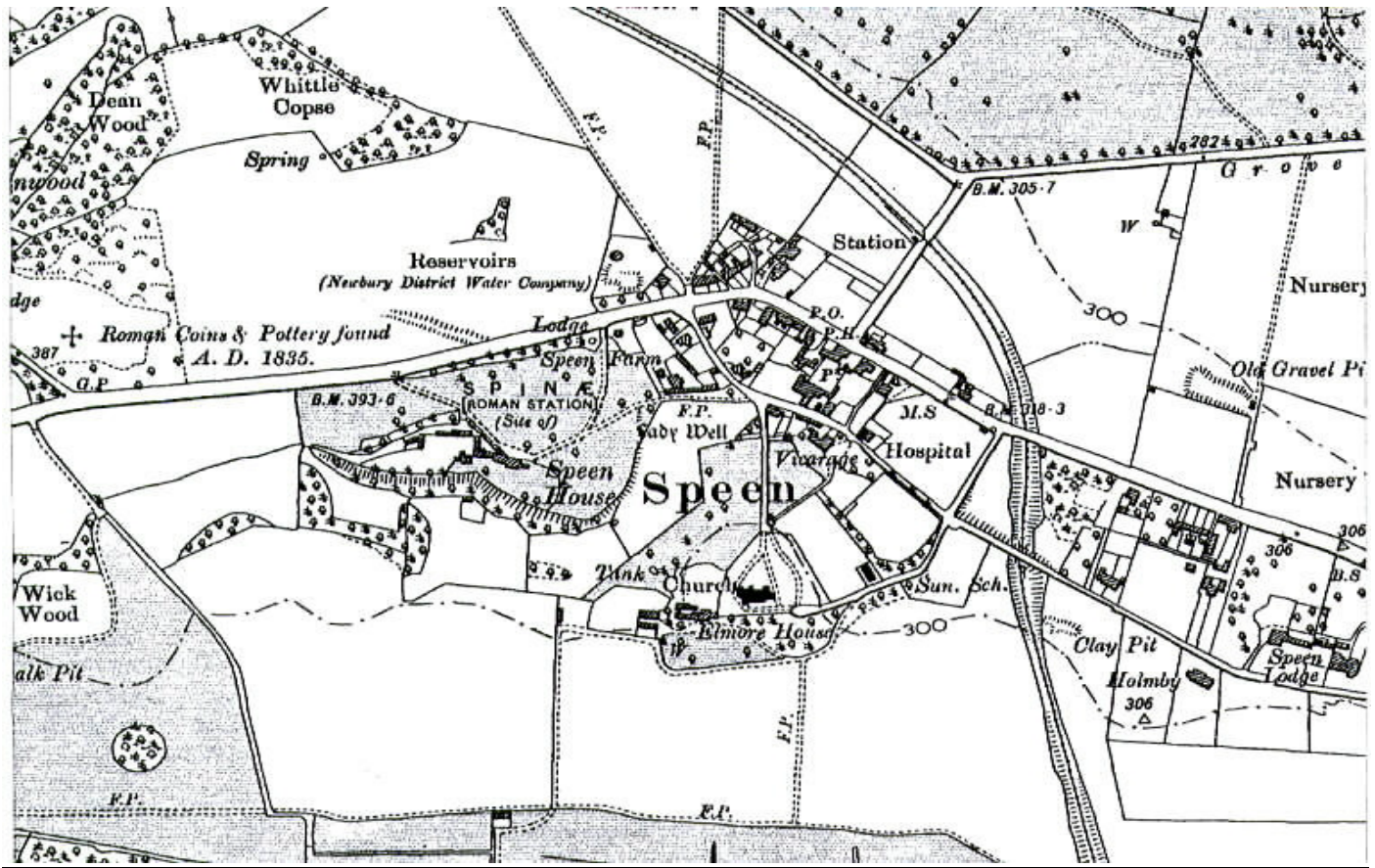


INSIDE FRONT COVER



Speen in 1900

Acknowledgements

Speen Parish Council

The Monastery of Our Lady and St. Benedict

Vodafone

Shell Employee Action

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Other Private Donors

SPEEN VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT

1.0 Introduction

The Speen Village Design Statement (VDS) has been produced by a group of Speen residents but contributions and comments have been sought and received from a wide cross section of the village community. A lot of work has gone into the preparation of the document and our thanks go to all those that have given up their time to be involved. The document tries to reflect the general view of the residents. The process has involved a workshop with villagers, a questionnaire to all households and presentations at clubs, societies, schools and Speen Parish Assembly. A great deal of information has been collected and summarized in this publication. [The final draft of the VDS was put on to the Speen Parish Council website.](#) [Selected households from all parts of the village were given a copy of the final draft asked to review and comment on it before submission for approval.](#)

There was approximately a 20% response to the questionnaire, (which is considered quite good for a postal survey) and from this a wide variety of ideas and opinions was obtained from all parts of the village. The response strongly supported the development of a VDS and indicated a belief that Speen does have a distinct character that needs to be conserved. The rural atmosphere, views and open spaces to the north, the soft edge and Speen Moors to the south, the quiet area around the Church and Abbey and the tree and hedge-lined roads were dominant in people's thoughts.

1.1 What is it all about?

What is it? - The VDS describes the character of the village that makes it a special place to live and work. It sets out design objectives that residents and developers should meet when thinking about building in the village. It covers only the village of Speen, an area roughly centred upon the Speen Post Office and stretching westward from Brummell Road and the 'Obelisk' at the junction of Speen Lane and the Old Bath Road to the A34 (Newbury bypass), and southwards from Grove Road to the Kennet and Avon canal at Speen Moor.

Who is it for? - It is a reference offering guidance to anyone planning development in and around the village. [It will be useful to an individual householder planning to build an extension or modification,](#) a housing developer building new houses, an industrial developer or a landowner planning tree-felling or new planting.

How does it work? - Anyone applying for planning permission for a development in the village will have to show that they have considered the guidelines the VDS contains when drawing up their plans.

1.2 The planning context

The Speen Village Design Statement was adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) by West Berkshire Council on 1st October 2002 and its recommendations will be taken into account when planning applications are assessed.

The Council's policies regarding development are set out in the statutory Development Plan, which currently comprises the Berkshire Structure Plan and the West Berkshire District Local Plan 1991-2006. The guidance contained in this Design Statement provides an explanation of the Council's position and while it is not a statutory document, it has had an element of public consultation and has been adopted by the Council's Newbury Area Forum. [Compliance with the recommendations does not by itself guarantee planning permission as each case is judged on its merits.](#)

This document will provide guidance at the most local level and at the lowest level of the planning policy framework. It will inform and influence planning decisions in the village. It will assist the Parish Council, who are consulted by West Berkshire Council on planning matters, to assess the impact of proposed development on the village. It will also help the Parish Council and local groups by encouraging and directing voluntary local initiatives that will conserve and enhance the character of the village.



2.0 The Village Context

2.1 Geographical and Historical Background

The village of Speen forms part of Speen Parish which covers a much wider area and includes five distinct settlements - Speen, Woodspeen, Stockcross, Bagnor and Marsh Benham.

Speen is an ancient settlement, which long pre-dates the town of Newbury lying immediately adjacent to the east. Today, the physical boundary between Newbury and Speen is not always obvious and the town of Newbury provides the main shopping, business and leisure facilities for Speen's residents. Infill and new estate development, particularly to the north of the A4 Bath Road have further blurred the edge of the village and some facilities, such as the local primary school, are located outside but just on the edge of the Parish boundary. Despite this, significant areas of Speen retain rural outlooks, and the village is a community with a strong sense of place and social identity, which residents are keen to retain.



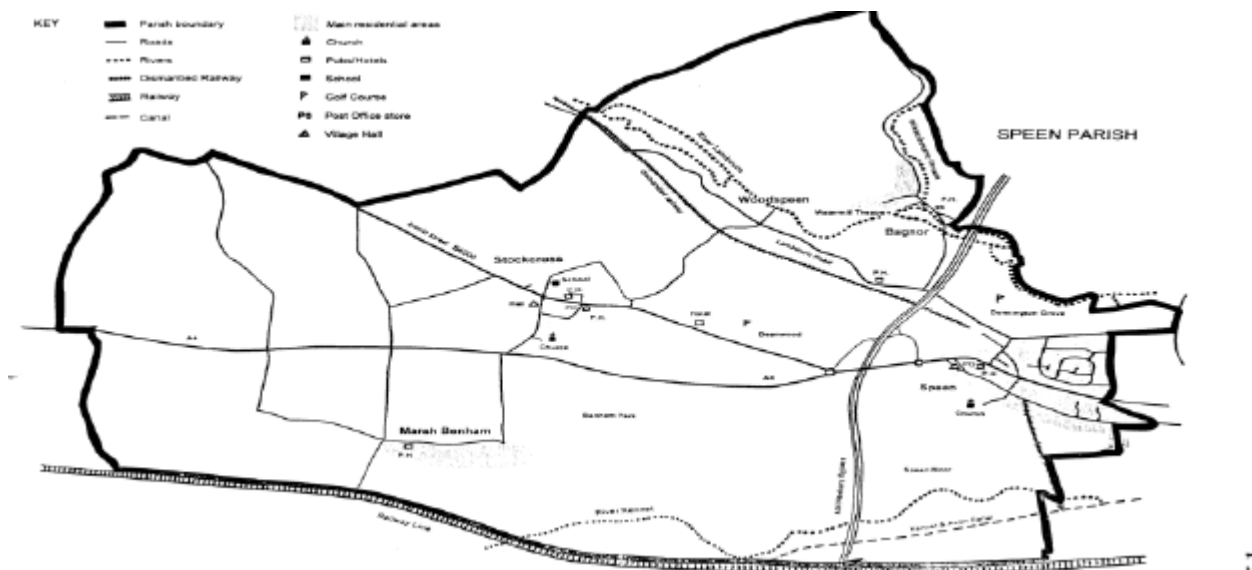
The Ladywell

As a result of its proximity to Newbury and the high levels of new building within some parts of the village, Speen's physical character is dispersed and differentiated. Although predominantly influenced by road transport in its development (a ribbon settlement), Speen's history is more complex and interesting than a casual passer-by on the A4 might suspect.



St. Mary the Virgin Church, Speen

Speen's historic centre is set away from the main east-west route currently running through it (the A4 Bath Road); in fact it even lies south of the other significant and older thoroughfare, Speen Lane. The church of St. Mary the Virgin stands today in surprisingly rural isolation, with only a cluster of 18th and 19th century houses nearby. Although the church's visible fabric is largely Victorian, it was mentioned in the Domesday Book. The fact that a holy well (the Lady Well) is found about 50 metres away from the graveyard might also suggest that this was a religious area before Saxon times; springs and wells were important in Iron Age traditions, and Christian foundations often made use of pagan sensibilities.



Map of the Total Parish of Speen



Elmore Abbey

The earthwork bank in Speen House grounds to the west of the Lady Well may also date from the years before the Roman invasions. It is widely believed that Speen may be the site of 'Spinæ', a known Roman station on Ermin

Street between Silchester and Cirencester. Further indications of a Roman presence are a small farmstead that was excavated in the line of the by-pass near Elmore Abbey, and an urn containing coins found on Speen Hill in the 19th century. Pottery scatters exist to the north and west of Speen House.

Speen saw action during the Civil War over a two day period during which the King remained around Newbury. The warring factions had several skirmishes around Shaw and Donnington Castle and in particular in the fields between Speen and the Castle.

2.2 The Village as it is today: The People, Economics and Future Prospects

Speen, located as it is between Newbury and the open countryside to the west, is an accessible and attractive place to live. It contains a wide variety of housing, of all types, sizes and ages from substantial period properties to family houses, modern town houses, flats and sheltered housing for the elderly.

Speen has a strong community spirit and its organizations cater for many interests. The Parish Hall is the venue for a variety of activities and clubs of diverse interest from ballet, choir, aerobics and yoga classes to the Botany Club and Alpine Society. The village WI meets regularly at the hall as do the Parish Council and the Wine Makers. On the northern edge of the village is a large recreation ground with playing equipment for the local children and a cricket pitch and pavilion. There is also an active Speen Conservation Group and several Neighbourhood Watch schemes, which have helped to develop co-operation between householders in Speen.

Speen is justly proud of its blooming allotments which have been continuously cultivated for 85 years and are so well kept they have helped to win the Best Kept Village award on several occasions. The popularity of the allotments is demonstrated by the number of people waiting for one to come free. The allotments are now included in the Conservation Area and are an essential element of village life.



The Hare and Hounds

Speen has a good range of facilities within the village, particularly the Post Office whose friendly welcome caters

Speen Allotments

St. Mary the Virgin, the local church, is a medieval church built on Saxon foundations. In 1988 the south side of the church was converted into a hall by a glazed partition. This has proved to be a great asset to the Church as it provides a meeting point for the congregation and an area to welcome new members after the service. The hall is also used for many church functions. A Parish Magazine is published to keep villagers in touch with current local activities.

Elmore Abbey is a Benedictine Monastery next door to the Church. The Abbot and community there join with the church in all main services and festivals. The Monks, an Anglican community, moved to Elmore Abbey in 1987. [Significant extensions have been added of recent years, firstly the oratory, built using oak and traditional construction methods, and then the refectory.](#) Considerable effort was made to ensure the building blended into the environment.



Speen Parish Hall

for many and varying needs. It also has two public houses (one with accommodation and both with restaurants), a garage and bus service linking it with the nearby town of Newbury, the main line station and other villages.

Many younger children attend the Robert Sandilands School which is on the boundary of Speen and Newbury, and older children travel into Newbury for the secondary schools. The village primary school at Stockcross is also used by Speen residents that live in its catchment area. This gives Speen village a further link with the other parts of the Speen parish. The A34 (Newbury by-pass) which connects into the A4 Bath Road just to the west of the village boundary, provides road links with the M4 motorway and Winchester and the south coast.

Speen is largely a residential area but there are a number of businesses that operate from the village, some home based but others in commercial premises, largely on the A4 Bath Road. Many residents commute to Newbury or further afield to work and there is also a sizeable retired community, many of whom have lived in Speen for a long time and have chosen to remain here.

The residents are very proud of their village and many of them, when they move house, move to somewhere else in the village.

2.3 Special considerations that affect the development pressures in the village

The same factors which make Speen an attractive place to live are the source of the main pressures for change – namely its accessibility, attractive village character, choice of housing and in particular its proximity to the services and facilities of Newbury. In planning terms, it is

considered to be a sustainable location for new development and much of the village is within walking distance of Newbury town centre. The pressure for development is not new, much of the existing housing was built in the 1960's or later, some as new or extended estates and some as infill plots or redevelopment on existing roads. In the main these developments have been sensitively designed and have matured to integrate successfully with the older pattern of development.



View to St. Mary's Church and Elmore Abbey from Kimbers Drive

3.0 The Character of Landscape Setting

3.1 The surrounding landscape

Speen is a predominantly residential village, built on either side of the A4 and about a mile west from Newbury town centre. Geologically, the area is chalk downlands, being part of the Berkshire Downs, with its gently rolling hills crossed by shallow river valleys. The village, lying as it does between the Kennet and Lambourn river valleys, has a lowest altitude of 80 metres at both rivers, with the levels rising gently to about 115 metres at the A4 plateau.



The Obelisk – Speen Lane

The village is largely hidden from the surrounding landscape by belts of trees to the south. The wooded embankment which housed the now disused railway running north/south through Speen Moor is a major landscape feature which effectively screens views of the easternmost part of the village from the west. To the north and north-west, the village is not so completely screened and the land is generally flatter but the by-pass and associated earthworks have again resulted in a reduction in

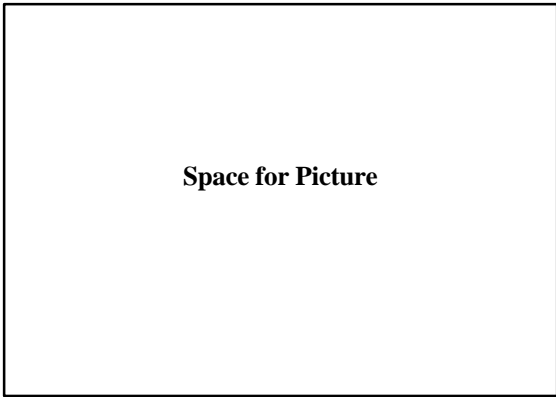
longer views of the village from the west. From the north, long distance views are possible from Donnington Castle and beyond up to Snelsmore Common, with the village edge visible with the golf course in the foreground.

The central core of the village, adjacent to the war memorial at the junction of the A4 and Speen Lane, is at the highest level and the land falls both to the east towards Newbury and to the south towards the meadows of Speen Moor.

3.2 Village Edges

While the north, south and west edges of the village are defined by tree belts, the east merges with Newbury and there is no sense of approach to the village.

The built up area is situated on the north slopes of the Kennet River Valley, which rise to the A4, and on the plateau on the north side of the road. The Newbury bypass cuts through the rural landscape just west of the settlement boundary. On the eastern side there is some merging with residential areas of Newbury.



Golden Jubilee Celebrations at the Speen Recreation Ground



Speen Moor

From Newbury along the Old Bath Road, the boundary of Speen is punctuated by the historic Speen Obelisk standing on the corner of Speen Lane. This ancient road provided

access to the Village and St Mary's Church from the Middle Ages onwards. Approaching Speen from the rural west, a red brick cottage gives way to the War Memorial at the other end of Speen Lane, with its historic houses and ancient garden walls.

The northern edge of the settlement is bordered by a golf course, with mature hedgerows and trees and good views north to historic Donnington Castle on a hilltop.



Donnington Castle

The high density modern development in Speen north of the A4, merges into a residential area of Newbury to the east. The south east boundary is clearer and more rural, being along the aptly named Hill Road with its mature hedges. This drops down to the bottom of the Kennet Valley and the water meadows below. Thames Water, the land owner, has boreholes and a pumping station and depot on site. Further west is Speen Moor, once a peat moor but now water meadow and marshy plantation, with St Mary's Church and Elmore Abbey nestling in a small dip surrounded by grassland, creating a tranquil haven. This has a very special sense of place and has an unusual and possibly unique situation in relation to the village.

It seems likely that the former railway cutting used to define the village on its eastern boundary. Although now partly built over it is still a significant, even dramatic, visual feature. It also provides a natural habitat for wildlife and a pleasant wooded area all the way down to Speen Moor.



Tree Line at Southern Edge of Village

The edges of the village have very significant areas of trees, including the enclosing belt of limes on the southern edge of the golf course, together with beech on the south west corner. The trees surrounding Speen House form a significant feature from the west and from the south, especially when viewed from the Lambourn Valley Way at Speen Moor. The belt of oak and sycamore on the approaches to Elmore Abbey and the shelterbelt along the edge of the old railway also form important enclosures. The overall effect is to contain the village within trees.

3.3 Wildlife and Habitat Conservation

Within the parish there are a number of wildlife sites.

- **Speen Moor** – an area of approximately 35 hectares, designated as a Wildlife Heritage Site (WHS, and also a candidate Special Area of Conservation (cSAC) for the rare Desmoulin's Whorl Snail. The area is entered into the Countryside Stewardship Scheme by the landowner. This area is liable to flooding which was a key feature in the past to bring silt from the river to the land to make it more fertile.
- The **River Kennet** (and its tributaries) is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), a national designation, which recognises its diverse flora and fauna.



Wet Alder Woodlands – Kennett Valley

- The **River Lambourn** floodplain which is also a SSSI and cSAC at Bagnor

- **Hedgerows** – species rich hedges provide a rural edge north and south of the parish. There is an ancient hedgerow forming a boundary between the arable and grasslands on Speen Moor, bordering an historical track, possibly linked to the Roman settlement of Spinae a short distance away. Here there are two very old specimen field maples.
- **Wet Alder Woodlands** – These are an increasingly rare habitat, so the alder woods at Speen Moor have now developed into an area of high conservation value, supporting a diversity of bird (notably snipe) and invertebrate communities. The Conservation Group has conducted surveys of the birds that visit this area. It is not uncommon to see deer, fox and other wild animals. Part of this has been designated as an SSSI and cSAC
- **Unimproved or natural grasslands** – apart from one, all the grass fields on Speen Moor are ‘unimproved’, i.e. they have never been ploughed, re-sown or fertilised, being too wet for tractors. Because of this they still contain a wide range of wildflower and grass species. Such wildflower meadows are now amongst the rarest and most prized wildlife habitats. The majority of all wildflower meadows and pastures in the country have been destroyed since the Second World War.

3.4 Planning Guidance

- PG 1. New development should maintain the setting of the village within the landscape and in particular should retain the existing mature tree screens around the southern, western and northern boundaries. Existing significant landscape features such as the former railway line should be retained.
- PG 2. The contribution that native trees and hedgerows on the village edges and in the surrounding managed

countryside make to the rural landscape character is recognised and should be carefully considered by developers.

- PG 3. Future development (including design) should seek to ensure that the biodiversity of the village is conserved and enhanced.
- PG 4. The southern section of the former railway cutting forms a strong visual feature in the landscape and a natural habitat for wildlife which should be conserved. Public access to this area should also be considered.
- PG 5. The setting of St. Mary’s Church and Elmore Abbey has an unusual and possibly unique situation in relation to the village. Its special sense of place should be preserved.



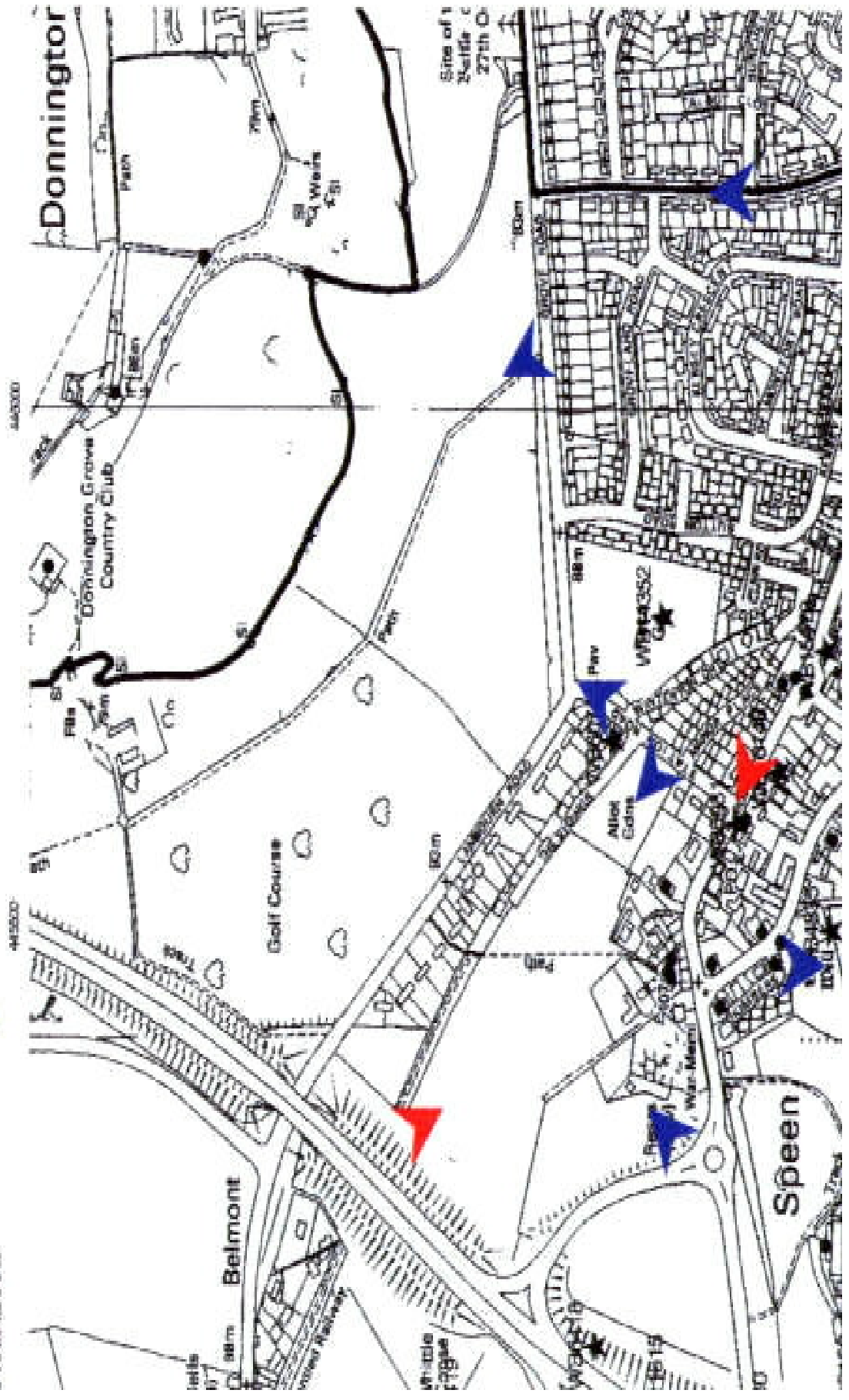
The Conservation Group on Speen Moor

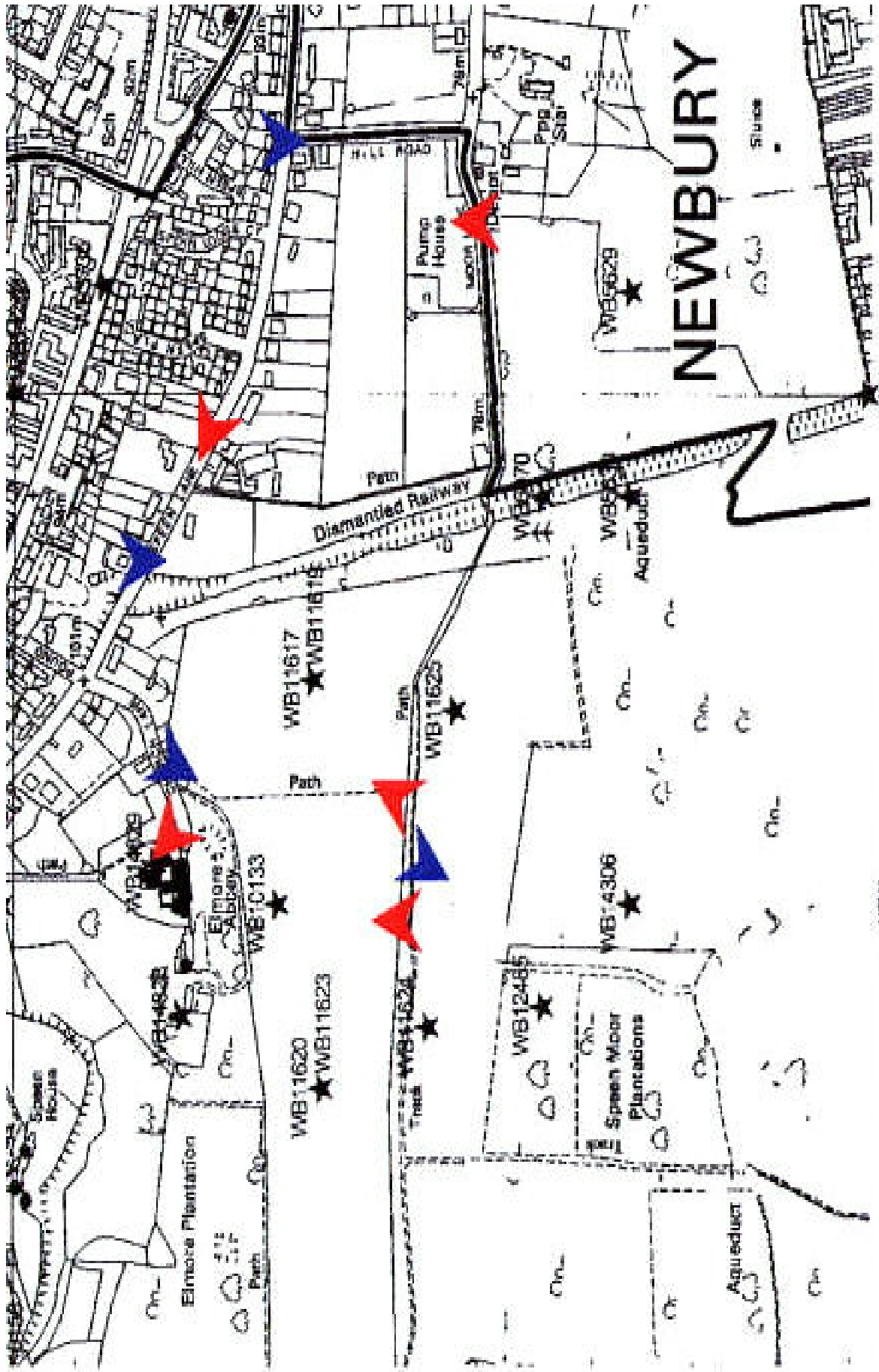
views looking in
views looking out



Speen village
24 Jan 2002

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4.0 Settlement Pattern Character, Buildings & Spaces

Speen has developed into four general zones which include the old part of the village, the A4 Bath Road corridor, Speen Lane to the east of the old railway cutting with its side roads and the new developments to the north of the A4. The latter two zones have mainly been developed in the last 50 years.

The character of a village is defined not just by the buildings, walls and trees but also the spaces and views between them as these contribute to the setting of the buildings.

The old part of the village is centred on the western ends of Speen Lane and developments on the north and south of the A4 Bath Road and is largely within the Conservation Area. The Ordnance Survey map of 1880 clearly shows that this was the total village at that time. Although Speen has undergone considerable residential expansion in recent years, the old part of the village and Conservation Area retain a sense of significant historical and architectural quality.

The village plan identifies, among others, the boundaries of the Conservation Area and the listed buildings (buildings identified by English Heritage as being of special architectural or historic interest). Open spaces and important views into, out of and within the village are also identified.



Old Farmhouse and Granary

Most of the public buildings and all of the 18 listed buildings are in the old part of the village. Some of these have been referred to elsewhere but include the Church, Post Office, Parish Hall and one Public House/Hotel. The Parish Hall was constructed in 1886 and is a classic Victorian red brick building with high roof and a tower and is very well used today. The Hare and Hounds Public House with its hipped old tile roof was built in 1756 but there are records of an “Ale House” being on the site before this. The post office is shown on the 1880 Ordnance Survey map and is a low two storey building which currently has the brickwork painted.

Many of the old building names and certain road names have links back into the history of the village from the 18th century.



Houses in the Old Part of Speen

In the old part of the village two storey houses of Georgian and Victorian construction are common with several post-war residential properties. The prominent external building materials include orange/red bricks, laid in Flemish bond with salt glazed grays used as headers. Render and lime wash finish are also common. Roofs are generally tiled using handmade clay tiles, but there are also many of slate. There are many examples of English and Flemish bond boundary walling, some with flint inset patterns. A feature of the buildings in this part of the village is that they are generally placed close to the roads with associated gardens to the rear. This gives a feeling of enclosure, particularly in Speen Lane. Within some of these old walls are some very attractive gates or doorways that add a certain charm or secrecy to the enclosure. The groups of houses on either side of the A4 Bath Road including those in Cromwell Terrace and Essex Place with their irregular placement and individual styles are also a key feature.



Houses in Old Part of Village

The more recent buildings in the old part of the village have been low density redevelopments of older properties or small new developments such as in Kimbers Drive or the serviced properties for senior citizens in Marshalls Court. The latter is an excellent example of fitting the new in with the old.



Richmond House

The eastern end of Speen Lane was developed over about a 20 year period from the 1960's into predominantly detached family homes. It comprises a single line development of individualistic houses to the south of the road and some infill across to the Bath Road to the north in the grounds of former large properties. Here the two replacement developments offer a range of detached and terraced houses in popular 'Georgian' style with bay windows and small panes. The houses actually on the north side of the Lane have a greater variety of styles and have larger gardens. The houses are set further back from the road than at the west end of Speen Lane giving a feeling of openness. The single line development to the south offers some fine views out to the Kennet Valley beyond.

Development on both sides of the A4 presents a mainly built-up, hard frontage close to the back edge of the footway. Where buildings are set back, hard boundary treatments, such as fences, railings or walls, define the road edge.

The developments to the north of the A4 Bath Road between Brummell Road and the recreation ground were again built in the 1960' and 1970's. These dwellings form an area of higher density with a mixture of detached, semi-detached and terraced houses and a group of 80 flats in 5 blocks. The majority of the houses in this area are part of a larger estate that is divided in two by Brummell Road. All to the west are in Speen and to the east are in Newbury. With the higher density development, gardens are smaller and little land has been left for open spaces, landscaping or communal planted tree areas. Buildings are set back along uniform building lines with pavements and some grass verges within the highway. Open plan or low enclosed front gardens are the norm and there are a good variety of street trees in Brummel Road, particularly the flowering cherries.

Some smaller cul-de-sac developments have taken place in various parts of the village the most prominent of these being The Sydings, Winterton Drive and Caunter Road (which were all built on the disused Newbury to Lambourn railway line), Manor Place and Kimbers Drive. With the exception of Caunter Road these developments are all modern, predominantly detached, family houses. The Sydings and Winterton Drive houses are brick built with

some wooden beam features and steep clay tiled roofs. Both developments are well screened by trees or high hedges. Kimbers Drive houses are brick built open fronted with partial panel wood facades and steep tiled roofs. The houses in Manor Place are all detached in the Georgian style and are more similar to the developments at the east end of Speen Lane.

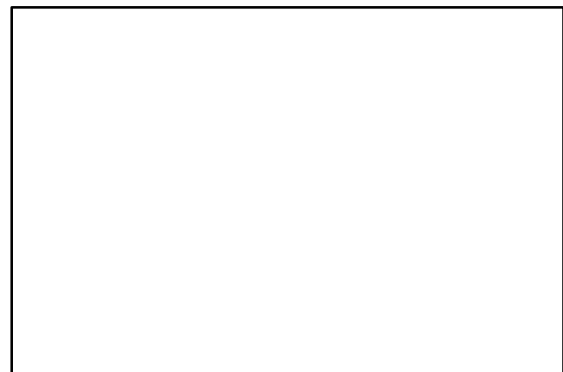
Caunter Road has a mixture of town houses, and individual dwellings generally built to a common style of red brick with some painted rendered finish and grey slate effect roofing. The development includes small bungalows.

Small developments of houses built by the Local Authority after the Second World War also feature in Speen. The main groups are those in Majendie Close and on the Lambourn Road. The houses are traditional red brick with high clay tiled roofs. These houses fit well into their surroundings.



Cedar Tree in Speen Hill Close

One of the important features of Speen is the retention of hedges and trees. This is particularly so in the older part of the village and all the way down Speen Lane and the Old Bath Road but is also a feature in the newer, smaller developments mentioned above. There are some excellent individual specimen trees, many of which have preservation orders on them. These include wellingtonia, pine, cypress, yew and oak. There are considerable numbers of evergreens within the village, especially in the older gardens and these give character, particularly in the winter months when they tend to dominate.



Historic Building??

4.1 Planning Guidance

Due to the variety of housing and development styles in different areas of Speen some of the following guidelines are area specific.

General

PG 6. Buildings on infill plots should be of individual design, and should be designed to be well integrated to reflect the landscape character of the area

PG 7. Any future development should be designed to conserve and where possible enhance the character of the village such as its rural nature, quality, diversity and heritage

PG 8. Existing mature tree belts and hedgerows which mark the edge of the existing village should be retained and, where appropriate, reinforced to preserve the setting of the existing village

Layout

PG 9. Any new development should take into account the scale, siting and layout of its surroundings.

PG 10. The siting of new buildings should be examined from all directions. Developers should provide perspective (isometric) drawings or artists impressions to show how new developments, extensions and conversions would appear in relation to their overall surroundings and adjacent properties.

PG 11. Any redevelopment along the western ends of Speen Lane and the Bath Road should reflect the linear frontage form of development, and new buildings should be sited close to the road frontage to maintain the sense of enclosure.

PG 12. Developments to the southern side of Speen Lane should retain the predominantly single frontage form of development.

PG 13. Any redevelopment along the A4 should be designed to provide an attractive frontage to that road and should not present a harsh, impenetrable visual or physical barrier.

Buildings

PG 14. Developers should respect and enhance the architectural quality and variety in the street scene.

PG 15. Where practicable re-use of larger detached properties set in spacious grounds should be sought as an alternative to demolition and re-development in order to preserve the visual character and landscape setting of such properties and their surroundings. This could apply to conversion to both residential and commercial use.

PG 16. Extensions and alterations, as well as new buildings, should use materials and be of a design compatible with original and adjacent buildings

PG 17. New buildings in the older part of the village should be domestic in scale, one and a half to two storey in height, of brick construction and appropriately detailed. Roofs should be steeply pitched and generally covered in plain clay tiles.

Views and Spaces

PG 18. The open spaces within the village and views into and out of the village (see map) are essential parts of the character of the village. Any new developments (including infill or extensions) should conserve and, where possible, enhance these elements

PG 19. Infill developments and extensions to existing buildings should take into account gaps that provide views to surrounding countryside or open spaces within the village.

PG 20. Any conversion of existing buildings for commercial use should be undertaken sympathetically and in a way that reflects the local character of the village.

PG 21. Open spaces, including garden areas that have the potential to encourage a variety of wildlife should, where practicable, be positively managed to provide appropriate habitats

PG 22. Any development in the estate area north of the Bath Road and west of Brummell Road should take note of the need to include and improve on landscaping and communal areas. Opportunities arise for the planting of larger indigenous trees but adequate space must be left for them to grow to maturity.

PG 23. The allotments should be preserved for present and future generations.

Boundaries

PG 24. New accesses should be designed to minimize the loss of boundary vegetation and achieve an appropriate balance between highway safety and amenity.

PG 25. Hedges and trees are an essential part of the character of Speen further enhancing the rural atmosphere. These should be conserved and reinforced through new planting in any new development whether small or large. In addition, hedges or a combination of hedges and low walls or railings should be used in preference to fences particularly on street frontages and where the property boundary adjoins open land.

PG 26. Any new development on the edge of the village should conserve or enhance the soft landscaped edge by the provision of appropriate tree and hedgerow planting. Hard edges of walls, fences or other structures should be avoided.

5.0 Highways and Traffic

5.1 Character of Local Roads

The A4 Bath Road forms the main arterial route into Newbury from the west and effectively cuts Speen into two halves – whilst it is only a single carriageway road, the volume of and noise from traffic make it a substantial feature. The busy road also has a visual effect, observable in the high enclosing walls of some properties, narrow pavements and trees cut back to avoid overhang-



Street Scene Down Brummell Road

There are two other east-west routes, Grove Road/Lambourn Road and Speen Lane, which run north and south respectively of the A4 Bath Road. Grove Road/Lambourn Road marks the northern edge of the built-up area of Speen and is flanked to the north by the Parasampia Golf Course which provides a rural setting with many mature trees and outlook across and up to Donnington Castle.



View down Speen Lane looking west

Speen Lane has many of the characteristics of a narrow country lane, particularly towards the western end being tree and hedgerow lined with few hard edges. It has no footways and buildings are generally set back and well screened from the road. Open to two-way traffic, it is capable of single lane traffic only in places. It is a pleasant and popular walking and cycling route but suffers from high levels of commuter traffic especially during peak hours as it serves as an alternative route to the A4 Bath Road.



Street Scene at Eastern End of Speen Lane

There has been some replacement of buildings and apparent infill along Speen Lane which has reduced tree and shrub cover. West of the railway there is strong enclosure and many fine trees, Wellingtonia, lime, oak and beech. The character of the Lane changes noticeably east of the cutting, being more open with fine views glimpsed to the south.

North of the A4 Bath Road and east of Station Road is a mix of modern estate roads, of largely similar design accessed via Brummell Road and Grove Road serving mainly 1970's and later housing and flats.

In addition to the above routes there are a variety of tracks and paths leading to dwellings behind the frontage development on the A4 Bath Road. Two recent linear developments on the former railway line lead east and west off Station Road.

Street furniture

Speen has a multiplicity of signage throughout the village. Some of these are commercial whilst others are installed by the local authority. There are some historic signs in the village, notably the signpost fingerboard outside the Hare and Hounds Public House and the milestone currently obscured in the shrubbery at the entrance to Majendie Close.



Fingerboard Outside Hare and Hounds Hotel

Full street lighting is currently limited to main roads such as the A4 Bath Road with limited or no street lighting in minor roads and lanes.

Overhead cables are to be found throughout the village and these can become an eyesore and a problem in areas of the village where there are a lot of trees.

There are a limited number of public seats in the village but those that are there are well used.

Parking

On-street parking is not a significant problem in Speen as most properties have off-street parking provision and many have garages. There is lay-by parking for the Post Office, which is important for it to continue to attract passing trade. Speen's proximity to Newbury Town Centre means that a relatively high proportion of residents walk to some facilities which helps to reduce the level of local traffic.

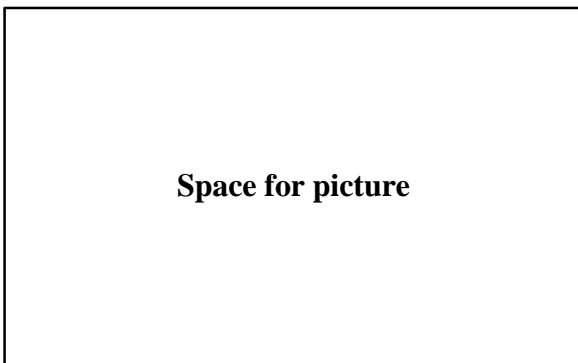


Lambourn Valley Way

5.2 Footpaths and cycle-ways

The rights of way network in and around the village, particularly Speen Moor, is heavily used and highly valued by villagers and others.

Apart from roadside walking there are numerous footpaths within the village ranging from recognized routes such as the Lambourn Valley Way and minor paths providing local access to property. There are many opportunities to combine footpaths to create circular routes which are popular and accessible opportunities for quiet recreation for residents of Speen and Newbury.



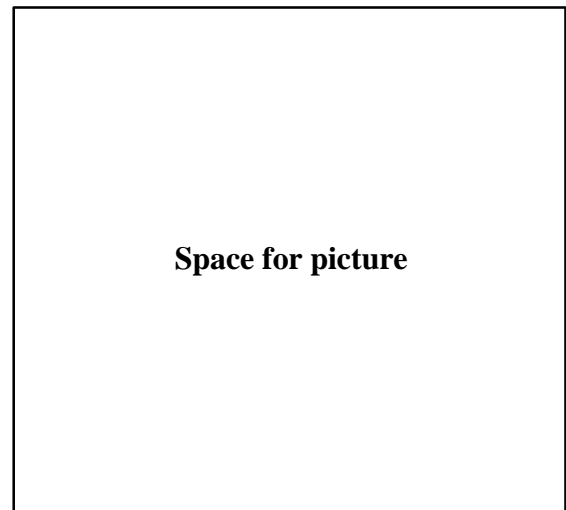
Space for picture



Lambourn Valley Way Passing Church Lych-gate

Speen Lane, Hill Road, Moor Lane and Church Lane are popular routes for walkers linking with the Lambourn Valley Way and routes to the River Kennet and Kennet and Avon Canal. These routes provide a short circular walk back to Speen Lane via St. Mary's Church along an ancient track to the church lych-gate and Ladywell.

Grove Road and Lambourn Road provide access to public footpaths through Parasampia Golf Course and towards Donnington Castle, Bagnor, Woodspeen and beyond.



Space for picture

To the south of the village the open countryside provides popular walks and southerly and westerly views to the Kennet Valley, both from existing properties, footpaths and from Hill Road and Church Lane, which are on pedestrian routes to Newbury.

There are no dedicated cycleways within the village but many opportunities for cyclists to use quieter lanes and roads and to combine with bridleways and other routes for recreational cycling.

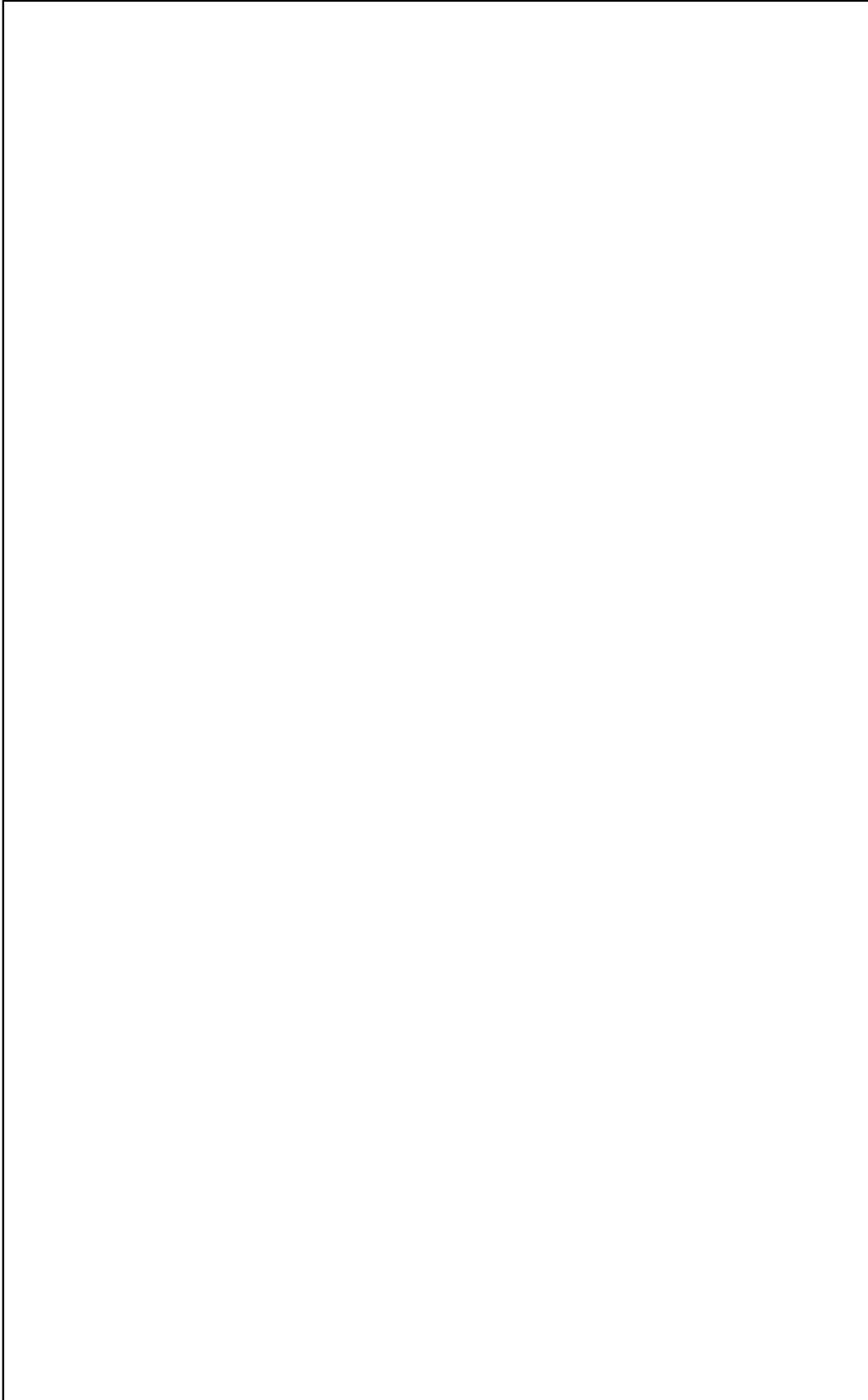
5.3 Planning Guidance

- PG 27. The use of modern ‘low noise’ road surfaces should be considered when resurfacing through roads.
- PG 28. Every effort should be made to retain the existing rural character of local roads and any changes to materials or street furniture, should be consistent with that character.
- PG 29. Where applicable, appropriate measures should be taken, in keeping with the character of the roads, to address road safety concerns, for instance on Speen Lane and Grove Road.
- PG 30. Safe and attractive crossing points on the A4 for pedestrians and cyclists would be welcomed to facilitate north-south movement within and through Speen.
- PG 31. If new development takes place, particular care should be taken to ensure that the rural character of roads/lanes is not damaged, and in particular that any existing soft green edges and/or sense of enclosure is not lost through unnecessary road widening or use of inappropriate surface materials and boundary treatments.
- PG 32. The impact of street signage should be minimised, without impairing safety. The historic signposts and milestones are part of the character of the village and should be preserved. Developers are asked to keep temporary signs at development sites to an absolute minimum and to remove them as soon as the works are complete. Similarly, estate agents are asked to remove signs promptly after the sale is complete.
- PG 33. Where street lighting is required it should not cause unnecessary light pollution. Where security lighting is installed on houses and outbuildings it should be sensitively designed and sited.
- PG 34. Wherever possible, developers should arrange with the local electricity and telephone companies to have cables laid underground rather than on posts above ground.
- PG 35. **Additional** public seats should be considered, **particularly** in any new development. Where possible they should be suitably placed to give a good view and be welcoming to local residents.



Footpath to North of Speen over the Golf Course

PAGE FOR PICTURE OF CHILDRENS ART



Important Speen Views

Speen commands an elevated position relative to much of the surrounding landscape, thereby affording views which add significant interest looking both into and out of the village. A map illustrating important views is therefore included in the VDS on the centre pages.

We have not considered views of discrete subjects such as specific buildings, monuments or trees, rather vistas affording a general perspective on the setting and character in the context of the landscape.

A list of 19 views, 9 looking in and 10 looking out of the village, are found by referring to the Map attached:

Views looking into Speen

- From Donnington Castle towards Speen village
- From the A4 towards the Hare and Hounds and Post Office
- Along Speen Lane from White Lodge towards the old railway bridge
- From the bottom of Church Lane towards the Church
- From the two Field Maples near the moor northwards
- From the track opposite Elmore Abbey northwards
- From the Pump House on Moor Lane northwards
- From the bypass at the Kennet northwards
- From the path near the intersection of the old railway and the bypass, towards the southeast

Views looking out of Speen

- From the path leaving Grove Road towards Donnington Grove club house
- From the allotments to the north-west
- From the A34 southbound roundabout on the A4 across to Donnington Grove and the Castle
- From Brummell Road north towards the castle
- From Kimbers Drive south towards the Church
- From Speen Lane near Coppice House looking south
- From Church Lane on the path to the moor
- From Speen Lane and Hill Road south across the Kennet Valley
- From the path near the two Maples towards Speen Moor Plantations and the Kennet
- From Station Road looking north across the golf course

Important Open Spaces

- **Allotments**
- **Recreation Ground**
- **War Memorial**
- **Obelisk**

BACK PAGE

Outline of Ladywell