses encircle the groups of buildings.



Characteristic Countryside: Small fields with historic hedgerows, narrow lanes with grass verges full of wildflowers, and many ditches, even beside the main road.

Small woods and copses occur where agriculture has been difficult, such as on the steep hill slope down towards Grazeley from Spencers Wood. There are many mature trees, which will be surveyed as part of the Veteran Tree Project for Shinfield Parish.

Significant Trees: The avenue of Wellingtonias in Spencers Wood is visible for miles around.





Significant Trees: *Mature oaks define the main routes, beech, pines, ash, poplars and willows enclose the groups of housing. Hedgerows provide a harvest of berries from blackthorn, hawthorn, elder and bramble.*

Views along the main roads throughout Our Villages are not dominated by buildings, but include mature trees and fields beside the roads, leading to countryside. On Clares Green Road, the recreation ground is a valued public open space, almost opposite the Wildlife Heritage Site (WHS), of natural grassland with notable wildflowers, where the hedge has been laid to encourage thickening up.



'The Common': *On Basingstoke Road, the Spencers Wood 'Common' has been valued as a central open space for centuries.*

The semi-natural unimproved grasslands in Our Villages include an area in Spencers Wood known as 'The Common', the field north of the avenue of wellingtonia trees leading to Wellington Court, and the small field at the end of Yew Tree Lane. The several ponds are also rich in wildlife, including the largest one at 'The Common' and a series where ditches widen out beside the single track lanes of Hyde End Lane, Croft Road and Ryeish Lane, particularly in the wetter months. Many ponds on the heavy clay soils around Ryeish Green may dry up in summer droughts. These habitats add to the biodiversity of Our Villages countryside.

There are many footpaths and some of the most important old routes have kept their names, such as Woodcock Lane from Three Mile Cross to Spencers Wood and continuing to Swallowfield, and Kiln Lane which led to the C19th brick kiln. Other historic paths were used by villagers walking to Shinfield Church, including a path from Swallowfield via Sussex Lane, and routes to the cross-roads at Three Mile Cross. The easy and immediate access to the countryside and the many footpaths, bridleways, lanes and by-ways are highly valued and much used by the community.

The biodiversity of Our Villages includes much animal and bird life e.g. deer and various small mammals and birds such as bats, cuckoos, woodpeckers, nuthatches and sparrowhawks. The southern part of Our Villages is within the area of the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area.

Countryside: Aspirations

6a The characteristic countryside pattern of fields with wide hedgerows and belts of trees should be retained and enhanced.

6b Tree belts and lengths of hedgerow should be protected, enhanced and not broken up for access points.

6c Significant trees in the landscape should be recorded, retained and protected.

6d The 'Common' at Spencers Wood should be kept as open space and access across it and to the adjacent pond should be retained.

6e Local ponds should be recorded, protected and enhanced.

6f Unmanaged, semi-natural grassland should be recorded with its wildlife, and should be protected.

6g The varied biodiversity of Our Villages should be recorded, protected and enhanced.

6h Wildlife and ecological surveys should support all development proposals.

6i Footpaths, bridleways, lanes and by-ways access to the countryside should remain open and be well defined.

6j Access in the immediate countryside and beyond, on foot, by horse and by cycle, should be encouraged with some improved surfacing and clearer signage.

6k Existing allotments should be retained.

6l Footpaths across fields should be specifically protected when any nearby development is proposed. The footpaths should have a minimum three metre wide protected route, and if there are no trees or hedges within this zone then new hedgerows are to be planted, using locally appropriate native plants in double rows each side of the footpath zone.

6m Footpaths should be extended and signposted to link with other paths in the parish and beyond, to improve the potential for pleasant and safe recreational walking.

Countryside: Design Guidelines

6.1 The impact on habitats should be considered in development proposals. Development should seek to safeguard, enhance and create habitats. Wildlife corridors (in particular belts of trees, wide hedgerows, roadside ditch and bank systems and footpaths) should be protected and enhanced. 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. *WBC policies WNC6 -8*

6.2 Natural frontages including trees, grass verges, ditches and hedgerows should be retained and enhanced where possible and provided for in new developments where they reflect the character of the area. *WBC policies WOS3, WOS1, WBE4*

6.3 Tree Preservation Orders should be maintained to protect important trees and belts of trees. The Veteran Trees Project should be used to identify and protect

significantly important and old trees. *WBC policy WBE5*

6.4 New woodland of native trees and hedging should be planted in association with new developments in keeping with the ecology of the area. *WBC policies WBE4 & 5*

6.5 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. *WBC policy WNC6*

6.6 Wildlife corridors (in particular belts of trees, wide hedgerows, roadside ditch and bank systems and footpaths) should be protected and enhanced. *WBC policy WNC7*

6.7 Public open spaces and recreational facilities should be retained and enhanced. This may include land required for mitigation arising from the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area. *WBC policy WOS3Housing*



Ancient Footpaths and Ponds: Woodcock Lane is one of many footpaths; the pond beside Basingstoke Road was once used for cart horses to drink and is now rich in wildlife.

7. The Built Environment

Features

Housing

Housing is the major building type in the area, of a variety of ages and a variety of housing styles. Typically houses are two storeys, with pitched roofs, and generally detached or semi-detached. Terraces are rare and normally short, of no more than four properties.



Late Victorian / Edwardian Houses: Houses characteristic of the centres of Spencers Wood and Ryeish Green with the details in brickwork, special windows and eaves are special to Our Villages.

The centres of Spencers Wood and Ryeish Green are characterised by late Victorian and early Edwardian red brick buildings, some patterned with 'silver' and cream bricks, typically with sash windows, tiled roofs and

decorative eaves boards. In these areas the buildings provide a unique character to the locality. Other individual properties with these characteristics are present throughout the area.



Three Mile Cross, the oldest part of Our Villages: Buildings typically of stone or brick construction, some colour washed.

Residential development in other parts of Our Villages is a variety of house styles, sizes and front gardens. Lower density development is typical. Development is characteristically along roads, not in cul-de-sacs, with hedges along the road frontage. In Three Mile Cross, the oldest part of Our Villages, stone buildings are typical, some colour washed. In the last 30 years there has been some backland development of new estates, with a single entrance on to the main road, such as the Montgomery Drive and Century Drive developments off Hyde End Road, Spencers Wood, Woodcock Close off Grazeley Road, Three Mile Cross, Clements Close off Beech Hill Road and Hunters Way and Benham Drive off Basingstoke Road, Spencers Wood. Typically these developments include a mix of housing sizes all in a 'modern' style and in a mid-brown coloured brick.



Sympathetic new local development at its best: The development in The Square in the late 1990's of a mix of semi-detached and detached houses, with matching two-tone brickwork.



Newer Housing Development: Housing generally in a mix of sizes, mostly 2 storey, in a modern brick style.

Industrial, commercial and retail

There are two small industrial estates dating from the 1970s and in a modern style, built with dark red bricks: Wellington and Heron Estates, both towards the south end of Spencers Wood. Also in this area, on Lambs Lane, are a builders merchant and transport company and nearby opposite White House Farm there is an agricultural sales and repair business. There is some commercial use of barns for farming related business. Three garages are sited in Three Mile Cross, and one in Spencers Wood. Much commercial development is small scale and largely in converted, or in keeping with, residential buildings. Many proprietors live above or near to their shops and businesses.



Commercial development: *Small scale commercial development is typical, largely in converted, or in keeping with, residential buildings.*



Modern public building: *The only significant modern building is the Church Centre at Three Mile Cross.*

Public buildings

Significant historic public buildings include the Library in Spencers Wood (Listed Grade II), United Reform Church Hall (now converted to flats), Lambs Lane and Ryeish Green Schools, Spencers Wood Village Hall, and the Wesleyan Chapel at Three Mile Cross. These buildings (in the case of the schools, the original buildings) are late Victorian and early Edwardian, and of red brick, often patterned with grey brick.

Farms

Non-intensive farming is a feature of the area, and characteristic buildings are the brick two-storey farmhouses with adjacent low timber barns and a selection of more modern, prefabricated outbuildings.

Built Environment: Aspirations

7a Listed buildings and their setting should be protected.

7b New housing developments need to be varied in their style and sizes, with lower densities maintained.

7c New developments should retain and enhance village feel eg mature trees, hedges and grass verges should be kept and fences should be discouraged.

7d Trees, hedges and grass verges should be used where necessary to screen and soften walls, fences, large farmland shed-type buildings and new developments.

7e Infill developments should match development in immediate local area.

7f Gated developments should be

discouraged as they are not typical of this area and are an urban-style visual intrusion.

7g Relatively low hedges and walls are in keeping with existing boundary features and therefore high brick walls and tall fences should be discouraged.

7h Small commercial developments and retail opportunities should be encouraged to widen the range of local facilities and provide more local employment opportunities.

7i Any change of use should retain the character and setting of the Library, United Reform Church Hall, Wesleyan Chapel and the old parts of Lambs Lane and Ryeish Green Schools.

7j Distinctive and significant farm buildings should be retained.

Built Environment: Design Guidelines

7.1 New houses should in general be one or two stories high, with pitched (not flat) roofs to reflect local character. New buildings should where appropriate reflect the proportions of those nearby. If terraced, the row of houses should be short. *WBC policy WH11*

7.2 Residential development in the centre of Spencers Wood and in Ryeish Green should use red bricks, patterned where possible and appropriate. *WBC policies WOS3 and WBE1*

7.3 Works on listed buildings should have regard to national policy. *National policy PPG15*

7.4 Where backland and rear garden development 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. *WBC policies WOS3 and WBE1 (The revised WBC residential design guide offers more information on this.)*

7.5 The design of buildings should be energy efficient. *National policy PPS1 and Code for sustainable homes*

7.6 Local character and historical context of buildings are to be reflected in new design.

7.7 New building design and construction must recognise the merit of local traditional materials. *WBC policies WCC1 WLL4*

7.8 The character and housing density of the surrounding area is an important factor to reflect in order to minimize the impact of new development. *WBC policy WOS3*

8. Roads, the Street–Scene and Traffic

Features

Grass verges, pavements and, frequently, ditches between the road and properties are the distinctive and characteristic local feature. As described in Section 5 they are also important for the local environment and wildlife. The Basingstoke Road is a wide, major local route. The width of the road and the current lack of pedestrian safety features make Basingstoke

Road an unhelpful barrier for pedestrians needing to cross the road. Hyde End Road, in Spencers Wood, and Church Lane, in Three Mile Cross, are also significant, busy local routes, especially at 'rush hours'. All three roads are through residential areas, where roadside parking is difficult. Some pavements are too narrow and badly maintained.





Traffic v Pedestrians: *Busy main roads are a barrier for pedestrians and routes to school are dangerous and polluted. Pavements may be narrow and badly maintained.*

In this semi-rural area, with limited public transport, car ownership is recognized by many to be important and provides access to a variety of work, recreation and shopping opportunities not otherwise present locally. Three Mile Cross and Spencers Wood have bus connections into Reading to the north, and to Swallowfield, Riseley and onwards towards Aldershot to the south. There are buses to Ryeish Green School two times a day on school days (only), and a weekly service to Wokingham.

Bus connections: *From Monday to Saturday buses serving Spencers Wood and Three Mile Cross are typically every 20–30 minutes during the working day, but normally stop running early in the evening. There is a very limited Sunday service.*



Enjoyable cycling is possible in the semi-rural area. Safe cycling to schools is important. There is a cycleway on the shared pavement between Brookers Hill in Shinfield, along Church Lane to Ryeish Green School, but no other routes through the area to this, or other, schools.

In addition to cycling, enjoyable walking, jogging and horse riding are all a feature in this semi-rural area. Safety in these leisure pursuits is important. A recent national publication 'Manual for Streets' gives more priority to pedestrians.

Noise from the M4, A33 and connecting roads is an ever-present disturbance to the otherwise quiet environment.

Cycling: *On quiet roads, enjoyable leisure cycling is possible.*

Roads, Street–Scene and Traffic: Aspirations

8a Grass verges, footpaths and ditches between the road and properties should be retained and any future development should take account of these features.

8b There should be a 30 m.p.h. speed limit imposed throughout Our Villages. This should be supplemented by traffic calming measures and pedestrian crossing points.

8c Suggested additional crossing points on the Basingstoke Road, Spencers Wood, are in the vicinities of the bakers, library and Farriers Arms. Additionally there should be a crossing point in Beech Hill Road, approaching Spencers Wood. In Three Mile Cross there should be a crossing point between the BP Garage and the Post Office Shop.

8d Junction safety at Basingstoke Road/Beech Hill Road in Spencers Wood and Basingstoke Road/Church Lane in Three Mile Cross should be improved with restricted parking and improved sight lines.

8e Adequate and useable parking arrangements, possibly in lay-bys, should be implemented on Basingstoke Road, Hyde End Road and Church Lane, to prevent pavement parking. These schemes must not be at the expense of current pavement widths.

8f 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.

8g Pavements to Lambs Lane School are upgraded to be wide enough for comfortable and safe family use.



Pedestrian Crossings: Crossing points are required along Basingstoke Road in Three Mile Cross, and in Spencers Wood between the bus stop and the Post Office shop.

8h Pavements and footpaths on all approaches to Ryeish Green School should be prioritised for improvement. In particular need are all pavements in Three Mile Cross and the footpath from St Mary's Church, Shinfield, along the ridge to Ryeish Green.

8i Road signage should be kept to a minimum, amalgamated where possible and be placed carefully and effectively.

8j Noise pollution from the M4, A33 and connecting roads should be reduced by the use of quieter surfaces.

8k New cycleways should be built linking to main facilities, and into the cycleways into Reading and the long distance routes.

Roads, Street-Scene and Traffic: Design Guidelines

8.1 Grass verges should be protected and enhanced alongside existing roads, including both main routes and local minor roads. *WBC policy WOS3 Development Control Principles*

8.2 In the appropriate settings, grass verges and footpaths should be a feature of new developments. *WBC Policy WOS3*

8.3 In larger schemes the design of footpaths and pedestrian safety should be considered. 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 off-street parking or safe on-street parking

of cars. *National policy PPS3 includes relevant policies. WBC policy WT6*

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. *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 policy WIC11 and National Policy Guidance PPG8*

8.7 Improvements are needed to facilitate cycling. *WBC Policy WT9*



Appendix 1: Acknowledgments



Contributors

The Village Character Statement has been drawn up with assistance and input from very many residents of Our Villages – Ryeish Green, Spencers Wood and Three Mile Cross. We are grateful for all the help and comments and we wish to thank everyone who filled in the questionnaires, comment sheets and feedback notes, as discussed under 'Consultations'.

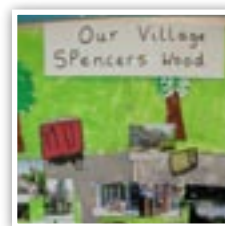
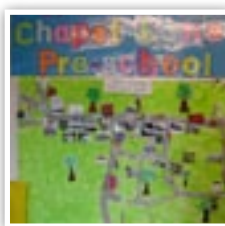
Also thanks are due especially for close involvement with the project by:

- The staff and pupils of the three schools, Ryeish Green School, Lambs Lane Primary School, and The Vine School, for taking photographs (of good and bad features), carefully assessing and listing what they liked about living here and what should be improved, and providing art and display work on the theme of the villages' character. Some of these photographs have been used in this document.
- The girls and Leaders of the Guides, two Brownies groups and Rainbows, for their photographic studies, discussions and comments;
- The Allotment Holders' Association for their photographs and contact works with other groups;
- The local playgroup and young children's nurseries for their art works and display materials;
- The Bowls Club at Three Mile Cross for recording their history;
- The Youth Club for general input;
- Mr Ian Clarke for advice about the farming in the area;
- Spencers Wood Library for its contribution to our displays;
- and the local church communities for assisting in publicity;
- Elaine Butler, John Marsh and Graham Symonds for other photographs.

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



2006 – Initial Stage: Gathering Views

- March Initial talks about the project with people in the community and headteachers of schools.
- Mar/Apr/May 1500 Cards and 200 leaflets, inviting involvement and asking for people's opinions, delivered to houses and business premises. Project discussed with local shops.
- March Local History Group involved.
- Mar and May Articles printed in 'Junction 11' about the *Village Character Statement*
- 8 April Display at Spencers Wood Village Hall during the Easter Parade**
- April Presentations and discussions with Rainbows, 1st and 2nd Spencers Wood Brownies and the Guides; questionnaires and disposable cameras given out for children to use for the project and return for the archives.
- April Presentations, displays and discussions at Lambs Lane Primary School and The Vine Christian School; questionnaires and disposable cameras given out for the children to use for the project and return for the archives.
- April/May Discussions with churches in Our Villages; cards left for responses.
- May Discussions with representatives of allotment holders. (There are four allotment sites in Our Villages).
- 6 May First Village Forum at Spencers Wood Pavilion.** Discussion of issues highlighted by the postcard responses and in other meetings. Prioritisation of issues.
- May/June Further discussions at Three Mile Cross and with Ryeish Green School.
- June Presentation to Ryeish Green School yrs 11 and 12:-questionnaires and cameras left for pupils to use for the project and return for the archives.

Circulation of Initial Outcomes, seeking comments. Revision and redrafting of issues for further comment:

- June/July Discussions with Playgroups etc. Contribution received about farming in the area.
- July Article in 'Junction 11': *First Comments from Children received.*
- 26 August Display at Swallowfield Show (held in Spencers Wood).**

Sept	Contributions received from the Library and the Bowls Club.
8 Sept	Shinfield Fun Day display at School Green.
23 Sept	Second Village Forum at Spencers Wood Pavilion. Discussion of Initial Outcomes and seeking further comments. Display of formal photographs and photographs and artwork from local schools.
12 Oct	Display at Lambs Lane School Parents' Evening.
Oct	Article in 'Junction 11': <i>Report on Second Village Forum.</i>
Incorporation of Comments and Preparation of Draft Village Character Statement.	

2007

Feb./Mar.	Circulation of draft VCS to all consultees and subsequent incorporation of comments.
31 Mar	Display at Easter Parade at Spencers Wood Village Hall.
25 April	Shinfield Parish Annual Meeting at Shinfield Village Hall.
Mar/Apr	Business Survey.
June/July	Subsequent incorporation of comments and business survey outcomes.
Nov	Final draft.

2008

Jan	Circulation of final draft to local organisations and businesses for final opportunity to comment.
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Appendix 3: Listed Buildings and Wildlife Heritage Sites



LISTED BUILDINGS

Location	Date Built	Listing
In Spencers Wood:		
• Library and 'School House'	1890	Grade II
• The Homestead, 264 Hyde End Road	early C19th	Grade II
• Fullbrooks, 202 Hyde End Road	C16th + C17, C19th	Grade II
• Hyde End Farmhouse, Hyde End Road	late C18th	Grade II
• Sussex Lodge, Hyde End Road	early C19th	Grade II
• Walnut Tree Cottage, at 9 Clares Green Rd	late C17th + C19th	Grade II
• Nullis Farmhouse, off Clares Green Road	mid C16th	Grade II
• Hill House, Basingstoke Road	early C18th + C19th	Grade II
In Three Mile Cross:		
• The Lieutenant's Cottage, Basingstoke Rd	C18th	Grade II
• The Thatch, Church Lane	late C18th	Grade II
• Wisteria Cottage, Church Lane	C18th, altered C20th	Grade II
• Highway Cottage, Basingstoke Road, formerly The George & Dragon ph.	C18th, altered C20th	Grade II
• Post Office & Newsagent, East side (former house), Basingstoke Rd	C18th, altered C19th + C20th	Grade II
• The Swan Inn, Basingstoke Road	early C16 cottage/s, altered C18th + C19th	Grade II
• The Mitford, Basingstoke Road	C18th, extended C19th	Grade II

WILDLIFE HERITAGE SITES

Fields to the north of Clares Green Road, Spencers Wood.

Woods between Highlands and White House Farm, Spencers Wood.

