

Divisions affected: *Kingston & Cumnor*

DELEGATED DECISIONS BY CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT

14 NOVEMBER 2024

BESSELSLEIGH – PROPOSED 20MPH SPEED LIMITS

Report by Director of Environment and Highways

RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet Member is **RECOMMENDED** to:

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

Executive Summary

1. The report presents responses to a statutory consultation on the proposed introduction of a 20mph speed limit on the unnamed road running through Besselsleigh (nr Wootton, Abingdon), replacing the existing 30mph speed limit in its entirety, 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 Besselsleigh by making them safer and more attractive.

Formal Consultation

6. Formal consultation was carried out between 19 September and 11 October 2024. 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, Vale of White Horse District Council, local District Cllrs, Besselsleigh Parish Meeting, 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. Besselsleigh Parish Meeting confirmed their support for the proposals, confirming that many local residents had requested that the speed limit is reduced to 20mph through the village. They outlined their view that the road is currently dangerous, as there isn't a footpath, it is a single track road, with poor drainage, uneven surface at the side of the road, and only four street lights.
9. Oxfordshire Cycling Network expressed support for the proposals.

Other Responses:

10. A further 36 responses were received via the online survey during the course of the formal consultation, comprising of: two objections (5%), three partially supporting (8%), 30 in support (80%), and one non-objection.
11. 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	9 (24%)
Yes - cycle more	4 (11%)
No	19 (51%)
Other	5 (14%)
Total	37

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 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 reduce the County's carbon footprint. This forms part of a countywide programme of works that seeks to deliver 'a safer place with a safer pace'.
14. The concerns of Thames Valley Police comprise observations applicable to the overall 20mph project but no site-specific comments relating to the proposals for Besselsleigh.
15. 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.

Paul Fermer
Director of Environment and Highways

Annexes Annex 1: Consultation plan
 Annex 2: Consultation responses

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

October 2024



Bessels Leigh 20mph		Revision 1.0										
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="2" style="text-align: center;">Legend</th> </tr> <tr> <td style="width: 20px; height: 10px; background-color: #00B0F0;"></td> <td>Proposed 20</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="width: 20px; height: 10px; background-color: #FF00FF;"></td> <td>Existing 50</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="width: 20px; height: 10px; background-color: #808080;"></td> <td>Existing NSL</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="width: 20px; height: 10px; background-color: #FFFFFF; border: 1px solid black;"></td> <td>Not Public Highway</td> </tr> </table>			Legend			Proposed 20		Existing 50		Existing NSL		Not Public Highway
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Rev.	Date	Purpose of revision	Drawn	Checked	Approved							
1.0	30.03.24	Proposed 2	C.W									
<div style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle; font-size: x-small; margin-left: 10px;"> Owen Jenkins Director for Infrastructure Delivery Communities Oxfordshire County Council County Hall New Road Oxford OX1 1ND Tel: 0845 310 1111 </div>												
Project title: Bessels Leigh 20mph Scheme												
Drawing title: Bessels Leigh 20mph Scheme Sheet A1												
Drawing Status												
Scale @ A3	Drawn by: C.W	Checked by: CR	Approved by: AJK									
	Date drawn: 30.03.24	Date checked: 02.04.24	Date approved:									
Oxfordshire Project No. & File Ref												
Drawing No. 1.0					Revision 1.0							

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>
(2) Besselsleigh Parish Meeting	<p>Support – Many residents have requested that the speed limit is reduced to 20mph through the village, there isn't a footpath, it is a single track road, with poor drainage, uneven surface at the side of the road and only 4 street lights. It is dangerous. Lots of residents walk down the lane to access the bus stops on the A420 or to access local footpaths to Appleton. Cars use the road as a cut through to the A420.</p>
(3) Local resident, (Cumnor, Forster lane)	<p>Object – We do not need 20 mile an hour speed limits they are too slow</p> <p>Travel change: Other Avoid the area if I can because 20 miles an hour is too slow</p>
(4) Local resident, (Wootton (Abingdon), Cumnor Road)	<p>Object – Other 20mph limits in the area have promoted an increase in speeds and eroded respect for the limits. It's now far more socially acceptable to speed, especially in 20mph areas.</p> <p>As the attached draft TRO includes Wootton, this opportunity should be taken to re-instate the 30mph limit on Cumnor Road as the Parish Council have requested, Cllr Bob Johnston has promised and Cllr Gant has stated he supports. The top half of Besselsleigh road (preferably all of it) should also be put back to 30mph as the 20mph has resulted in higher speeds than when it was 30mph.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>

<p>(5) Local resident, (Besselsleigh, Eaton road)</p>	<p>Partially support – No additional signage please there are plenty already</p> <p>Travel change: Yes – walk/wheel more</p>
<p>(6) Local resident, (Besselsleigh, Village)</p>	<p>Partially support – Support the 20mph limit but do not agree with additional signage as it is unsightly, not necessary, and a wast of money.</p> <p>Travel change: Yes – walk/wheel more</p>
<p>(7) Member of public, (Wootton Village, Wootton Village Old Boars Hill)</p>	<p>Partially support – Whilst the 20mph limit is good, I have already complained about the increase in speed limit to 30mph at a very inappropriate place at the bottom of the hill of Old Boars Hill. When the 30mph signs were installed I, along with others objected for the following reasons. The speed limit increase is at a point where there is a horse livery yard business, providing stabling /grazing for about 45 horses. The horses are led across the road at this point multiple times a day. Plus riders leave the yard on their horses at the point of the speed limit increase. We were told at the time that this area is not a known accident spot so no changes would be made to the signage. An accident waiting to happen it would seem before action will be taken.</p> <p>Furthermore the increase in speed limit comes just before a tight 90 degree double bend on the narrow lane. (with horse riders in abundance)</p> <p>In addition to changing the speed limit here it would be very helpful to have an increased awareness of horse rider signs as well please as there are at least 4 horse livery yards within half a mile of the site.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
<p>(8) Local group/organisation, (Oxfordshire Cycling Network)</p>	<p>Support – The part of Besselsleigh proposed for 20mph is a short, narrow residential village road. 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>
(9) Member of public, (Appleton, Park lane)	<p>Support – Greater safety on our narrow lanes</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
(10) Local resident, (besseleigh, road through besseleigh)	<p>Support – residential area with no pavement</p> <p>Travel change: Yes - cycle more</p>
(11) Local resident, (Besselsleigh, Besselsleigh)	<p>Support – Reduce the number of accidents</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
(12) Local resident, (Besselsleigh, Besselsleigh)	<p>Support – Its a narrow road with lots of houses with people walking down with no footpath. Therefore is an accident risk.</p> <p>Travel change: Yes – walk/wheel more</p>
(13) Local resident, (Besselsleigh, Besselsleigh)	<p>Support – It will help keep people safe particularly the young and elderly in our village</p> <p>Travel change: Yes - cycle more</p>
(14) Local resident, (Besselsleigh, Bessesleigh)	<p>Support – I agree we need cars to drive slower through the village</p>

	Travel change: Yes – walk/wheel more
(15) Local resident, (Besselsleigh, Eaton Rd, Besselsleigh)	Support – To make a safer road in our village Travel change: Yes – walk/wheel more
(16) Local resident, (Besselsleigh, Eaton Road, the road through Besselsleigh)	Support – For general safety Travel change: Other Safer on my horse
(17) Local resident, (Besselsleigh, No name)	Support – It is dark in winter and can be dangerous and I have to walk down it early in the morning. Travel change: No
(18) Local resident, (Besselsleigh, No name)	Support – Very narrow road Travel change: No
(19) Local resident, (Besselsleigh, No name but the main village street)	Support – There are several children in the village who visit their friends and there is a lot of delivery traffic which goes to fast and needs to slow down. Travel change: No
(20) Local resident, (Besselsleigh, Un named road)	Support – Single track road, no pavements Travel change: No

<p>(21) Local resident, (Besselsleigh, Unnamed aroad)</p>	<p>Support – We live in middle of village and while generally traffic slows for the traffic calming measures we do experience non-village passers through coming through at speed and have two young children. There is no pavement and it is a narrow road and there is no need to do any speed even at 20mph so we are very keen to have the limit reduced. Thanks</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
<p>(22) Local resident, (Besselsleigh, Unnamed road through Besselsleigh Village)</p>	<p>Support – It is dangerous walking down the road as there isn't a footpath. I walk down the road at least twice a day to catch the bus from the A420. At night with only 4 street lights it is very dark and you can't be seen easily.</p> <p>Travel change: Yes – walk/wheel more</p>
<p>(23) Local resident, (Besselsleigh, Besselsleigh)</p>	<p>Support – It's a small lane and although there is some traffic calming people still drive at speed through the village. There are families with small children and pets farm traffic also speeds through the village</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
<p>(24) Local resident, (Besselsleigh, Besselsleigh)</p>	<p>Support – I live in the village and support the proposal</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
<p>(25) Local resident, (Besselsleigh, Besselsleigh village)</p>	<p>Support – I am supporting this as a resident of the village with young children.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
<p>(26) Local resident, (Besselsleigh, Besselsleigh village)</p>	<p>Support – As a resident of the village we would all welcome a safer road. I have young children and the speed at which cars come through the village makes it unsafe for them.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>

<p>(27) Local resident, (Besselsleigh, Besselsleigh village)</p>	<p>Support – I would like it to be safer when I ride my bike and walk my dog. The cars can be very fast.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
<p>(28) Local resident, (Besselsleigh, Besselsleigh village)</p>	<p>Support – There is no pavement so residents and their small children and dogs have to walk in the road. The road is narrow in places so that cars cannot pass oncoming traffic without pulling in and this puts pedestrians at increased risk. The road through the village is used as a cut-through to Eaton, Cumnor and Appleton so there is a fair amount of traffic.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
<p>(29) Local resident, (Besselsleigh, No name)</p>	<p>Support – No comment.</p> <p>Travel change: Other Doesn't affect me now as I am under 10</p>
<p>(30) Local resident, (Besselsleigh, Not named)</p>	<p>Support – A420 is a very dangerous road. There are lots of accidents and this is relevant because they happen at the junction turning into Besselsleigh. We need people to drive carefully throughout the village.</p> <p>Travel change: Other I can't drive so it will make no difference to me.</p>
<p>(31) Local resident, (Besselsleigh, Road running through Besselsleigh)</p>	<p>Support – Should make the village safer</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
<p>(32) Local resident, (Besselsleigh village, The road running through Besselsleigh village)</p>	<p>Support – The current 30mph speed limit is too fast for pedestrians in the road, and there is no pavement. The existing speed humps do not deter some drivers from driving too fast.</p> <p>Travel change: Yes – walk/wheel more</p>

<p>(33) Local resident, (Besselsleigh Village, Unnamed road)</p>	<p>Support – We have no pavement single track road many dog walkers .Difficult seeing. Coming off driveways . off driveways</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
<p>(34) Local resident, (Besselsleigh village, Unnamed road through Besselsleigh village)</p>	<p>Support – I am supporting the 20mph through Besselsleigh because most vehicles drive too quickly through the village.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
<p>(35) Local resident, (Besselsleigh village, Unnamed (Eaton Road))</p>	<p>Support – Due to the bend in the road leading into the village from the A420 and over hanging branches, the 20mph sign reference R1 on the consultation plan, may not be clearly visible on the left hand side of the road</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
<p>(36) Local resident, (Besseslsleigh, Besseslsleigh)</p>	<p>Support – Cars drive too fast through the village especially late evening</p> <p>Travel change: Yes – walk/wheel more</p>
<p>(37) Local resident, (Besseslsleigh, Besseslsleigh)</p>	<p>Support – cars drive fast speed bumps don't slow them down</p> <p>Travel change: Yes – walk/wheel more</p>
<p>(38) Local resident, (Besseslsleigh, Besseslsleigh)</p>	<p>Support – make it easier to pull out of the drive</p> <p>Travel change: Other run & cycle</p>
<p>(39) Local resident, (Besselsleigh, Besselsleigh)</p>	<p>No objection – Cars drive too fast through the village especially late in the evening</p>

	Travel change: Yes - cycle more
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