



5th October 2020

To Members of Council

You are hereby summoned to a virtual MEETING OF CONSULTATIONS AND HIGHWAYS **to be held on** Monday, 12th October 2020 at 7.30pm, **to conduct the following business.**

Helen Bojaniwska
Town Clerk

The meeting will be held via the Zoom meeting platform: <https://www.zoom.us/join>

To attend the meeting please use ID **864 1654 9988** – password **45782904**.

For more information about attending Council meeting via Zoom please refer to the guidance on our website at: <https://www.stroudtown.gov.uk/uploads/taking-part-in-an-stc-zoom-meeting-april-2020.pdf>

AGENDA

1. To receive apologies
2. To receive declarations of interest or requests for dispensations
3. To approve the minutes of the meeting of 14th September 2020 previously circulated
4. To receive questions from members of the public
5. To receive the Assistant Clerk's Report (for information only)
6. To comment on planning applications as listed
7. To note planning decisions from the Stroud District Council
8. To consider supporting the campaign to reopen Stroudwater station (from Stonehouse Town Council)
9. To consider a report on the A419 Golden Valley Inspiration Study
10. To consider consultation proposals on a review of the highway code <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/review-of-the-highway-code-to-improve-road-safety-for-cyclists-pedestrians-and-horse-riders/summary-of-the-consultation-proposals-on-a-review-of-the-highway-code>
11. To consider lower rugby field, Marling School

Members are reminded that the Council has a general duty to consider the following matters in the exercise of any of its functions: Equal Opportunities (age, race, gender, sexual orientation, faith, marital status and disability); Crime and Disorder (Section 17); Health and Safety; and Human Rights.

Clerks Report – Consultation Committee

Meeting of 12th October 2020

Appeal

Ref: APP/C1625/W/20/3254695 20 Mill Farm Drive, Paganhill

The development proposed is erection of a dwelling.

Decision - The appeal is dismissed.

Decisions Made By Local Planning Authority

Application	Status	STC Comments
Travis Perkins Wallbridge S.20/1360/FUL storage heights; removal of 2no. skips and 1no. storage container; additional customer loading area; pedestrian foot links; and associated works (retrospective).	Permission Permission Regularisation of external	
3 - 7 Rowcroft S.20/1563/ADV Replacement company signage	Consent	
The Withins Lansdown S.20/1511/HHOLD Proposed replacement garage	Permission	
Glenfield Park End Paganhill S.20/1525/HHOLD Proposed rear extensions comprising of two storey / attic and part single storey	Withdrawn	
Wayside Park End Paganhill S.20/1523/HHOLD Proposed rear extensions comprising of two storey / attic and part single storey.	Withdrawn	
12 London Road S.20/1650/HHOLD The installation of a front light well and larger window to an existing basement, with an access stair from ground to basement level.	Permission	
Land Adjacent To Northside Mill Farm Drive Paganhill S.20/1583/FUL Erection of 3 detached dwellings.	Withdrawn	
3 - 7 Rowcroft S.20/1560/LBC Refurbish the existing sign on the front of the building, replace with new trading name and branding	Consent	
4 Milton Grove S.20/1606/HHOLD Proposed two storey rear extension, single storey side extension plus decking area at rear	Permission	
Rockleigh Park Road S.20/1693/HHOLD Proposed enlarged terrace	Permission	
89 Bisley Road S.20/1745/TCA Holly (T1) fell. Pear (T2) fell.	Consent	
The Orchard Downfield S.20/1671/TPO Beech T1, remove deadwood, shorten the low limb by approximately 2.5m.	Consent	
The Lindens Lower Street S.20/1833/TCA Lime (T1) remove 2 stems leaning towards the road, keeping the rear stem in line with the 5 existing lime trees	Consent	

Lower rugby field, Marling School

At 10th August meeting it was agreed to submit an application to register this site as an asset of community value. This site has not been used by the community for many years and doesn't qualify for listing as an ACV.

The legislation (Localism Act 2011) s33 says:

“88Land of community value

(1)For the purposes of this Chapter but subject to regulations under subsection (3), a building or other land in a local authority's area is land of community value if in the opinion of the authority—

(a)an actual current use of the building or other land that is not an ancillary use furthers the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community, and

(b)it is realistic to think that there can continue to be non-ancillary use of the building or other land which will further (whether or not in the same way) the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community.

The land is owned by Rodborough Trust and is leased to Marling School. Stroud Rugby Club would like to use the site for club purposes and Cllr Haydn Sutton has written to our MP, on behalf of the Rugby Club, to make an approach to the Trust and the school to try to resolve this. Is this something we could support by working with our MP and the rugby club?

12th Oct 2020
APPLICATIONS

Item 6

Planning Application No.	Location	Details	Ward/notes
S.20/1885/HHOLD	17 Burford Drive	Proposed front and side extension	Central
S.20/1747/HHOLD	50 Marling Crescent, Paganhill	Revised. Proposed alterations, extentions, garage conversion and the dropping of kerbs	Pag/Farm
S.20/1944/HHOLD	Zamek, Castle Street	Ground floor rear and side extension, conversion of attached garage into living space. External alterations and improvements for vehicular access	Trinity
S.20/1943/HHOLD	37 Acre Street	Replacement bike/bin store. Replace window with door	Central
S.20/1989/FUL	89 Bisley Road	Subdivision of existing dwelling to form two dwellings with a rear extension.	Slade

Delegated applications

These applications will not be discussed unless a ward Cllr calls in or there are significant objections from members of the public.

Planning Application No.	Location	Details	Ward/notes
S.20/1857/LBC	Farmhill Lodge, Paganhill Estate	Internal and external alterations	Pag/Farm
S.20/1740/TPO	Visitors Car Park At Stone Manor, Bisley Road	Sycamore Tree (0154)- reduction to crown of sycamore tree by 3 metres on garden side and 2 metres off the top	Slade
S.20/1928/TPO	Stroud High School, Beards Lane	Limes T1-T6) - dead wood and crown raise to 4.5m	Central
S.20/1931/HHOLD	12 Weyhouse Close	Proposed dormer extension / loft conversion	Trinity
S.20/1814/TCA	2 Castle Villas, Castle Street	To crown 2 limes and 4 yew trees - all mature trees in residential area.	Trinity
S.20/1924/LBC	Subscription Rooms, George Street	Remove 1.2m section of internal wall in the first floor room known as the Kendrick Room and replace with 2 steel posts	Central – STC application
S.20/2008/HHOLD	82 Farmhill Lane	Single storey side extension.	Pag/Farm

Stroudwater Station, a sustainable station for the Stroudwater Corridor: Briefing for local councils.

Stroudwater Station, Stonehouse - a fast, green, direct route to Bristol and beyond.

Re-opening Stroudwater Station at Bristol Road, Stonehouse is an economic, sustainable and deliverable project to link a catchment area of 55,000 people with their regional capital for work, education and leisure.

Stonehouse Town Council and Rail Future submitted a bid to the Department for Transport's Restoring Your Railway Fund; the proposal was assessed as having potential benefits. We are seeking evidence of local support.

1. Why build Stroudwater Station, Stonehouse?

a) Gloucestershire needs more stations

Gloucestershire and Stroud District need more stations and better rail links to the regional capital Bristol. A station at Stonehouse is the missing link to connect the area with Bristol and will remedy Stroud District's and the County's poor rail performance.

People in Gloucestershire, including the Stroud District, take around half the average train journeys per year, 9 in 2018. This compares with a regional average of 14 -16 journeys per head in the South West region and a national average of 21 journeys.¹

Gloucestershire has almost the smallest number of stations, nine, compared with all other counties. Five stations serve scattered rural areas and only three offer a direct service to Bristol.

b) Gloucestershire needs more direct rail links to Bristol and beyond

For around 55,000 people in the Stroud Valleys, one of the more densely populated areas in Gloucestershire, along with over 4000 workers on the Stonehouse industrial estates, there is no direct link to the regional capital, Bristol. It can take longer to travel by train from the Stroud Valleys to Bristol, 30 miles away, than it does to reach London, 100 miles away. The Stroudwater corridor is the largest semi-urban area between Bristol and Birmingham, without direct access to its major regional economic centre, Bristol.

c) There is a climate emergency

Stroudwater Station would reduce congestion in our towns, on the M5 and within Bristol. It would contribute to a reduction in carbon emissions in line with targets set by national and local government. There is a climate emergency: action must be taken now to move away from the car to other forms of transport.

2. Where is the site for Stroudwater Station?

- a) The station would be on the existing Gloucester to Bristol line. Stonehouse Bristol Road was closed in 1965 as part of the Beeching cuts. See **Map at Appendix 1**.
- b) The site is in Stonehouse, close to the town centre, with excellent road, cycle and pedestrian access. Analysis has shown most rail passenger start their journey by walking or cycling to the station.² The A419, B4008, National Cycle Route 45, the canal, its towpath and local footpaths all link to the site which also has regular passing bus services. Stonehouse Burdett Road, on the Cheltenham to London line is also close.

¹ Rail journeys are taken from the annual passenger estimates 2018, Office of Rail and Road, and compared with population data to arrive at journeys per head per annum. Apart from 3 sparsely populated counties, Gloucestershire was at least 40% worse than the rest.

² Earlier Rail Census analysis and National Travel Surveys: car parking at the station is rarely greater than 15% of journeys, with 65% of passengers arrive on foot or bicycle.

3. Who would use Stroudwater Station?

- a) Up to 55,000 people live in the catchment area for a new station at Bristol Road station. See map of catchment area at **Appendix 2** and table at **Appendix 3** for Wards included and population data.
- b) The proposed Station is located in a densely populated area with a population of 12,000 within a mile (Stonehouse and The Stanleys) and 22,000 within 2 miles (Stonehouse, The Stanleys, Cainscross, Eastington, Standish³). The South West region, Gloucestershire and the Stroud District are growing with population predicted to expand by 7% over the next decade⁴. By 2028, the population in the catchment area for the station is predicted to grow to 58,800.

4. What levels of journeys and revenue would be generated?

- a) At a reasonable assumption of around £10 per journey and 400,000 journeys per year, annual revenue could be around £4 million.
- b) The Halcrow Study (2002)⁵ found a medium forecast for journeys was 160,000 with a high forecast of 200,000. Since 2002, rail journeys have increased by 150%, suggesting a level of 400,000 is attainable which would put the proposed station in the top 40% of all stations. Cam & Dursley currently have 188,900 journeys a year⁶ from a catchment area of much less than half of the Stroudwater corridor.

5. How would Stroudwater Station benefit the area?

<p>Economy and jobs:</p>	<p>Stroudwater Station would be close to some of the District's major employment sites and provide a good link to North and central Bristol for people to commute in either direction.</p> <p>The station would make a significant contribution to regional economic development. Stonehouse is a major employment centre with five industrial estates, almost a third of Stroud District's commercial floor space. The Oldends Lane industrial estate is right next to the station site, with major employers such as Muller, Schlumberger, Delphi and Renishaw employing over 4,000 employees.</p> <p>A direct link to the regional capital Bristol would help the area pull its weight in the Western Gateway region. The Stroud and Stonehouse areas have long been known for technological innovation and there is potential for greater synergy with the hi- tech sector in Bristol, especially at a time of potential change for the aerospace industry.</p> <p>Site allocations in the draft Local Plan include a proposal for a 10 hectare employment site, known as the Eco-Park, near to the station site at Junction 13 of the M5, by Ecotricity, the local green energy supplier.</p>
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³ Population figures for Eastington (1567) and Standish (227) from 2011 census.

⁴<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationprojections/bulletins/subnationalpopulationprojectionsforengland/2018based/relateddata>

⁵ Gloucestershire County Council Stonehouse(Bristol Road) Station study, Final Report, January 2002, Halcrow Group Limited

⁶ <https://dataportal.orr.gov.uk/statistics/usage/estimates-of-station-usage>

National and local transport infrastructure:	Help to relieve congestion and pollution on the A419 and local roads as well as on the M5 and within Bristol. The M5 is the current main direct link to Bristol from the area. The Stroud District has high levels of out commuting, with most of the journeys made in a private car ⁷ . A direct train service from Stroudwater Station would reduce congestion, pollution and carbon emissions.
Carbon neutrality:	Help to contribute to a reduction in carbon emissions in line with targets set by national and local government by reducing car journeys. Site is easily accessible by cycle, foot and public transport.
Youth mobility and education:	Enhance educational opportunities by connecting to schools and colleges within Stonehouse and Stroud and to further education opportunities in Bristol. Allow students and staff to use rail transport.
Tackling deprivation and levelling up:	The station site is close to Stroud 005D Lower Super Output Area which is amongst the 30% most deprived neighbourhoods in the country, one of three 3 areas within Stroud District are ranked this highly. Income, employment and education, skills and training deprivation are all high in this area, with levels within the 20% of most deprived areas. A station with fast, direct access to Bristol would give people a much wider choice of job, training and educational opportunities.
Demands of development:	Help meet the demands of current and proposed housing development. A major new development Great Oldbury, West of Stonehouse, is being built close to the site with housing for over 3,500 residents, and 10 hectares of employment land. Further housing (2,000 dwellings) and employment development (15-25 hectares) are proposed within 2 miles of the site.
Leisure economy and well being:	Enhance the social, cultural, tourism, sport and shopping opportunities for residents of the Stroudwater Corridor and the Bristol region. Around one third of train journeys are now made for leisure and shopping. ⁸ Visitors to the area are set to increase with the Cotswold Canal restoration up to Saul, the new Forest Green Rovers stadium at Junction 13 of the M5 and the attractions of the Stroud Valleys and Cotswold Way all nearby. Other benefits could include direct access to Bristol's hospitals for medical appointments.

⁷ <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/media/2093897/full-draft-local-transport-plan-draft-for-consultation-171219-a.pdf>, p.66

⁸ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/851082/rail-factsheet-2019.pdf

6. How would the station fit with the existing rail network?

- a) A previous study⁹ showed a strong business case for re-opening Stroudwater Station together with a new station at Charfield in South Gloucestershire. South Gloucestershire Unitary authority have recently submitted a bid to the New Stations Fund and the Restoring your Railway Fund.
- b) There have been suggestions that a new station on the Bristol to Birmingham line should be located north of Stonehouse and Standish Junction in the Haresfield area. We believe that it would **not be effective** for the following reasons:
 - **Fewer passengers, fewer benefits:** Haresfield would have a smaller catchment area than for Stroudwater Station and would always be constrained by its proximity to the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Stations users, journey numbers and revenue would be lower than for Stroudwater Station and the beneficial impacts on use of the private car and carbon emissions would also be reduced.
 - **Existing station closure:** If the London train stopped at Haresfield, the operators may seek to close the existing Stonehouse Burdett Road station leading to an annual loss of around 100,000 journeys a year.
 - **Less access to Bristol by rail:** Changing trains is a deterrent for many passengers so a rail connection to Bristol from Stroud via Haresfield interchange would attract fewer passengers than direct access using Stroudwater station.
 - **Impact on rail network:** A new station with stopping trains so near a fast junction would create pathway constraints on future train service planning, particularly where interchanges are required.
 - **Infrastructure costs/project complexity:** the provision of four tracks would incur substantial track and signalling expenditure. Road access would need major changes, given the existing rural lane network.

7. Who supports the Stroudwater Station proposal?

- **Local people** (most requested infrastructure improvement during consultation for the Stonehouse Neighbourhood Plan)
- **MP:** cross party political support from MPs over a number of years including current MP, Siobhan Baillie.
- **Stroud District Council**
- **Local businesses** (including Ecotricity and Stonehouse Court Hotel)
- **Landowner of adjacent site**
- **Business West**
- **Cam and Dursley Transportation Group** (Support as there is pressure on Cam and Dursley station and the surrounding settlements.)
- **Railfuture**
- **Department for Transport:** assessed proposal as having potential benefits (response to bid to Restoring Your Railways Fund, June 2020)

The proposal was included in the Gloucestershire County Council's current Local Transport Plan 2015-2031. It is concerning that there is no reference to the proposal in the draft Local Transport

⁹ Table 6, Section 3.2.1, shows Benefit Cost Ratio of 4.72, [MetroWest Phase 2 Gloucestershire Extension Study, December 2016](#) (C2CHM/Gloucestershire County Council),

Plan. The proposal fits well with the recent [Rail Investment Strategy](#) commissioned by GCC which identifies poor connectivity between Gloucester and Bristol as a rail service gap which could “support Gloucestershire’s economy” (Rail Investment Strategy, March 2020, p.26).

8. If it’s such a good idea, why hasn’t it happened yet?

- a) There have been delays in progressing the proposal as major changes in the region’s rail service have been planned, for example the MetroWest project to improve rail services between Bristol and Gloucester.
- b) **We believe the time is right to make this happen:**
 - A station on an existing line where people already live and work, where housing and employment sites are developed and planned.
 - A station which will provide a fast, green link to the regional centre and more.
 - There is a climate emergency and a modal shift to alternative transport to the car is needed now.
 - The Department of Transport, our MP, the District Council and Town Council, local businesses and local people can all see the benefits of this achievable and sustainable project.
- c) We need to embed the proposal in the County’s Local Transport Plan and get Stroudwater Station built.

9. Request for support from local councils

Stonehouse Town Council is working to promote the proposal with local people and businesses, local councils, Stroud District Council, Gloucestershire County Council, GFirstLEP and the Department for Transport. It will strengthen the case for Stroudwater Station to demonstrate support from town and parish councils.

We are asking local councils to pass a resolution:

supporting the proposal to build Stroudwater Station as a sustainable and achievable transport project which will bring environmental, social and economic benefits.

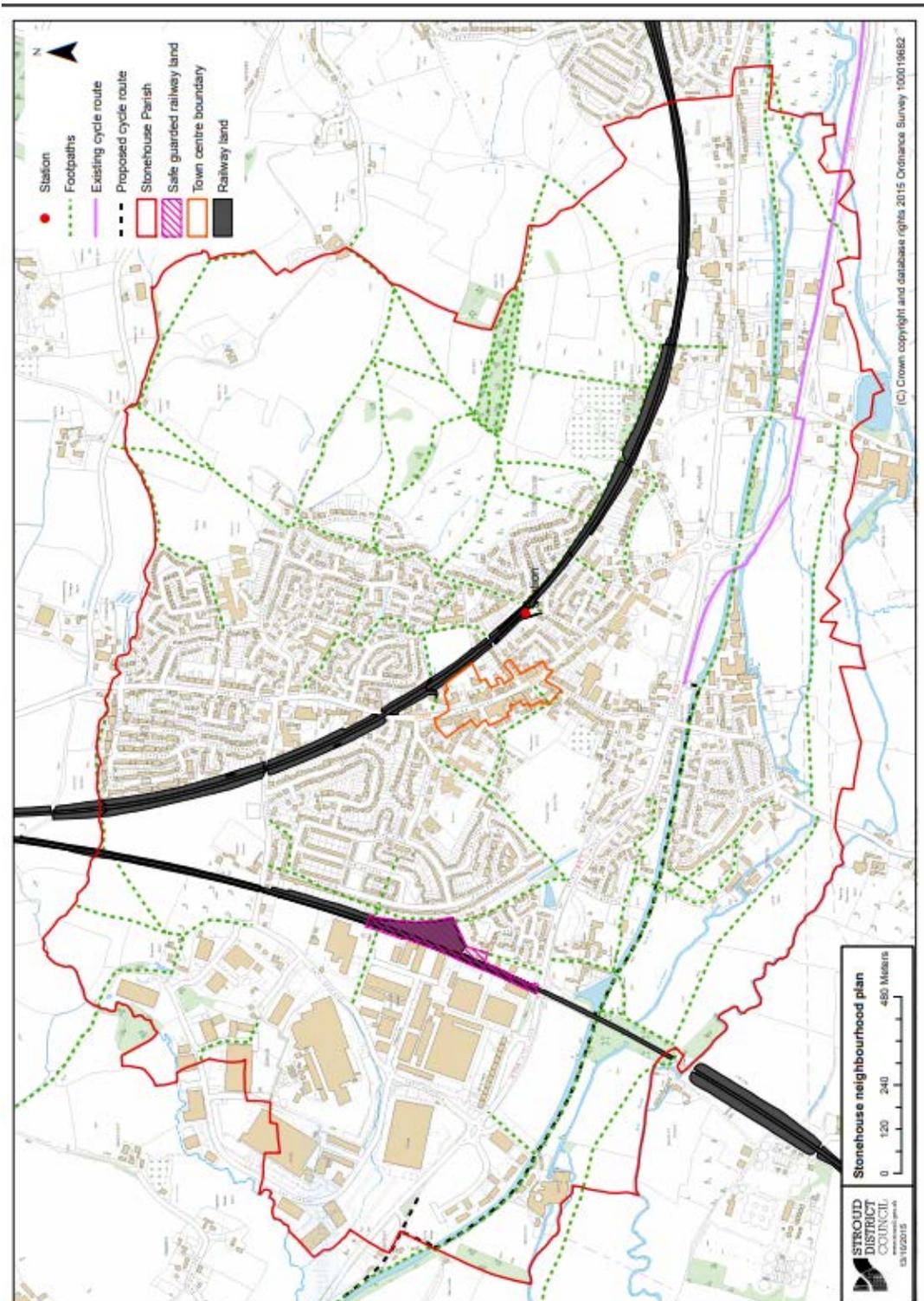
We are also asking local councils to consider taking action:

by asking their County Councillors to ensure this proposal is included in the County’s Local Transport Plan, currently under review (awaiting government White Paper on Transport in Autumn 2020)

Briefing by Stonehouse Town Council, Bristol Road Working Group, August 2020.

Appendix 1: Map to show safeguarded land for station at Stonehouse Bristol Road and the site of Stonehouse (Burdett Road) Station London line.

[Link to PDF](#)



Appendix 2: Map to show catchment area (Source: Halcrow Study, 2002)



Appendix 3: Table to show population Stroudwater Corridor, 2018¹⁰

Stroudwater Corridor wards	Population 2018
Cainscross	8,288
Stroud Central	2,144
The Stanleys	4,381
Hardwicke	7,278
Randwick, Whiteshill and Ruscombe	2,050
Rodborough	4,520
Severn	5,146
Stonehouse	7,416
Trinity	2,170
Uplands	2,120
Stroud Farmhill and Paganhill	2,519
Stroud Slade	2,589
Stroud Valley	2,198
Amberley & Woodchester	2,137
Total	54,956

¹⁰

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationprojections/bulletins/subnationalpopulationprojectionsforengland/2018based/relateddata>

GOLDEN VALLEY ROUTE – INSPIRATION STUDY

AUTHOR

Town Clerk

CONSULTEES

See attached reports – (it is suggested that you read them in the order shown):

- Golden Valley Route leaflet
- Golden Valley Route Inspiration Study
- Golden Valley Route FAQs
- Golden Valley Route Technical Report
- Golden Valley Route Technical Report Appendices

FOR MEETING

Consultations and Highways 12/10/2020

RECOMMENDATION

Note the report and authorise the Clerk to continue to support the partnership group with development and promotion of the project, starting with the “next steps” outlined below.

REPORT

In 2019 [Witteveen+Bos UK](#) (engineering consultancy who specialise in infrastructure relating to walking, cycling and air pollution) and [Clifton Emery design](#) (urban design specialists) were commissioned to produce a study to investigate whether the A419 between Stroud and Chalford could be improved, to make it welcoming to everyone, not just cars.

The project was developed and funded as a partnership with Brimscombe & Thrupp Parish Council, Chalford Parish Council and Stroud Valley Cycling Campaign, and with collaboration from Stroud District Council and Gloucestershire County Council.

After extensive research and community consultation an “Inspiration Study” was produced which sets out a vision for how the Frome valley route could look while allowing pedestrians, cyclists **and** traffic to safely use the A419 alongside each other, in a greener and MORE pleasant environment.

It should be stressed that the project is still at a very early stage and a great deal more consultation and technical assessment will be required before the whole route could be delivered.

The **next steps** recommended in the Technical Report are:

“In order to manage this process pro-actively, a pre-engagement approach to sharing the Inspiration Study is recommended which continues leading through community engagement as follows:

- Pre-engagement with school children and young people to address some of the sampling bias of the online questionnaire.
- Pre-engagement with business stakeholders and partnerships to gain further insight into the business implications of the proposal and level of support.

- Further Pre-engagement with key delivery partners including Gloucestershire County Council Highways, Stroud District Council, Brimscombe Port Development Board and potential developers.
- Pre-engagement with Network Rail due to the close proximity to the A419.
- Pre-engagement with bus service providers.
- Pre-engagement with the police regarding road safety”

The project group have however, agreed to bring forward the publication of the report, partly because the Covid19 situation has sparked a great deal of interest in improving routes for walking and cycling in the area, but mainly because Gloucestershire County Council have included part of the route in their bid to central government for cycle lane funding.

If the GCC bid is successful segregated cycle lanes could potentially be installed on the first section of the route out from Stroud to Bowbridge and also on the Cainscross Road, so the group felt it was important to get publish now in order to stimulate interest and encourage community engagement with the scheme.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The Council has the General Power of Competence which is “the power to do anything that individuals generally may do” as long as they do not break other laws.

FINANCIAL AND STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

There are no immediate financial implications to the Council, other than incidental costs like printing. The Council’s project officer is already supporting and promoting the project.

An early estimate for the cost of delivering the whole route is “between £10-25m, but this does not include the removal of any pollutants from verges or land acquisition costs. These figures have been estimated using Department for Transport guideline figures for the creation of similar infrastructure”.

These costs are obviously beyond the budgets of the partners involved, but we can play a significant role in helping with community engagement and advocating for change.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

Accessibility will be a key element of the technical design process.

CO2 IMPLICATIONS

Transport is the largest single contributor to Stroud District’s carbon footprint (54%), and most of that comes from passenger cars. Very few other projects could help quite so much as this one. If implemented the whole scheme has the potential to save more than 3m kg of carbon per annum. (There is more information on this in the FAQs.)

Adding in the Cainscross Road scheme, should GCC’s funding bid be successful, will undoubtedly increase the carbon saving, but no figures are available for this yet.



A Golden Valley Route for everyone

The A419 Stroud to Chalford 'Inspiration' Study

Spring 2020

A study into how to build better and greener connections along the Frome valley:

- › Making roads safer
- › Fighting climate change
- › Strengthening communities

Commissioned by **Brimcombe & Thrupp** Parish Council • **Chalford** Parish Council

• **Stroud Town** Council • Stroud Valley Cycling Campaign. In collaboration with Stroud District Council and Gloucestershire County Council.

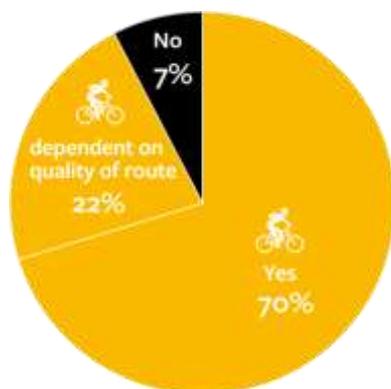
What's already happened?

In 2019, Witteveen+Bos UK and Clifton Emery design were asked to look at whether and how the A419 between Stroud and Chalford could be improved, making it welcoming to **everyone**, not just cars.

Over that summer, they gathered ideas and opinions from people in the communities along the 4 mile long route. These came through surveys and in person, at meetings that discussed the best ways to make the A419 work for everyone...

Sample Question: *Would you consider cycling on safe, segregated cycling infrastructure along the A419?*

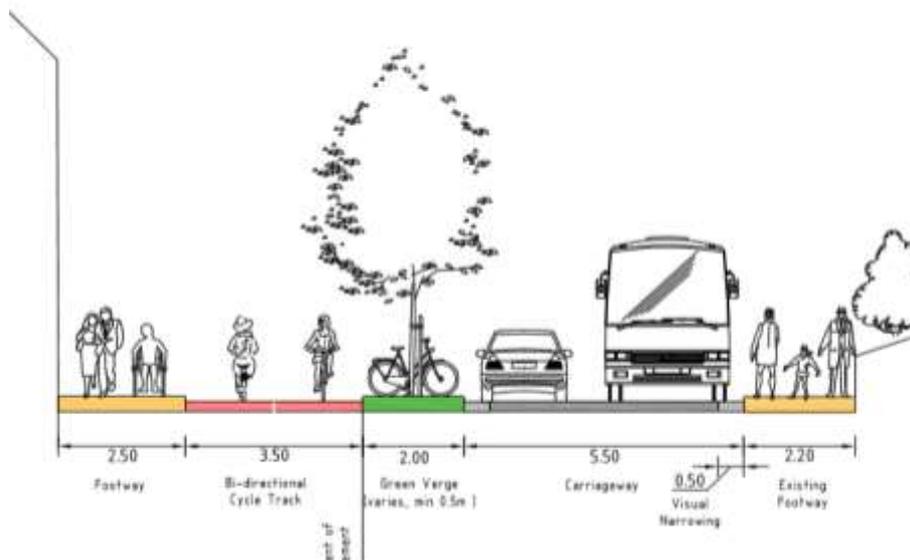
Key Finding: 62% of people asked don't currently cycle between Stroud and Chalford, but 92% might **if** there was a safe, high-quality cycle path.



From what people said, we imagined how our main Frome valley route could look. How pedestrians, cyclists **and** traffic could **all** safely and happily use the A419 alongside each other in a greener and pleasanter environment.

The idea we're now working with

We developed an idea that we want to explore to see if it's doable. We want pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles to **all** be able to use **all** of the A419 between Stroud and Chalford. Pedestrians would have their own 2.5m-wide footway and cyclists a 3.5m-wide two-way cycle track. They'd be kept safely apart from vehicles by green verges, benches, cycle parking and bins where possible. There'd **at least** be raised curbs throughout.



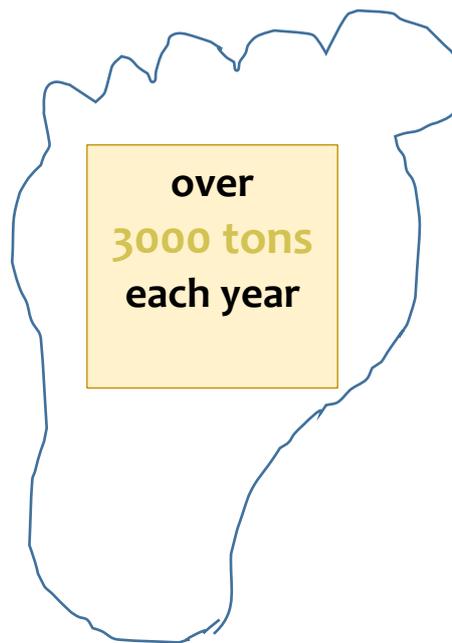
Making places

The study highlights 8 places – ‘**villages**’ – along the route where extra steps will be taken to strengthen local communities. There'll be 20mph speed limit zones in the villages, with added measures such as raised-level zebras, visual narrowing of the road, and improved junctions and crossings.

Roads will be safer where people live, and crossing them will be easier. Bus stops and the canal towpath will be easier to get at and use.

Cutting carbon, better lives

If just **half** of the car journeys made along the A419 between Stroud and Chalford were made by walking, cycling or on public transport, then the carbon saved would be...



At **54%**, transport is the largest single contributor to Stroud District's carbon footprint, and most of that comes from passenger cars. Very few other projects could help quite so much as this one.

Cutting carbon like this in the Frome valley would make it a safer, healthier, more neighbourly place to live **and** work. It would change the way people see what's outside their doors from a place to get through, to a community to be **in**. The air would be cleaner, our views would be greener, we'd get where we're going more easily. We'd be doing a lot to meet our climate targets.

What happens next?

The Inspiration Study literally provides the inspiration for how to do what we're aiming to do. Now starts the process of putting the dream into reality – next we need to look at feasibility and design.

Find out more

Visit goldenvalleyroute.net to read the Inspiration Study and the answers to the most often-asked questions about it.

Learn more about our consultants at www.witteveenbos.com |

www.cliftonemerydesign.co.uk

GOLDEN VALLEY ROUTE - Answers to the most-often-asked questions about the Inspiration Study

Why is it important to improve facilities for walking and cycling?

Transport is the largest contributor to territorial greenhouse gas emissions. It accounts for 27% of the UK's net carbon emissions and more than half of this comes from domestic car journeys. Other toxic chemicals such as nitrogen dioxide or particulates are produced by vehicles, which can contribute to air pollution and ill-health. Vehicle tyre dust also contributes a significant proportion of the primary micro-plastic that enters water courses and ends up polluting our oceans.

Almost 60% of journeys by car are less than 5 miles so could in many cases be walked or cycled.

To make a significant personal contribution to reducing carbon emissions and improving air quality, individuals are encouraged to consider walking, cycling or public transport where feasible. Not all journeys can be made without a car, but there are significant benefits to health by becoming more active. Physical inactivity is linked with obesity and chronic illness, which has a major impact on the quality of life of an individual and huge economic ramifications for society.

Studies show that it is easier for people to make a choice to walk or cycle when the facilities are good. Local residents are unlikely to walk or cycle along the A419 when it is generally perceived as unsafe.

Why do we need a cycling route on the A419?

The A419 Inspiration Study was initiated by a cross parish group of councils and volunteers who wanted to improve conditions for cycling and walking along the A419. Whilst the project began with active transport in mind, an assessment by specialist transport engineers showed that the road does not adequately meet the needs of any of the potential users and should be improved to accommodate future housing developments or the regeneration of ex-industrial sites for business.

Rather than a project to promote solely cycling, this project seeks to improve the A419 for all users. This may involve some changes to the road and compromises to accommodate all road users. The project seeks to prioritise the needs of the most vulnerable and to ensure there is real choice for those who are able to consider alternatives to driving.

Why can't cyclists use the road carriageway?

A survey showed that many people are too scared to cycle on the A419 because of the poor condition of the road, the high numbers of vehicles and the

speed of traffic. The narrow carriageway means that some motorists pass too close to cyclists or overtake when it is dangerous to do so.

Large potholes and flooding make the road treacherous for all users and many parents stated that they would not be happy for their child to cycle along the road. The road is a strategic freight route and has a relatively high volume of lorries. Despite a speed limit of 40mph there are some motorists who travel at up to 70mph. Even during periods of congestion, when vehicle speeds are low, it can still be difficult to accommodate cycling and driving safely. There are also some difficult junctions which place cyclists at risk because of their design.

Why can't cyclists use the canal towpath?

The canal is a beautiful leisure route for cycling, however it is not a direct or effective route for mass cycling at the levels which would make an impact on carbon emissions.

Many parts of the towpath between Chalford and Brimscombe are impassable during the winter months and periods of flooding. Even on the stretch between Stroud and Brimscombe, which has been significantly improved by an army of volunteers, the canal-side track is very narrow, muddy, uneven in places and next to open water. This makes it inappropriate for road bikes or those using mobility vehicles or adapted bikes.

Conflicts already exist between the variety of people using the route and if there was a significant rise in those cycling and walking which relied on the towpath, this route would become congested and unattractive.

In addition, the canal towpath is identified as a natural wildlife corridor and so benefits from being slightly remote and unlit. This could pose security issues or make some users feel vulnerable and unsafe. To widen the path, remove the obstacles, light it and make it safe for high volumes of different users would change the nature of the area, impact the ecosystems and possibly destroy the character of this industrial heritage area. Its remote location and complex land ownership would also make it expensive to adapt, particularly to the published standards for good quality cycling infrastructure.

What about other vulnerable users?

The project seeks to not only create a segregated cycle facility along the A419, but also to improve pavements and crossing points for other users, making walking particularly, safer and more attractive for everyone.

What about car parking?

Car parking is a contentious issue throughout the Five Valleys, because of the relatively large number of vehicles and lack of space close to housing for residents to use. Car ownership and the size of vehicles continue to rise creating congestion on routes and makes it hard for people to park on narrow streets, which weren't built to accommodate so many vehicles. The project

recognises that this is a key issue that must be tackled, however it also identifies that pavement parking and parking on advisory white lines on some stretches of the route already creates safety issues and prevents movement along a foot way by vulnerable users e.g. with pushchairs.

Any solution will need to consider where residents will park so that they can access their properties, particularly when they need to load or unload heavy items and shopping or safely get their children home. Research suggests that more efficient utilisation of the space along the A419 corridor might accommodate some of the vehicles, however it may be that some residents will need to park slightly further away from their houses except when loading and unloading.

How can you improve the route for pedestrians?

The usable pathway along some stretches of the A419 is under 50cm and very close to the carriageway where the top speed of some vehicles has been registered at 70mph. The narrow footpath is very rough, uneven and overgrown in places. There are only two controlled crossing points on the road and few refuges to help pedestrians to cross the road safely.

The project suggests a number of potential solutions which could be used to make the environment feel safer for pedestrians and thereby encourage more people to walk stretches of the route to visit friends, local shops and businesses. These include widening the pavement and introducing more crossing points. It is also potentially possible to control the speed of traffic through design, to create a less traffic dominated environment and a village feel to the settlements along the main road.

Won't slowing the traffic down create more pollution?

The aim of any design would be to move vehicles at a consistent speed through the valley corridor and thereby reduce congestion and the surges of traffic which are more likely to increase the level of pollution. There isn't conclusive evidence to suggest slowing speeds increases air pollution in an area if more consistent speeds are maintained.

It is also more likely that people will choose environmentally friendly modes of transport if speeds are lower and facilities are better.

Isn't it too narrow to put a cycle route in?

There are some stretches of the route that are very narrow and it would be difficult to introduce two-way vehicle traffic, ample pavement and a segregated cycle path. In these areas there are a number of potential solutions, including: better use of the land in the valley, traffic control or ambitious engineering schemes. No design has been finalised, but solutions do exist.

How much will this cost?

It is difficult to predict how much money this project could cost because a finalised route and design is a long way from being confirmed. Estimates suggest it could cost between £10-25m, but this does not include the removal of any pollutants from verges or land acquisition costs. These figures have been estimated using Department for Transport guideline figures for the creation of similar infrastructure.

Whilst this figure may seem high, good transport links are imperative for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods and are therefore essential to build a strong economy in the district. In comparison to other road building projects which do not offer the same benefits to the local community or build in sustainable transport solutions, this project represents relatively good value for money. The controversial Missing Link Project on the A417, for example, is approximately the same distance, but will cost in the region of £500m.

There have been some cost benefit analyses which show that £1 invested in cycling infrastructure can yield a return of £9-14.¹ This is attributed to savings in:

- healthcare costs for a fitter population
- dealing with air pollution
- costs associated with congestion and delays.

What about the villages on the hillsides?

The A419 is a strategic route along the valley bottom, used by thousands of people daily to access jobs, services, education and leisure facilities. Two important issues have been raised concerning neighbouring villages near the route.

Firstly there is concern that changing the road in the valley will have a negative effect on other routes, such as the road across the commons or some of the quiet lanes which might be used as rat runs to escape new traffic controls. Minchinhampton and Rodborough Commons are Sites of Special Scientific Interest and are maintained by the grazing of livestock. Traffic volumes and high levels of speeding are of great concern to local residents. There is a worry that instead of choosing the strategic A419 route through the valley, drivers will opt to cross the commons, assuming it may be quicker. This situation is already a problem as the poor conditions on the A419 frequently cause delays and data collection shows that at certain points on the Commons, traffic flows are higher than the A419 itself. It is proposed that any scheme give adequate consideration to minimise further disruption on the Commons, to protect the livestock and the unique habitats.

There is a concern that the links to the A419 from villages such as Bisley or Bussage are not adequate to ensure maximum value for the project. The roads are often steep e.g. Brimscombe Hill, lack pavements e.g. Old Neighbourhood or are narrow e.g. Toadsmoor. Several of the junctions at access points with the

A419 are difficult and dangerous for traffic and vulnerable road users. There are opportunities to improve these link roads and to provide facilities in market towns, villages and access points across the district e.g. cycle parking so people have a choice to use various modes of transport to complete their journeys. The focus of this project initially is to upgrade the A419, however the parish Cycling Group and individual councils are also keen to improve routes across the wider district.

Why are you stopping at Chalford?

The project focuses on the route between Chalford and Stroud because Chalford is the last major settlement in the District on the A419. The project acknowledges the potential to extend the route to Cirencester, however research suggests that a half hour cycle of approximately 4 miles is a more attractive proposition for novice riders. The distance between Chalford and Stroud is about 4 miles and has a number of settlements along the route, so it is an appropriate route to consider. Furthermore, there are already some options for cyclists to take quiet lanes between Chalford and Cirencester and avoid long stretches of motor vehicles on the A419.

Will this create congestion elsewhere?

There is a possibility that changes to the road network will affect other areas and cause drivers to select other routes which they perceive to be quicker, particularly if traffic controls and speed restrictions are introduced. For this reason, it is important to recognise that this project is at the very early stages. Research has established that the route is sub-standard and could benefit from improvement, but the exact nature of that improvement and the finalised designs still need to be explored thoroughly to minimise disruption and to create a situation which works for everyone.

What are the benefits of this project for me and my family?

The Inspiration Study makes many suggestions of what it is possible to achieve through a number of measures. Broadly speaking improvements to the route could:

- Reduce carbon emissions
- Improve air quality
- Improve safety and perceptions of safety
- Promote healthy life-styles
- Reduce congestion and the car dominated nature of the area
- Improve the environment along the road making it a more attractive place to live and work.
- Attract new business to the area

How can I help?

Businesses:

- Get in touch to register support for this scheme

- Start promoting the Cycle to Work Scheme
- Introduce incentives to employees who walk or cycle to work
- Install bike parking or facilities like showers, to encourage people to cycle
- Offer space to the local community to park their vehicles in company car parks overnight or at the weekends
- Donate money to the project
- Donate space to the project

Individuals:

- Start cycling and walking if you feel safe to, to demonstrate demand for the facilities
- Contact Highways to let them know about issues such as potholes or narrow pavements
- Work with your local Climate Action Group to promote sustainable transport strategies
- Funding is available for community-based projects to install facilities e.g. cycle parking
- Or contact your parish councillors to see what can be done locally to link your village to the A419 more effectively

¹ Davis, Dr Adrian for the Department of Health/Government Office for the South West. Value for Money: An Economic Assessment of Investment in Walking and Cycling. 2010. [APHO Public Health Guide](#).

Learn more about our consultants [Witteveen+Bos](#) and [Clifton Emery design](#).