

Divisions affected: *Shrivenham*

CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAY MANAGEMENT – 2 SEPTEMBER 2021

CHILDREY: B4001 NEW ROAD AND PULPIT HILL - PROPOSED 40MPH SPEED LIMIT

Report by Corporate Director, Environment and Place

RECOMMENDATION

1. The Cabinet Member for Highway Management is RECOMMENDED to approve the proposed introduction of a 40mph speed limit as advertised.

Executive summary

2. This report presents responses received to a statutory consultation to introduce a 40mph speed limit at B4001 New Road and Pulpit Hill, Childrey.

Financial Implications

3. Funding for consultation on the proposals has been provided by the local member County Councillor Yvonne Constance through the 'Councillor Priority Fund' and, should the speed limit proceed to implementation, funding for that element of the work will be provided by the County Council.

Equality and Inclusion Implications

4. No implications in respect of equalities or inclusion have been identified in respect of the proposals.

Sustainability Implications

5. The proposals would help facilitate walking and cycling on the outskirts of Childrey village and safe movement of traffic including equestrians.

Consultation

6. Formal consultation was carried out between 14 July and 13 August 2021. A notice was published in the Oxfordshire Herald series newspaper and an email sent to statutory consultees, including Thames Valley Police, the Fire & Rescue Service, Ambulance Service, Vale of the White Horse District Council, Childrey Parish Council and local County Councillor.
7. 26 responses were received during the formal consultation. 8 objections (31%), 17 in support (65%) and one non-objection. The responses are shown

at Annex 2 with copies of the original responses available for inspection by County Councillors.

Response to objections and other comments

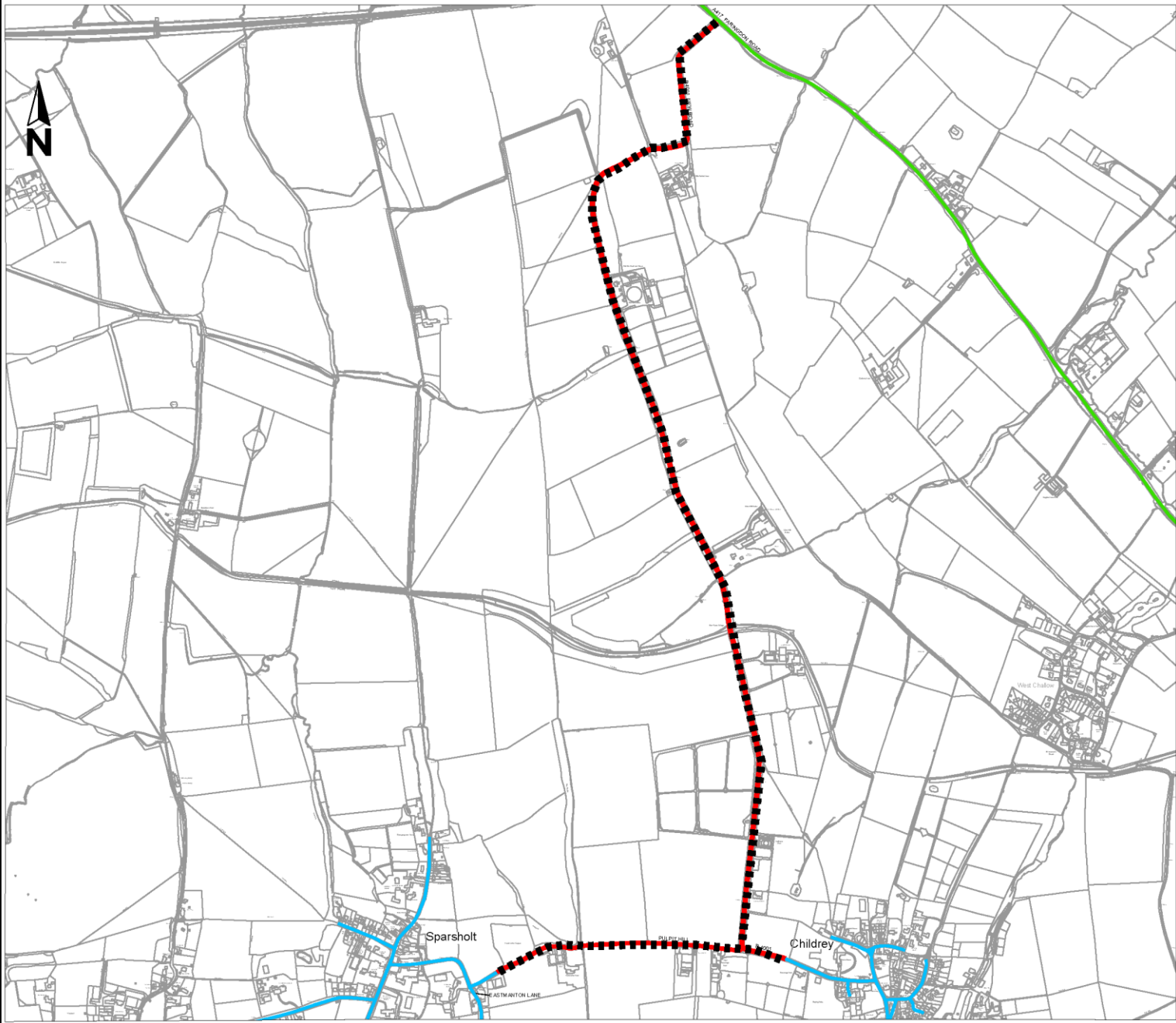
8. Thames Valley Police objected to the introduction of the 40mph speed limit because 'before' speed data at two out of three sites along New Road showed mean speeds to be 48mph which, in accordance with the County Council's Speed Limit Policy (46mph or below), is too high for lowering the existing national speed limit without the introduction of supporting highway measures. They also state that there is no recorded collision history in the last five years, and, therefore, no justification for lowering the speed limit.
9. In response, 'after' speed surveys will be undertaken to determine the effectiveness of the 'sign only' 40mph speed limit. If speeds have not reduced sufficiently, then supporting highway measures such as vehicle activated signs, enhanced static signage, road markings etc. can be considered. There were in fact two recorded slight personal injury road traffic collisions on New Road during the last five-year period. Both were in 2019, one involving a cyclist and the other a vehicle travelling too fast.
10. Seven local residents have objected to the introduction of the 40mph speed limit on New Road on the grounds of artificially depressing the road's natural speed will negatively affect road safety whilst causing major inconvenience to residents, there being no significant history of road traffic collisions, 40mph being far too low for New Road, changing the speed limit will have no impact on how fast cars will travel, the road being in good condition, largely straight with clear visibility and only a handful of houses along it, all set back from the road and gated.
11. To respond, there is no evidence that lowering the speed limit adversely affects road safety. Whilst there is no significant history of recorded road traffic collisions, New Road is used by walkers, runners, cyclists, and horse riders, as well as slow and large agricultural vehicles. Some of the 'houses' mentioned above are stable yards and some have land on both sides of the road, resulting in machines and animals crossing the road at times. Lowering the speed limit to 40mph, including if necessary, implementing the supporting highway measures outlined in paragraph 8 above should make the road safer for all users, particularly non-motorised.

BILL COTTON,
Corporate Director, Environment and Place.

Annexes Annex 1: Consultation Plan, Annex 2: Consultation Responses.

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September 2021



Drawing No. Revision 0

Key

- Proposed 40mph Speed Limit in place of the national speed limit
- Existing 50mph Speed Limit
- Existing 30mph Speed Limit

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B4001 NEW ROAD AND PULPIT HILL
CHILDREY

Drawing title

PROPOSED 40MPH SPEED LIMIT

Drawing Status

Scale @ A3	Drawn by	Checked by	Approved by
N.T.S.	JaC		

Oxfordshire Project No. & File Ref

Date drawn	Date checked	Date approved
07/21		

Drawing No. Revision 0

RESPONDENT	COMMENTS
<p>(1) Traffic Management Officer, (Thames Valley Police)</p>	<p>Object – Thames Valley Police are not opposed to lowering speed limits providing they are appropriate to the road environment and likely to have casualty reduction benefits. All aspects of the proposed speed limit are taken into account i.e., collision history, speed of existing traffic, road environment, enforcement, road character and driver perception etc.</p> <p>The current speed of traffic is a reliable indicator of how acceptable a new speed limit would be. The recognized way of ascertaining this level of self-compliance is the 85th percentile speed. If the 85th percentile speed is 7mph or more over the proposed limit it is unlikely to be effective without other measures such as engineering or continual enforcement.</p> <p>There is a proven link between road environment/character and driver’s 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.</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 or reduced forward visibility.</p> <p>Experience shows that changing to a lower speed limit on its own will not necessarily be successful in reducing the speed of traffic by very much if the prevailing mean speeds are much higher than the proposed lower speed limit. If a speed limit is set too low and is ignored then this could result in the majority of drivers criminalising themselves and could bring the system of speed limits into disrepute. There should be no expectation that the police would be able to provide regular enforcement if a speed limit is set too low as this could result in an unreasonable additional demand on police resources. It is also important to set reasonable speed limits to ensure consistency across the country.</p> <p>Therefore, speed limits should be considered as part of a package of measures to manage vehicle speeds and improve road safety. Changes to the highway (for example through narrowing, providing vertical traffic calming or re-aligning the road) may be required to encourage lower speeds in addition to any change in speed limit. Though these</p>

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	<p>may be more expensive, they are more likely to be successful in the long term in achieving lower speeds without the need for increased police enforcement to penalise substantial numbers of motorists.</p> <p>I am aware that a speed survey has already been carried out and the results do not support this lowering of the current speed limit.</p> <p>There is no collision history recorded in the last 5 years. I therefore can see no justification for lowering this speed limit and therefore object.</p>
(2) Vale of White Horse District Council	<p>No objection – Having reviewed the details of the scheme the Vale of White Horse District Council raises no objection.</p>
(3) Local Group, (Cycling UK Oxford)	<p>Support – The part between Sparsholt and Childrey is frequently used by cyclists as an alternative east-west route parallel to the B4507. A cyclist was a casualty in a collision on New Road in 2019.</p> <p>These are narrow roads with bends and undulations not suitable for the high speeds that vehicles are capable of today. Reduced speed limits would make the roads safer, partly by reducing speeds and partly by sending the signal that the roads are not safe enough for the national limit to be applied.</p>
(4) Local Resident, (Childrey)	<p>Object - Given the proposal pertains to be about road safety the evidence nationally should be taken into account. 40mph is far too low for that road and all the evidence shows that when speed limits are artificially depressed below the natural speed for the road safety outcomes are negatively impacted, not positively. There is not significant history of RTA cases on the stretch in question, so this limit becomes, at best, arbitrary and counter productive. We object to it in the strongest terms. Because the proposal will negatively affect road safety whilst causing major inconvenience to residents.</p>
(5) Local Resident, (Childrey)	<p>Object - Changing the speed limit will have no impact on how fast cars will travel on new road. It is a long straightish road with relatively new tarmac. I think it is crazy to impose a 40mph speed limit on what should be a 60mph road. A far better solution would be to put a speed camera to actually enforce the current limit. I think 40mph on pulpit Hill is very sensible.</p>

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<p>(6) Local Resident, (Childrey)</p>	<p>Object - I object to the change of speed limit for the New Road B4001. Pulpit Hill's change, however, I would support. Pulpit Hill is a much narrower road and this limit would be more suitable.</p> <p>Making the New Road a 40MPH, however, will not mean drivers will adhere to this. The road has a very small number of dwellings along it - perhaps at those stages it could be 40MPH, but to make the entire stretch of the road to the A417 40MPH is just a waste of time and consultation. It will be entirely disregarded - I know this as a resident that uses this road a lot and see ALL drivers (even those that live along this road!) doing way in excess of the current speed limit, let alone keeping more towards 40MPH. An entirely pointless exercise. I'm submitting this response because I feel that to try and impose a 40MPH limit on the New Road (not Pulpit Hill) is nonsensical. The road is in good condition (for an Oxfordshire road, this is very rare), good visibility and is wide enough and quiet enough to maintain a national speed limit. Putting this as 40MPH is not going to make drivers go 40MPH, so is a waste of time, effort, and money.</p>
<p>(7) Local Resident, (Childrey)</p>	<p>Object - I object to this proposal in respect of the 40 mph on the B 4001 to Childrey. This is a ridiculous speed on this road and even if set at this speed no one will stick to it anyway. This is a road in good condition that was totally resurfaced in the last 6 years and has clear visibility all along it. It is a 2 mile stretch with a handful of houses along it all of which are set back way off the road and are all gated. As far as I am aware there have been no car accidents on this stretch of road that warrant this restriction. What are the concerns and reasons for this as these are not mentioned???? There are far more important issues to be dealing with than driving down speed limits where it is not required.</p> <p>As for the speed limit at 40 in pulpit hill I agree that this road warrants this. The B4001 is a road in good condition with clear visibility and can support a 60mph speed limit. There have not been any accidents I know of in the 15 years I have lived here.</p> <p>With regards to pulpit hill I agree with 40mph but to be honest if you have driven down this road you will know that doing over 40 mph is near enough impossible</p>
<p>(8) Local Resident, (Childrey)</p>	<p>Object - The roads I question are generally quiet and, as far as I am aware, no incidents, let alone accidents, have been reported along these roads.</p> <p>There are only five or six properties on a 5km stretch, of which the roads are very long and straight for the most part,</p>

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	<p>especially where any houses are.</p> <p>40 miles/hr seems excessive for such an unpopulated country road. I'm a keen and frequent cyclist and I have never had any issues along these roads!</p> <p>Also, slowing down traffic unnecessarily will probably have the adverse effect as it will only frustrate drivers. Money would be better spent repairing the road.</p>
(9) Local Resident, (Goosey)	<p>Object - What are the actual road safety concerns for suggesting this as a proposal? There are other local roads with higher volumes of traffic (e.g., the road between the A417 and Northmead Lane through Goosey which vehicles use as a cut through during the week for travelling between Faringdon, Stanford and Didcot/ Milton Park). Has the County Council undertaken an ATC survey for this the consultation road? Frankly this road is not worthy of a reduced speed limit. I am a local resident and object because the proposal is not meritorious. Other local roads with higher volumes of traffic should be considered first.</p>
(10) Resident, (Wantage)	<p>Object - 40mph along this road it too slow, I would support a move to 50mph but I don't believe that without a speed camera this will be enforceable. The Earth Line lorries constantly trudging up and down and through Childrey above the speed limit are more of an issue, they don't take notice of the speed restrictions currently in place so changing the limit won't make any difference.</p> <p>The speed they travel through the village along with the hordes of parked vehicles are more of a danger issue than cars travelling down a road where it's rare to encounter another vehicle or pedestrian even at peak times. I am objecting as I don't think the speed along this road is an issue. it's a remote road and doesn't warrant a 40pmh limit for so few residential properties. For the horse riders there are plenty of bridleways about.</p>
(11) Email Respondent, (unknown)	<p>Support – I support the proposed 40mph speed limit for New Road and Pulpit Hill, Childrey. The roads are used by walkers, cyclists and horse riders and the reduction in the speed limit, will be of benefit to vulnerable road users.</p>
(12) Local Resident, (Childrey)	<p>Support - I think this is a good idea but what it really needs is calming and/or enforcement. We live on this road in the 30-mph zone and people regularly speed past the house. We've lost wing mirrors, been sworn at when pulling in and out of our drive, etc. This road needs everyone to slow down. There are not always guaranteed spaces for</p>

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	<p>pedestrians, we often walk in the road, and there are several blind bends.</p>
<p>(13) Local Resident, (Childrey)</p>	<p>Support - As a resident living on New Road, walking my dogs on some parts of the road is quite hazardous as there is no useable verge to jump onto if vehicles is speeding up or down the road. Although some areas are trimmed, the verges in some parts are overgrown or have a very rough surface so can only be used in an emergency. From our house, I have no other way of getting on to footpaths without using the roads, unless I drive - which is not environmentally friendly.</p> <p>We also have lorries which go very fast, although probably not breaking the current speed limit, and have been known to bring down branches of overhanging trees when traffic has been coming the other way. Motor bikes, sometimes in large groups, which are also fast and noisy are another nuisance. Although I'm a horse rider I, fortunately, don't have to ride on New Road or Pulpit Hill as I would not feel safe.</p> <p>The other related issue is the use of B4001 as a diversion route. We can always tell when the A417 or other routes into Wantage are closed as drivers are obviously trying to make up time as they speed up and down New Road. I am a resident on New Road - see my comments above. I am SUPPORTING the proposal in order to make my life safer.</p>
<p>(14) Local Resident, (Childrey)</p>	<p>Support - I live on New Road New Road is currently national speed limit and vehicles travel in excess of this limit. Children and animals both equestrian and farm live on this road and it is a matter of time before there is a major accident. I would support a speed camera being installed on the road.</p>
<p>(15) Local Resident, (Childrey)</p>	<p>Support - I have rented a house on the B4001 New Road for c.11 years. During that time the volume of traffic on the road has doubled (admittedly from a low base) but the speed of traffic has also increased markedly, particularly following resurfacing works undertaken along the length of the road by OCC in 2016. Vehicles regularly exceed the existing 60mph speed limit and, at times, can be close to or in excess of 100mph. The B4001 is a rural road. It is regularly used by walkers, runners, cyclists, and horse riders, as well as motorists - cars, motorbikes, and lorries. In addition, the section of road north of the Wilts & Berks Canal is used by 5 different farmers to access their fields, some of whom are operating some very large agricultural machinery. Due to the speed that some vehicles travel at along New Road there is potential for a serious accident. I therefore support a 40mph speed limit on New Road.</p> <p>I would also support a 40mph on Pulpit Hill. This road is relatively narrow with some poor sightlines and therefore, on</p>

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	<p>the grounds of highway safety, warrants being a 40mph road. The road is also regularly used by walkers' runners, cyclists and horse riders travelling between Sparsholt and Childrey. As stated above, I have rented a house on New Road for the c.11 years. During that time, I have been concerned by the marked increase in the speed of vehicles using the road, particularly since the road was resurfaced by OCC in 2016. Since that time, I have had a number of near misses shortly before turning into or after pulling out of my driveway caused by speeding motorists overtaking other vehicles or simple going to fast - on two occasions I have had to pull my vehicle completely onto the verge to allow an oncoming vehicle to go past whilst overtaking another vehicle. These incidents have put not only my own life at risk but also the lives of my children when they have been in the car with me. My dog has also been nearly run over on a number of occasions as a result of speeding motorists. In 11 years of living here I have never let my young children cycle on the road as it is, in my opinion, too dangerous.</p>
<p>(16) Local Resident, (Childrey)</p>	<p>Support - The resurfacing of New Road and the fact that it is wide and very straight for some distances has made it into an opportunity for some to use it like a racetrack. The speed some cars and motorcycles travel must be well in excess of 60 mph. This is dangerous for pedestrians, horse riders, walkers, and cyclists. Two of the properties have land on both sides of the road and have to cross with machines and animals. This is their livelihoods. Fully support this proposal for the reasons stated above</p>
<p>(17) Local Resident, (Childrey)</p>	<p>Support - This road is used regularly by horse riders and dog walkers (there is no footpath along it) and some drivers drive extremely fast which can be very dangerous. As a horse rider and dog Walker I have seen drivers going extremely fast and dangerously close to me (and other pedestrians) here and have had my horse scared several times.</p>
<p>(18) Local Resident, (Childrey)</p>	<p>Support - I have lived on the B4001 for the last 20 years and have watched it turn from a normal country "B" road to what it is today.... often a racetrack, increasingly a short cut, and most importantly a potential death trap as vehicle speed and activity become ever more extreme. It seems that the improved quality of the road surface coupled with the unusual long straight stretches is too much of a temptation for many drivers to up their speed and carry out risky manoeuvres.</p> <p>For those who use the road for normal activities viz dog walking, horse riding, farming transport etc, the road has simply become day by day a major accident waiting to happen! The road has become a major safety concern for users, be they on foot, on a horse, in farm machinery or simply in a car.</p>

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<p>(19) Local Resident, (Childrey)</p>	<p>Support - I sometimes walk along this road and frequently drive along it. It can be quite frightening when traffic is going too fast, which it often does. I fully support a 40mph speed restriction. As a local I use this road several times a week and feel it's very unsafe at the current speeds.</p>
<p>(20) Local Resident, (Childrey)</p>	<p>Support - Very concerned with the number of Hgv's using this road, especially Earth Line lorries which are carrying very heavy loads and always at great speed. We quite often use sections of this road to gain access to footpaths, so a reduction in speed would be safer for pedestrians.</p>
<p>(21) Resident, (East Challow)</p>	<p>Support - I use this road every day. I see this is a fantastic news as I use this road every day to take my child to school in the local village of Childrey this is a beautiful village with a lot of history. to see speeding cars, HGV, motorcycles not using their initiative of regulating their speed through this village shows lack of respect for the follow community who have many have lived in this beautiful small village for many years, as I also keep my horse on the long stretch of road this is very lack of respect to riders and horses which is a shame as it's a fantastic location set in the heart in a well-loved community.</p> <p>We have been some say lucky that no one has been hurt yet but animals have been affected due to the unnecessary use of speed on this road.</p>
<p>(22) Local Resident, (Childrey)</p>	<p>Support - The speed of traffic using the road causes near misses when accessing agriculture fields. Also safety of horses and pedestrians accessing a bridleway with bends North and south. Between Challow Station and Childrey there is a total of 10 driveways/property accesses.</p>
<p>(23) Local Resident, (Childrey)</p>	<p>Support - We support the 40mph because I ride and use the bridleway and walk the road with the dog. The cars hurdle towards you very fast and don't slow down as they over-take you.</p>
<p>(24) Resident, (Sparsholt)</p>	<p>Support - We live on Pulpit Hill going into Sparsholt. I support this as traffic comes down Pulpit Hill far too fast. In fact, I feel the speed limit should be lowered to 30mph. I support this as there is a public footpath across the field, starting at the bottom of Pulpit Hill. This footpath is well-used and it is only a matter of time before someone is run over</p>

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	<p>crossing the road to reach the stile to the footpath.</p>
<p>(25) Resident, (Stanford in the Vale)</p>	<p>Support - 40mph is the maximum suitable speed on rural B class and unclassified roads from a road safety and environmental perspective. As a regular user of this road - motorist, cyclist, and occasional dog walker - I'm, very supportive of the imposition of this speed limit along the B4001 New Road and unclassified road towards Sparsholt. In fact, I consider that 30mph is more suitable for the Sparsholt Road.</p> <p>I do wonder why New Road was chosen for the 40mph limit. I appreciate that it is mostly straight and that some drivers do travel at excess speed but surely 40mph should be the default for B class and unclassified roads in the area? The B4507 from Wantage to Ashbury most definitely needs a 40mph limit along its length and the same applies to the B4508 from Longcot to Pusey/A420.</p>
<p>(26) Resident, (Wantage)</p>	<p>Support - With the current volume and speed of traffic on New Road, it has become impossible to safely ride a horse at peak times of the day. Speed limits would reduce the hazard on the road for all users 1. The B4001 is used by numerous horse riders, cyclists, and pedestrians. There are 3 stable yards housing 10 or more horses situated on the road plus a couple of domestic horse keepers. These users are at constant risk when vehicles are travelling at 60 mph or more.</p> <p>2. There are also numerous farm gateways on the road which are used by slow moving vehicles such as tractors and combines. When these are turning into fast moving traffic it is very difficult to safely enter the road.</p> <p>3. There is a number of blind bends, obscuring the view of oncoming vehicles, and slow-moving road users. Vehicles do overtake the slow road users on and before these blind bends. If fast moving traffic comes the other way there is likely to be a head on collision. I have personally witnessed numerous near misses with people overtaking my horse on blind bends. Reducing the speed limit will greatly increase the time available for people to react to unexpected events.</p>