

Divisions affected: *Wheatley*

**CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAY MANAGEMENT –
8 DECEMBER 2022**

**FOREST HILL WITH SHOTOVER:
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 Forest Hill with Shotover 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 Forest Hill with Shotover by making them safer and more attractive.

Consultation

6. Formal consultation was carried out between 27 October and 25 November 2022. 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, Forest Hill with Shotover, Stanton St John, and Holton parish councils, and the local County Councillor representing the Wheatley division.

7. Seven responses were received via the online consultation survey during the course of the formal consultation, and these are summarised in the table below:

Proposal	Object	Concerns	Support	No opinion/ objection	Total
Forest Hill 20mph	1 (14%)	0	6 (86%)	0	7

8. Those who responded online, were also asked whether if the 20mph speed limit proposals were implemented, would it likely influence a change to their mode of travel in the area, the results of which are shown below:

Travel Change	Number
Yes – walk/wheel more	1 (14%)
Yes - cycle more	3 (43%)
No	3 (43%)

9. Additionally, three emails were received from statutory consultees – and these are summarised below

Statutory Consultee Responses:

10. Thames Valley Police re-iterated their views on OCC policy and practice regarding 20mph speed limits and consider their response as ‘having concerns’ rather than an objection; Stanton Road and Church Hill Road proposals raised particular concerns. Stagecoach Bus Company responded but had no observations. The Parish Council raised no objections.

Other Responses:

11. Seven further responses were received with 5 residents and the Oxford Cycling Network expressing support. One resident objected considering the proposals unnecessary, suggesting the environment largely restricted speeds to 20mph and where not it was a reasonable expectation to make progress.
12. The responses are shown in **Annex 2**, and copies of the original responses are available for inspection by County Councillors.

Officer response to objections/concerns

13. The single objection is noted but officers consider it does not merit a change to the proposal.

14. The main purpose of the scheme is to 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 Counties carbon footprint. This forms part of a countywide programme of works that seeks to deliver 'a safer place with a safer pace'.

Bill Cotton
Corporate Director, Environment and Place

Annexes Annex 1: Consultation Plan
 Annex 2: Consultation responses

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December 2022

A B



Drawing No. Forrest Hill Overview Revision 1.0

Legend	
Proposed 20	
Existing 20	
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	19.07.22	Final Draft	C.R		


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 Sheets A1 to B1

Drawing Status			
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Drawing No. 1.0	Revision 1.0
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2

RESPONDENT	COMMENTS
(1) Traffic Management Officer, (Thames Valley Police)	<p>Concerns – (especially Station Road and Church Hill Road)</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 • road function • composition of road users (including existing and potential levels of vulnerable road users)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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) Stagecoach Bus Company, (Head of Strategic Development & the Built Environment)	No comments
(3) Forest Hill with Shotover Parish Council	No objection
(4) Member of public, (Forest Hill, Main Street)	Object – The road naturally slows you down with speed humps, parked cars and twist and turns. Where these don't exist it's reasonable to drive at 30. it reasonable to want to make progress faster than 20 in some of the proposed areas. A blanket speed limit of 20 is unrequited.
(5) Local group/organisation, (Cycling UK Oxfordshire)	Support – We support the reduction of speed limits to 20mph in Forest Hill. 20 limits are proven to reduce speeds and this improves safety for residents and road users. It creates a better environment for walking, wheeling and cycling, encouraging these healthy transport modes.
(6) Member of public, (Forest Hill, Wheatley Road)	Support – I am supporting this as i have had my fence knocked down and my car crashed into by cars which have been speeding through the village. So has my neighbour. We live on Wheatley Road which is the B4027 east side section

	Also - as Church Hill/Main Street, road surface is so poor, many people drive on the A40, past the Church Hill turn, and take the next turn onto the B4027 to get back to Forest Hill/Stanton as quickly as they can.
(7) Member of public, (Forest Hill, Powell Close)	Support – Some vehicles are traveling too fast.
(8) Member of public, (Forest Hill, Wheatley Road)	Support – I daily see three hotspots in Forest Hill - Wheatley Road south towards A40, Stanton Road north and Main Street - that would benefit from a 20mph enforcement. They are all regularly used by children and the elderly and make me fear that an accident at some point will occur. The speed reduction would mitigate any harm.
(9) Member of public, (Forest Hill, Wheatley Road)	Support – reducing the speed limit is safer for the village. The main road through the village is windy and narrow on the Wheatley side and parked cars make the road more dangerous on the Stanton side
(10) Member of public, (Forest Hill, Wheatley Road)	Support – As a Forest Hill resident, I witness many cars driving too fast through the village. Many use the road as a short cut to the A40, accelerating at both ends of the village. The speed is a potential threat to anyone attempting to cross Wheatley Road. Hopefully, the 20 mph would limit the potential danger plus inhibit traffic.