

Division(s) affected: *Harwell, Western Valley & Blewbury*

DELEGATED DECISIONS BY CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT

17 JULY 2025

ROAD SAFETY & PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENT SCHEME – CHILTON, LOWER ROAD

Report by Director of Environment and Highways

RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet Member is **RECOMMENDED** to:

- a) **Approve the introduction of a 30mph speed limit on Lower Road in Chilton, as advertised.**

Executive Summary

1. This report presents responses received to a statutory consultation on proposals to introduce a 30mph speed limit ('Restricted road' by virtue of the existing street-lighting) on Lower Road in Chilton, by removing the current 40mph speed limit in its entirety between the Chilton roundabout, and the existing 20mph speed limit terminal point north of its junction with The Paddock – as shown in **Annex 1**.
2. The proposals have been put forward as a result of requests made by the Parish Council and local residents, as Lower Road is one of the main roads into Chilton, and provides pedestrian access between the two residential areas either side of the A34 (via Jubilee footbridge) and the recreational ground, village hall and primary school.

Sustainability Implications

3. The proposals will improve road safety, by helping to slow traffic in the immediate vicinity of an area with a high number of more vulnerable road users (i.e. pedestrians & pedal cyclists).

Financial Implications

4. Funding for consultation on the proposals (and implementation if approved) has been provided by the County Council's Accessibility & Road Safety budget.

Legal Implications

5. The consultation that has been undertaken complies with the consultation requirements for the various elements as required by law including under the Highways Act 1980, the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and any other relevant legislation.
6. The scheme has been promoted by Oxfordshire County Council as the Highway Authority and Traffic Authority under the Highways Act 1980, and the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

Comments checked by:

Jennifer Crouch (Head of Law - Environmental)

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Equalities and Inclusion Implications

7. No negative implications in respect of equalities or inclusion have been identified in respect of these proposals.

Formal Consultation

8. Formal consultation was carried out between 21 May and 20 June 2025. A notice was published in the Oxfordshire Herald Series & the Oxford Times, and an email was 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, relevant local District Cllrs, Chilton Parish Council, and the local County Councillors representing the Harwell, Western Valley & Blewbury division.
9. The parish council, and local Councillors (including County, District, Parish, Town) were also encouraged to use the consultation documents provided to publicise the proposals amongst local residents as necessary.
10. During the course of the formal consultation, nine responses were received via the online survey, comprising of: two objections, and seven in support.
11. Additionally, a further two emails were received directly – with Thames Valley Police submitting a non-objection, and Thames Travel offering their support.
12. The full responses are shown in **Annex 2**, and copies of the original responses are available for inspection by County Councillors. Any comments received that

Officers identify as containing personal abuse and/or other personal information will be redacted as appropriate.

Officer Response to Objections/Concerns

13. The objection states that there is an off-carriageway pavement for pedestrians – as part of this scheme there are proposals to install drop kerbs at the entrance to Jubilee Bridge, and also on the opposite side of Lower Road to help improve accessibility for vulnerable users which should increase the use of the facility, especially by children accessing Chilton School and the playground at the Village Hall.
14. The lower speed limit is proposed to help standardise the current speed restrictions in the area, as there are currently lower limits either side of these proposals.
15. Speed surveys were carried out week commencing 05th May 2024, the results showed that mean speeds were below 33mph in either direction – resulting in the location complying with Oxfordshire County Council policy for a sign only reduction in the posted speed limit to 30mph.
16. Officers feel that the proposals will help improve road safety by reducing vehicle speeds, and thus allowing safer movements for the more vulnerable road users (i.e. pedestrians & pedal cyclists).

Paul Fermer
Director of Environment and Highways

Annexes Annex 1: Consultation plan
 Annex 2: Consultation responses

Contact Officers: Mark Francis (Senior Officer – Traffic & Road Safety)
 Lee Turner (Team Leader – Traffic & Road Safety)

July 2025

Drawing No.

1100000001

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Proposed 30mph speed limit
(currently 40mph speed limit)

Existing 30mph speed limit

Existing 20mph speed limit

SAFETY, HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION

IN ADDITION TO THE HAZARDS/RISKS NORMALLY ASSOCIATED WITH THE TYPES OF WORK
DETAILED ON THIS DRAWING, NOTE THE FOLLOWING SIGNIFICANT RESIDUAL RISKS

CONSTRUCTION

(ENTER 'NONE' IF APPLICABLE)

MAINTENANCE/CLEANING

(ENTER 'NONE' IF APPLICABLE)

USE

(ENTER 'NONE' IF APPLICABLE)

DECOMMISSIONING/DEMOLITION

(ENTER 'NONE' IF APPLICABLE)

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Rev.	Date	Purpose of revision	Drawn	Checked	Approved

OXFORDSHIRE
COUNTY COUNCIL

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Project title

CHILTON, LOWER ROAD

Drawing title

PROPOSED 30MPH SPEED LIMIT

Drawing Status

CONSULTATION

Scale @ A3

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JaC

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Approved by

N.T.S.

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Oxfordshire Project No. & File Ref

Drawing No.

Revision

0

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The map shows a section of Lower Road in Chilton, Oxfordshire. A blue line indicates the proposed 30mph speed limit, which follows the road from the top left, past Chilton Pond and the Garden Centre, through the village, and down towards The Paddock. A green line shows the existing 30mph limit, and a red line shows the existing 20mph limit. Key landmarks include Chilton Pond, Garden Centre, All Saints' Church, Jubilee Bridge, and The Paddock. Pedestrian access points are marked with circles and labels: 'Pedestrian access to recreation ground' and 'Pedestrian access to Chilton Primary School via A34 footbridge'. The map also shows various residential streets and buildings in the area.

RESPONDENT	COMMENTS
(e1) Traffic Management Officer, (Thames Valley Police)	<p>No objection – Thames Valley Police welcome the opportunity to engage on plans for road safety improvement . There are other reasons 30mph 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 some speed 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 (No speed data has been provided to support this proposal) • road environment <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. Self-Enforcement using Community Speed Watch would be another option to consider/explore.</p>
(e2) Managing Director, (Thames Travel)	Support
(o1) Local resident, (Chilton, Lowr Road)	<p>Object – I do not support the proposal to lower the speed limit on this particular stretch of road. Having lived in very close proximity to it for over 10 years, I am not aware of a single incident involving injury or collision. The road has a pavement for pedestrians, meaning there is no shared road space, and there are no residential driveways along this section requiring vehicles to enter or exit. It is primarily used by local domestic vehicles, not commercial traffic. In fact, this stretch is technically already prohibited to motor vehicles under the existing signage — a restriction that is not currently enforced.</p> <p>Given this context, introducing a lower speed limit appears unnecessary and unlikely to be effectively enforced, particularly when the existing prohibition is not being upheld.</p> <p>I am concerned that this proposal represents a misallocation of time and resources. Nearby roads such as Hagbourne Hill experience significantly higher volumes of traffic — including school transport, HGVs, agricultural vehicles, and cyclists — and have a history of serious accidents, including fatalities. These roads pose a far greater risk to public safety and are more deserving of attention. I witness near misses on this stretch of road an almost daily basis.</p> <p>In summary, I urge you to reconsider this proposal and instead focus efforts where there is clear evidence of danger and a real opportunity to improve safety outcomes.</p>

(o2) Local resident, (Eynsham, Back Lane)	Object – It will will not improve safety and will increase pollution and congestion as proved everywhere you have already done it
(o3) Local group/organisation, (Coalition for Healthy Streets & Active Travel)	Support – We support this proposal to improve the safety of pedestrian and cycling users of this road and access to the pedestrian overbridge and the pedestrian/cycling subway crossings of the A34. I have personal experience of using the bridge and underpass on this road on a fairly frequent basis, as do others I know who walk and cycle in this area. The 40mph speed limit is out of context for the village setting and the high traffic speeds are an unnecessary danger and will put some people off from using the road and crossings to access the garden centre and the Ridgeway.
(o4) Local resident, (Chilton, Fieldside)	Support – over the distance of this section of road the likely increase in journey time is 10s max (diff between 30 and 40 mph) and likely to be less in reality. Given that drivers exceed the 20 mph speed limit coming into the village, reducing the Lower Road limit will increase safety through more likely compliance with the following 20 mph section. The change also improves safety for road users and pedestrians crossing the road to use the foot bridge.
(o5) Local resident, (Chilton, Latton Close)	Support – I'm absolutely in support of this proposal, I use the allotments most days and regularly experience cars (and vans) driving too fast for that section of road, additionally I've witnessed close calls with wildlife and a cat which would be so sad for the sake of a few miles per hour.
(o6) Local resident, (Chilton, South Row)	Support – The footpaths leading to, and along, this section of road see a lot of pedestrian traffic, especially that heading to/from Chilton Primary School. When the 30 mph limit was imposed on the A4185 roundabout and, more recently, the 20 mph limit in the old village, this 40 mph zone became an anomaly. Making it 30 mph is a sensible step.
(o7) Local resident, (Chilton, The Orchids)	Support – It seems eminently sensible to reduce the limit to 30mph on this short stretch of road, currently 40mph sandwiched between 30mph on roundabout and 20mph into village. It is frequently busy both for vehicles and pedestrians, especially at school taking and collecting times, and there are often vehicles parked by the allotments or waiting briefly between appointments.

(o8) Local resident, (Chilton, Hill Piece)	<p>Support – As a Chilton resident in the south end of the village, I use Lower Road multiple times a day by car, weekly on bike and occasionally on foot. I support the 30 mph speed limit because I frequently see pedestrians, including children and pets, in close proximity to cars on the corner where the 20mph zone begins. Cars are frequently hurtling round that corner, slowing from 40 mph but still too fast, and meeting pedestrians walking in the road where there is no pavement.</p> <p>I would question how effective this speed limit would be in reducing speeds since few motorists seem to be obeying the 20 mph limits, but hey let's give it a go!</p>
(o9) Chilton Parish Council	<p>Support – Chilton Parish Council fully support this proposed 30mph speed limit on Lower Road. The Council requested this was done when the village roads became 20mph. We believe this will make crossing the road safer for both vehicles and pedestrians. At present Lower Road is 40mph whereas the adjoining roundabout is 30mph and the village is 20mph.</p>