

Divisions affected: Thame & Chinnor

CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAY MANAGEMENT – 23 MARCH 2023

SYDENHAM: PROPOSED 20MPH SPEED LIMITS

Report by Corporate Director, Environment and Place

RECOMMENDATION

1. The Cabinet Member for Highway Management is **RECOMMENDED** to approve the proposed introduction of 20mph speed limits as advertised.

Executive summary

2. The report presents responses to a statutory consultation on the proposed introduction of 20mph speed limits in Sydenham as shown in **Annex 1**.

Financial Implications

3. Funding for consultation and the proposals themselves has been provided by the County Council's 20mph Speed Limit Project

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 encourage walking and cycling within Sydenham by making them safer and more attractive.

Formal consultation

6. Formal consultation was carried out between 09 February 2023 and 10 March. A notice was published in the Oxford Times newspaper, and an email sent to statutory consultees & key-stakeholders, including Thames Valley Police, the Fire & Rescue Service, Ambulance service, Bus operators, countywide transport, access & disabled peoples user groups, South Oxfordshire District Council, the local District Cllrs, Sydenham, Chinnor, and Aston Rowant parish

councils, and the local County Councillor representing the Thame & Chinnor division.

Statutory Consultee Responses:

7. Thames Valley Police re-iterated their views concerning OCC's policy and practice regarding 20mph speed limits; they consider their response as 'having concerns' rather than an outright objection. Stagecoach Bus Company had no objections as they do not operate services within the village. Sydenham Parish Council confirmed their support for the scheme as requested.

Other Responses:

8. Nine online responses were received from members of the public with eight in support, one expressing a concern, and one objection. The concern was over the enforceability of the proposals, whilst the objector considered it unnecessary, a waste of money, and creating undue sign clutter.
9. The responses are shown in **Annex 2**, and copies of the original submissions are available for inspection by County Councillors.

Officer response to objections/concerns

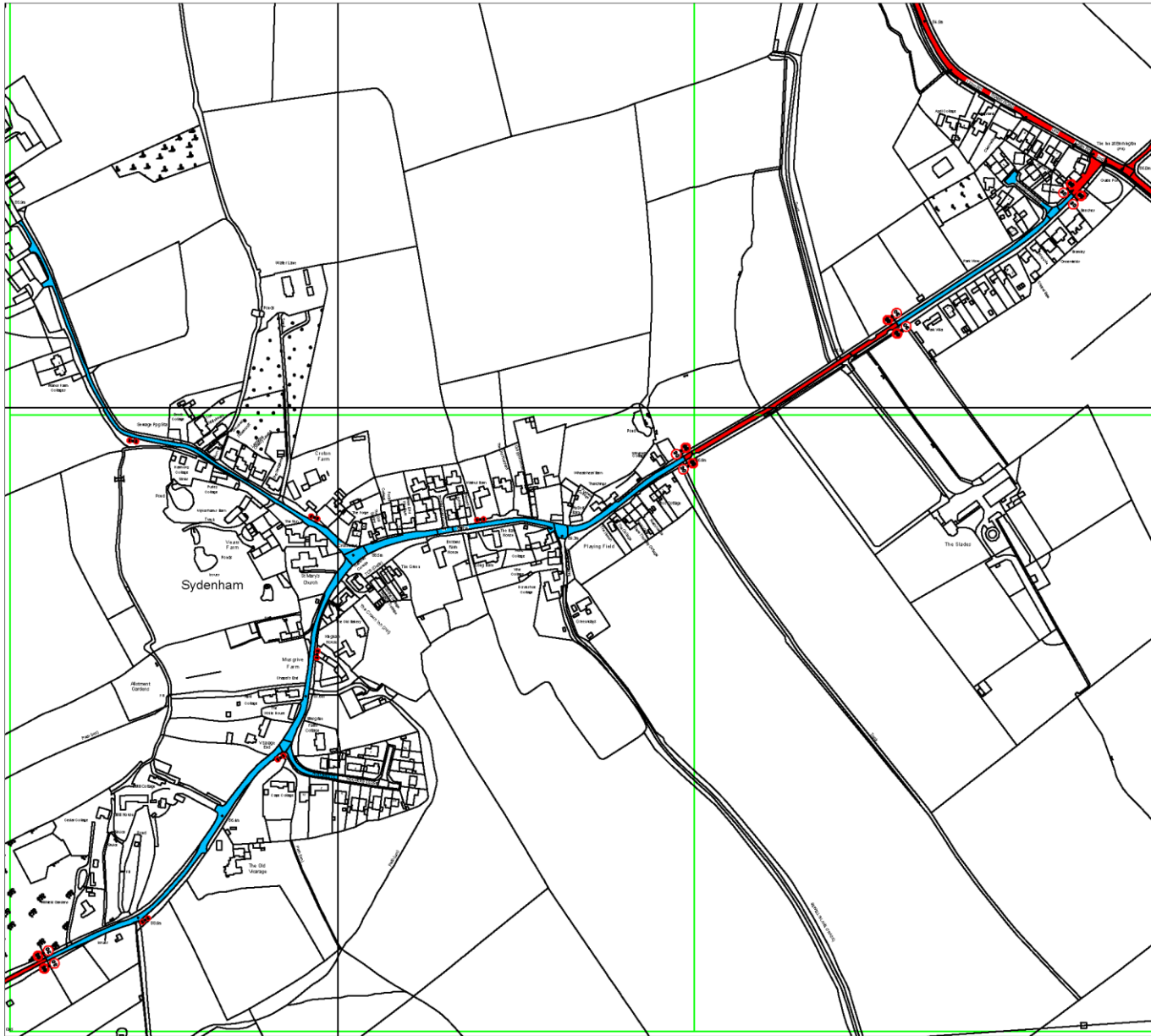
10. The main purpose of the scheme is to improve road safety and encourage greater use of active travel by reducing speeds; this will also reduce accidents. The aim of reducing speed limits is to change driver's mindsets to make speeding socially unacceptable and make more environmentally friendly modes of travel such as walking and cycling more attractive – and also reduce the County's carbon footprint. This forms part of a countywide programme of works that seeks to deliver 'a safer place with a safer pace'.
11. The objector expresses similar views to those outlined and considered in earlier similar schemes which were not then seen as warranting a change in those previous proposals given the explicit intention of the County Council's 20mph limit policy.

Bill Cotton
Corporate Director, Environment and Place

Annexes Annex 1: Consultation Plan
 Annex 2: Consultation responses

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March 2023



Sydenham Overview		Revision 1.0			
<p>Legend</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed 20 Existing 20 Not within Highway Boundary Existing 30 Existing 40 Existing 50 Existing NSL Not Public Highway 					
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Rev.	Date	Purpose of revision	Drawn	Checked	Approved
1.0	12.01.23	Proposal 1	C.R		
Owen Jenkins Director of Infrastructure Delivery Communities Oxfordshire County Council County Hall New Road Oxford OX1 1ND Tel: 0845 310 1111					
Project title: Sydenham 20mph Scheme					
Drawing title: Sydenham 20mph Scheme Overview					
Drawing Status					
Scale @ A3	Drawn by: C.R	Checked by: E.JB	Approved by:		
	Date drawn: 12.01.23	Date checked:	Date approved:		
Oxfordshire Project No. & File Ref					
Drawing No. 1.0					Revision 1.0

ANNEX 2

RESPONDENT	COMMENTS
<p>(1) Traffic Management Officer, (Thames Valley Police)</p>	<p>Concerns – Thames Valley Police welcome the opportunity to engage on plans for road safety improvement and acknowledge that 20mph limits can be a useful tool in road safety. There are other reasons 20mph limits may be desirable for communities, such as environmental concerns, and creating a shared space environment to encourage greater diversity of road users.</p> <p>Compliance with 20mph limits is a challenging issue as there is a difference between the achievable results of the various available schemes. For example a sign-only scheme will only have a limited effect on the mean speeds, as opposed to other schemes that influence the road environment, which is recognised as being key to achieving compliance. If a speed limit is set too low and is ignored then this could result in the vulnerable road user being less safe. It can also cause a dis-proportionate number of drivers to criminalise themselves and could bring the system of speed limits into disrepute.</p> <p>Thames Valley Police have no policy to enforce based on arbitrary speed limits alone but will enforce based on threat of harm, risk and resourcing. 20mph limits are not excluded from this and will be enforced where appropriate. 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 and there are no additional resources available to support extra enforcement. Messages from partners that police will not enforce need to be discouraged. Such messaging can encourage non-compliance and should be avoided.</p> <p>The policy of Thames Valley Police is to use sound practical and realistic criteria (Setting local speed limits – GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)) 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.</p> <p>The key factors that should be taken into account in any decisions on local speed limits are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • history of collisions • road geometry and engineering • road function • composition of road users (including existing and potential levels of vulnerable road users) • existing traffic speeds

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • road environment <p>However I recognise Oxfordshire County Council now have their own Policy for Setting Speed Limits and I expect full compliance of that policy going forward in relation to both monitoring , future engineering and self-enforcement through Community Speed Watch .</p> <p>Our stance remains that primarily 20 mph speed limits and zones should be self-enforcing</p> <p>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 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>
(2) Sydenham Parish Council	<p>Support – This response comes from Sydenham Parish Council, and having applied for the proposed 20mph limit we are in full support.</p>
(3) Head of Strategic Development and the Built Environment, (Stagecoach Bus Company)	<p>No objection – I can confirm that Stagecoach has no services operating on the affected roads, nor is it ever likely to. I therefore confirm we offer no objection.</p>
(4) Local Resident/Member of public, (Sydenham, Sydenham Road)	<p>Object – There have been many initiatives to reduce speeds e.g warning signs, 2 pinch points, speed cameras which have had no effect.</p> <p>The last time there was a speed check in the centre of the village the average speed was barely over 20mph. A 20mph speed limit will only lead to more pointless signage. A waste of time.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>

<p>(5) Local Resident/Member of public, (Sydenham, Thame Road)</p>	<p>Concerns – How do you propose to enforce the reduced speed limit? You've already installed a pinch point along the road from the Inn at Emmington to the main part of the village, for which many vehicles speed up in order to get through it first - I have had this happen to me countless times now - so that hasn't worked very well. The drivers who already did 30mph or less through the village (me included) will continue to observe the limit, and those who didn't will continue to ignore it, unless you can enforce it.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
<p>(6) Local Resident/Member of public, (Sydenham, Brookstones)</p>	<p>Support – Sydenham has increasingly been used as a 'rat run' by traffic and this is likely to increase given the restrictions to 20mph being put in place in Chinnor. This will add to the safety of all road users in the village - being a rural village with a variety of road users.</p> <p>Travel change: Yes – walk/wheel more</p>
<p>(7) Local Resident/Member of public, (Sydenham, The Green)</p>	<p>Support – 20mph is urgently needed in the village. There is a high pedestrian footfall here with many children, cyclists, rambles and dog walkers on our narrow roads and it is crucial to reduce the risk to all including vehicles on the narrow roads.</p> <p>Travel change: Yes – walk/wheel more</p>
<p>(8) Local Resident/Member of public, (Sydenham, Sydenham Road)</p>	<p>Support – The village is used as a cut through to the M40, and during commuter hours, vehicles don't slow down entering the village, and between the Emmington end and the Playing Fields. The width restrictor has helped, but if a car sees nothing is coming, or a car is a distance away, they often accelerate to get passed it.</p> <p>Travel change: Yes – walk/wheel more</p>
<p>(9) Local Resident/Member of public, (Sydenham, Sydenham Road)</p>	<p>Support – The roads can get very dangerous with speeding cars and as there are no pavements one has to walk on the road. A 20mph limit will make things safer.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>

(10) Local Resident/Member of public, (Sydenham, Park View)	<p>Support – The speed data taken from the VAR sign and local speed watch clearly demonstrate an issue with excessive speed in this area.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
(11) Local Resident/Member of public, (Sydenham, Round Close Road)	<p>Support – For the safety of pedestrians and cyclists.</p> <p>Travel change: Yes - cycle more</p>
(12) Local Resident/Member of public, (Kingston Blount, Stert Road)	<p>Support – Although I don't live in the village, I do sing in their church choir. I attend practice every Tuesday and have to park on the road nearby. As is common these days there are too many drivers ignoring the speed limit and putting others at risk.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>