

Divisions affected: *Kingston & Cumnor*

DELEGATED DECISIONS BY CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT

14 NOVEMBER 2024

DENCHWORTH – PROPOSED 20MPH SPEED LIMITS

Report by Director of Environment and Highways

RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet Member is **RECOMMENDED** to:

- a) **Approve the proposed introduction of 20mph speed limits in Denchworth, as advertised.**

Executive Summary

1. The report presents responses to a statutory consultation on the proposed introduction of 20mph speed limits in Denchworth, 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, with proposed changes to existing Traffic Regulation Orders governed by the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and other associated procedural regulations. Failure to adhere to these statutory processes could result in the proposals being challenged.

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

Formal Consultation

6. Formal consultation was carried out between 11 September and 04 October 2024. A notice was published in the Oxfordshire Herald 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, local District Cllrs, Denchworth Parish Council, and the local County Councillor representing the Kingston & Cumnor division.

Statutory Consultee Responses:

7. Thames Valley Police re-iterated their views concerning OCC's policy and practice regarding 20mph speed limits and wish their response to be listed as 'having concerns' rather than an objection.
8. Oxfordshire Cycling Network expressed support for the proposals.




Other Responses:

9. 16 further responses were received via the online survey during the course of the formal consultation, comprising of: 15 in support (90%), and one non-objection.
10. 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	7 (41%)
Yes - cycle more	2 (12%)
No	8 (47%)
Total	17

11. The responses are shown in **Annex 2**, and copies of the original responses are available for inspection by County Councillors.

Denchworth 20mph

Legend	
Proposed 20	
Existing NSL	
Not Public Highway	

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Rev.	Date	Purpose of revision	Drawn	Checked	Approved
1.0	05.12.23	Proposal 1	C.R		

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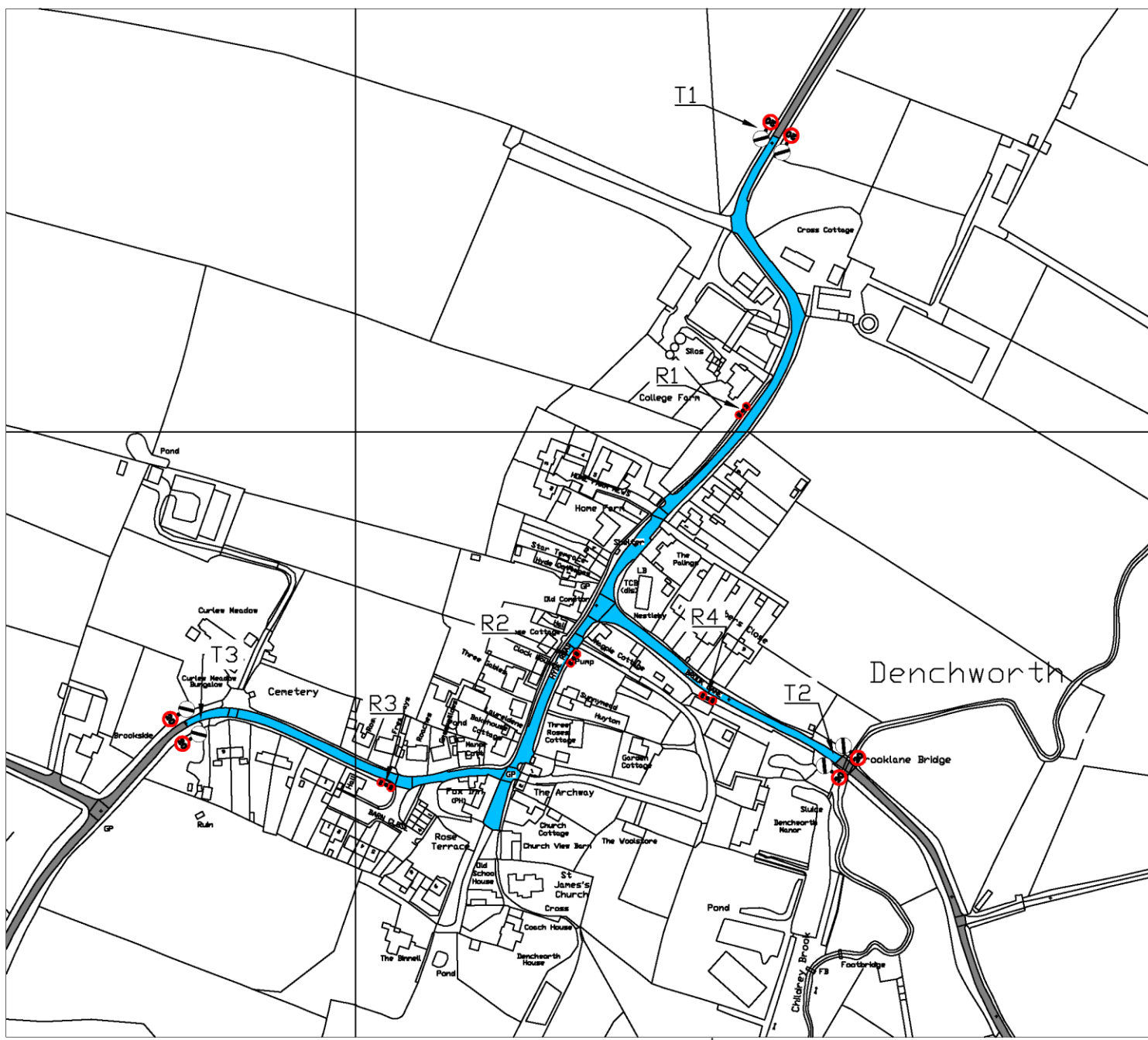
Project title: Denchworth 20mph Scheme

Drawing title:
 Denchworth 20mph Scheme Overview

Drawing Status			
Scale @ A3	Drawn by: C.R	Checked by: G.JB	Approved by: G.JB
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Oxfordshire Project No. & File Ref

Drawing No. 1.0	Revision 1.0
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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 (No data provided) • 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 a substantial number of motorists.</p>
<p>(2) As part of a group/organisation, (Oxfordshire Cycling Network)</p>	<p>Support – Denchworth is popular on routes for cyclists because it lies on one of the few non-A/B-road routes out of Wantage/Grove to the north and west, and also because of the excellent Fox pub.</p> <p>We support this speed limit reduction based on growing evidence from Wales, London and other UK cities that 20mph limits result in a 20-30% reduction in road casualties across all users: pedestrians, cyclists, motorcyclists, motorists and their passengers. This happens even with current low levels of enforcement, although we consider that better enforcement should also be applied. We support Oxfordshire’s policy of 20mph limits with community support and schemes designed to be where the people are.</p> <p>Lower speeds also create a more friendly street environment for people to walk, wheel and cycle, encouraging healthy forms of transport that reduce road danger further, reduce traffic, reduce damage to the environment, and lead to healthier and happier lives.</p> <p>Travel change: Yes - cycle more</p>
<p>(3) Local resident, (Denchworth, Circourt Road)</p>	<p>Support – It makes for safer roads for all users but I’d like to know what type of enforcement there will be? If 25 were an option I think that would be most sensible.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>

<p>(4) Local resident, (Denchworth, Circourt Road)</p>	<p>Support – Compliance with 20 mph vs 30 mph lowers vehicle kinetic energy by ~55% without significantly affecting journey times. Kids, animals and pedestrians currently have no pavements in significant parts of Denchworth putting them in very close proximity to traffic as roads are narrow, thus increasing likelihood of an adverse interaction. Would also strongly support revising the National speed limit on Circourt Road between Denchworth and the A417 as this has property frontages on it and currently v. dangerous to pull out from driveways etc with lots of blind bends/bridges very close to houses.</p> <p>Travel change: Yes – walk/wheel more</p>
<p>(5) Local resident, (Denchworth, Circourt Road)</p>	<p>Support – Some traffic drives far too fast in Denchworth. I'm amazed someone hasn't be killed. 2 dangerous bends & I live on one of them</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
<p>(6) Local resident, (Denchworth, Circourt Road)</p>	<p>Support – My self and children walk along the narrow paths to get to our vehicles , slower traffic speed would make us feel safer , also my eldest daughter walks to the bus stop to get to her school bus there is approximately 150 yards with no path at all which means she has to walk in the road , therefore in my opinion slower traffic speed would save her life should she be struck whilst making this part of her journey</p> <p>Travel change: Yes – walk/wheel more</p>
<p>(7) Local resident, (Denchworth, Hyde Road)</p>	<p>Support – It's too noisy and parked cars obscure some traffic (dangerous)</p> <p>Travel change: Yes – walk/wheel more</p>
<p>(8) Local resident, (Denchworth, Hyde road)</p>	<p>Support – Too many cars exceed the current limit</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>

<p>(9) Local resident, (Denchworth, Hyde Road)</p>	<p>Support – There is a lot of traffic that comes through Denchworth and it is getting worse. I have a young baby and often feel concerned about the speed at which cars come through the village, especially as it is necessary to walk along the road itself to access some of the local footpaths. I hope a 20mph limit will make the village safer for all residents and reduce pollution in the area.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
<p>(10) Member of public, (Denchworth, Hyde Road)</p>	<p>Support – I am supporting the 20mph limit as currently people drive and cycle much faster than is safe through the village. The village has parked cars on the road on one side and a sharp bend that you cannot see round, both of which mean that cars need to slow down as they drive through the village.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
<p>(11) Local resident, (Denchworth, Hyde Road)</p>	<p>Support – Because of issues surrounding parking around the pub corner and vicinity and on Hyde Road, including on the Hyde Road and Brook Lane junction. Reduced speeds reduce the impact of collisions, including on pedestrians and animals. Peacocks are an additional hazard in the village.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
<p>(12) Local resident, (Denchworth, Hyde Road)</p>	<p>Support – Because quite simply vehicles are driven too fast into and through the village. As a resident with a dog one of the few available walking routes in the locality is to walk down Brook Lane from the centre of the village and join the field track just outside the village on the left that takes you through farm fields to the village of West Hanney. But this can be terrifying at times when cars and vans come speeding into the village from the direction of Grove as they come round blind corners without slowing down. Ideally I would like to see the 30mph speed limit (but hopefully 20mph) area zone extended beyond where it lies currently (just inside the Brook Lane bridge, as cars are driving far in excess of 30mph when they round the bend into the village and rarely slow down despite the 30mph signs.</p> <p>A proposed 20mph speed limit would have little or no impact at all on journey times as it is a small village with a single high street, so would add very little time at all to any journey. There is a single weekly bus to Wantage, and school coaches/buses daily but given they have to slow down to stop at the pick up point anyway this would make no difference at all and would ensure safer driving through the village.</p>

	<p>Volume of traffic is increasing - especially with the new Grove housing estates under construction. Denchworth is often regarded as a cut-through route for people wishing to avoid having to drive through Wantage - and traffic flow volume is therefore only likely to increase. Dropping the speed limit will hopefully result in the reduction of average speeds which, even if only be a few mph will make a significant difference to the village.</p> <p>Travel change: Yes – walk/wheel more</p>
(13) Local resident, (Denchworth, Brook Lane)	<p>Support – We have no paths on our street coming into the village from Grove and it's dangerous for walkers and horses</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
(14) Local resident, (Denchworth, Circourt Road)	<p>Support – It's becoming really dangerous to walk in and out of the village in all directions. We have no foot paths on blind bends and the speeds getting ridiculous.</p> <p>Travel change: Yes – walk/wheel more</p>
(15) Local resident, (Denchworth, Hyde Road)	<p>Support – Fully support the proposal, it's a village with elderly, children, pets, horse riders, walkers. The throughfair of morning cars and Lorrie's is sometimes extremely dangerous and I've seen cars fly through. 20 mph is needed!</p> <p>Travel change: Yes – walk/wheel more</p>
(16) Local resident, (Denchworth, Kimbers Close)	<p>Support – It used to be a lovely village to walk through, but has become a rat run for grove residents from the early morning too late at night.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
(17) Member of public, (Wantage)	<p>Support – Hard corners with low visibility and limited footpath in some areas</p>

	Travel change: Yes - cycle more
(18) Local resident, (Denchworth, Hyde Road)	No objection – Vehicles travel at well over 30 in peak periods. 20mph would decrease noise from engines and road rumble. Travel change: Yes – walk/wheel more