

CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT – 12 OCTOBER 2017

PROPOSED REVISED WAITING RESTRICTIONS AND EXTENSION OF 20MPH SPEED LIMIT, A4144 WOODSTOCK ROAD BY THE RADLCIFFE OBSERVATORY QUARTER OXFORD

Report by Director for Infrastructure Delivery

Introduction

1. This report presents responses received in the course of the statutory consultation on a proposal to reduce the number of pay and display parking places and to extend the 20mph speed limit on the A4144 Woodstock Road, Oxford adjacent to the Radcliffe Observatory Quarter.

Background

2. The above measures are proposed in conjunction with the redevelopment of the Radcliffe Observatory Quarter. Annex 1 details the proposals .

Consultation

3. The formal consultation on the proposals was carried out between 13 July and 11 August 2017. A public notice was placed in the Oxford Times newspaper, and sent to statutory consultees, including Thames Valley Police, the Fire & Rescue Service, Ambulance service, Oxford City Council and the local County Councillors. Additionally letters were sent to approximately 70 nearby properties.
4. Responses were received from eleven parties, including two objections and nine expressions of support for the proposed extension of the speed limit and one objection and six expressions of support for the proposed amendments to the parking bays (with a further four responses expressing no view on the latter) as summarised at Annex 2. Copies of the full responses are available for inspection by County Councillors in the Members' Resource Centre.
5. Thames Valley Police objected to the proposed extension of the 20mph speed limit on the grounds they considered that this limit would likely be ignored by many drivers and lead to speed limits being brought into disrepute, noting also that if the proposal is approved, the police would not be able to provide regular enforcement. The police however expressed no objection to the proposed changes to the parking places.
6. A member of the public also objected to the proposed 20mph speed limit on the grounds that the existing 30 mph limit provides the right balance between

speed and safety and that to reduce the speed limit to 20 mph would be frustrating for drivers and is less fuel efficient and likely to increase pollution.

7. St Anne's College objected to the proposed reduction in the number of pay and display parking places on the grounds of the inconvenience that would result for visitors and contractors working at the college. The college also expressed concerns that the proposed paved median area could be mistaken by pedestrians as a providing a refuge, whereas in practice it will frequently be over-run, particularly by the bus stop, which the college suggested is relocated to a wider part of the road.
8. Expressions of support for the proposals were received from the local member, Oxford City Council, Oxford University and Oxford Bus Company.
9. Cyclox, a group representing the pedal cyclists within Oxford, while expressing support for the 20mph speed limit and amendments to the pay and display parking places, also expressed disappointment with the design in respect of the provision for cyclists, and considered that there was a need for segregated space for cyclists – including bus-stop bypasses - in this section, which would also help change the character of the road to encourage compliance with the proposed 20mph speed limit. Other changes to the cycle lane on the west side of the road adjacent to the pay and display parking to the north of the proposed scheme were also suggested.
10. A member of the public - while also expressing support for the proposed 20mph speed limit and changes to the pay and display parking – also expressed very strong concerns about the effect of the scheme on cyclists, and specifically considered that the safety and amenity of cyclists would be adversely affected by the reduced width available due to the provision of the widened footway and central median area, particularly at the bus stops.
11. A response from a member of the public similarly expressing support for the proposed 20mph speed limit and changes to the pay and display parking also requested that the bus stops are designed to a high standard for the benefit of bus users.
12. A response was also received from a member of the public expressing support for the proposed extension of the 20mpgh speed limit, and no objection to the proposed changes to the pay and display parking places.

Review of responses

13. The objections of Thames Valley Police and member of the public to the proposed extension of the 20mph speed limit are noted; however this extension is– in the context of the wider 20mph speed limit in Oxford city centre –very modest. The wider changes to the road environment being made as part of the scheme, together with the higher level of pedestrian activity resulting from the Radcliffe Observatory Quarter Project, should encourage compliance with the proposed additional length of 20mph limit.

14. The objection from St Anne's College on the loss of pay and display parking places is also noted; three such places will be removed by the proposals, but with twenty one places being still available directly opposite the college, and also there being additional parking available in nearby Bevington Road, it is considered that the impact of the proposals in respect of parking are proportionate to the wider benefits of the scheme.
15. The representations made on wider aspects of the design of the scheme - including the concerns expressed by St Anne's College on the safety of the scheme in respect of pedestrians, and Cyclox and a member of the public in respect of the provision for cyclists, and also the design of the bus stops are similarly noted. They do however lie outside the scope of the consultation, and it should be stressed that the design has been subject to very careful assessment on its impact on all road users; since the consultation was carried out, the design has been amended in a response to an independent road safety audit to;
- Remove the central median treatment,
 - Provide for surface colouring at the formal and informal crossing locations of the scheme,
 - Widen the mandatory cycle lanes, and also
 - To slightly amend the zig zag markings at the puffin crossing.

A number of suggestions were also raised in the consultation on the scheme design elements which were not formally consulted upon. These were;

- Proposed relocation of the bus stops. Positioning of the bus stops has been carefully considered in the design. Due to the need to maintain access to existing facilities, an alternative positioning of the bus stops would mean that an alternative location for these popular stops would be located away from the areas of passenger demand. Additional walking required to any relocated stops would likely inconvenience the majority of current/ future passengers utilising these stops.
- Potential design conflict points for cyclists at where parking bays are located by the Green Templeton College entrance. Officers acknowledge the comments and suggestions made and will consider suitable options for addressing these points as part of further scheme design.
- Provision of cycle bus-stop bypasses and segregated cycle lanes. Provision of either design feature was not considered appropriate to the location due to the frequent number of vehicle access and egress points along the scheme. Officers consider that this would compromise the integrity of any segregated cycle provision.

How the Project supports LTP4 Objectives

16. The public realm enhancements to this stretch of Woodstock Road will improve the perception of a safer road at this location and facilitate improvements to walking and cycling routes.

Financial and Staff Implications (including Revenue)

17. Funding for design and construction of the scheme has been provided by Oxford University under Section106. Staff from Communities, including through the term Highways contract with Skanska will deliver the project with the assistance of staff from Legal Services.

RECOMMENDATION

- 18 **The Cabinet Member for the Environment is RECOMMENDED to approve the proposals as advertised**

OWEN JENKINS

Director for Infrastructure Delivery

Background papers: Plan of proposed restrictions
 Consultation responses

Contact Officers: Anthony Kirkwood 07392 318871

September 2017

Drawing No: S-000673/PRE/000/101 Revision: 0

- KEY:**
- Proposed footway paving (Hanson Chartes classic modular PCC paving, permanent grey colour)
 - Proposed localised footway reinstatement to match surrounding material
 - Proposed access paving (Granite sett blocks, silver grey colour)
 - Proposed central road feature formed in an imprinted bitumen material with a tegula pattern infill and kerf profile boundary pattern
 - Existing kerline (reference purposes only)

- NOTES:**
1. Extents of carriageway resurfacing identified as change 55 to change 160.
 2. Proposed kerbing for western kerline to be ACC contained kerb drainage units to match the units currently installed.
 3. Proposed traffic islands and footway build-out to be formed in Marshalls Conservation kerbing, 145 mm wide.
 4. Relocated bus stop bays to be 13 m long.
 5. The existing mandatory cyclines are to be widened to 1.80 m and will narrow down to match the existing widths of the cyclines at each end of the scheme.

SAFETY, HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION

REGARDING TO THE HAZARDS NORMALLY ASSOCIATED WITH THE TYPES OF WORK ESTIMATED ON THIS DRAWING, NOTE THE FOLLOWING SIGNIFICANT RESIDUAL RISKS:

CONSTRUCTION
Underground utility apparatus, tar-bound material

MAINTENANCE/CLEANING
Underground utility apparatus, tar-bound material

USE:
none

DECOMMISSIONING/DEMOLITION
Underground utility apparatus, tar-bound material

© Crown Copyright and Database right 10003343 2016

Rev.	Date	Purpose of revision	Drawn	Checked	Approved

Chris McCarthy
Deputy Director - Commercial
Environment and Economy
Oxfordshire County Council
County Hall
New Road
Oxford
OX1 1BZ
Tel: 0845 310 1111

Project No: Woodstock Road Public Realm
Radcliffe Observatory Quarter

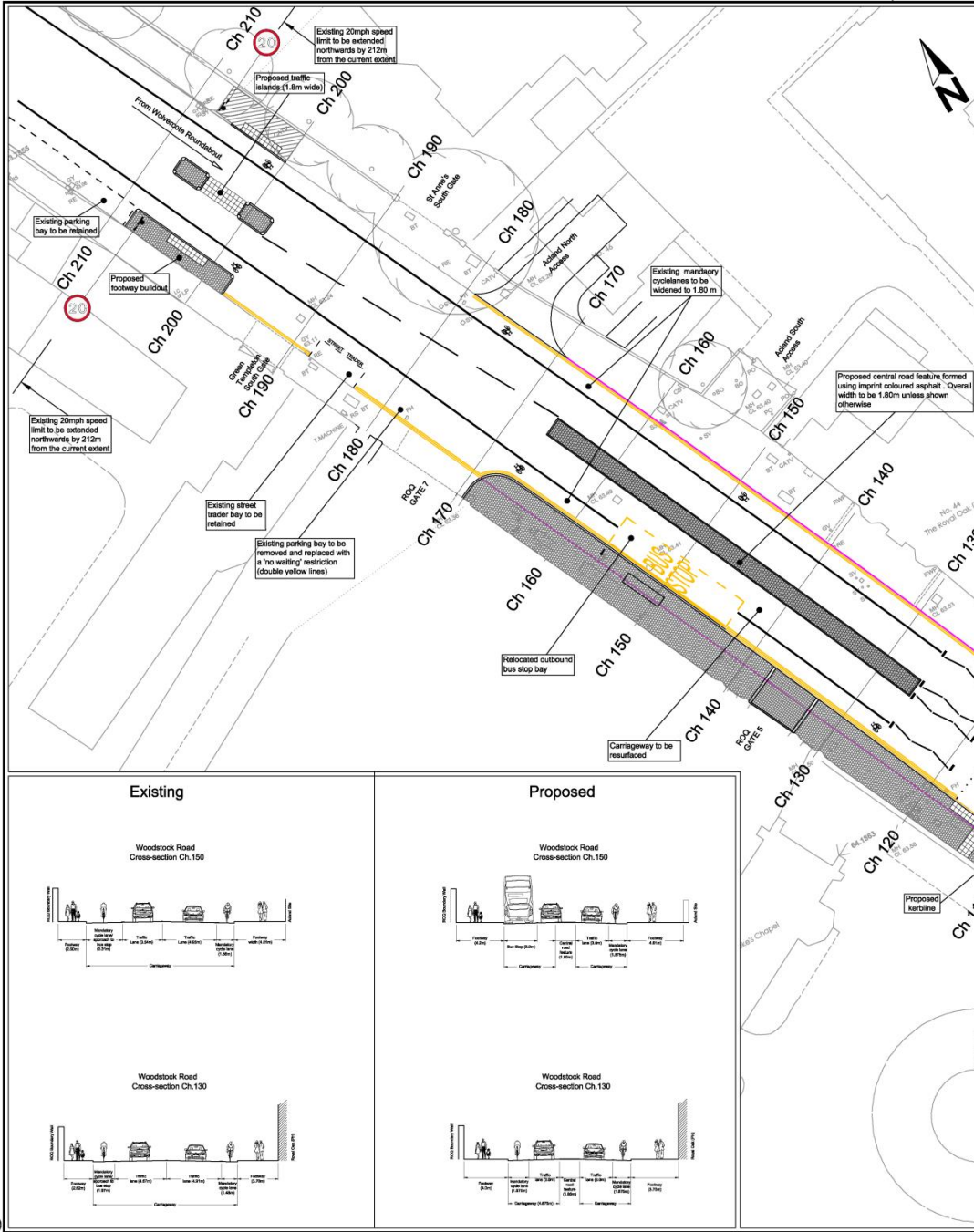
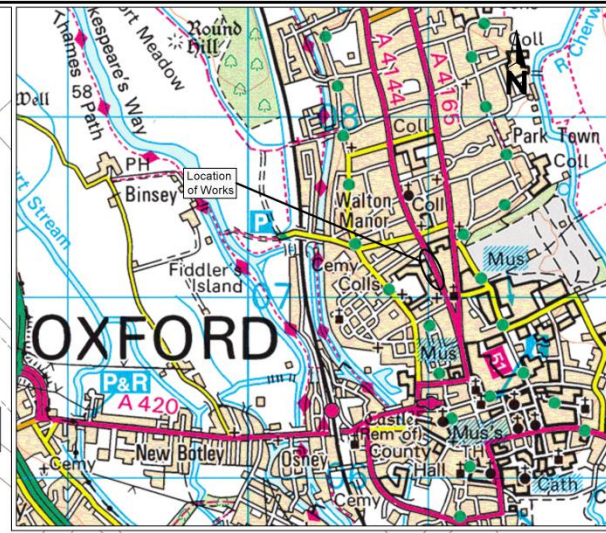
Drawing Title: Preliminary Design
Revised General Layout

Drawing Status: Issued for Comment

Scale	Drawn by	Checked by	Drawn by	Checked by	Approved by
1:200	EA	EA			

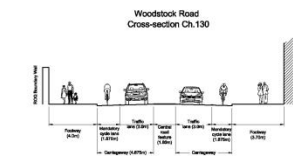
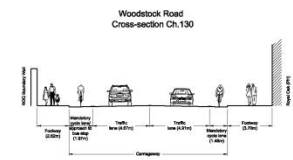
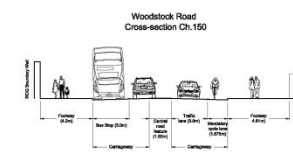
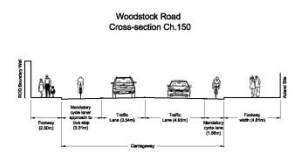
Date issued: 22.03.17
Date checked:
Date approved:

Customer Project No & File Ref: S-000673
Drawing No: S-000673/PRE/000/101 Revision: 0



Existing

Proposed



P-14 - Improvement Scheme (Scheme S-000673) - Woodstock Road (New Scheme) - Jan 2016 (R05) - Drawing 05 - Working Drawings - S-000673/PRE/000-101 (A1.dwg)

RESPONDENT	SUMMARISED COMMENTS
(1) Thames Valley Police	<p><u>20mph speed limit</u> – Object – Experience shows that changing to a lower speed limit on its own will not necessarily be successful in reducing the speed of traffic by very much if the prevailing mean speeds are much higher than the proposed lower speed limit. If a speed limit is set too low and is ignored then this could result in the majority of drivers criminalising themselves and could bring the system of speed limits into disrepute. 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. It is also important to set reasonable speed limits to ensure consistency across the country.</p> <p><u>Parking restrictions</u> – No objection.</p>
(2) Oxford City Council Planning	<p>As a principle the City Council support these proposals to further extend the 20 mph speed limit along Woodstock Road and Windmill Road respectively. The introduction of these new highway measures does appear to be very much in accordance with the approach being taken in the Preferred Options document currently being explored as part of the preparation of the Local Plan 2036. The preferred transport approach identifies a clear priority 'to promote sustainable travel over private car use so as to help to alleviate the current issues of congestion and air pollution.' This broad approach seeks to promote a travel hierarchy within the city which will prioritise walking, cycling and then public transport. The City Council are very keen to continue to work with the County Council, as the local highway authority, to develop new transport policies within the Local Plan 2036, which are aligned to the policy approach being developed through the Oxford Transport Strategy.</p> <p>Finally whilst the City Council are fully supportive of these lower speed limits and the benefits that it would bring to the areas concerned their active enforcement within the City should be made a priority.</p>
(3) Oxford City Councillor for North Ward	<p>Support - the extension of the 20mph zone on Woodstock Road and the improved pavements. Road safety (for cyclists) and speeding traffic are probably the biggest complaints I get from my ward, so this is a welcome change.</p>

(4) Oxford Bus Company, Thames Travel & Carousel Buses	Support - I can confirm that from our perspective the scheme looks fine.
(5) University of Oxford	<p><u>20mph speed limit</u> – Support – The University welcomes the proposals to extend the 20mph speed limit further North along the A4144 Woodstock Road as part of the pedestrian and cycling public realm enhancements outside the University’s Radcliffe Observatory Quarter (ROQ). This can be expected to reduce average vehicle speeds and thereby road danger to vulnerable road users. It should improve real and perceived safety for all road users and in particular improve the experience of walking and cycling on the corridor and accessing the ROQ via Gate 5 and Gate 7.</p> <p><u>Parking restrictions</u> – Support – The removal of the existing on-street parking bay outside gate 7 is supported, which can be expected to improve visibility for all users including freight and delivery vehicles serving the ROQ by gate 7, the only vehicle access to the site. The University is supportive of the whole scheme and looks forward to its delivery in 2018; the University hopes this will provide a suitable public realm environment for the Woodstock Road which is in keeping with the majestic appearance of the Building frontage and for convenient, welcoming and safe pedestrian and cycle access to the ROQ itself for the thousands of staff and students who use the site daily as the ROQ Masterplan is built-out.</p>
St Anne’s College	<p><u>20mph speed limit</u> – Support – <i>No comment.</i></p> <p><u>Parking restrictions</u> – Object – The reduction of parking opportunities for visitors to our college is unwelcome. Our contractors often use the P&D parking. On behalf of St Anne's College, I also object to the planned changes at Ch150. The northbound traffic will have to use the imprinted tarmac 'central reservation' to pass buses at the adjoining bus stop. You have, with your current plan, designed in a potential accident. Pedestrians will believe, by the nature of the coloured area that they are in some form of refuge. This, according to you plan will not be the case and could lead to confusion and potentially an accident. The only thing that mitigates is the 20 mph speed limit. The bus stop should be moved to a wider part of the road.</p>
(6) Cyclox	<p><u>20mph speed limit</u> – Support – We support the extension of 20mph along Woodstock Road, though Cyclox's position is that we wish to see 20mph across the city.</p> <p>While we understand that this consultation is about speed limits and parking bays nevertheless we do want to point out again that the OTS designates Woodstock Road as a Cycle Super Route and in this section the characteristics of a</p>

CMDE6

	<p>Cycle Super Route appear only partially upheld. We feel that there is a lost opportunity for segregation and bus-stop bypasses in this section. Generally the dimensions don't indicate a 20mph area and these could be visibly different, therefore supportive of 20mph driving, were the cycle provisions to be segregated: the road would then look, and be, narrower. Having a mandatory marked lane, with Double Yellow Lines at the kerb, rather negates the message about safe cycling which 'mandatory' markings should give.</p> <p><u>Parking restrictions</u> – Support – The wide area of Mandatory Lane at the Green Templeton College reads incoherently, it has a 'Street Trader' marked in it. It is an invitation for conflict. The Mandatory Lane should have an inner edge in an attempt to give it a recognisable, specific provision. The on-street parking north of Green Templeton College south gate, is another invitation to continue an existing conflict. We support the build-out as a physical marker for the car parking rather than enabling a driver to cross the cycle lane. There will be manoeuvring into parking places, but at least it will usually be at a lower speed. The Mandatory Lane should have an inner edge in an attempt to give it a recognisable, specific provision.</p>
<p>(8) Online response, (unknown)</p>	<p><u>20mph speed limit</u> – Support – <i>No comment.</i></p> <p><u>Parking restrictions</u> – Neither – <i>No comment.</i></p>
<p>(9) Online response, (unknown)</p>	<p><u>20mph speed limit</u> – Object – Woodstock Road is wide and long. It is either very slow at peak times when there is congestion but outside of these periods it has good visibility for drivers. The existing 30 mph limit has served perfectly well for many years and is an excellent compromise between speed and safety. To slow traffic to 20 mph is not only frustrating for drivers but is less fuel efficient and likely to increase pollution. In some vehicles it can require constant gear-changes to keep to the limit.</p> <p><u>Parking restrictions</u> – Neither – I do not know the justification for this proposal. Parking is always difficult wherever you are in Oxford and reducing its availability does not seem to be a useful option unless it is causing real and genuine difficulties for traffic flow.</p>
<p>(20) Local Resident, (Nuffield Road, Headington)</p>	<p><u>20mph speed limit</u> – Support</p> <p><u>Parking restrictions</u> – Support –</p>

	<p>However, also expressed utter disappointment in the rest of the cycling facilities proposed in respect of the width of the cycle lanes, noting that it would be far preferable to remove the proposed median area provide more space for cyclists, particularly at the bus stop, where a cycle bypass could be considered. This design will absolutely mean cyclists remain constantly in conflicts with people driving vehicles. A conflict area where buses and cyclists have to cross paths at the bus stop is even built specifically into this design. Cyclists WILL get injured or worse because this city chose to waste money painting the middle of a road and widening pavement.</p>
<p>(21) Local Resident, (Watlington Road)</p>	<p><u>20mph speed limit</u> – Support – We support this project and consider it will be a positive addition to the public realm, We are particularly supportive of the use or imprint surfacing for the central road feature. We are keen to ensure a high quality bus stop with superior facilities that might be expected on a high quality bus corridor, including: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good bus stop design including real time passenger information display, printed timetable and service information, local map and way finding; • High visibility bus stop flag and pole with appropriate and consistent branding; • An enhanced maintenance regime to maintain the quality feel of infrastructure investment; • A higher kerb to reduce the step height between the bus and the footway, minimum 125mm; • A stop cage marking of sufficient length to enable buses access close to the kerb. Minimum of 15m per bus if unobstructed (to cater for maximum likely vehicle lengths). <p><u>Parking restrictions</u> – Support – The removal of pay and display spaces at this location is essential to allow for the free flow of traffic, including buses through this scheme and accordingly this needs to be delivered to ensure a high quality scheme.</p>