

Eynsham Parish Plan 2007-08

56 ROADS, TRAFFIC & TRANSPORT

56.1 The Facts

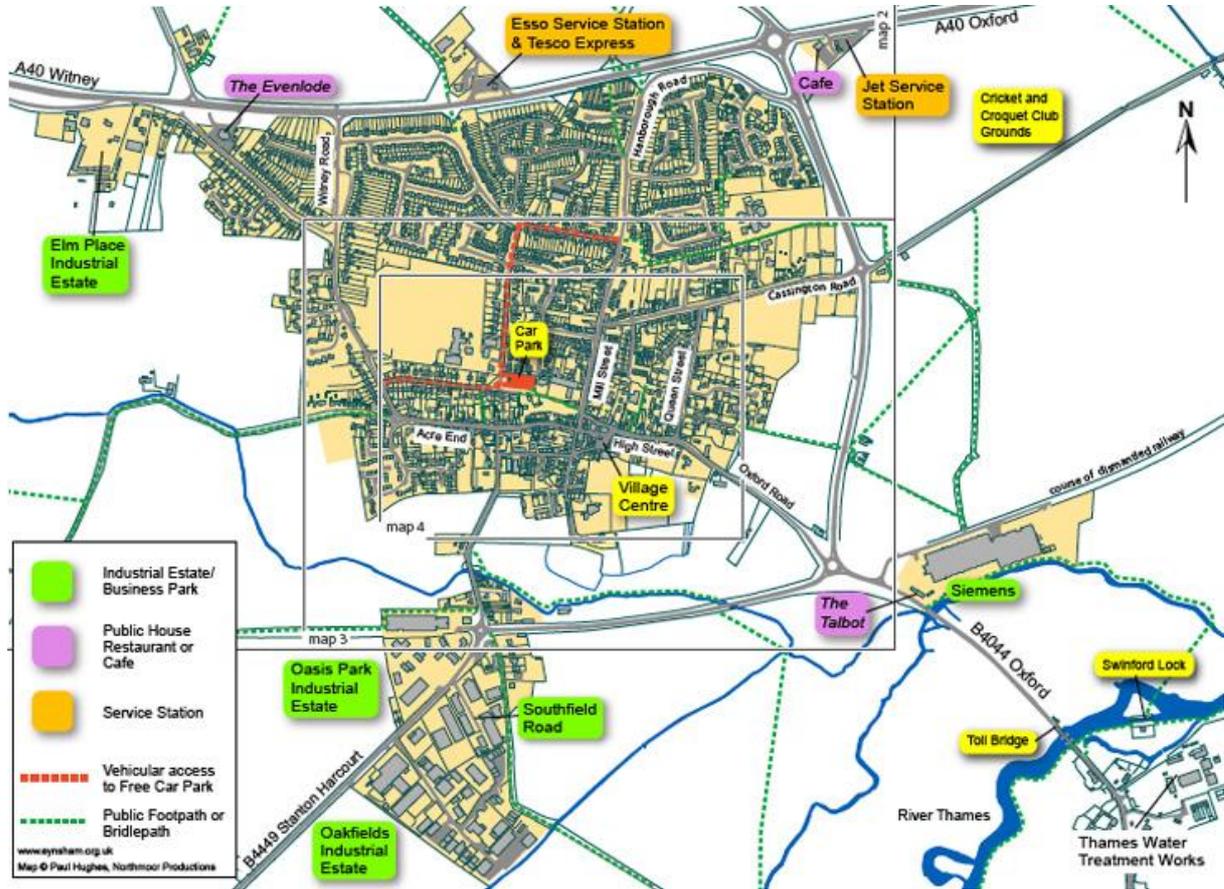


Illustration 1: Map of Eynsham – access, industrial estates and car park

56.1.1 The A40 bisecting the parish of Eynsham is a major part of the county road network, but significant congestion problems arise from the volume of traffic wishing to use the road.

56.1.2 The West Oxfordshire section of the Local Transport Plan states:

“Congestion on the A40 between Witney and Oxford is amongst the most severe transport problems in Oxfordshire. Flows on the A40 single carriageway between Witney and Oxford are approximately 23,000 – 29,000 vehicles per day. The high level of congestion on this route means that many vehicles, including the frequent buses between Witney and Oxford, taking an alternative, less direct route to avoid the congestion and frequently journey time delays.”

56.1.3 It continues:

“The main cause of congestion is insufficient capacity at the Wolvercote and Cutteslowe roundabouts, but Eynsham roundabout and the signals at Cassington also add to the congestion. Westbound congestion is at its worst during the evening peak and is caused primarily by insufficient junction capacity at the Eynsham roundabout and insufficient

link capacity between Eynsham and Witney.”

- 56.1.4 OCC's proposed solution is to redesign the existing signals at Cassington to reduce delays to A40 traffic and increase bus priority; increase bus priority measures to increase the attractiveness and reliability of bus services between Witney, Eynsham and Oxford; and redesign the key ring road roundabouts north of Oxford (Cutteslowe & Wolvercote).
- 56.1.5 While highways are the responsibility of Oxfordshire County Council, the District and Parish Councils are involved in traffic congestion and and public transport issues via the Traffic Advisory Committee.
- 56.1.6 Eynsham Traffic Advisory Committee (TAC) has representatives from the Parish, District and County Councils, the bus operators and Thames Valley Police. This committee feeds into member organisations, giving them a more local perspective.
- 56.1.7 Recent related activity has included:
- i. separation of traffic / pedestrian zones in the Square, shortlisted for 2003 Civic Trust award
 - ii. traffic calming in Acre End Street, John Lopes Road, Mill Street and Spareacre Lane
 - iii. A40 improvements including bus controlled lights / no right turn at Witney Road junction
 - iv. pressure for action to reduce delays at the toll bridge including a motion to the district council and a supporting online campaign
 - v. NAG speed awareness campaigns, supported by local police and parish council.



Illustration 2:
Swinford Toll bridge is now a notorious bottle-neck



Illustration 3: speed awareness campaign – members of Eynsham NAG with PC Richard Conner, June 2006

- 56.1.8 In the summer of 2006 Eynsham Parish Council commissioned a Transport Needs Survey from Oxfordshire Rural Community Council. Based on a very low response rate (112/1887 households), ORCC concluded:

“... good levels of bus usage in the Parish and the frequency of service creates a culture of bus usage amongst residents. There are smaller numbers of users of the subsidised 11 and

18 services, but usage figures would indicate that they are being relied upon to access employment or key services and by those who live further away from the village centre.

“There are many comments on services, commonly about the high ticket prices and some on lack of information, and on integration of the range of services available in the area.

“Publicity of services is currently good, although the Parish Council will need to maintain this standard to keep levels of usage high. As only one of the respondents have indicated that they use the Octabus Dial-a-Ride, the parish council could increase publicity of this service for those who are unable use public transport.

“For medical appointments, residents are served by Eynsham’s voluntary car scheme and the Parish Council could also maintain publicity of the scheme and advertise for volunteer drivers.

“The Parish Council might also consider a simple audit of the bus stops to see if the timetable information is accurate, if there at all, and to see if there are adequate timetable cases.¹

“The Parish Council could also pass on comments made in relation to the level of fares to the bus operators in question.”

56.2 Roads, traffic & transport: The Opinions

56.2.1 Question 16 of our questionnaire focused on traffic:

“Do you think the centre of Eynsham can be improved by the following?”

Responses follow (total respondents 730; total ticked 1541):

i.	Vehicle length /weight restriction	417 (57.1%)
ii.	One way traffic	232 (31.7%)
iii.	Traffic Warden	193 (26.4%)
iv.	Traffic calming	191 (26.2%)
v.	Western by pass	190 (26.0%)
vi.	Pedestrianisation	135 (18.5%)
vii.	Does not need improving	77 (10.5%)
viii.	Other	106 (14.5%)

56.2.2 We also asked (Q18):

“What do you think should be done to help protect and enhance the local environment of Eynsham?”

The traffic related responses follow (total respondents 726; total ticked 3025):

i.	reduce traffic	435 (59.9%)
ii.	improve public transport	155 (21.3%)

¹ Timetables were updated at all bus stops early in 2007, though some of the cases have seen better days.

56.2.3 The open questions yielded further expressions of concern about traffic.

Would like: (total responses 460)

- i. less traffic 19 (4.0%)
- ii. more traffic restrictions 7 (1.5%)

Dislike: (total responses 1243)

- i. the amount of traffic 125 (10%)
- ii. A40 27 (2%)

Could be improved by: (total responses 808)

- i. more traffic restrictions 61 (7.5%)
- ii. scrapping toll bridge 32 (3.9%)

56.2.4 Other specific concerns included:

- i. Speeding: Eynsham's top community safety priority in a survey conducted by the police in November 2005, though recent work seems to have improved the situation.
- ii. Safety at Bartholomew School (Witney Road Exit). This is an ongoing item on the TAC agenda.
- iii. Road and footway surfaces: as discussed in the Environment section 53.2.16.
- iv. Heavy delivery lorries: it appears that current restrictions are not enforced, though there is some confusion on the regulations for through traffic in the village centre.
- v. Aircraft noise: from increased volume of flights to Brize Norton, especially at night.
- vi. Extra traffic: potentially arising from proposed gravel extraction and/or Bitterell development.



Illustration 4: Conflict between traffic and deliveries in Church Street

56.2.5 Public Transport came up frequently in the open responses. When asked for “three things you like about Eynsham (Question 21), 177 people mentioned the public transport service (10.6% of a total 1666 responses).

56.2.6 However, 18 people mentioned the buses among “three things you dislike about Eynsham” (Question 23: 1.5% of a total 1243 responses). They said the service was unreliable, poor and expensive and they did not like the route.

- 56.2.7 There were a further 55 negative remarks along similar lines.
- 56.2.8 Parking concerns were raised by 92 people. There are difficulties in most parts of Eynsham because of the narrow streets and lack of drives or garages at some homes. There were also comments about Eynsham being used as a:

“park & ride for Oxford”

- 56.2.9 ... since vehicles were left near the bus stops all day while people caught a bus into Oxford. As shown above, 26.4% of respondents wanted a traffic warden. Some residents would like more parking made available. Other suggestions for improvement² included more parking restrictions and a full time traffic warden on duty.

56.3 Roads, Traffic & Transport: The Vision

- 56.3.1 Oxfordshire County Council (OCC)'s Local Transport Plan: 2006 - 2011 has five main strands: tackling congestion; delivering accessibility; safer roads; better air quality; and improving the street environment.
- 56.3.2 Although all five strands apply to Eynsham, the most pressing problem is congestion. OCC plan to tackle this by the following six actions for the county:
- i. Make public transport faster, more reliable and more user friendly
 - ii. Manage, develop and maintain the county's road network to reduce the impact of bottlenecks (including road works) and make better use of existing road capacity to improve the traffic flow
 - iii. Make walking and cycling safer and more convenient.
 - iv. Enable people to make better informed travel choices
 - v. Manage parking to support transport improvements and initiatives
 - vi. Ensure that new development is planned in such a way as to minimise congestion problems.
- 56.3.3 “Park & Ride” on the outskirts of Eynsham might redirect traffic from outside the village to park there when owners work in Oxford. This could produce limited employment and an income for Eynsham. It would also relieve the parking problems during the day in the centre. This is very much at the suggestion stage and may not even be viable.
- 56.3.4 Other suggestions from the survey included:
- i. *“build a complete ring-road”*
 - ii. *“pedestrianise the centre”*³
 - iii. *“make the A40 a dual carriageway”*
 - iv. *“take over the Red Lion car park and make it available for two hour parking”*

2 Further suggestions have come from students at Eynsham Primary School – see Section 58 Young People

3 Possibly as part of the Market Square improvements – phase two