

Division(s): Sutton Courtenay and Marcham

**CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT – 16 JANUARY 2020**  
**A415 BETWEEN ABINGDON AND MARCHAM: PROPOSED 50MPH**  
**SPEED LIMIT**

**Report by Interim Director for Community Operations**

**Recommendation**

1. The Cabinet Member for Environment is RECOMMENDED to approve the 50mph speed limit on the A415 between Abingdon and Marcham as advertised.

**Executive summary**

2. Speed limits are reviewed when there are changes to the road layout or usage as a result of development and when requested by the local member or local councils due to concerns over road safety.

**Introduction**

3. This report presents responses received to a statutory consultation to introduce a 50mph speed limit on the A415 between Abingdon and Marcham.

**Background**

4. The above proposals as shown at Annex 1 have been put forward following a request from County Councillor Richard Webber and, if approved, would be funded by the Councillor Priority Fund.

**Consultation**

5. Formal consultation on the proposal was carried out between 6 November and 6 December 2019. A public notice was placed in the Oxfordshire Herald series newspaper and sent to statutory consultees, including Thames Valley Police, the Fire & Rescue Service, Ambulance service, Marcham Parish Council, the Vale of the White Horse District Council and the local County Councillor.
6. Twenty responses were received. Four objecting, fifteen in support and one neither supporting or objecting. All comments are recorded at Annex 2 with copies of the full responses available for inspection by County Councillors.

**Response to objections and other comments**

7. Thames Valley Police had not responded to this consultation at the time of preparing this report so any comments received will be reported verbally to the meeting.
8. Objections to the proposals were received from four members of the public, all residents of the area, expressing the view that the speed limit reduction would increase congestion, not improve safety and represented a poor use of public funds.
9. Marcham Parish Council expressed support on road safety grounds. The Vale of the White Horse District Council responded but made no specific comment on the proposals.
10. Expressions of support were also received from fourteen members of the public on the grounds of improved road safety, though several of these also expressed a preference for a 40mph speed limit rather than the 50mph limit currently proposed.
11. Overall the balance of opinion is clearly supportive of the proposal. In respect of the requests to consider a 40mph speed limit, a speed survey carried out in June 2019 showed average speeds of 48 mph indicating that the proposed 50mph speed limit was appropriate taking account the character of the road and that a 40mph speed limit would only be viable if significant supporting measures were also to be provided, for which there is currently no funding.

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

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

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



13. Funding for the proposed speed limit has been provided by the Councillor Priority Fund.

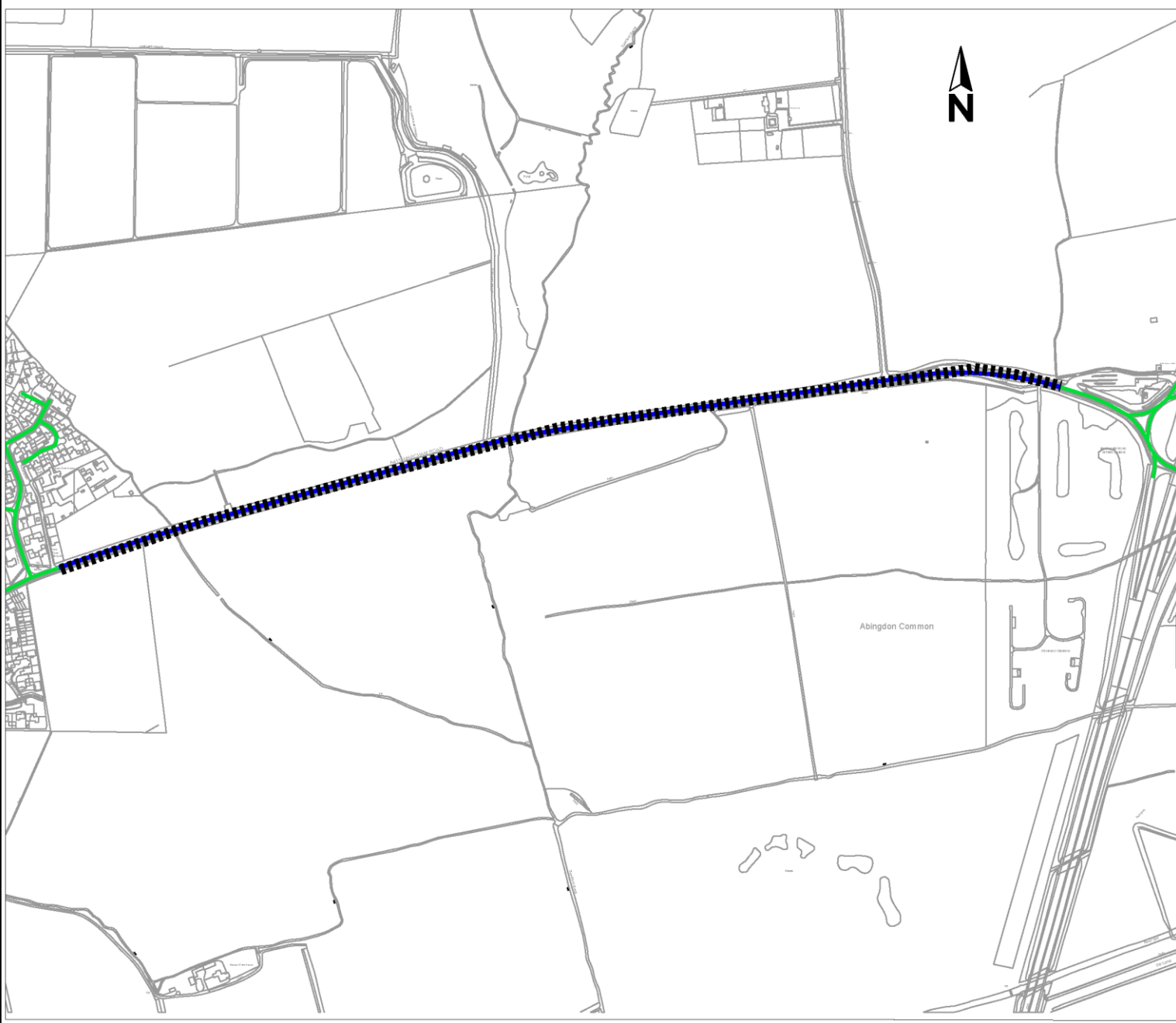
JASON RUSSELL  
Interim Director of Community Operations

Background papers:            Plan of proposed speed limit  
   Consultation responses

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January 2020

Drawing No.		Revision							
		0							
<b>Key</b>									
		Proposed 50mph speed limit in place of existing national speed limit							
		Existing 30mph speed limit (to remain)							
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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									
PROPOSED 50MPH SPEED LIMIT									
Drawing title									
A415 MARCHAM									
Drawing Status									
Scale @ A3	Drawn by	Checked by	Approved by						
N.T.S.	JaC	JaC							
	Date drawn	Date checked	Date approved						
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RESPONDENT	SUMMARISED COMMENTS
(1) Traffic Management Officer, (Thames Valley Police)	(No comments received as at: 23/12/2019).
(2) Vale of White Horse District Council	<b>No comments</b>
(3) Marcham Parish Council	<b>Support</b> - There is a combined footway / cycleway along the A415. Pedestrians are often walking next to large lorries, and other vehicles travelling at fast speeds. There is a chance of wing mirrors overhanging the footway. A speed reduction would make pedestrians at less risk from fast moving traffic and enable them to feel safer.
(4) Local Resident, (Marcham)	<b>Object</b> - It is simply not necessary to reduce the speed limit along the proposed road. Traffic accidents as a result of the current speed limit are minimal and a reduction to 50mph would increase congestion.
(5) Local Resident, (Marcham)	<b>Object</b> - Having lived in Marcham for over 15 years I know this road well. This road is already safe. There are almost no accidents. I have seen little evidence of speeding on this road. A lower speed limit would only serve to slow traffic when there is no need. When its busy, traffic density reduces the average speed already. Let's not spend money changing something that's not broken. I'm sure the council have higher priorities in these frugal times.
(6) Local Resident, (Drayton)	<b>Object</b> - Unofficial restrictions are already in place, by the numbers of drivers who think National Speed Limit means 50mph, drivers who drive along the A415 at 40mph (and continue at 40mph through the 30mph speed limits at either end) and by cyclists who refuse to use the cycle lane provided.  If any improvements to safety should be made, then it would be to install traffic lights at the Dalton Barracks turn off (where the accident blackspot is).

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<p>(7) Local Resident, (Marcham)</p>	<p><b>Object</b> - I do not think that reducing the speed limit by 10mph will make any difference. It will also cost money to replace the signs. There is a clear 30mph sign going into the village, so people just need to stick to that! If anything, that sign could be moved further forward so that speed is reduced sooner...</p>
<p>(8) Local Resident, (Marcham)</p>	<p><b>Support</b> - I have seen a car collide with a family of roe deer that jumped out of the dense wooded area at the side of the road. It was a miracle that the driver did not swerve into the path of an oncoming vehicle coming the other way.</p> <p>The road is quite narrow leaving little room for error or lapses of concentration with the potential of a 120mph collision with oncoming traffic.</p> <p>The combined footpath and cycle path is too narrow to safely allow cyclists to pass in opposite directions or avoid a pedestrian safely. Side draft from large vehicles is strong enough at 60mph to knock cyclists or pedestrians off balance.</p> <p>Traffic struggles to judge when to decelerate on entering the Marcham 30mph area and this can lead to tailgating.</p> <p>I would also like to see a 40mph limit for suitable distance before Marcham to encourage traffic to decelerate adequately to meet the village 30mph limit.</p>
<p>(9) Local Resident, (Abingdon)</p>	<p><b>Support</b> - No comments.</p>
<p>(10) Local Resident, (Marcham)</p>	<p><b>Support</b> - This speed limit will only work if enforced properly - so speed cameras should be installed. Following assessment, a reduction to 40mph should be considered.</p>
<p>(11) Local Resident, (Marcham)</p>	<p><b>Support</b> - I nearly ticked "Object" as I would much rather it be a 40mph please. As a cyclist and a regular user of the cycle track alongside the A415 between Marcham and Abingdon, I can't tell you how scary it is when traffic is hurtling towards you at 60mph+, with their lights dazzling you at night and are only 1m or so away from you. If you meet someone coming the other way (on the "path") or get behind someone then you have to stop as there's precious little room to get by someone, making the busy, fast road by you even more threatening and unnerving. I know this consultation is about the road and its speed limit but please bear in mind those having to cycle by it.</p>

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	<p>My other concern is having to regularly turn right in to Howard Cornish Road in Marcham (in my car) and having traffic pile up behind me often braking at the last minute as they're going so fast. There has been a number of accidents at this junction (often due to the speed of drivers from 60mph limit). Sadly some drivers see the 30mph sign in Marcham as the place to start braking (in the run down to the corner) rather than slowing to 30mph for the speed limit. Finally, the Dalton Barracks turn off the A415 between Marcham and Abingdon is a shambles and often there's shunts there. People trying to turn right out of that junction take their life into their hands due to the speed of some drivers coming from both directions. Personally I'd make it a roundabout but as your consultation is asking about a speed limit then a 50mph (and certainly 40mph) would help.</p>
(12) Local Resident, (Oxford)	<b>Support</b> - The speed limit ought to be reduced further.
(13) Local Resident, (Marcham)	<b>Support</b> - A speed camera is also needed. There has been a fatality on the road. Many cars go above 60 already. When I walk along the path it does not feel safe.
(14) Local Resident, (Marcham)	<b>Support</b> - No comments.
(15) Local Resident, (Marcham)	<b>Support</b> - I fully support the reduction, and wish it was 40mph because of the danger to cyclists and pedestrians who use the now, overgrown narrow footpath to Abingdon. It is so dangerous when one gets large lorries thundering along the road. It would also reduce the speed on the entrance to the village - with the new housing estates on the main road there is a danger to children who have to use this route to school. There maybe logical reasons to reduce to 50mph but do these take into account the health and safety of persons who have to use footpaths along this very dangerous and busy route.
(16) Local Resident, (Marcham)	<b>Support</b> - No comments.
(17) Local Resident, (Marcham)	<b>Support</b> - No comments.

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<p>(18) Local Resident, (Marcham)</p>	<p><b>Support</b> - Should be reduced to 40mph</p>
<p>(19) Local Resident, (Marcham)</p>	<p><b>Support</b> - I strongly feel 60mph is too fast for this road. It is a short stretch from Abingdon to Marcham, and people are unprepared to slow down for Marcham's 30mph.</p> <p>I am always afraid and keep my foot on my brake pedal to warn people coming behind me when waiting to turn right into Howard Cornish. I know of at least two people who have had a car go into the back of them at that point by people speeding towards Marcham, and not realising a car has stopped to turn right until too late.</p> <p>Cars going at 60mph and above are also very unpleasant for pedestrians and cyclists on the footpath. There is also a slightly tricky wiggle in the road early on from Abingdon to Marcham and going at 60mph at night makes it tricky for the unprepared, and I think dangerous.</p> <p>I find it really surprising that most of the road from Frilford to Wantage is 50mph, when this stretch is 60mph. With the turning to Shippon, and the need to slow down for Marcham, I strongly feel this stretch has as much or more need to be 50mph.</p>
<p>(20) Local Resident, (Abingdon)</p>	<p><b>Support</b> - The speed of some drivers, especially HGVs, on the A415 from Abingdon to Marcham is excessive for the conditions of the road and should be reduced and there should be further restrictions through the village of Marcham i.e. speed cameras as many drivers ignore the 30mph limit. My family has been subject to 'near misses' on the pedestrian crossing adjacent to the cross-road on many occasions.</p> <p>The volume of traffic during the rush-hours makes it difficult to egress from side-roads on to the A415.</p>
<p>(21) Local Resident, (Marcham)</p>	<p><b>Support</b> - It should be 40 MPH, like the Drayton to Abingdon Road. This is for SAFETY reasons and to ENCOURAGE walkers and cyclists to use the footpath feeling safe. = GREEN POLICY?!?!?! please..... Secondly please consider SIGNS to drivers exiting the A34 (northbound) that there is a CYCLE PATH crossing the road at the roundabout junction with A415.</p>