

CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT – 25 APRIL 2019

A4155 BETWEEN LOWER AND UPPER SHIPLAKE - PROPOSED 40MPH SPEED LIMIT

Report by Director for Infrastructure Delivery

Recommendation

1. The Cabinet Member for the Environment is RECOMMENDED to approve the proposed increase in speed limit to 40mph speed limit (from the current 30mph speed limit) on the A4155 between Lower and Upper Shiplake as advertised.

Executive summary

2. Speed limits are reviewed when there are changes to the road layout as a result of 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 to introduce a 40mph speed limit on the A4155 between Lower and Upper Shiplake (in place of the current 30mph speed limit) as a result of safety concerns on the part of Shiplake Parish Council that the current 30mph speed limit – which runs through largely open countryside – is poorly respected and results in undesirable behaviours (for example following the vehicle ahead too closely and overtaking) and reduces respect for the 30mph speed limit on the A4155 in the more built up parts of Lower and Upper Shiplake.

Background

4. The current 30mph speed limit has been in place since 1999 and it should be noted that at the time of a previous county wide review of speed limits completed in 2011, a possible increase in the speed limit here was not then supported locally. Additionally there have been no reported injury accidents that appear to relate to the current concerns of Shiplake Parish Council and that following the introduction of the 30mph speed limit in 1999 (the speed limit previously being 50mph) a reduction in reported accidents was observed.

5. The above proposal as shown at Annex 1 has been put forward at the request of Shiplake Parish Council and if approved would be funded by them.

Consultation

6. Formal consultation on the proposal was carried out between 8 March and 5 April 2019. A public notice was placed in the Henley Standard newspaper, and sent to statutory consultees, including Thames Valley Police, the Fire & Rescue Service, Ambulance service, South Oxfordshire District Council, Shiplake Parish Council and the local County Councillor.
7. Nine responses were received. One objection, six in support and one non-objection. The District Council submitted a no comment response. The responses are summarised at Annex 2 with copies of the full responses available for inspection by County Councillors.

Response to objections and other comments

8. Thames Valley Police have not objected to the proposal.
9. Henley Town Council objected on road safety grounds citing the alignment of the road and a concern that the proposal would lead to confusion due the number of changes in speed limit along the route.
10. County Councillor David Bartholomew, the local member, supported the proposal on the grounds of the observed driver behaviours such as close following and risky overtaking manoeuvres, also noting that the proposed limit would enable prominent 30mph speed limit signs to be placed at the entry to Lower and Upper Shiplake, which could be expected to lead to greater compliance with the 30mph speed limits through these settlements where most needed.
11. Five other responses in support were received from local residents, with some of these responses specifically raising the above concerns over the current 30mph speed limit.
12. While noting that a small number of changes in speed limit from 30mph to 40mph in similar environments in the county have not seen any increase in accidents, it is nevertheless recommended that safety is monitored closely to confirm that the revised limit is operating safely should the proposal be approved.

How the Project supports LTP4 Objectives

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

Financial and Staff Implications (including Revenue)

14. Funding for the proposed measures has been provided by Shiplake Parish Council.

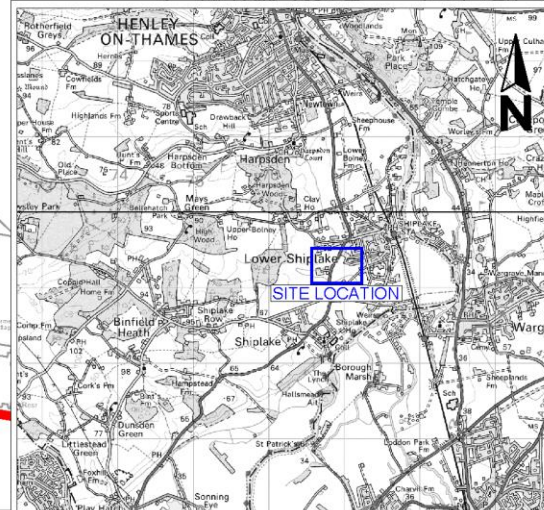
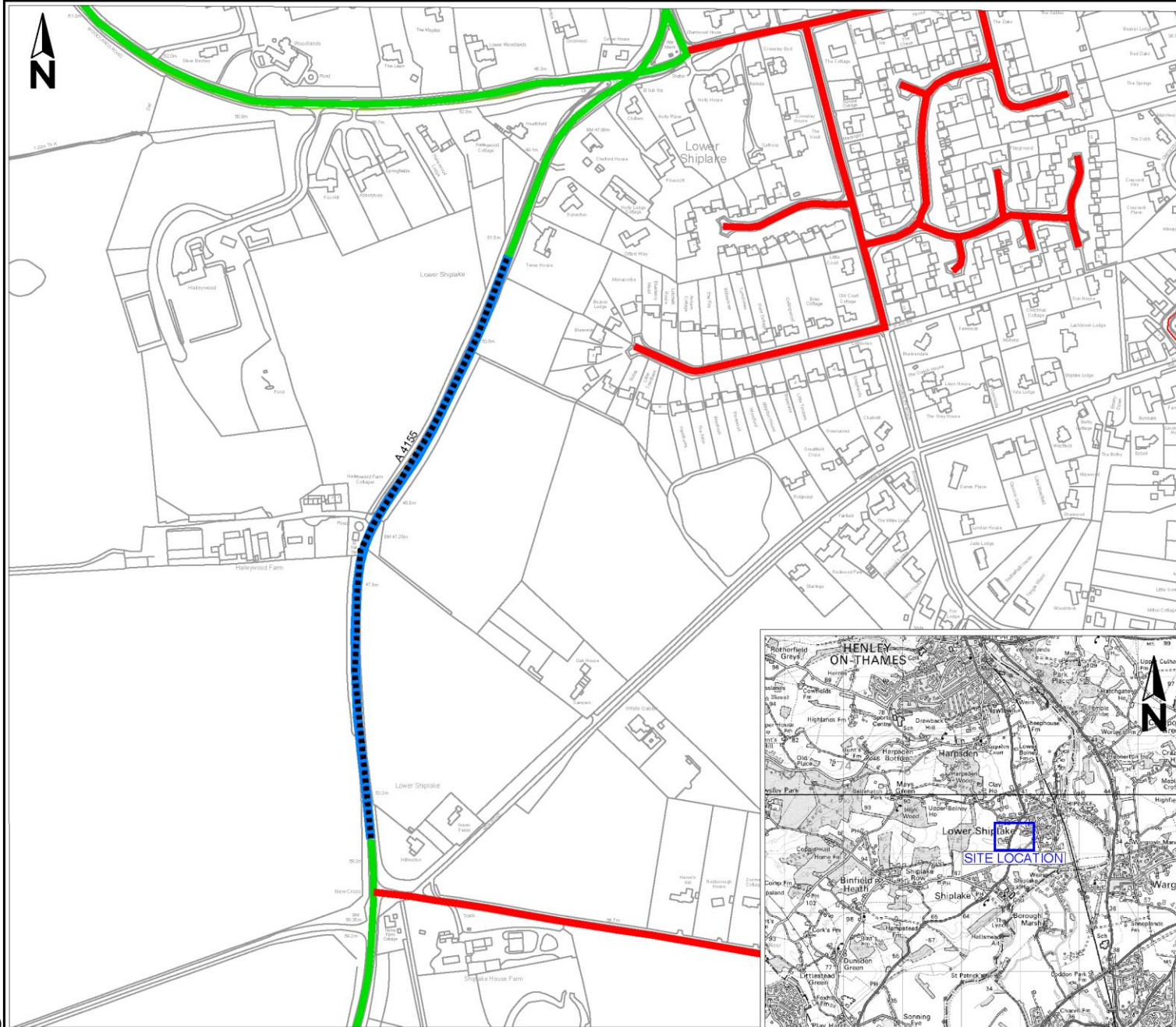
OWEN JENKINS

Director for Infrastructure Delivery

Background papers: Plan of proposed speed limit
 Consultation responses

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April 2019



Drawing No.		Revision	
		0	
Key			
		Proposed 40mph Speed Limit in place of existing 30mph (approx 345 metres)	
		Existing 30mph Speed Limit (to remain)	
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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			
PROPOSED 40 MPH SPEED LIMIT			
Drawing title			
SHIPLAKE A4155			
Drawing Status			
Scale @ A3	Drawn by	Checked by	Approved by
N.T.S.	Date drawn	Date checked	Date approved
	02/19		
Oxfordshire Project No. & File Ref			
Drawing No.		Revision	
		0	

RESPONDENT	SUMMARISED COMMENTS
(1) Traffic Management Officer, (Thames Valley Police)	No objection – <i>No comment</i>
(2) Henley-on-Thames Town Council	<p>Object – The Committee voted against the proposal and would not like to support the increase in speed from 30mph to 40mph.</p> <p>The reason for not supporting the proposal is due to safety concerns. Increasing the speed limit to 40mph is deemed to be too fast for the safe usage of this stretch of road.</p> <p>In the proposed small stretch of road, changes in speed limits in quick succession was not thought to encourage safe road usage by vehicles, creating confusion with rapid speed changes. There is a junction, a bend and dip in the proposed stretch of road.</p>
(3) South Oxfordshire District Council	No comment
(4) Local County Councillor, (Sonning Common Division)	<p>Support – I fully support this proposal to revise an inappropriate speed limit.</p> <p>Non-local motorists often fail to realise this is a 30mph limit as the visual cues indicate otherwise and the 30mph repeater signs can become concealed by vegetation. The consequence of this is that many of these non-local motorists tailgate other motorists complying with the limit or attempt dangerous overtaking manoeuvres. The recent traffic survey confirmed the existing limit is widely flouted.</p> <p>An additional benefit of this proposal is that where the speed limit will drop back to 30mph, large 30mph signs will be erected and thus slow south-travelling motorists before the college and north-travelling motorists before the crossroads at Station Road.</p>

CMDE7

(5) Local Resident, (Shiplake)	Support – Since its introduction the current 30mph limit has been impractical and largely ignored by motorists. It is inappropriate for a major road linking large centres of population, and unnecessary. The result of this speed limit is that it causes a build-up of frustrated drivers behind individuals who do observe it, and as a local resident I have seen many instances of dangerous overtaking as drivers seek to pass those observing this limit which is clearly too low.
(6) Local Resident, (Shiplake)	Support – <i>No comment</i>
(7) Local Resident, (Lower Shiplake)	Support – I have seen first-hand that the current 30 mph encourages dangerous driving, tailgating and can lead to reckless overtaking.
(8) Local Resident, (Shiplake)	Support – <i>No comment</i>
(9) Local Resident, (Shiplake)	Support – <i>No comment</i>