

Division(s): Bloxham and Easington; Chipping Norton; Wroxton and Hook Norton

## **CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT – 31 MAY 2019 A361 BETWEEN BANBURY & CHIPPING NORTON - PROPOSED SPEED LIMITS**

**Report by Director of Community Operations**

### **Recommendation**

1. The Cabinet Member for the Environment is RECOMMENDED to approve the proposed reductions in speed limit on the A361 between Banbury and Chipping Norton with the following qualifications:
  - a) The implementation of the reduced speed limits between Banbury and Bloxham is deferred until the new layout (including a roundabout) which forms part of planned development is in place
  - b) The 50mph speed limit south west of South Newington is extended by approximately 300 metres to just east of the Heythrop turn.

### **Executive summary**

2. Speed limits are reviewed when there are changes to the road layout due to development, when requested by local councils as a result of road safety concerns, and as part of the on-going monitoring of reports on road accidents. Proposed changes are assessed applying the County Council's Procedure for Speed Limits.

### **Introduction**

3. This report presents responses received to a statutory consultation on a proposal to reduce speed limits on the A361 between Banbury and Chipping Norton.

### **Background**

4. The above proposals as shown at Annexes 1 - 4 have been put forward as part of a Department for Transport funded project to improve safety on this part of the A361 on account of a long-term history of high severity traffic accidents. They also take account of approved and planned development in Banbury.

### **Consultation**

5. Formal consultation on the proposal was carried out between 14 March and 12 April 2019. A public notice was placed in the Oxford Times & Banbury

Guardian newspapers, and sent to statutory consultees, including Thames Valley Police, the Fire & Rescue Service, Ambulance service, West Oxfordshire & Cherwell District Councils, Banbury & Chipping Norton Town Councils, Bloxham, Over Norton, South Newington & Swerford Parish Councils, Heythrop & Great Tew Parish Meetings and local County Councillors.

6. Nine responses were received. Three objections (33%), five expressions of support (55%) albeit some with concerns and one which raising no objection. The responses are recorded at Annex 5 with copies of the full responses available for inspection by County Councillors.

### **Response to objections and other comments**

7. Thames Valley Police objected to the proposed speed limit changes – comprising an extension of the 30mph speed limit and then a 40mph speed limit to just south of the Wykham Lane crossroads between Banbury and Bloxham because the current environment and traffic speeds are not consistent with the proposed limits. While it is accepted that this is currently the case, planned development will extend the built-up area of Banbury to the south west including the construction of a new roundabout and the proposed speed limits are judged to be appropriate in this context on the understanding that they will not be implemented until the new road layout has been constructed.
8. The police, however, supported the proposed 50mph speed limit south west of South Newington but requested that this is extended by approximately 300 metres to the south west to include the bends near the Great Tew and Heythrop turn. Given this represents only a small (approximately 5%) increase in the overall length of the proposed 50mph limit it is recommended that this amendment is accepted. While the police response did not specifically refer to the proposed 50mph speed limit proposed between Bloxham and South Newington, this is also considered to meet the criteria for a 50mph speed limit as set out in the Department for Transport guidance on setting local speed limits, noting that the road is a lower quality A road with a relatively high number of bends, junctions or accesses.
9. West Oxfordshire District Council expressed no objection to the proposals.
10. Bloxham Parish Council expressed support for the proposed 50mph speed limit between Bloxham and South Newington, but not the proposals for the extension of the 30mph limit at Banbury or the 40mph limit then extending to the Wykham lane crossroads. As noted above those changes would not be progressed until the road layout changes forming part of approved development at south west Banbury had been implemented.
11. Bloxham Parish Council also requested consideration of a 20mph speed limit in Bloxham village. Such a reduction would. However. need quite extensive supporting measures given the current speeds through most of the village and detailed work would be required to identify suitable measures that were both effective and would gain a good level of support, noting that standard traffic

calming measures such as road humps or speed cushions, or build-outs and chicanes would likely not be considered appropriate taking account of the character and current usage of the road.

12. Swerford Parish Council expressed support for the proposals but requested that the 50mph speed limit south west of South Newington be extended to the A3361/A3400 roundabout at Chipping Norton and that a 40mph speed limit then apply south west of this roundabout into Chipping Norton. As noted above it is recommended that the 50mph speed limit be extended by approximately 300 metres but, while not ruling out the further changes, given their scope that would need a further formal consultation. It should be noted that the 40mph speed limit on the A361 at Chipping Norton is proposed to be extended as part of approved development (see Agenda item 12).
13. Swerford Parish Council also requested consideration of a 20mph speed limit through South Newington. As with the request for a 20mph speed limit through Bloxham, although speeds in parts of the village are significantly constrained by bends and the narrowness of the road, at other locations supporting measures would be required to make such a limit consistent with Department for Transport guidance on setting local speed limits. The parish council also requested the provision of hatched centre of carriageway markings between the Swerford turn and the Boxing Hare public house. This request will be considered as part of planned changes to the traffic management aids on the route being funded by the Department for Transport.
14. Two objections were received from members of the public. One expressed the view that there is no significant need to reduce speed limits and that if safety is a concern, improvements should be carried out to road markings, signage and by the provision of street lighting. The other objection queried the effectiveness of the proposed limits but also noted that the character of the road was unsuited to the current and anticipated increase in traffic and that consideration should be given to other measures including improved signing (especially at junctions) and a 20mph speed limit through South Newington.
15. Three expression of support were received from members of the public, but these were also qualified by concerns about their effectiveness and the need for enforcement, and also that the 50mph speed limit south west of South Newington should be extended to the A361/A3400 roundabout at Chipping Norton.

### **How the Project supports LTP4 Objectives**

16. The proposals would help facilitate the safe movement of traffic.

### **Financial and Staff Implications (including Revenue)**

17. Funding for the proposed measures has been provided by the Department for Transport

CMDE9

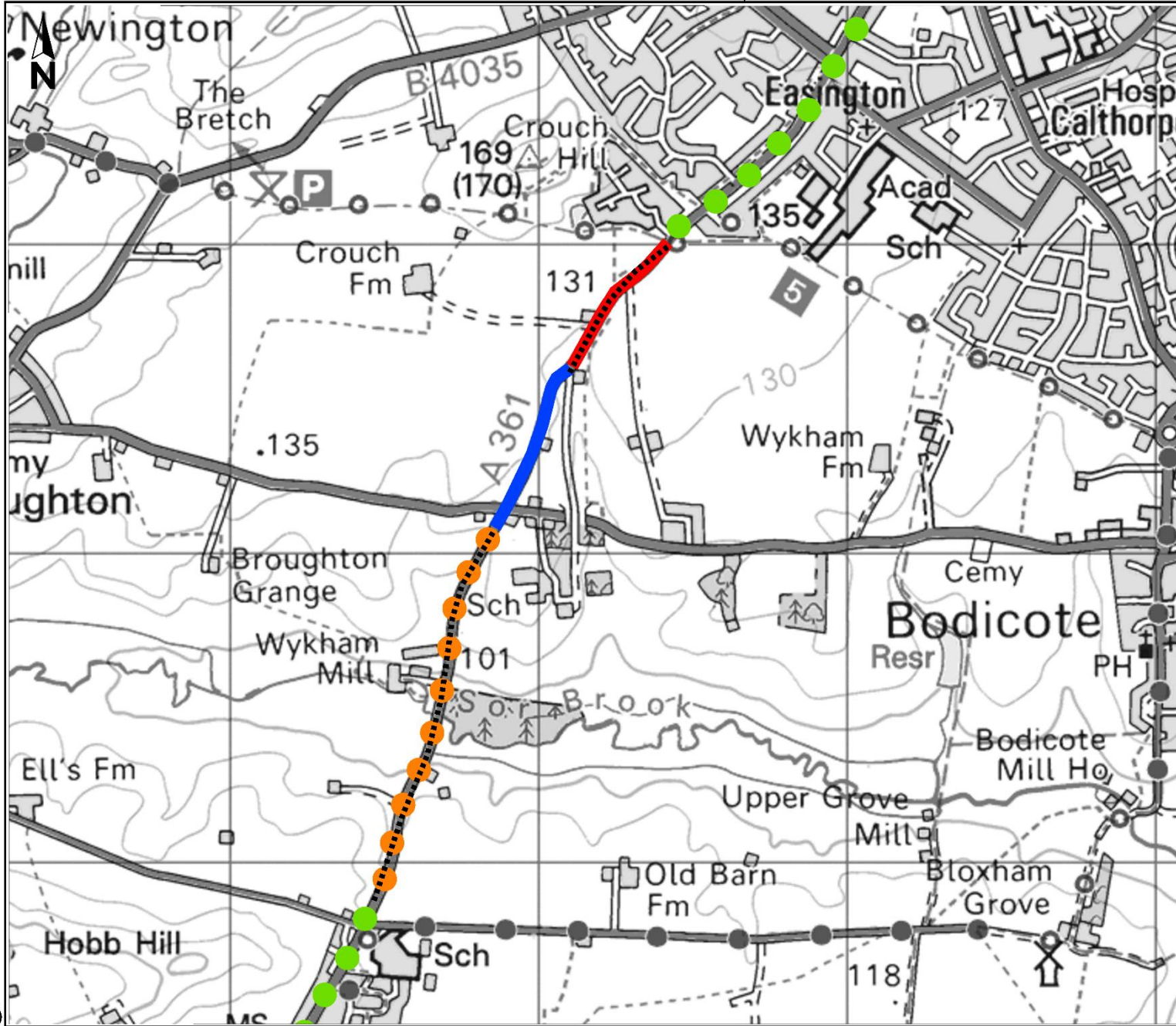
Director of Community Operations

Background papers: Plan of proposed speed limits  
Consultation responses

Contact Officers: Hugh Potter 07766 998704

May 2019

C:\Users\jane.clark\OneDrive - Oxfordshire County Council\ITRO\useful info\CAD\plans\A361 Speed Limits\A361 Speed limit.dwg

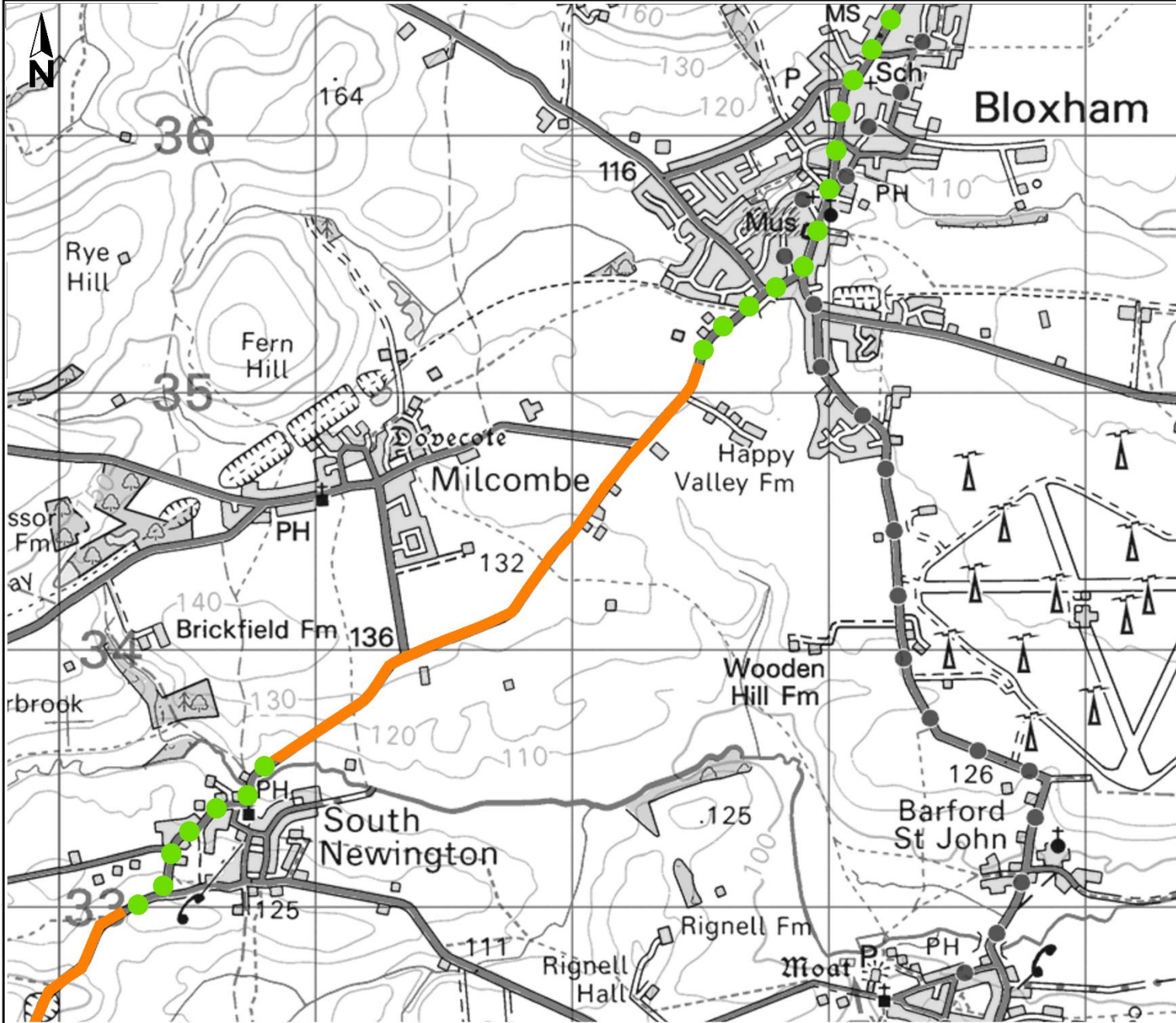


Drawing No.	Revision 0				
<b>Key</b>					
Proposed 30mph Speed Limit in place of current 50 mph speed limit					
Proposed 40mph Speed Limit in place of current 50mph speed limit					
Existing 30mph Speed Limit					
Existing 50mph Speed Limit					
Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright, and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Oxfordshire County Council Licence No. LA076805					
Rev.	Date	Purpose of revision	Drawn	Checked	Approved
Owen Jenkins Director for Infrastructure Delivery Communities Oxfordshire County Council County Hall Oxford OX1 1ND Tel: 0345 310 11 11 Fax: (01865) 241577					
Project title					
A361 PROPOSED SPEED LIMITS					
Drawing title					
BANBURY TO BLOXHAM					
Drawing Status					
Scale @ A3	Drawn by	Checked by	Approved by		
N.T.S.	JaC	JaC			
	Date drawn	Date checked	Date approved		
	07/18				
Oxfordshire Project No. & File Ref					
Drawing No.					Revision 0

CMDE9



C:\Users\jane.clark\OneDrive - Oxfordshire County Council\ITRO\useful\info\CAD\plans\A361 Speed Limits\A361 Speed limit.dwg



Drawing No. Revision 0

**Key**

	Proposed 50mph Speed Limit in place of current national speed limit
	Existing 30mph Speed Limit

Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright, and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Oxfordshire County Council Licence No LA078805

Rev.	Date	Purpose of revision	Drawn	Checked	Approved

**OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

Owen Jenkins  
Director for Infrastructure Delivery  
Communities  
Oxfordshire County Council  
County Hall  
Oxford  
OX1 1ND  
Tel: 0345 310 11 11  
Fax: (01865) 241577

Project title  
**A361 PROPOSED SPEED LIMITS**

Drawing title  
**BLOXHAM TO SOUTH NEWINGTON**

Drawing Status

Scale @ A3	Drawn by N.T.S.	Checked by JaC	Approved by
	Date drawn 07/18	Date checked	Date approved

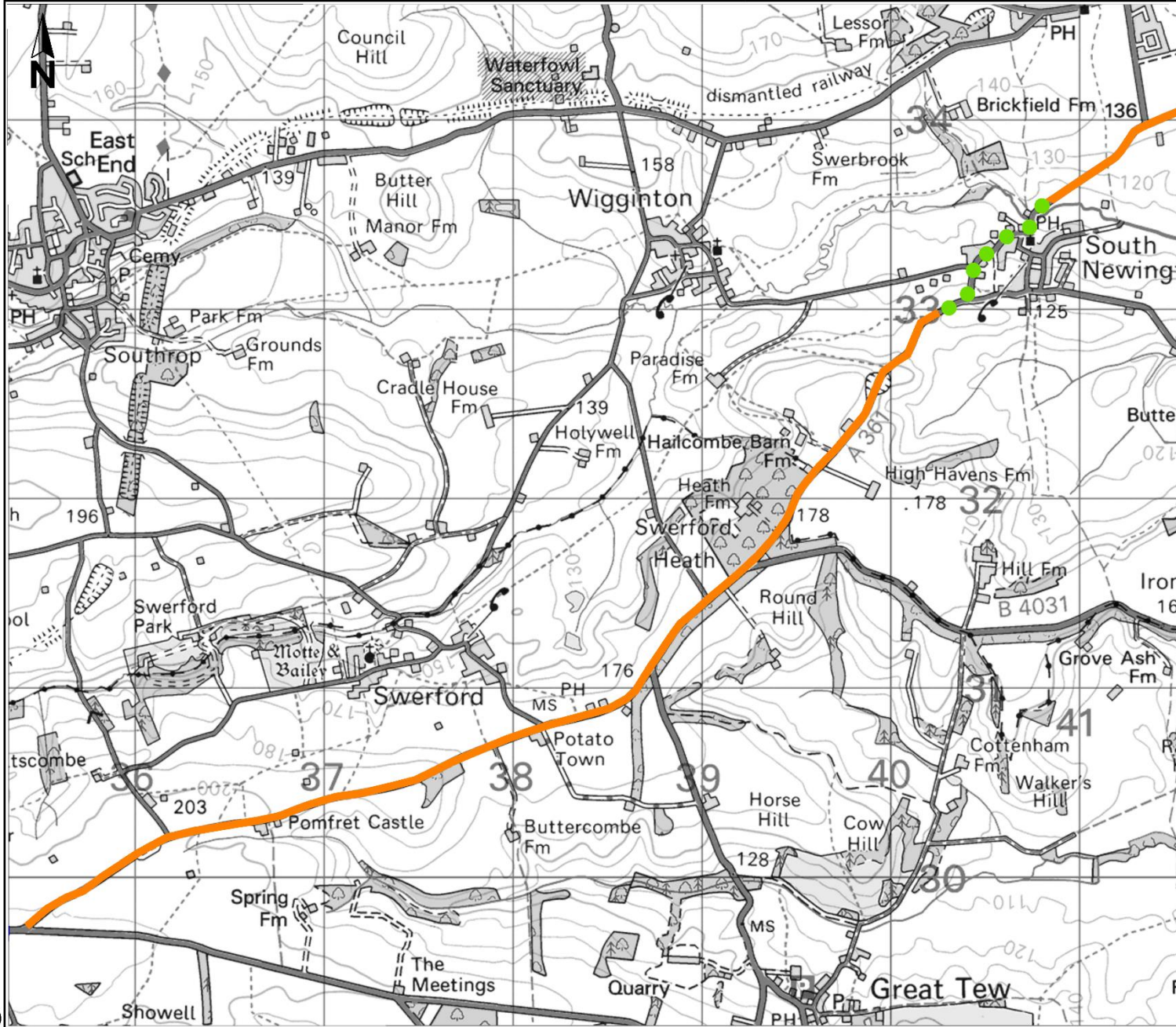
Oxfordshire Project No. & File Ref

Drawing No. Revision 0

CMDE9



c:\Users\jane.clark\OneDrive - Oxfordshire County Council\ITRO\useful info\CAD\plans\A361 Speed Limits\A361 Speed limit.dwg



Drawing No. Revision 0

**Key**

- Proposed 50mph Speed Limit in place of current 60mph National speed limit
- Existing 30mph Speed Limit

Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright, and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Oxfordshire County Council Licence No LA076805

Rev.	Date	Purpose of revision	Drawn	Checked	Approved

**OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

Owen Jenkins  
Director for Infrastructure Delivery  
Communities  
Oxfordshire County Council  
County Hall  
Oxford  
OX1 1ND  
Tel: 0345 310 11 11  
Fax: (01865) 241577

Project title  
**A361 PROPOSED SPEED LIMITS**

Drawing title  
**SOUTH NEWINGTON TO TEW TURN**

Drawing Status

Scale @ A3	Drawn by JaC	Checked by	Approved by
N.T.S.	Date drawn 07/18	Date checked	Date approved

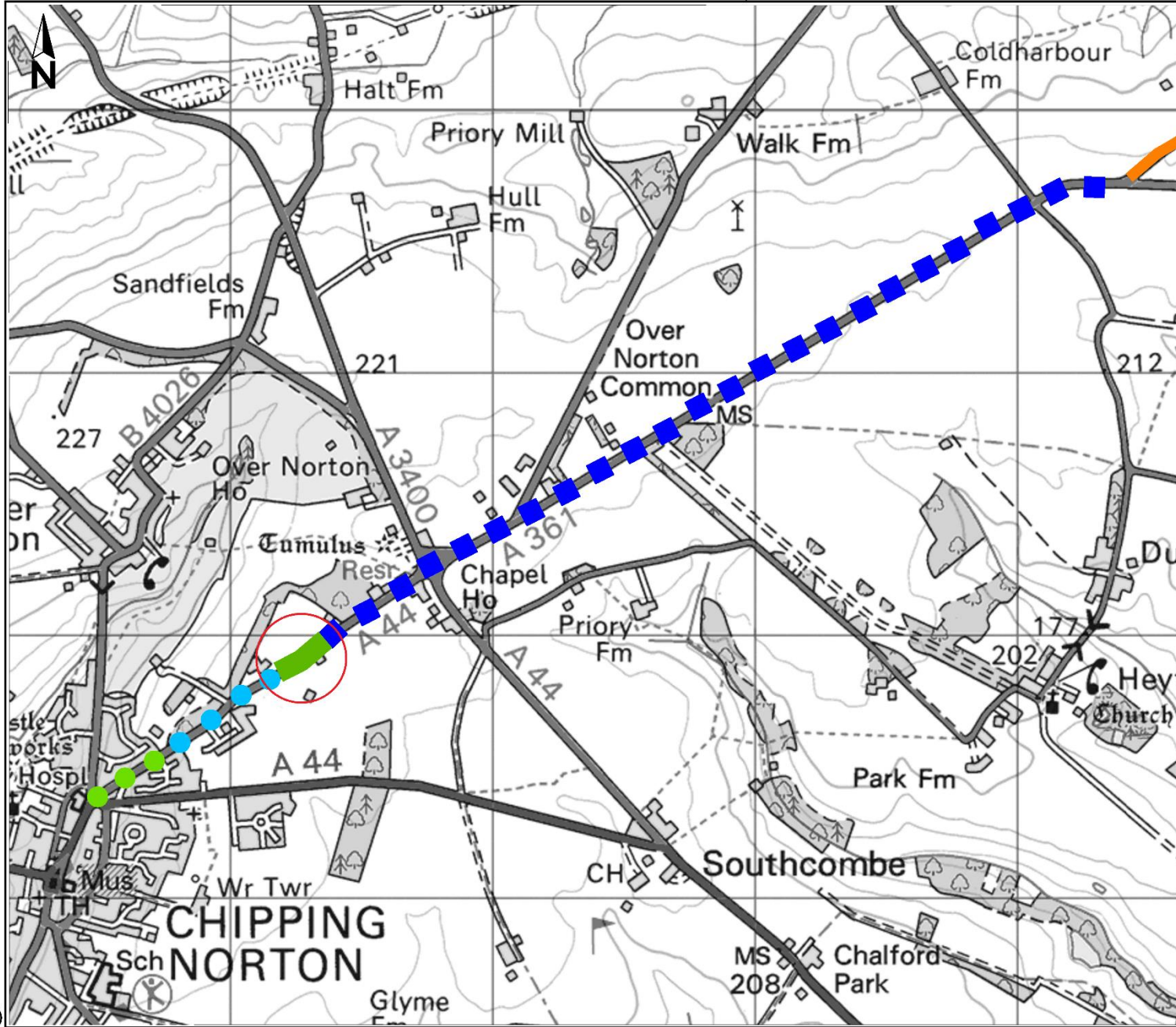
Oxfordshire Project No. & File Ref

Drawing No. Revision 0

CMDE9



C:\Users\jane.clark\OneDrive - Oxfordshire County Council\ITRO useful info\CAD plans\A361 Speed Limits\A361 Speed limit for CM.dwg



Drawing No. \_\_\_\_\_ Revision 0

- Key**
- Proposed 50mph Speed Limit in place of current 60mph National speed limit
  - Proposed 40mph Speed Limit in place of current 60mph National speed limit
  - Existing 60mph National speed limit
  - Existing 40mph speed limit
  - Existing 30mph speed limit

Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright, and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Oxfordshire County Council Licence No LA078925

Rev.	Date	Purpose of revision	Drawn	Checked	Approved

**OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**  
 Owen Jenkins  
 Director for  
 Infrastructure Delivery  
 Communities  
 Oxfordshire County Council  
 County Hall  
 Oxford  
 OX1 1ND  
 Tel: 0345 310 11 11  
 Fax: (01865) 241577

Project title  
**A361 PROPOSED SPEED LIMITS**

Drawing title  
**TEW TURN TO CHIPPING NORTON**

Drawing Status

Scale @ A3	Drawn by JaC	Checked by	Approved by
N.T.S.	Date drawn 07/16	Date checked	Date approved

Oxfordshire Project No. & File Ref \_\_\_\_\_  
 Drawing No. \_\_\_\_\_ Revision 0

RESPONDENT	SUMMARISED COMMENTS
(1) Traffic Management Officer, (Thames Valley Police)	<p><b>Object</b> - Aspects of any proposed speed limit that are taken into account are collision history, speed of existing traffic, road environment, enforcement, road character and driver perception. These are applied to the location towards our response which is evidence based.</p> <p>The current speed of traffic is a reliable indicator of how acceptable a new speed limit would be. The recognised way of ascertaining this level of self-compliance is the mean speed. If the mean speed is 4 mph or more over the proposed limit it is unlikely to be effective without other measures such as engineering or effective enforcement which is unlikely in most cases.</p> <p>The route is considered from the north on the outskirts of Banbury travelling south for each application considered.</p> <p>No speed survey information has been received for the extending of the 30mph limit south from Banbury towards the Wykham junction new 40? This remains rural as far as I am aware from the current new housing build line and is outside Dft guidelines for extension! Speeds here are likely to remain high and the urban limit gateway lost without an entry gateway visually represented close to the new housing. The 30mph limit here should be close to the new visual build line currently present. No information has been sent that this will change which is a significant factor!</p> <p>The speed survey information sent by Oxon CC indicates that speeds at Wykham cross roads are above 40mph and we know from research that reductions will be minimal with imposition of a this down from 50 the current limit, and therefore remain too high. This cross-road location has a collision history and deserves serious engineering improvements where approach speeds may be a factor. The site lines and general inter-visibility without any dedicated right turning areas are more significant factors in our experience.</p> <p>Actual speeds taken from the evidence, are above 40 (mean 47.7 typical) and outside the Dft and informally adopted Oxon CC / Surrey CC guidelines (We understand that these from previous correspondence are adopted by Oxon County Council as good practice!). Proceeding with these new limits here could allow design improvements to the speed limit rather than the speed of traffic WHICH IS A DANGEROUS STRATEGY. This approach is a high-risk element to the proposals and the real situation should not be ignored! (Design Manual for Roads and Bridges)</p>

CMDE9

	<p>The section between Bloxham and the Little Tew junction is accepted as new 50mph with one exception. The series of bends just before and between the Little Tew junction and a short distance forward south to the Heythrop/Great Rollright cross roads should also be included in our view. Extending the proposed 50 south to approximately 100m south of the cross-road junction would include this a high-risk area.</p> <p>I use this route regularly and see numerous near misses / late braking here and debris at the junction usually due to traffic some heavy agricultural, waiting to turn right especially where the northbound bend is blind! The bends can be driven safely at 50 in my opinion although an appropriate speed is likely lower for most. Consideration of improved junction signing should be a safety consideration at this location with the speed limit lowered.</p> <p>There is a proven link between road environment/character and drivers speed. Drivers must respect the need for a speed limit. If it is not accepted as realistic it will quickly be abused and be the source of constant demands for police action. Residents will be disappointed in the residual speeds and likely expect enforcement later as the solution which would never significantly lead to credible speed reductions at most times and should not be considered with the lower limit in most cases.</p> <p>The police stance firmly reflects Dft advice that all limits should be reasonably complied with in driver passive compliance without the need for supervision.</p> <p>The policy of Thames Valley Police is to use sound practical and realistic criteria (Circular Roads 1/2013) when responding to Highway Authorities in an effort to promote consistency and to reduce the burden of constant and unnecessary enforcement. The advice shown in Circular Roads 1/2013 states Speed Limit should not be used to attempt to solve the problem of isolated hazards, for example a single junction access or reduced forward visibility.</p> <p>Thames Valley Police welcome road safety interventions on this route but will object to the proposal in this form due to the detail outlined.</p>
(2) West Oxfordshire District Council	<p><b>No Objection</b></p>
(3) Bloxham Parish Council	<p><b>Support with concerns</b> – The Parish Council agreed to support the 50mph limit at the exit of Bloxham on the South Newington Road, along to South Newington.</p> <p>With regard to stretch of the A361 from Banbury to Bloxham, there is no need to extend the 30mph past where it is</p>

CMDE9

	<p>now at the Bloxham V expressed support for ale roundabout. The limit should be 40mph from this roundabout, down to Wykham crossroads continuing onto Bloxham, where the limit then changes to 30mph as drivers enter the village.</p> <p>The Parish Council would also request that consideration be given to reducing the speed limit to 20mph through Bloxham, from Bloxham Grove Road to South Newington Road.</p>
<p>(4) Swerford Parish Council</p>	<p><b>Support</b> – In addition to that which is being proposed for which there is only support in general, the following further recommendations are made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- there is a white line/hatching marked at the intersection of the A 361 to the road/intersection with Swerford (returning from Banbury after the Boxing Hare and both ways around the intersection) sufficiently long to make that junction much safer;</li> <li>- that the speed limit in South Newington be reduced to 20 mph from 30 mph;</li> <li>- that the unrestricted length on the A 361 (ie where the limit is 60 mph) be dropped to 50 mph both running down to the roundabout into Chipping Norton (from Banbury into the Shell Garage/Wheelers/Chapel Garage roundabout) and also from there into the 40-mph limit into Chipping Norton.</li> </ul>
<p>(5) Local Resident, (Leafield)</p>	<p><b>Object</b> – There is no significant need to reduce speed limits, if safety is a concern, improve road markings, signage and lighting.</p>
<p>(6) Local Resident, (South Newington)</p>	<p><b>Object</b> – We consider the new proposals are just tinkering to try and alleviate far greater problems that the County Council are unwilling to accept, and we therefore cannot support the proposed changes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) As the existing 30 MPH limits on the A361 out of Banbury, through Bloxham and South Newington along with the 50 MPH limit between Banbury and Bloxham are ignored by so many, how will the revisions amend the attitude of many car, van, small lorry drivers and motorcyclists? Is there a plan for forcible enforcement? It is our observation that it is not the current speed limits that are the cause of accidents but rather the lack of care and patience shown by road users. We have been overtaken or seen overtaking manoeuvres too often, both through the Bloxham 30 MPH limit and in the Easington section of the A361 plus the in the current 50 MPH section between Banbury and Bloxham to know that without strict enforcement matters will not change.</li> <li>b) The road from South Newington to Chipping Norton is not dangerous if road users engage the brain and drive according to the topography. The most dangerous junction is undoubtedly that with the B4031 with people</li> </ul>



CMDE9

	<p>joining the A361 to head towards Chipping Norton without due consideration for those already on the A361. This is due to the angle that the two roads meet. The Wykeham Lane turn is only dangerous because again, drivers pull out of it without due care and attention.</p> <p>c) These measures take no account of the unsuitability of sections of the A361 for the unreasonable size and weight of some of the traffic currently using the road. Namely Bloxham and South Newington villages.</p> <p>d) The roadworks through South Newington late last year went some way to improve matters on this part of the road. Road users who are familiar with the road are by and large careful. In early December when motorists were confronted with a new surface, they drove slowly through the village and HGVs avoided it. Excessive road noise and vibration (both of which your environmental department are aware) were substantially reduced. By mid-December there was a change, perhaps for the same reason i.e. a new road surface, and speeding has resumed through South Newington. Noise and vibration are back to their previous levels and the road already shows signs of heavy wear. There is also the incessant use of airhorns by large vehicles announcing their presence approaching the three narrow, blind turns.</p> <p>e) A questionnaire sent to residents some years ago by the local action group showed that the majority of villagers felt that “20 is plenty” signs should be introduced. Residents turning out of Bakers Lane, driveways on the main road, or the Slibber do so very much at their own risk. Indeed, some residents refuse to exit via the Slibber at all. We feel that a “slow/caution – concealed entrances” sign placed on the verge opposite the pub.</p> <p>f) OCC have often stated that this is an A road, which of course is quite right but designated such in 1922 when traffic levels were vastly different. An A road is one that functions efficiently and traffic flows freely. Your own operatives will admit that it is unsuitable. This part of the A361 is an old narrow toll road lined with listed buildings which experience, on average, about 30 traffic hold ups and tailbacks per day. If traffic levels continue to rise unabated then a 20 limit through the village should be considered.</p>
<p>(7) Local Resident, (Chipping Norton)</p>	<p><b>Support with concerns</b> – may I add my full support. However, I feel that the proposals do not extend far enough. As a resident on this road, I have experienced, over the years, not only an increase in traffic volume but excessive speeds. I have before expressed concerns regarding the stretch of road from Chipping Norton roundabout towards Banbury and am concerned that this area has not been taken into consideration. The junction leading off towards Hook Norton is extremely dangerous with drivers, often towing caravans, pulling out into traffic approaching at speed from the Banbury direction.</p>

CMDE9

	<p>There are hidden dips which impede visibility, but we still see dangerous overtaking at speeds well over the limit and drivers ignore or do not understand the significance of the cross-hatch road markings.</p> <p>As with other residents on this stretch of road, turning in and out of our properties is a hazardous act. On a regular occurrence, whilst waiting to turn right into our driveway, (having given clear indication) drivers overtake cars waiting behind me simply because they cannot see ahead and are driving too fast. Visitors, postmen &amp; delivery drivers have all commented how dangerous it is to access the property.</p> <p>I am well aware that you are not responsible for bad drivers, but by making this stretch of road 50 mph with solid double white lines, at least past the residencies, would make it safer for all concerned.</p> <p>During the summer months we are also subjected to road being used as a race track by motor cycle enthusiasts, both excessive noise &amp; speed. A 50 mph would reduce this.</p> <p>There is no clear indication of any speed limit from the Chipping Norton roundabout going towards Banbury. It would appear that this road is the only one in the area without a 50mph limit but one that would benefit all users, especially local residents, if it were imposed on the whole stretch of road.</p>
<p>(8) Local Resident, (Banbury)</p>	<p><b>Support</b> – These proposed speed limits are very important to better protect cyclists and other non-motorised road users.</p>
<p>(9) Local Resident, (Banbury)</p>	<p><b>Support</b> – The extension to the 30mph limit south west beyond Crouch Farm is welcomed but the associated location of any street lamps and signage needs to be carefully considered to avoid any detrimental effect on the properties at Crouch Cottages, and frequent monitoring of the speed limit, perhaps by fixed cameras, may be necessary to discourage speeding in that area.</p> <p>I do want to make the point that it would be no good simply extending the 30mph limit without enforcement, such as a static camera. The reason for my comment is that vehicles already ignore the existing 50mph limit at will and cross the centre white lines at speed while overtaking those vehicles that do stay within the limit. That stretch of road was "straightened" some twenty odd years ago to improve safety (it was formerly a series of bends) but the effect has been that cars now speed up significantly. I have had several near misses when pulling out of my drive onto the A361 with cars who simply pull out and overtake without warning. These near misses are, of course, not reflected in the accident statistics.</p>

## CMDE9

	Double white lines would only have limited effect, I believe, but a fixed camera similar to the one in Bloxham village may well curtail that problem.
--	---