

Divisions affected: *Deddington*

DELEGATED DECISIONS BY CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT

25 APRIL 2024

STEEPLE ASTON PROPOSED 20MPH SPEED LIMIT

Report by Corporate Director, Environment and Place

RECOMMENDATION

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

- a) **Approve the introduction of 20mph speed limits in Steeple Aston as advertised.**

Executive Summary

2. The report presents responses to a statutory consultation on the proposed introduction of a 20mph speed limit in Steeple Aston 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 Steeple Aston by making them safer and more attractive.

Formal Consultation

6. Formal consultation was carried out between 22 February and 15 March 2024. A notice was published in the Bicester Advertiser 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, Cherwell District Council, the local District Cllrs, Steeple Aston Parish Council, and the local County Councillor representing the Deddington 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 objection.
8. Steeple Aston Parish Council confirmed their support for the proposals, but did object to the proposed number of repeater signs associated within the scheme, especially considering the fact that Steeple Aston is considered a historic conservation village.
9. The Development Management team at Cherwell District Council had no immediate observations to make in relation to the proposals

Other Responses:

- 10.45 responses were received during the course of the formal consultation, comprising of 11 objections (24%), seven partially supporting (16%), 22 in support (49%), and five submitting a non-objection (11%).
11. The following table is a synopsis of the objections and concerns with the views of some respondents covering more than one category,

View/Opinion	Number of responses
Unnecessary	7
Waste of money	6
Will increase pollution	1
Only appropriate outside school	1
No safety justification	1
Cannot / will not be enforced	1
People should be permitted to use their own judgement	1

12. 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	4 (9%)
Yes – cycle more	2 (4%)
No	39 (87%)



Drawing No. _____ revision _____

Notes:

Proposed 20mph limit

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Rev.	Date	Purpose of revision	Drawn	Checked	Approved

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
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Project title
Steeple Aston 20mph

Drawing title
General Layout

Drawing Status

Scale @ A3	Drawn by ER	Checked by GJB	Approved by GJB
	Date drawn 29/08/23	Date checked 07/09/23	Date approved 07/09/23

Oxfordshire Project No. & File Ref

Drawing No. _____ Revision _____

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 disproportionate 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 • 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) Steeple Aston Parish Council	<p>Support – We as the Steeple Aston Parish Council - support the 20mph but we object to 18 repeater signs proposed in this a historic Conservation village.</p> <p>We as the Parish Council will accept 6 double sided repeater signs that we will install at what we consider to be critical points. Please could poles be supplied for the signs.</p>
(3) Cherwell District Council, (Development Management)	<p>No objection – Upon review of the information forming part of the consultation, I confirm the local planning authority has no observations to make.</p>
(4) Local resident, (Not given)	<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</p>

	<p>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> <p>Travel change: No</p>
(5) Local resident, (Steeple Aston, Fenway)	<p>Object – Why waste money on new signs when you can barely reach 30mph throughout most the village anyway.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
(6) Local resident, (Steeple Aston, Grange Park)	<p>Object – This is a waste of time and money as it almost impossible get faster than 20mph as it stands what with the road layout, sight lines and the plethora of parked vehicles.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
(7) Local resident, (Steeple Aston, North Side)	<p>Object – Steeple Aston, by nature, has very narrow and twisty roads and with the amount of car parking on the roads at present, it is almost impossible to exceed 20mph. With little or no police presence in the village, any speed limit is unenforceable.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
(8) Local resident, (Steeple Aston, Paines Hill)	<p>Object – Please let people use their own judgement on how to drive. Any reasonable person will tailor their speed to suit the conditions, such as slowing by the school at the start and end of the school day, and when passing horses etc. If you insist on telling everyone what they must do all the time no-one will ever think the situation through for themselves. Regardless of what you do, those who drive inappropriately now, and have a total disregard for the law, will continue to speed.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
(9) Local resident, (Steeple Aston, South Side)	<p>Object – Completely pointless - most traffic through the village only travels at 20 anyway. Waste of County Council money on signage. No more signage - there is far too much contributing to visual clutter already in the conservation zone.</p>

	Travel change: No
(10) Local resident, (Steeple Aston, South Side)	<p>Object – I strongly object to this proposal on the following grounds.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Twenty's Too Slow. Here in the countryside one can't get anywhere without driving through a village; reducing the speed limit this much increases journey times and frustration, which can lead to more accidents. 2. 20-limits *INCREASE* noise and pollution as engines - and electric vehicles - perform better at higher speeds. A 25 mph limit might be more sensible, as used in residential areas of the USA for example. 3. If reducing the speed limit to 20 makes such a huge difference, why stop at 20? Why not 10 mph - or even better, 0 mph: no accidents then! 4. There is *NO* scientific evidence that 20 limits have *ANY* effect whatsoever. The *ONLY* scientific studies (Department for Transport, 2018; Journal of Epidemiology, 2022) - as opposed to hysterical nonsense from single-issue pressure groups such as "Brake" - showed that lowering the limit from 30 to 20 had *ZERO* impact. Why then push this discredited policy? 5. The reality is that virtually all accidents in 30 mph areas happen at less than 20 mph anyway. So reducing the speed limit further is irrelevant. 6. The vast sums of money being wasted on this ineffective policy would be better spent on repairing our crumbling roads: the worst in the UK, and a far-more pressing health-and-safety issue than 20 mph virtue signaling. 7. The proliferation of random speed limits makes our roads even more dangerous as they distract drivers and prevent them from exercising their own judgement. 8. Stop indoctrinating our children at school with your "20's good; 30's bad" propaganda! Bring back the Green Cross Code and stop playing political games with our roads! <p>Travel change: No</p>
(11) Local resident, (Steeple Aston, South Side)	<p>Object – Completely pointless and a waste of Council money on signage which is also cluttering up the Conservation Zone.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
(12) Local resident, (Steeple Aston, South Side)	<p>Object – No reason for reducing speed limits (not many accidents in the village). Most drivers see sensible</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>

<p>(13) Local resident, (Steeple Aston, Fir Lane)</p>	<p>Object – I've lived here twelve years with my wife and five children and we have never in all that time found speeding was a problem or a risk. We walk around the village a lot. Better pavements by the school and the pub might help as would more yellow lines to prevent thoughtless parking. Speed is the least of the issues.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
<p>(14) Local resident, (Steeple Aston, Southside)</p>	<p>Object – There are streets in Steeple Aston here a reduced speed limit would be justified (eg outside the school/village hall) but a blanket approach is wrong and unnecessary. Why stop at 20 mph? Why not 10? 5? 2 mph?</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
<p>(15) Local resident, (Steeple Aston, Bradshaw Close)</p>	<p>Partially support – DRIVING at such a slow speed gives drivers the option of looking around instead of concentrating on the road whereas at 30 miles an hour responsible drivers keep their eyes on the road</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
<p>(16) Local resident, (Steeple Aston, Nizewell head)</p>	<p>Partially support – Think this is only necessary by the schools</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
<p>(17) Local resident, (Steeple Aston, Southside)</p>	<p>Partially support – Ideal near school but not needed elsewhere</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
<p>(18) Local resident, (Steeple Aston, The Crescent)</p>	<p>Partially support – While reducing speed it increases pollution. Speed bumps would be a better option at traffic control</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>

<p>(19) Local resident, (Steeple Aston, Jubilee Close)</p>	<p>Partially support – There are so many cars park Ed inroads through the village you cannot go faster at present more than 20 mph</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
<p>(20) Local resident, (Steeple Aston, Northside)</p>	<p>Partially support – With the way drivers use the village as a race track. I don't think reducing the speed limit will make any difference at all</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
<p>(21) Local resident, (Steeple Aston, Southside)</p>	<p>Partially support – Support at school & park, sports field but no where else.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
<p>(22) Local resident, (Steeple Aston, Bradshaw Close)</p>	<p>Support – Due to the narrowness of the roads, it is not practical to safely drive much above 20mph. Driving at 30mph is not necessary since there are no through routes. There are many children, elderly people and animals (dogs, horses) crossing/using the roads who would benefit from slower vehicle traffic.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
<p>(23) Local resident, (Steeple Aston, Cow Lane)</p>	<p>Support – People drive so fast, especially past the school and through to Middle Aston. The whole village needs a 20 mph limit.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
<p>(24) Local resident, (Steeple Aston, Cow Lane)</p>	<p>Support – Steeple Aston has all narrow roads. It had school traffic and a couple of stables along with narrow roads it's virtually impossible to drive safely over 20 mph anywhere. Compared to other local villages it most certainly qualifies for 20 mph limit. There should be no argument against. Thanks.</p>

	Travel change: Yes - cycle more
(25) Local resident, (Steeple Aston, Fenway)	Support – Safety reasons. 20 mph limit is long overdue. Travel change: Yes – walk/wheel more
(26) Local resident, (Steeple Aston, Fenway)	Support – It is much safer especially as there are children and horses in the village. It is also near impossible to drive at 30mph throughout most of the village. Those not familiar with the village (e.g. delivery drivers) might therefore drive too fast. Travel change: No
(27) Local resident, (Steeple Aston, Fir Lane)	Support – Will make our streets safer Travel change: No
(28) Local resident, (Steeple Aston, Grange Park)	Support – Make it safer for walkers and bicyclists Travel change: Yes – walk/wheel more
(29) Local resident, (Steeple Aston, Grange Park)	Support – It makes sense, there are lots of narrow roadways with on-street parking reducing visibility. It will hopefully slow drivers who habitually ignore the current 30mph limit. Travel change: No
(30) Local resident, (Steeple Aston, Grange Park)	Support – Good idea as there is no need to drive any more quickly through our village. Please could there be speed enforcement along Fenway and North side to help ensure that parents dropping off or picking up children from the school comply. I often see cars speeding along these roads during these times which is completely unnecessary and can put residents and their pets at risk, especially in bad weather.

	Travel change: No
(31) Local resident, (Steeple Aston, Grange Park)	Support – We have far too many near misses due to excess speed Travel change: No
(32) Local resident, (Steeple Aston, Heyford Road)	Support – I believe 20mph limit is a safe option and also a green choice Travel change: No
(33) Local resident, (Steeple Aston, Lawrence Fields)	Support – Other local speed restrictions have modified my behaviour, and I tend to drive at ~20mph in built-up areas by default. I strongly support this proposal. Travel change: Yes – walk/wheel more
(34) Local resident, (Steeple Aston, Nizewell Head)	Support – Steeple Aston's roads and pavements, where they exist, are very narrow and our village is one that definitely would benefit from the 20 mph speed limit. However, some of the other introductions of 20 mph speed limits in the local area, eg, A4260 through Deddington, make little sense on arterial routes that are wide and clear. Travel change: No
(35) Local resident, (Steeple Aston, Paines Hill)	Support – Living on Paines Hill, one of the main through routes in the village, and on the main school run/route through to the newly opened cafe, and at the narrowest part of the road, which is only wide enough for one vehicle, we frequently witness near misses which are not helped by people speeding. If people were approaching the pinch point in the road at a lower speed, then that may help (we have witnessed two separate wing mirror clashes in the last 10 days). In addition to the road narrowing we have several points where the pavement narrows too and people end up having to walk in the road - a lower speed limit (if obeyed) would help mitigate the risks that this creates. Visibility is a big part of the problem - and I appreciate that this won't be solved by the speed reduction, however, it will allow more time for reaction. I think there are additional, low cost, low intervention, methods that would help on Paines Hill, but reducing the speed limit is a good start.

	Travel change: No
(36) Local resident, (Steeple Aston, South Side)	<p>Support – In a lot of Steeple Aston 20 mph is the fastest you can drive anyway because of narrow streets and parked cars so reducing the speed limit really won't make that much difference. Except to people who drive too fast anyway.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
(37) Local resident, (Steeple Aston, South Side)	<p>Support – The main road through the village with cars parked along, and people walking with children and dogs, definitely are a good reason to change speed limit to 20mph. Living close to entry/exit road, I would be happy to see a change resulting in people slowing down before they pass the current 30mph sign, and start accelerating when near the sign when they leave the village. Right now it seems like the sign does not exist for most and they only slow down when they are getting close to the Red Lion, when driving into the village, and when they leave, they accelerate as soon as they pass Red Lion as if trying to get 60mph at the sign.</p> <p>One other comment, considering potential new development opposite Townend, it would be good if the new limit started even earlier, i.e. before the entrance to the new housing estate.</p> <p>Travel change: Yes – walk/wheel more</p>
(38) Local resident, (Steeple Aston, South Side)	<p>Support – Strongly supported.</p> <p>In the six years since we have moved into South Side the number of children under the age of six has increased from two to twenty one and at the same time the number of cars parking on the side of the road has increased considerably. There are very real safety risks as a result of the increasingly tight roadway (the bus barely has 12" clearance at points). Vehicles coming down the road at speed have limited visibility at several choke points (outside Nizbit House, an area with 9 children; outside the Rise - an area with 6 children) and there is not sufficient reaction time for a driver to stop if a previously unseen child were to run out if the driver was going at 30.</p> <p>Drivers coming on to Southside from the pub end of the road are invariably going faster than 30 because the road is on a downwards slope and widens considerably towards Greenacre before narrowing sharply. Equally drivers coming up the road often get through the right spot near Nizbit house and then speed up towards the opening road.</p> <p>The problem is particularly acute between 0800-0830 and 1500-1600 when parents are rushing to collect their children from School, most of whom drive large SUV/4x4 vehicles.</p> <p>In the interests of child safety, a limit of 20mph would be in the interests of the village.</p>

	Travel change: No
(39) Local resident, (Steeple Aston, Southside)	Support – Narrow streets with lots of parked cars. 20mph would be safer for all. Travel change: No
(40) Local resident, (Steeple Aston, Southside)	Support – Retired police officer aware of tragedy of road accidents. Village is comprised mainly narrow roads and 30 can feel quite fast where parked cars narrow the roads even further. There is a fair amount of pedestrian traffic, not least near the school. A lowering to 20 elsewhere has often felt ridiculous but this particular proposal is reasonable. Though injury stats minimal for the village I dare say there's been plenty of bent metal. And reducing such accidents is still laudable. Travel change: No
(41) Local resident, (Steeple Aston, Water Lane)	Support – If I were run over by a car by accident in the village I know that at 20mph I have a much better chance of living and also of not receiving severe wounds. Altogether safer. Travel change: No
(42) Local resident, (Steeple Aston)	Support – I strongly support the proposals, which will make out streets more pleasant and safer for all. Travel change: Yes - cycle more
(43) Local resident, (Steeple Aston, South Side)	Support – I'm the far end of south side where the village suddenly stops and becomes national speed limit. It is downright dangerous as people speed up leaving the village and don't slow down entering. Maybe cutting the speed limit to such an extent that it's visibly more obvious you are breaking the speed limit might make drivers think more Travel change: No

<p>(44) Local resident, (Steeple Aston, Fenway)</p>	<p>No objection – It's difficult to drive faster than 20mph anyway as the roads are either too narrow and twisty or are blocked by parked cars. A 20mph speed limit might help to slow the yummy mummies in their 4x4's who bring their children into the village school, and surprisingly too the busy farmers who thunder along in their tractors and trailers.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
<p>(45) Local resident, (Steeple Aston, Nizewell Head)</p>	<p>No objection – It is often a difficult town to navigate through because of all the necessary on street parking, and the unnecessary risks taken by a number of parents dropping off and collecting children from school. More awareness through slower speeds seems sensible</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
<p>(46) Local resident, (Steeple Aston, South Side)</p>	<p>No objection – I have no objection if that is what villagers really want, although personally I consider it to be a complete waste as I don't believe it will make any significant difference to the speeds people drive in the village. My observation is that the vast majority of people already drive through the village at less than the 30mph limit, and the few who do speed clearly have complete disregard for road safety anyway, so changing the legal limit won't affect them. I also believe residents are under the impression that the new limits will be policed, which I find hard to believe given the other pressures on policing in the area.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
<p>(47) Local resident, (Steeple Aston, South Side)</p>	<p>No objection – The narrow roads in this village are already perform some traffic calming, There have been no serious injuries in 10 year.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
<p>(48) Local resident, (Steeple Aston, South Side)</p>	<p>No objection – Frustrated with some areas where 20mph has been introduced like Deddington, the market square should absolutely be 20 but the through road to Banbury being a 20 is ridiculous.</p> <p>For Steeple Aston the need is there with lots of school kids and idiots taking short cuts through the village at speed.</p>

	Travel change: No
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