

## **Danny Yee (on behalf of Oxfordshire Liveable Streets) – Bicester 20mph Speed Limits**

We support these 20mph speed limits but are disappointed they don't go further.

The strengths of leaving decisions about 20mph speed limits to parishes and town councils are clear, but the Bicester scheme illustrates the problems.

First of all, and most obviously, one goal of the 20mph speed limits is injury reduction, with Vision Zero as a broader goal. But the overwhelming majority of road injuries in Bicester occur on the roads that are not being changed to 20mph.

Secondly, the scheme aims "to encourage walking and cycling within Bicester". But, again, the roads being omitted from the scheme are the ones that are most important for connectivity and are currently the greatest barriers to active travel.

People walking or cycling need to cross the main roads, and to walk and cycle along them, but almost none of these roads have protected cycling infrastructure, some of them have narrow footways with no buffer from the carriageway, and formal crossings are infrequent. Lower speed limits would make a huge contribution to ameliorating these infrastructure defects: there is too much traffic for most people to cycle on e.g. Banbury Rd even at 20mph, but that would still help some; walking along a road next to motor traffic is less stressful if speeds are lower; and compliance with both signal and zebra crossings is better with 20mph speed limits.

Even opponents of 20mph speed limits often support them around schools, but pretty much every part of Bicester is within a kilometre walk of a school. If all the students at Bure Park Primary lived west of Banbury Rd and all the students at Southwold Primary lived east of Banbury Rd, none of them would need to cross Banbury Rd to get to school. But that is not how the world works. Children need to walk and cycle across and along Banbury Rd.

It is too late to change this scheme now, but we urge that once the 20mph programme is finished, a further programme is run to look at the "holes" left. This should focus on the basic holes, on connectivity, and on Vision zero.

The basic holes are all the stretches of road which clearly meet the criteria for 20mph speeds, but which were omitted from the initial programme.

Connectivity would cover sections of road that may not be "built up" but which are essential parts of the walking and cycling network (actual or planned) and lack protected cycling infrastructure or footways.

And Vision Zero concerns should focus on injury hotspots, but take into account problems with sparse data. Locations with high volumes of buses and HGVs may have low overall injury rates, but a relatively high risk of those that do occur being serious or fatal.