

Division(s) affected: *Wheatley*

DELEGATED DECISIONS BY CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT

23 APRIL 2026

FOREST HILL: OLD ROAD – PROPOSED 20MPH SPEED LIMIT

Report by Director of Environment and Highways

RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet Member is **RECOMMENDED** to:

- a) **Approve the extension of the existing 20mph speed limit on Old Road in Forest Hill, as advertised.**

Executive Summary

1. This report presents responses received to a statutory consultation on proposals to extend the existing 20mph speed limit on Old Road in Forest Hill, from the existing terminal at a point 355 metres east of its junction with The Ridings, to the 'Shotover Hill' car park – replacing the existing 60mph National speed limit in the process – as shown in **Annex 1**.
2. The proposals have been put forward for road safety reasons following a request by the local County Cllr to review the extents of the existing 20mph which was introduced in July 2023, and follows the subsequent completion of the implementation phase of the County-wide 20mph project at the end of the 2025/26 financial year.
3. Oxfordshire County Council wants to make our built environments safer and more attractive places to walk and cycle. To enable this, 20mph speed restrictions are being used to help promote alternative modes of transport for local travel.
4. Streets are central to everyday life in Oxfordshire. They play a role in all transport journey's and are places where people shop, work and spend time. Improving the experience of being on Oxfordshire's streets will therefore improve people's local areas and their everyday lives. Improving streets to encourage active travel will also help to deliver further benefits for people in Oxfordshire. A wide range of people choosing to walk, and cycle will help to improve public health, reduce road noise, improve air quality and make local areas more relaxing. Furthermore, 20mph speed limits will help reduce casualty rates and improve road safety

Corporate Policies and Priorities

5. The proposals form part of the County Councils 20mph transformation programme, as approved at Cabinet.
6. Of the three priorities identified within the newly adopted 'Oxfordshire Strategic Plan 2025-2028' which are listed below, these proposals actively support priority nos.1 & 3:
 - (1) Greener Oxfordshire – *“We want our communities to enjoy clean air, access to green space, and safe and sustainable ways to move around. This means reducing traffic congestion and investing in public transport, cycling and walking; protecting our natural environment; and helping Oxfordshire respond and adapt to a changing climate.”*
 - (2) Fairer Oxfordshire – *“We want all our residents to benefit from the advantages our county has to offer. This means supporting a local economy that benefits everyone; assisting people who face challenges in finding work; making our services as easy to access as possible; and helping communities in need.”*
 - (3) Healthier Oxfordshire – *“We want all our residents to be happy, healthy and safe. This means helping children get the best start in life; creating opportunities for young people to reach their full potential; supporting older people to age well and stay independent for as long as possible; and encouraging everyone to make healthy choices.”*

Financial Implications

7. Funding for consultation on the proposals (and implementation if approved) has been provided by the County Council's Vision Zero programme.
8. Finance has completed a high-level review of this report. As no financial figures or costings were included, this sign off is limited to confirming that the narrative is reasonable based on the information provided. Service area Officers therefore take responsibility for confirming the funding arrangements, validating the financial position & underlying data independently from Finance.

Comments checked by:

Andrew Price – Interim Business Partnering Accountant

Andrew.Price@Oxfordshire.gov.uk

Legal Implications

9. 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.
10. 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 – Principal Solicitor (Regulatory)

Jennifer.Crouch@Oxfordshire.gov.uk

Staff Implications

8. There are no negative staff implications – with the appraisal of the proposals, as well as the consultation process having been undertaken by Officers from the ‘Vision Zero’, and ‘TRO & Schemes’ teams as part of their regular day-to-day duties, with no additional or negative impact on capacity expected.

Equality & Inclusion Implications

11. No negative implications in respect of equalities or inclusion have been identified in respect of the proposals.

Sustainability Implications

12. The proposals have been put forward for road safety reasons, and aim to reduce vehicle speeds to safer levels for all motorists & road users, specifically those considered to be more vulnerable, including pedestrians, cyclists, equestrians, and motorcyclists.

Risk Management

13. No potential significant health and safety or service provision risks, or potentially significant financial impacts have been identified in these proposals.

Formal Consultation

14. Formal consultation was carried out between 29 January and 27 February 2026. A notice was published in the Oxford Times newspaper, 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, South Oxfordshire District Council, relevant local District Councillors, Forest Hill with Shotover Parish Council, and the local County Councillor representing the Wheatley division.

15. During the course of the formal consultation, nine responses were received via the online survey, comprising of one objection, and eight in support.
16. Additionally, a further two emails were received directly – with Thames Valley Police not objecting, and ‘Oxfordshire Liveable Streets’ (a not-for-profit campaign organisation) offering their support.
17. Cllr Emily Kerr, the Council’s Active Travel Champion, expressed support for the proposals.
18. 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

19. The objection from a member of the public was on the grounds of need, and concerns that the proposals was not in accordance policy and that the plan contained an error labelling the extent of the proposal being subject to a 30mph speed limit, whereas the current limit is national speed limit. The response also queried the adequacy of the repeater sign spacing should a 20mph speed limit be approved.
20. Noting the above, Officers can confirm that the plan originally uploaded onto the Councils ‘Let’s Talk’ consultation portal incorrectly showed an existing 30mph speed limit to be replaced. This was however rectified as soon as Officers were made aware of the error, and a replacement plan was subsequently drafted & made available. Officers are keen to stress that the supplied Legal documentation, as well as the accompanying text did not mirror this error.
21. In terms of the detail of the objection, while the approved criteria for the 20mph project include that 20mph limits should only be considered for roads where the current speed limit is 40mph or less, there are a number of precedents of departures from this approach where considered appropriate (as is the case here), taking account of the detailed specific site circumstances.
22. Officers can also confirm that repeater signs will be placed where most practical, taking environmental factors – such as the available verge widths – into account where possible.

Paul Fermer
Director of Environment and Highways

Annex(es): Annex 1: Consultation plan
Annex 2: Consultation responses

Background papers: n/a
Other Documents: n/a

Contact Officer(s): Anthony Kirkwood (Team Leader – Vision Zero)
Daron Mizen (Operational Manager – Highway Schemes)

April 2026

Drawing No. 0

Key

- Proposed 20mph speed limit in place of existing 60mph National 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)

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|--|
| 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 |
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Project title

FOREST HILL & SHOTOVER
OLD ROAD AND SHOTOVER HILL

Drawing title

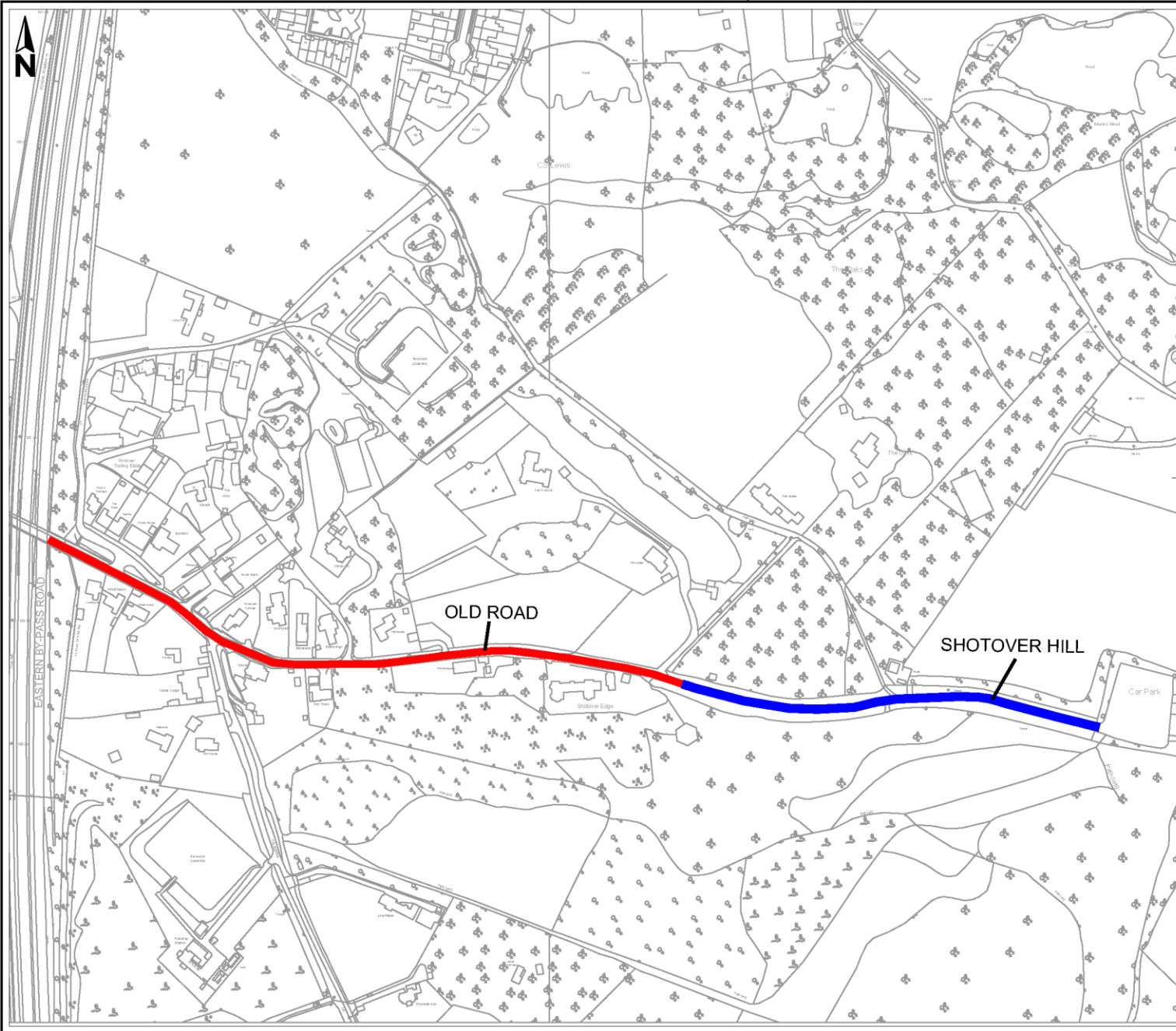
20MPH SPEED LIMIT EXTENSION

Drawing Status

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|------------|------------|--------------|---------------|
| Scale @ A3 | Drawn by | Checked by | Approved by |
| NTS | JaC | | |
| | Date drawn | Date checked | Date approved |
| | 01/26 | | |

Oxfordshire Project No. & File Ref

Drawing No. Revision 0



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A. Email responses:

| RESPONDENT | COMMENTS |
|---|--|
| (e1) Traffic Management Officer, (Thames Valley Police) | No objection – The current state of this road and the presence of a fallen tree makes driving at more than 20 mph impossible. |
| (e2) Local group/organisation, (Oxfordshire Liveable Streets) | Support – This is a short stub of single-track road, heavily used by people walking and cycling, which should clearly be 20mph. |

B. Online responses:

| RESPONDENT | COMMENTS |
|--|---|
| (o1) County Cllr, (Oxford, New Road) | Support – As Active Travel Champion, I support measures which are proven to improve the safety of pedestrians, cyclists and horse-riders - as extending the 20mph zone will do. I am particularly keen to see 20mph in a place which I myself use regularly with my children when accessing Shotover by bike or on foot - as thousands of other people do - and I've frequently been dismayed by the NSL here. So good work in adjusting it! |
| (o2) Member of public, (Uffington, Green Lane) | Object – 1) This proposal seems completely unnecessary. The nature of the road is sufficient to make it obvious to drivers that a lower speed is appropriate. There is no need to spend any money here. 2) The proposal contradicts the Council policy on introducing 20mph restrictions which states that the existing speed restriction must not be more than 40mph. |

| | |
|---|--|
| | <p>https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.oxfordshire.gov.uk%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2Ffile%2Froads-and-transport-major-projects%2F20mphPolicydocument.docx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK</p> <p>3) The consultation plan is incorrect as it shows the existing speed restriction as 30mph rather than national limit.</p> <p>4) Given that the proposed extension of the 20mph zone is greater than 200m then further repeater signs are required as per table 8.4 of the DfT Traffic Signs Manual. Otherwise there would be a risk that the speed restriction would be unenforceable. If the response to this point is that the repeater signs are not required because it is clear that a lower speed is appropriate then there is no need to change the restriction in the first place.</p> |
| (o3) Member of public, (Oxford, Maidcroft Road) | Support – 20mph here is a safety necessity. |
| (o4) Local Cllr (Oxford, St Aldates) | Support – This is aligned with the policy of Vision Zero. The road is often used by pedestrians and runners, as well as cyclists so it will make it safer for all vulnerable road users. |
| (o5) Local resident, (Oxford, Harold Hicks Place) | Support – Fully support, for safety - a narrow steep lane with no footpath or bike path should definitely be no more than 20mph, thank you for prioritising safety |
| (o6) Member of public, (Oxford, Westbury Crescent) | Support – This is a narrow steep winding road with people walking and cycling along with vehicles accessing the car park. Low speed makes perfect sense for safety of all |
| (o7) Local group/organisation, (Oxfordshire Cycling Network) | Support – Shotover Country Park is a local asset, and we should encourage people to travel there by sustainable means. Old Road is challenging enough with its steep gradients, but occasionally fast traffic makes this intimidating even for the cyclists who are fit enough to pedal up the hill. A 20mph limit will calm the environment and be far more suitable for the short approach road to a country park, with no footway and high likelihood of people walking, or cycling. |

| | |
|---|---|
| (o8) Local resident, (Stanton St John, Middle Road) | Support – Seeems v sensible |
| (o9) Local resident, (Wheatley, Templars Close) | Support – Safety of other users paramount as no pavement |