

Divisions affected: *Shrivenham*

DELEGATED DECISIONS BY CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT

23 MAY 2024

BAULKING: PROPOSED 20MPH SPEED LIMITS

Report by Corporate Director for Environment and Place

RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet Member for Transport Management is **RECOMMENDED** to

- a) Approve the introduction of 20mph speed limits in Baulking as advertised.

Executive summary

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

Financial Implications

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

Legal Implications

3. No legal implications have been identified in respect of the proposals.

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 Baulking by making them safer and more attractive.

Formal Consultation

6. Formal consultation was carried out between 06 March & 29 March 2024. A notice was published in the Oxfordshire Herald Series 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, Vale of White Horse District Council, the local District Cllrs, Baulking Parish Council, and the local County Councillor representing the Shrivenham 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 view as 'having concerns' rather than a formal objection. They did raise the specific concern regarding the drop in speed limit from National to 20mph in what is a very rural setting, and how this could affect the level of compliance.
8. Oxford Bus Company offered no objection due to no regular public buses services operating along the road concerned.
9. The Parish Meeting Chairman outlined their support, stating that local opinions differed as to whether the proposed limit needed to be extended past St. Nicholas' Church and up Baulking Green, but the general view was that the limit should go as far as the cattle grid, with no 'street furniture' or signs beyond that point.

Other Responses:

10. Three local residents & one member of the public responded during the course of the consultation, with two objections, one in support, and one not-objecting. The objection felt that the proposals were an unnecessary waste of funds, that 'blanket' 20mph zones are disregarded by motorists, can lead to an increase conflict on the roads, and result in zones which are needed being ignored.
11. The consultation responses are shown in **Annex 2**, and copies of the original responses are available for inspection by County Councillors.

Officer Response to Objections/Concerns

12. The main purpose of the scheme is to encourage greater use of active travel by reducing speeds; this is also expected to 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 help reduce the Counties carbon footprint. This forms part of a countywide programme of works that seeks to deliver 'a safer place with a safer pace'.

13. The authority considers objections along the lines of it being unjustified, anti-car, a waste of money, not enforceable or pointless to not warrant amendments to a proposal. As such the authority has not addressed any specific comments made of this nature in this report.

Bill Cotton
Corporate Director for Environment and Place




Annexes Annex 1: Consultation plan
 Annex 2: Consultation responses

Contact Officers: Anthony Kirkwood (Team Leader – Vision Zero)
 Matt Archer (Portfolio Manager - Programme Delivery)

May 2024

Baulking 20mph Scheme

17/05/2017 1:12

Legend	
Proposed 20	
Existing NSL	
Not Public Highway	



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Rev.	Date	Purpose of revision	Drawn	Checked	Approved
1.0	16.11.23	Proposal 1	C.R		


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Project title: Baulking 20mph Scheme

Drawing title:
Baulking 20mph Scheme Overview

Drawing Status

Scale @ A3	Drawn by: C.R	Checked by: G.JB	Approved by: G.JB
	Date drawn: 16.11.23	Date checked: 22.12.23	Date approved: 22.12.23

Oxfordshire Project No. & File Ref

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RESPONDENT	COMMENTS
(1) Traffic Management Officer, (Thames Valley Police)	<p>Concerns – My main concern relates to the drop in speed limit from National to 20mph in what is a very rural setting and how any level of compliance is going to be achieved on the less populated stretches.</p> <p>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

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • road function • composition of road users (including existing and potential levels of vulnerable road users) • existing traffic speeds • 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) Head of Built Environment and Infrastructure, (Oxford Bus Company)	<p>No objection – No regular public buses services operate along the road concerned. We thus offer no objection.</p>
(3) Baulking Parish Meeting	<p>Support – I am writing on behalf of the majority of local residents who support the proposal for a 20mph speed limit through the central section of Baulking village. Opinions differ as to whether the limit needs to extend past St. Nicholas' church and up Baulking Green, but the general view is that the limit should go as far as the cattle grid, with no 'street furniture' or signs beyond that point.</p>
(4) Local resident, (Baulking)	<p>Object – What we don't need in Baulking is a 20mph speed limit, I live right by the railway bridge and from my observations of vehicles crossing the bridge they are mostly all travelling at under 30mph.</p> <p>What we do need from this "woke" council is the roads repairing, the verges cut back, the shoulders rebuilt and the road signs cleaned so that they can be read.</p>

	<p>We hear that the council is hard pushed for money but can waste vast quantities of it on ridiculous 20mph signs that are not needed or required, when for example was there a fatal collision in Uffington, Woolstone and Baulking?</p> <p>Having just spent almost £700.00 on a road fund license for my car I expect better roads to use, after all I've done my bit by paying so now they should do theirs by keeping the roads fit and safe to travel on.</p> <p>The mind boggles at the sheer waste of our rates money when there are more pressing items that require immediate attention.</p>
(5) Local resident, (unknown)	<p>Object – Like all of the other 20mph zones installed in Oxfordshire, this is an unnecessary waste of valuable taxpayers money which should be spent on projects to benefit communities. Blanket 20mph zones are rightly disregarded by motorists, increase conflict on the roads and mean that zones which are actually really needed around areas such as schools are also ignored instead of being used properly to flag areas for greater safety awareness. Cllr Gant in particular is pushing these zones in the face of increasing opposition, evidence that they do not reduce accidents (increasing them in some areas) and needs to urgently reconsider what he is doing. Be bold enough to pause this policy, to evaluate the impact and to admit mistakes - many of the existing 20mph zones need reverting to 30mph, just as the Welsh Government are finding and are doing. The pity is that valuable public funds are being wasted in the face of clear need to spend on other genuine priorities or in not increasing taxation on those living in poverty - it is no exaggeration to say that families who cannot properly afford to feed their children or heat their homes are having to pay their council tax to pay for projects like this which is an absolute disgrace. I know OCC will not change policy, will not listen, but I live in hope that one day those responsible for this will look back and feel guilty that they missed their chance to effect meaningful benefit for the people of the county to push this agenda.</p>
(6) Member of public, (Stanford in the Vale, The Timms)	<p>Support – There are a number of public footpath and bridleway routes linked by these roads. This new speed limit will make a significant difference to the enjoyment and safety of people walking, cycling or horse riding.</p>
(7) Local resident, (Baulking)	<p>No objection – The road through our village has a number of awkward bends with poor visibility, any action to reduce the speed of traffic will make it a safer place for all road users. I have one concern, which is not an objection, that any street furniture is kept to a minimum on the dead end stretch of road after the gateway leading away from the church.</p>