

Division(s): Division(s): Berinsfield and Garsington; Isis; Kennington and Radley

CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT – 14 NOVEMBER 2019

OXFORD & KENNINGTON: A423 SOUTHERN BYPASS & LINKING ROADS – PROPOSED 50MPH & 40MPH SPEED LIMITS

Report by Director for Community Operations (Interim)

Recommendation

1. The Cabinet Member for the Environment is **RECOMMENDED** to approve a 50mph speed limit on the A423 Oxford Southern bypass between its junctions with A34 Hinksey Hill interchange and the existing 50mph speed limit which terminates just north east of the Heyford Hill roundabout junction (and including also a 50mph speed limit on the slip road to Kennington village) and a 40mph speed limit on the Old Abingdon Road and Kennington Road between the A423 and the existing 30mph speed limits at their entries to Oxford City and Kennington village as advertised.

Executive summary

2. Speed limits are reviewed when there are changes to the road layout or usage as a result of development and when requested by the local member or local councils due to concerns over road safety.

Introduction

3. This report presents responses received to a statutory consultation on a proposal to introduce a 50mph speed limit on the A423 Oxford Southern bypass between its junctions with A34 Hinksey Hill interchange and the existing 50mph speed limit which terminates just north east of the Heyford Hill roundabout junction (and including also a 50mph speed limit on the slip road to Kennington village), a 40mph speed limit on the Old Abingdon Road and Kennington Road between the A423 and the existing 30mph speed limits at their entries to Oxford city and Kennington village.

Background

4. The above proposals as shown at Annex 1 have been put forward as a result of a review of safety on the A423 Oxford Southern bypass following the completion in late 2015 of the A423 Kennington Roundabout improvement. These speed limits were previously consulted on in 2017, with approval for the 50mph speed limit being given at the Cabinet Member for Environment decisions meeting on 29 June 2017 and the 40mph speed limit at the Cabinet Member for Environment decisions meeting on 7 September 2017. However, due to delays in their implementation, the council is required to reconsult on proposals as more than two years has elapsed since their original publication.

Consultation

5. Formal consultation on the proposal was carried out between 3 October and 1 November 2019. A public notice was placed in the Oxford Times newspaper, and an email sent to statutory consultees, including Thames Valley Police, the Fire & Rescue Service, Ambulance service, South Oxfordshire & the Vale of White Horse District Councils, Oxford City Council, Kennington, South Hinksey, Sandford, Littlemore & Sunningwell Parish Councils and local County Councillors.
6. Thirty-one responses were received to the consultation. These are summarised in the table below:

Proposal	Support	Object	Neither/No opinion
Southern Bypass 50mph	17 (55%)	13 (42%)	1
Slip Road to Kennington 50mph	13 (42%)	16 (52%)	2
Slip Road to Old Abingdon Road & Kennington Road 40mph	12 (39%)	16 (52%)	3

7. Copies of the full responses are recorded at Annex 2 with copies available for inspection by County Councillors.

Response to objections and other comments

8. Thames Valley Police have not objected noting their response to the previous consultation in 2017.
9. The other responses, which included one from Cyclox, a group representing cycling interests in Oxford, with the remaining responses being from members of the public, included objections to all the speed limit reductions; while the majority of these were on the grounds that the speed limit reductions were unnecessary, several – including the Cyclox response - requested that the speed limit on the slip roads, Old Abingdon Road and Kennington Road should be reduced to 30mph to reduce the number of speed limit changes and to improve safety, in particular for cyclists.
10. In response to the above, the proposals are judged to be consistent with national guidance on setting local speed limits and in view of this and the expressions of support also received, together with the police response, it is recommended that they are approved, noting that the technical case for 30mph speed limits as requested by some of the objectors was carefully assessed in the previous consultation but were not considered then to be appropriate. For those respondents concerned that the proposed speed limits on the roads linking to the A423 Southern bypass are too high, it should also be noted that they are nevertheless being reduced from their current national speed limit status and, if approved, the effect of the changes will be monitored to ensure that they are operating safely.

How the Project supports LTP4 Objectives

11. The proposals would help facilitate the safe movement of traffic.

Financial and Staff Implications (including Revenue)

12. Funding for the proposed measures has been provided by the Oxfordshire County Council capital programme.

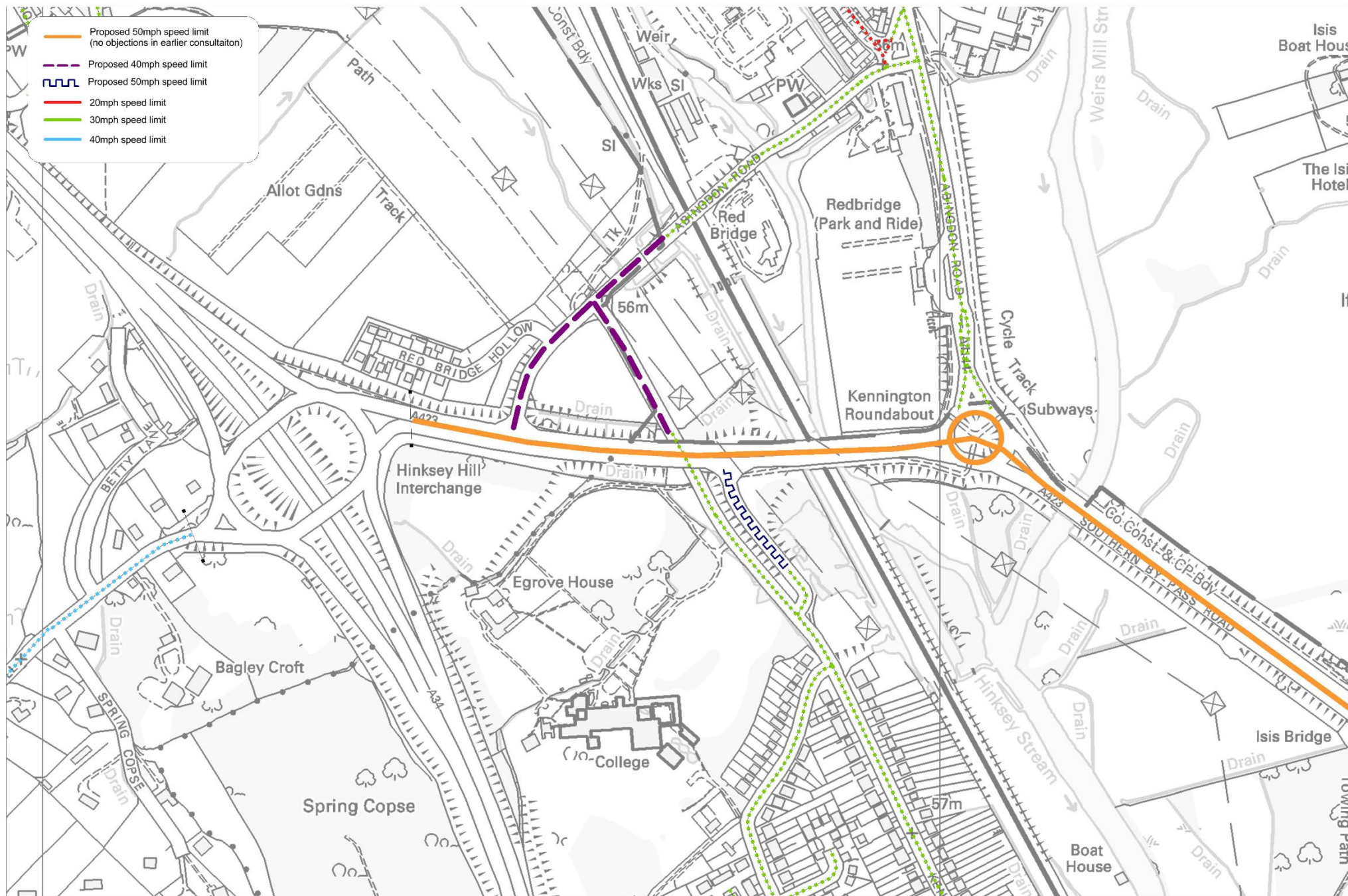
JASON RUSSELL

Director of Community Operations

Background papers: Plan of proposed waiting restrictions
 Consultation responses

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November 2019



RESPONDENT	SUMMARISED COMMENTS
(1) Traffic Management Officer, (Thames Valley Police)	No objection – In line with previous response dated 10 th August 2017 I have no objection.
(2) Local Resident, (Oxford)	<p><u>Southern Bypass 50mph</u> – Object – As a local resident with good knowledge of this road I strongly object to the proposal to reduce the speed limit on the A423 Southern/Eastern Bypass.</p> <p>My grounds for this objection from national speed limit to 50 mph is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the reduction is unnecessary as the road between the Heyford Hill roundabout and Kennington roundabout is a straight dual carriageway with excellent visibility; - the change in speed limits will unnecessarily increase the journey times for motor cars with no justified benefit; - during morning and evening ‘rush hour’ the average speed on these roads is frequently below 50 mph, while the roads are often quiet outside this time – especially in the evening – the proposed measure is therefore disproportionate in its impact outside peak times; and - motorists will not expect a dual carriageway of this nature to have a speed limit of 50 mph and the measure is likely to cause confusion among motorists (and therefore be extensively ignored). <p>Moreover, the Statement of Reasons provided does not substantively support the proposal because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the statement makes reference to minimising danger to cyclists and pedestrians, however the road already has a completely separate pavement/cycleway separated from the road by a metal safety barrier and therefore the proposal will be largely ineffective in this aim (cyclists almost never cycle directly on the road as an out of town dual carriageway); - the statement makes reference to reducing confusion to motorists yet all motorists would naturally expect a road of this nature and layout to carry a national speed limit – the change is therefore more likely to increase confusion; - the statement makes reference to increasing the ‘effective’ passage of traffic yet, as described above, the proposed measures will significantly and unnecessarily increase the time taken for traffic to pass through the road outside peak times; and - no evidence has been provided that the proposed reduction would make the road significantly safer, or that any past

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	<p>incidents have been caused by traffic travelling at speeds between 50 and 70 mph.</p> <p>In light of this objection, and the specific reasons provided above, I would appreciate if you could re-consider this proposal and not progress further. Should this not occur it is important that an updated statement of reasons be provided to address the failing described above.</p> <p><u>Slip Road 50mph</u> – Object – No comments.</p> <p><u>Slip Road/Old Abingdon Road 40mph</u> – Neither – No comments.</p>
(3) Local Resident, (Oxford)	<p><u>Southern Bypass 50mph</u> – Object – No comments.</p> <p><u>Slip Road 50mph</u> – Object – No comments.</p> <p><u>Slip Road/Old Abingdon Road 40mph</u> – Object – No comments.</p>
(4) Local Resident, (Oxford)	<p><u>Southern Bypass 50mph</u> – Object – Reducing the speed limit should only be done once evidence is provided that it will indeed be beneficial, specifically in this instance.</p> <p><u>Slip Road 50mph</u> – Object – No comments.</p> <p><u>Slip Road/Old Abingdon Road 40mph</u> – Object – No comments.</p>
(5) unknown, (Oxford)	<p><u>Southern Bypass 50mph</u> – Object – No comments.</p> <p><u>Slip Road 50mph</u> – Object – No comments.</p> <p><u>Slip Road/Old Abingdon Road 40mph</u> – Object – No comments.</p>

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<p>(6) unknown, (Oxford)</p>	<p><u>Southern Bypass 50mph</u> – Object – No comments.</p> <p><u>Slip Road 50mph</u> – Object – No comments.</p> <p><u>Slip Road/Old Abingdon Road 40mph</u> – Object – No comments.</p>
<p>(7) Local Resident, (Oxford)</p>	<p><u>Southern Bypass 50mph</u> – Object – No comments.</p> <p><u>Slip Road 50mph</u> – Object – No comments.</p> <p><u>Slip Road/Old Abingdon Road 40mph</u> – Object – No comments.</p>
<p>(8) Local Resident, (Chipping Norton)</p>	<p><u>Southern Bypass 50mph</u> – Object – The roads of Oxfordshire are already littered with random and irrelevant speed limit variations. They are accompanied by excessive levels of street furniture and the ever popular Speed Camera van operating in the name of “road safety”</p> <p>The ring road was built to get people round Oxford quickly, please remember that. If you’ve got money to spend please widen the ring road between the Banbury Road and the BMW garage westbound which for reasons no sane person can understand is only one lane wide.</p> <p><u>Slip Road 50mph</u> – Object – see above</p> <p><u>Slip Road/Old Abingdon Road 40mph</u> – Object – see above</p>
<p>(9) Local Resident, (Oxford)</p>	<p><u>Southern Bypass 50mph</u> – Object – No comments.</p> <p><u>Slip Road 50mph</u> – Object – No comments.</p> <p><u>Slip Road/Old Abingdon Road 40mph</u> – Object – No comments.</p>

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<p>(10) Local Resident, (Oxford)</p>	<p><u>Southern Bypass 50mph</u> – Object – It is already slow enough, this is just going to increase travel times for everyone</p> <p><u>Slip Road 50mph</u> – Object – No comments.</p> <p><u>Slip Road/Old Abingdon Road 40mph</u> – Object – No comments.</p>
<p>(11) Local Resident, (Abingdon)</p>	<p><u>Southern Bypass 50mph</u> – Object – No comments.</p> <p><u>Slip Road 50mph</u> – Object – As an employee at the Mini factory, I regularly use these routes and reducing the speed limit will have no effect on traffic flow. Several times a day traffic is queued back from the Boars hill roundabout to Littlemore roundabout. Is it not time for Oxfordshire county council to look at building new roads to accommodate the rising number of housing and cars being produced in and around the area?</p> <p><u>Slip Road/Old Abingdon Road 40mph</u> – Object – No comments.</p>
<p>(12) Local Resident, (Abingdon)</p>	<p><u>Southern Bypass 50mph</u> – Object – I travel this road out of rush hour daily and feel it doesn't need to be slowed down during this time. During rush hour it's generally slow moving traffic that doesn't need a speed limit.</p> <p><u>Slip Road 50mph</u> – Object – <i>(see comments above)</i></p> <p><u>Slip Road/Old Abingdon Road 40mph</u> – Object – <i>(see comments above)</i></p>
<p>(13) Local Resident, (Bicester)</p>	<p><u>Southern Bypass 50mph</u> – Object – Traffic in oxford is bad enough at times, slowing it down even more along unnecessary road that I need slowing down. Is pointless traffic needs to flow better not slower. Maybe fix the roads so they are smooth and easy to drive on instead.</p> <p><u>Slip Road 50mph</u> – Object – Same as above.</p> <p><u>Slip Road/Old Abingdon Road 40mph</u> – Object – Same as above.</p>

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<p>(14) Local Resident, (Abingdon)</p>	<p><u>Southern Bypass 50mph</u> – Object – I object to this proposal as it will compound congestion on the road in question, cause longer delays to morning commutes, reduce economic productivity through increasing commute times, compound the number of cars idling in traffic and reducing air quality, and increase the number of commuters using alternative routes compounding congestion locally.</p> <p><u>Slip Road 50mph</u> – Object – I object to this proposal as it will compound congestion on the road in question, cause longer delays to morning commutes, reduce economic productivity through increasing commute times, compound the number of cars idling in traffic and reducing air quality, and increase the number of commuters using alternative routes compounding congestion locally.</p> <p><u>Slip Road/Old Abingdon Road 40mph</u> – Object – I object to this proposal as it will compound congestion on the road in question, cause longer delays to morning commutes, reduce economic productivity through increasing commute times, compound the number of cars idling in traffic and reducing air quality, and increase the number of commuters using alternative routes compounding congestion locally.</p>
<p>(15) Local Resident, (Kennington)</p>	<p><u>Southern Bypass 50mph</u> – Support – It makes the limits more consistent, so easier to understand/comply with.</p> <p><u>Slip Road 50mph</u> – Object – Make it 30mph to be consistent with the Kennington Rd at the bottom. Also Cyclists/pedestrians will be crossing the slip road to get to the ring road cycle track, 50mph is too fast for this. Cyclists will be using the bottom half of the slip road – 30mph would be an appropriate limit for this use.</p> <p><u>Slip Road/Old Abingdon Road 40mph</u> – Object – 40mph is too fast for this road, and making it 30 mph would make the limit consistent with the Old Abingdon Rd and the Kennington Rd. Also Cyclists will need to cross the Old Abingdon Rd coming from/going to Hinksey roundabout via the cycle track. The residents of Hinksey Hollow need to be able to turn right safely into Red Bridge Hollow. All modes of transport will be stopping I bottom og the hill to turn right into Kennington Rd</p>
<p>(16) Local Resident, (Oxford)</p>	<p><u>Southern Bypass 50mph</u> – Support – No comments.</p> <p><u>Slip Road 50mph</u> – No opinion – No comments.</p>

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	<p><u>Slip Road/Old Abingdon Road 40mph</u> – No opinion – No comments.</p>
<p>(17) Local Resident, (Oxford)</p>	<p><u>Southern Bypass 50mph</u> – Support – I support setting a lower speed limit; there are many junctions and it's surprising that the limit wasn't imposed earlier.</p> <p><u>Slip Road 50mph</u> – Support – I support setting a lower speed limit; there are many junctions and it's surprising that the limit wasn't imposed earlier.</p> <p><u>Slip Road/Old Abingdon Road 40mph</u> – Support – I support setting a lower speed limit; there are many junctions and it's surprising that the limit wasn't imposed earlier.</p>
<p>(18) Local Resident, (Kennington)</p>	<p><u>Southern Bypass 50mph</u> – Support – No comments.</p> <p><u>Slip Road 50mph</u> – Support – No comments.</p> <p><u>Slip Road/Old Abingdon Road 40mph</u> – Object – I believe the changing of speed limits from 50 to 40 to 30 within a relatively short distance is unnecessary and potentially confusing. It should be 50 between the ring road and Redbridge Hollow and then 30.</p>
<p>(19) Local Resident, (Kennington)</p>	<p><u>Southern Bypass 50mph</u> – Support – No comments.</p> <p><u>Slip Road 50mph</u> – Support – No comments.</p> <p><u>Slip Road/Old Abingdon Road 40mph</u> – Support – No comments.</p>
<p>(20) Local Resident, (Abingdon)</p>	<p><u>Southern Bypass 50mph</u> – Support – No comments.</p> <p><u>Slip Road 50mph</u> – Support – No comments.</p> <p><u>Slip Road/Old Abingdon Road 40mph</u> – Support – No comments.</p>

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<p>(21) Local Resident, (Oxford)</p>	<p><u>Southern Bypass 50mph</u> – Support – The Bypass is 50 – so this makes sense....I also believe the road to Kennington should be between 20-30 with the road humps already in place. Certainly no more than 30 for safety reasons...</p> <p><u>Slip Road 50mph</u> – Object – The By-pass is 50, so surely the slip road itself should be less down to 30 mph at most?...</p> <p><u>Slip Road/Old Abingdon Road 40mph</u> – Object – 30mph is surely fast enough for safety reasons...</p>
<p>(22) Local Resident, (Kennington)</p>	<p><u>Southern Bypass 50mph</u> – Support – No comments.</p> <p><u>Slip Road 50mph</u> – Support – No comments.</p> <p><u>Slip Road/Old Abingdon Road 40mph</u> – Support – No comments.</p>
<p>(23) Local Resident, (Oxford)</p>	<p><u>Southern Bypass 50mph</u> – Support – No comments.</p> <p><u>Slip Road 50mph</u> – Support – No comments.</p> <p><u>Slip Road/Old Abingdon Road 40mph</u> – Support – No comments.</p>
<p>(24) Local Resident, (Oxford)</p>	<p><u>Southern Bypass 50mph</u> – Support – It is INSANE to have an unrestricted speed limit on the Kennington Road, a key connector to the national cycle route 5, and where thousands of cyclists pass by and come into conflict with 60mph traffic. This must be done urgently.</p> <p><u>Slip Road 50mph</u> – Support – Drivers need to slow to 30 mph immediately after this. Is 50mph still to fast?</p> <p><u>Slip Road/Old Abingdon Road 40mph</u> – Support – All of these speed limits are incorrect for the road usage and need</p>

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	<p>updating urgently.</p> <p>With a speed survey you will probably find the majority of drivers being safe and with the proposed new speed limits already.</p>
<p>(25) Local Resident, (Oxford)</p>	<p><u>Southern Bypass 50mph</u> – Support – These are short stretches between roundabouts, and it is entirely unnecessary to get up to motorway speeds here. This causes unnecessary emissions. It could also make negotiating junctions safer.</p> <p><u>Slip Road 50mph</u> – Support – Makes sense to match with the ring road.</p> <p><u>Slip Road/Old Abingdon Road 40mph</u> – Support – I am extremely supportive of this, as I think the current derestricted limit encourages excess speed, making cycling along that section precarious. I'd suggest a continuation of the 30mph limit right to the top of Kennington Road.</p>
<p>(26) Local Resident, (Oxford)</p>	<p><u>Southern Bypass 50mph</u> – Support – At long last, about time this dangerous local race track was officially curbed, if only it would be properly enforced.</p> <p><u>Slip Road 50mph</u> – Support – As above</p> <p><u>Slip Road/Old Abingdon Road 40mph</u> – Support – As above</p>
<p>(27) Local Resident, (Oxford)</p>	<p><u>Southern Bypass 50mph</u> – Support – The bypass encourages drivers to go fast, often above the speed limit. The 50mph limit will encourage people to go slower reducing noise pollution, improving air quality and reducing carbon emissions as well as improving safety.</p> <p>The same restriction is needed all the way along the northern bypass between Headington and Cutteslowe. Road noise spreads over a mile. Into the City.</p> <p><u>Slip Road 50mph</u> – Support – No comments.</p> <p><u>Slip Road/Old Abingdon Road 40mph</u> – Support – No comments.</p>

CMDE8

<p>(28) Local Resident, (Oxford)</p>	<p><u>Southern Bypass 50mph</u> – Support – No comments.</p> <p><u>Slip Road 50mph</u> – Support – No comments.</p> <p><u>Slip Road/Old Abingdon Road 40mph</u> – Support – No comments.</p>
<p>(29) Local Resident, (Oxford)</p>	<p><u>Southern Bypass 50mph</u> – Support – Much of the rest of the ring road is 50mph anyway.</p> <p><u>Slip Road 50mph</u> – Support – This slip road is used by cyclists travelling between Kennington and the underpass under the Redbridge roundabout.</p> <p>Currently the slip road junction with the A423 is very dangerous as there is limited visibility for both cars and cyclists at the junction and there is no segregated cycle lane along the slip road.</p> <p>In addition, for cyclists going straight along the (narrow and overgrown) path towards the A34 roundabout, the dropped curbs on the two sides of the slip road aren't aligned, and there is no central island.</p> <p>Basically, this is a downright awful and dangerous junction.</p> <p>The slip road and ring road here should be at least lowered to 50mph in order to make this junction safer for cyclists and pedestrians.</p> <p><u>Slip Road/Old Abingdon Road 40mph</u> – Support – Similar comments to above – Old Abingdon Road in particular is used by many cyclists and turning right at the junction between OAR and the slip road is dangerous because drivers travel to/from the slip road at speed.</p>
<p>(30) Cyclox & Cycling UK Oxford</p>	<p><u>Southern Bypass 50mph</u> – Support – more consistent limits on the ring road makes for better compliance/less confusion. That said, I do see (from the cycle track) quite a number of vehicles whose drivers more or less "floor it" from Kennington to Hinksey roundabouts (but rarely in the other direction).</p>

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Slip Road 50mph – **Object** – It is too high a limit for this road.

- Once works (starting next week) are completed, cycle users will be crossing the slip road at about its mid point, where if allowed, vehicles will be at their maximum speed.
- There will still be pedestrians and cycle users crossing the top of the slip road (when travelling from Kennington roundabout to Hinksey roundabout and up Hinksey Hill/on towards Boars Hill).
- Cycle users will still be using both sides of the slip road on the bottom half of its length.
- You'd need a very powerful car and floor it to actually achieve 50 mph on the short stretch of slip road (that has a sharp bend at each end) and stop at the other end, so you are basically proposing an unachievable speed limit!
- As a daily user of this slip road (to access the A423 cycle track), I rarely see fast vehicles on this slip road. The few fast vehicles I see invariably are travelling uphill towards the A423, never towards Kennington, so a 30 limit will make no difference to most drivers who already drive in a sensible manner.
- The Kennington Road at the bottom has a 30mph limit. It would be clearer/more consistent to make the slip road 30 mph to tie in with the Kennington Road.

Slip Road/Old Abingdon Road 40mph – **Object** – it is too high a limit for this road.

- Cycle users from Hinksey Hill will be joining the road from the off road cycle track (either at Red Bridge Hollow turning (travellers site), or on the bend at the A423 exit - the latter often preferable as the Red Bridge Hollow site has a high kerb - it is lowered, but not to standard, so it is too high). There is no cycle facility/provision between the Red Bridge Hollow and the start of the cycle track over Red Bridge railway bridge, and the road is not very wide.
- Cycle users from Oxford travelling towards Hinksey Hill need to wait in the middle road to turn right at the Red Bridge Hollow turning to gain access to the cycle track to Hinksey Hill roundabout. The residents of the travellers site also have to do this in their motor vehicles as well.
- Users of various travel modes after exiting the A423 have to stop at the bottom of the hill to turn right into Kennington Road.
- Having a 30 limit on these roads will make it more consistent with the rest of Old Abingdon Road and the rest of Kennington Road.
- In 2016 there were 3 cycle - motor vehicle accidents on this section of road.

Thus we propose the slip road is made a 30 mph speed limit for the benefit of vulnerable road users, and to further the aims of the County Council's LTP4's aims and objectives.

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<p>(31) Local Resident, (Oxford)</p>	<p><u>Southern Bypass 50mph</u> – Support – No comments.</p> <p><u>Slip Road 50mph</u> – Support – No comments.</p> <p><u>Slip Road/Old Abingdon Road 40mph</u> – Support – No comments.</p>
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