

CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT - 24 APRIL 2014

ST HELEN WITHOUT AND WOOTTON PARISHES - PROPOSED SPEED LIMITS

**Report by Deputy Director for Environment & Economy
(Commercial)**

Introduction

1. This report presents an objection received in the course of a statutory consultation on several separate proposals for speed limit changes in the adjacent parishes of St Helen Without and Wootton – plans showing the proposals are shown at Annex 1 and 2 respectively.

Background

2. The proposals arise from a request from both Parish Councils in response to local concerns over road safety.

Consultation

3. Consultation on the proposals was carried out between 21 February and 21 March 2014. An objection was received from Thames Valley Police in respect of the proposals for Barrow Road (St Helen Without) and Old Boars Hill Road (Wootton) on the grounds that they do not comply with the advice contained in current Department for Transport guidance on setting speed limits. A copy of this response is available in the Members' Resource centre.
4. No objections were received from the police in respect of the proposals for Honeybottom Lane, Cholswell Road and Long Tow in St Helen Without and for Wootton village road in Wootton. However, for the proposals for Cholswell Road and Long Tow, the police requested that consideration be given to the provision of supporting measures to achieve good levels of compliance with the proposed 30mph limit; this will be investigated by officers if approval is given for this proposal.
5. In addition to the support of both parish councils, letters of support were received from Councillor Richard Webber, District Councillor Catherine Webber and the Station Commander (Dalton Barracks) in respect of the proposals for Barrow Road, Choswell Road and Long Tow adjacent to Dalton Barracks. A letter of support was also received from a livery yard in respect of the proposals for Old Boars Hill Road.

Barrow Road

6. The proposal for Barrow Road comprises a 'buffer' 40mph limit of approximately 300m length in advance of the 30mph limit for the built up area of the village itself. Department for Transport guidelines on setting village speed limits acknowledge that in some circumstances an intermediate speed limit of 40mph is appropriate and, although it is agreed that the technical case for this proposal is not clear cut given the absence of road side development, or any relevant accident history over the past 5-years, the proposed length of 40mph limit includes the primary access to Dalton Barracks.
7. A speed survey carried out in 2012 showed average and 85th percentile speeds in both directions of 41mph and 48mph respectively; the introduction of a 40mph limit could be expected to reduce average speeds by around 2mph.
8. Strong support for the proposal for Barrow Road was expressed by The Station Commander, Dalton Barracks who commented that 'the single carriageway and the existing speed limit make it a difficult and dangerous junction to exit, particularly for larger slower moving vehicles departing site in convoy'.
9. Taking account of the local support and that a reasonable degree of compliance could be expected without the need for additional measures, the officer recommendation is to approve this proposal.

Old Boars Hill Road

10. The proposal for Old Boars Hill Road is to create a continuous 30mph limit between Wootton and Old Boars Hill, replacing a 700m length currently subject to the national speed limit. The road is lightly trafficked (daily flows typically being under 250 vehicles) with 6 accesses to adjacent premises, including a livery yard, and fields. A letter of support was received from the livery yard on the grounds of improved safety for equestrians using the road.
11. A speed survey carried out in 2013 showed average and 85th percentile speeds of 27mph and 34mph (westbound) and 26mph and 30mph respectively. No injury accidents have been reported over the past 5 years.
12. The technical case for a reduction in speed limit is not strong, but there are precedents elsewhere in Oxfordshire of roads of similar character having a 30mph limit, and it is accepted that this road is popular with equestrians, cyclists and walkers. The existing speeds suggest that compliance with a 30mph limit would be good.
13. While officers are of course very cautious in recommending proceeding with a proposal that appears to depart appreciably in some respects with national guidelines, given the strong local support, the use of the road by vulnerable road users, precedents elsewhere and the anticipated good compliance with the reduced limit without the need for supporting measures, it is recommended in this case that the proposal is approved.

How the Project supports LTP3 Objectives

14. The proposals would help reduce the risk of accidents and improve road safety.

Financial and Staff Implications (including Revenue)

15. The costs will be met by St Helen Without and Wootton Parish Councils. Maintenance of the signs will be met from the highways maintenance budget.
16. The appraisal of the proposals and consultation has been undertaken by Environment & Economy officers as part of their normal duties.

RECOMMENDATION

17. **The Cabinet Member for the Environment is RECOMMENDED to approve the implementation of proposals for speed limits in St Helen Without and Wootton parishes as advertised.**

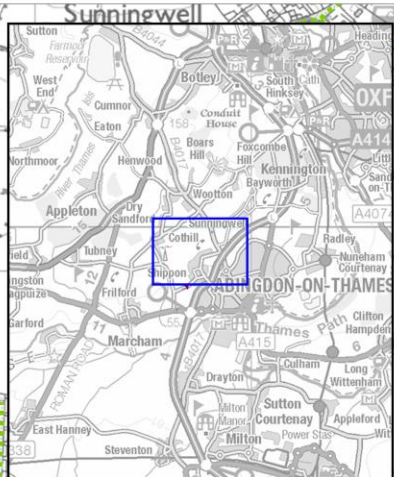
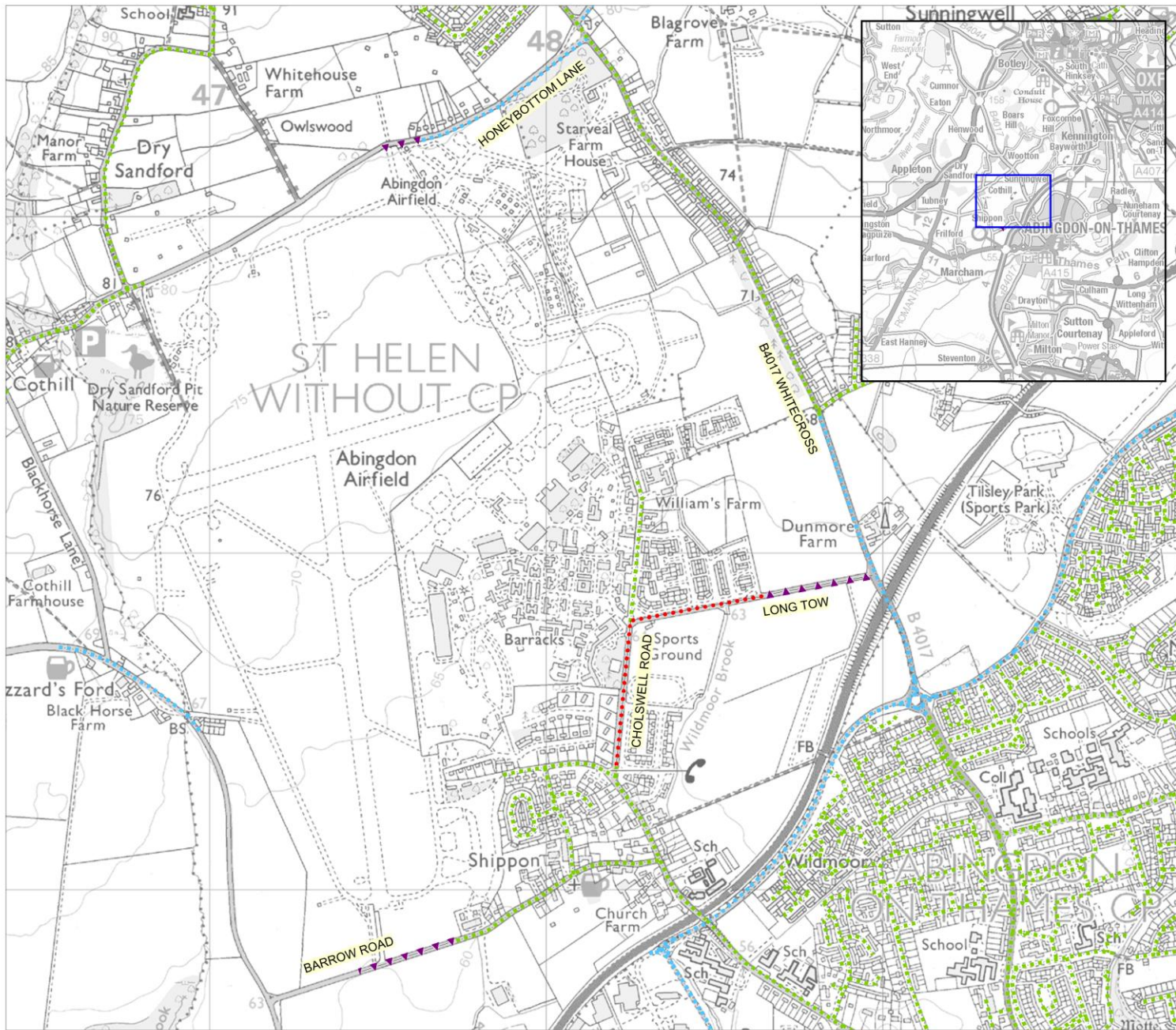
MARK KEMP

Deputy Director of Environment & Economy (Highways & Transport)

Background papers: Consultation responses

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March 2014



Drawing No. Revision 1

- - - - - Existing 30mph speed limit
- - - - - Existing 40mph speed limit
- - - - - Proposed 30mph speed limit in place of current 40mph speed limit
- - - - - Proposed 40mph speed limit in place of current National speed limit

Site Location

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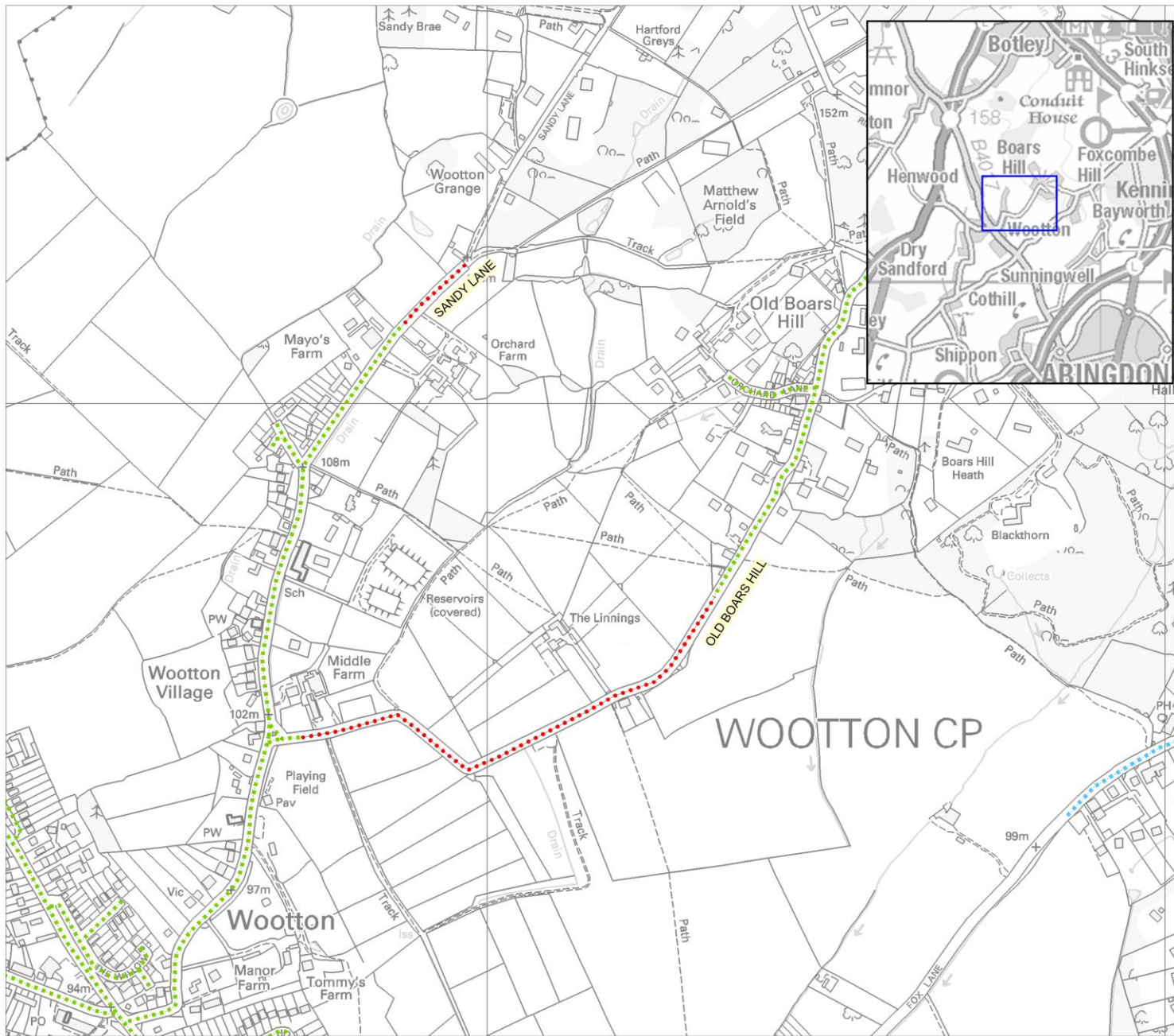
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**CABINET MEMBER
 FOR ENVIRONMENT
 24 APRIL 2014**

**ST HELEN WITHOUT PARISH
 PROPOSED SPEED LIMIT CHANGES**

Drawing Status		
Drawn by:	Checked by:	Approved by:
CJM		
Date drawn:	Date checked:	Date approved:
31/03/2014		

Drawing No. Revision 1



Drawing No. _____ Revision _____

- Existing 30mph speed limit
- Proposed 30mph speed limit in place of existing National Speed Limit

Site Location

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CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT
 24 APRIL 2013

WOOTTON (ABINGDON) PARISH
PROPOSED 30MPH EXTENSIONS

Drawing Status		
Drawn by:	Checked by:	Approved by:
CJM		
Date drawn:	Date checked:	Date approved:
31/03/2014		

Drawing No. _____ Revision **1**