Claydon Traffic Survey 2010.

1. Background.
In 2000 and 2001 the local branch of the Labour party carried out traffic censuses in the autumn of those years in order to assist the argument for improved pedestrian crossing facilities in the centre of Claydon. Through the efforts of successive County Councillors for the division, matters have been improved significantly with the installation of zebra crossings at each end of what might be termed the commercial centre of Claydon. The Labour party branch is currently dormant, but it was felt that a repeat of the exercise would give an indication of how matters had changed over nine years and would be of interest to the Parish Council and others.

2. Method.
The 2000 exercise only covered a sample 6 hours of the 12 hour day 07:00 – 19:00. However the 2001 survey covered a full 12 hour day spread over 4 weekdays (Mondays – Fridays). Thus it is with this survey that the major comparison is made. Whereas the 2001 survey was organised and largely carried out by myself with two other people participating, the 2010 survey was all my own work with my wife helping to total and check figures.

The 'screenline' adopted was as before, the junction of Back Lane with Ipswich Road. Sitting in a chair on the wide footway outside of the Greyhound pub gave a good view of the traffic and pedestrians. The survey was carried out on Monday to Thursday 27 – 30th September for the 12 hours 07:00 until 19:00 with only one hour being surveyed before a break (to prevent 'tennis neck'!) The weather was seasonably mild and mostly dry (the Monday survey was partially undertaken in drizzle) and it was term time for schools. No special events affecting traffic flow were noted.

A prepared survey form was used to record vehicles passing (categorised into cycles, motor cycles, cars/general, heavy lorries, buses and coaches). Vehicle occupancies were also noted. Pedestrians crossing were recorded in three zones, the two zebra crossings and in between. Finally at the end of each 5 minute period the number of parked vehicles in the two parking areas either side of Back Lane was noted/. Unfortunately it was not possible to note the individual times that cars etc were parked in each of the areas nor the turning movements into and out of Station Road.

3. Results.
3.1 Traffic Flow.
Over the 12 hour period, a total of 3,809 vehicles were counted travelling southbound through the village, the half hour period 08:00 - 08:29 being the busiest at 282 vehicles. The northbound flow was over 9% less at 3,463 vehicles, the period 17:00 – 17:29 being the busiest at 231 vehicles.

The occupancy of the vehicles was noted and excluding buses and coaches, the figure came out at 1.17 people per vehicle.

Belatedly I decided to classify the general traffic flow additionally into commercial and non commercial vehicles and over the 12 sample half -hourly periods covered it was found that 10.2% of southbound (to Ipswich) and 9.7% of northbound (from Ipswich) vehicles could be classified as commercial. At no time was traffic stationary

because of congestion although there was considerable queuing in Station Road in the evening peak period for traffic travelling towards Ipswich.

The traffic flow rates over the composite weekday are best demonstrated in the form of the attached diagram.

3.2 Cycles.
A total of 126 pedal cycles passed the screenline during the survey concentrated in the early morning and evening peak periods.

3.3 Motorcycles.
65 'motorised two wheelers' passed, mainly made up of modern 50cc scooters.

3.4 Lorries.
40 lorries of what were visually classified as being over 7.5 tons passed during the survey principally travelling to or from Norwich Road. However six hgv's were noted turning into or out of Station Road (a banned movement) during the survey and an attempt to record registration details was made (not always successfully). Lorries turning from Station Road into Ipswich Road present a particular nuisance in that their length forces them to drive right up the parked cars outside of the 'Fresh Fills' shop and slowly negotiate the corner causing delay to other traffic.

3.5 Buses.
96 local service buses passed during the survey carrying a total of 1,047 passengers across the screenline. It is worth noting that as the screenline is north of both principal village bus stops, the significant numbers of passengers travelling between Claydon and Ipswich were not recorded.

3.6 Coaches.
With growth of local coach operators and the provision of coaches carrying school pupils to and from Claydon High School and Otley College, 59 coaches passed the survey line mainly during the peak periods. About half of these were empty having delivered their passenger load, but a total of approximately 737 passengers were recorded (unlike buses, because of their high floors and tinted glass, it is far harder to estimate coach passengers).

3.7 Pedestrians.
A total of 438 pedestrians was recorded crossing the road of which 163 used the two zebra crossings and the remaining 63% crossing the road between them. However it was noted that the zebra crossings were well used by school pupils and by older people at busy times.

3.8 Parking outside shops.
As stated earlier no attempt was made to assess the time that cars occupied the two kerbside parking areas. However the total of parked vehicles were noted at the end of each 5 minute period. For the north kerb length (Norwich Road outside of Fresh Fills etc) 13 cars were the recorded maximum(once only) and for the south kerb length (Ipswich Road) 8 vehicles were the maximum (many times). The 'chevron' parking outside 'Fresh Fills' worked well in maximising parking capacity. Reversing out of

the spaces was generally done carefully although there were a couple of occasions when cars travelling into the village along Norwich Road at too high a speed had to slow down fairly quickly to allow cars to drive away.

The other kerbside parking on Ipswich Road outside the One Stop Shop worked reasonably well but the double parking did cause complications with triple parking being noted on a couple of occasions. Quite often the parking space was not fully utilised because of fear of blocking cars in. During the early morning several cars parked on the double yellow lines near the bus stop on the Greyhound side of the road, but this was for brief periods only as the purchases appeared to be newspapers, cigarettes etc.

4. Comparison with previous surveys.
This is probably the most interesting part of the survey. As stated earlier the 2000 survey was a sample 6 hour one over a 12 hour period composite weekday, so it will be more useful and reliable to compare with the full 12 hour 2001 survey.

4.1 Traffic Flow.
The diagram best represents the comparison on a time basis over the composite day. It is encouraging from the point of view of validity of the survey that peaks and troughs are similar in both surveys although there is a slight earlier trend in the 2010 survey possibly due to the alteration of Claydon High School hours to start and finish earlier than in 2001. The figures are best summarised in the form of a table;-

	2001 survey	**2010 survey**	**%variation.**
Vehicles towards Ipswich	3,565	3,809	+6.8%
Vehicles from Ipswich	3,378	3,463	+2.5%
Total vehicles*	**6,943**	**7,272**	**+4.7%**

*excluding cycles.

Vehicle occupancy was noted to have fallen slightly from 1.18 people per vehicle in 2001 to 1.17 now.

4.2 Cycles.
In 2001 108 cycles were recorded compared with 126 in 2010, an increase of 16.7%. Paper boys' cycles were included in both counts but in 2001 the survey was carried out after the start of GMT, whilst in 2010 the whole survey was in BST with daylight conditions which may affect the result.

4.3 Motor cycles, lorries and coaches.
Unfortunately these categories were not recorded separately in 2001.

4.4 Buses and passengers.
Remarkably, precisely the same number of bus passengers, 1,047, was recorded in both surveys over the 12 hour period. However in 2001 there were 84 local service buses passing the survey point whilst in 2010 there were 96. The introduction of free elderly concession travel has probably influenced usage.

4.5 Pedestrians.

The pedestrian count related only to people crossing the road. However this would comprise the great majority of pedestrians seen, possibly about 80 - 85%. In 2001 563 people were recorded during the 12 hour survey whilst in 2010, 438 people were recorded, a drop of 22.2%. This fall is despite the larger number of High School pupils walking to and from Great Blakenham along Station Road.

5. Anecdotal observations.

It is of interest to record casual observations of differences between the 2001 and 2010 surveys. They follow in no particular order;-

(i) Car size; the average size has noticeably become smaller over the period between the two surveys.

(ii) Women drivers; there was a significant increase in the proportion of women drivers observed, particularly at off peak periods.

(iii) Standard of driving; this does have appeared to have improved with more anticipation of other vehicles' moves. However three drivers were seen with mobile phones clamped to their ears and there were three examples of very poor and potentially accident causing driving caused by impatient overtaking in the centre of the village. At off peak periods a number of cars particularly from the Norwich Road direction were noted driving at an excessive speed through the village at probably 35 – 40 mph. In 2001 several incidents of near misses were noted at the Station Road junction and more cars were seen to be driven at an excessive speed.

6. Conclusions.

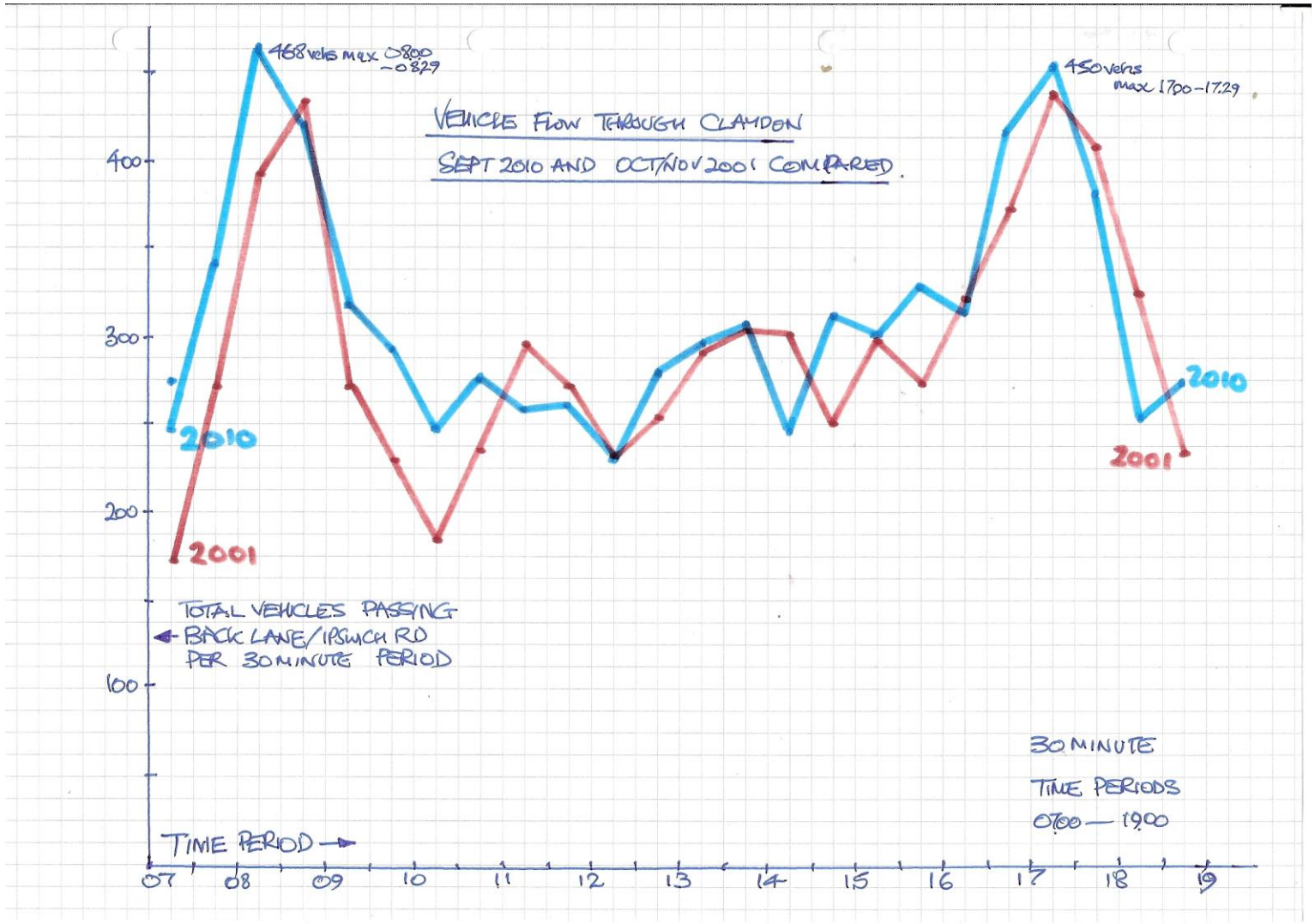
Most of the differences between the two surveys reflect national trends. Traffic is generally on the increase although not at the national rate. There has been a small increase in cycling, but pedestrians are fewer reflecting the regrettable trend of shorter car journeys replacing some walking journeys. Bus usage has remained static but is helped by free concessionary fares and improvement in service provision since 2001.

The difference between the levels of traffic travelling through the village in the two directions is of interest. In fact the gap has widened over the 9 year period. Possibly use of Norwich Road southbound from Six Hills A14 junction is much more attractive southbound than the other direction. Also the volume of traffic queuing in Station Road in the evening just after 16:30 and 17:00 seems significantly greater than the morning flow turning into Station Road. Is this an effect of the banned right turn at the newly signalled Blakenham junction onto the B1113 Bramford Road ?

Looking to the future, Claydon has a thriving commercial village centre with a good variety of shops. The short term car parking is vital to their viability. The improvement of capacity outside of the Norwich Road shops by the adoption of chevron parking has helped. The Ipswich Road parking could similarly be improved but would require a revision of the kerbline to make this safe. Additionally at some stage in the future adoption of a 20 mph speed limit with both zebra crossings being ramped to slow traffic would be a scheme worthy of investigation.

I hope that this survey will prove of interest as a record of an aspect of our village life.

Barry J C Moore, 3 Station Road, Claydon. ***October 2010.***


468 vehs max 0800 - 0829
450 vehs max 1700 - 1729
VEHICLE FLOW THROUGH CLAYDON
SEPT 2010 AND OCT/NOV 2001 COMPARED
2010
2001
2010
2001
400
300
200
100
TOTAL VEHICLES PASSING BACK LANE/IPSWICH RD PER 30 MINUTE PERIOD
30 MINUTE TIME PERIODS 0700 — 1900
TIME PERIOD
07
08
09
10
11
12
13
14
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17
18
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