

Divisions affected: Kirtlington & Kidlington North

**CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAY MANAGEMENT –
26 JANUARY 2023**

BLETCHINGDON: PROPOSED 20MPH SPEED LIMITS

Report by Corporate Director, Environment and Place

RECOMMENDATION

1. The Cabinet Member for Highway Management is **RECOMMENDED** to approve the proposed introduction of 20mph speed limits as advertised.

Executive summary

2. The report presents responses to a statutory consultation on the proposed introduction of 20mph speed limits in Bletchingdon as shown in **Annex 1**.

Financial Implications

3. Funding for consultation and the proposals themselves has been provided by the County Council's 20 mph Speed Limit Project

Equality and Inclusion Implications

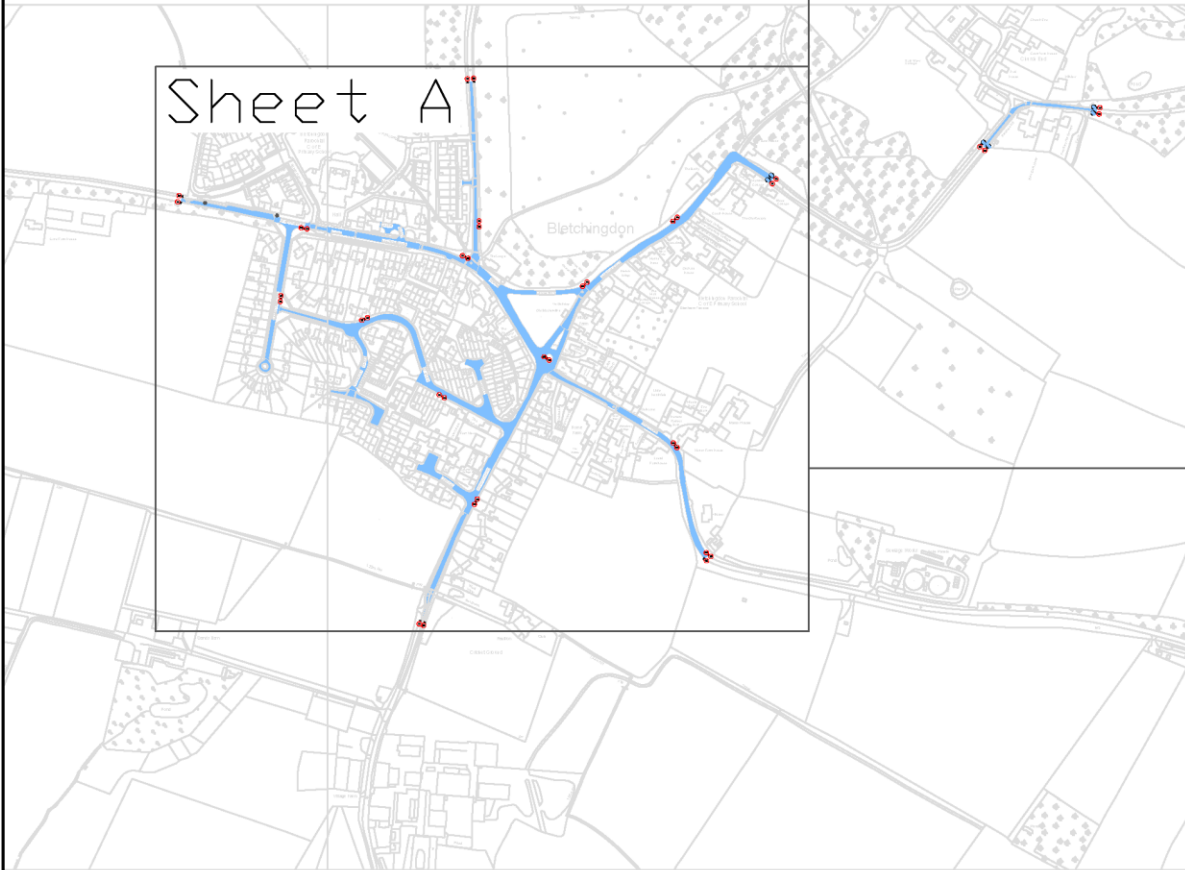
4. No implications in respect of equalities or inclusion have been identified in respect of the proposals.

Sustainability Implications

5. The proposals would help encourage walking and cycling within Bletchingdon by making them safer and more attractive.

Formal Consultation

6. Formal consultation was carried out between 10 November and 09 December 2022. A notice was published in the Oxford Times newspaper, and an email 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, Cherwell District Council, the local District Cllrs, Bletchingdon and Kirtlington parish councils,



Drawing No.		Revision				
Notes:						
[Blue Box]		Proposed new 20mph				
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Rev.	Date	Purpose of revision	Drawn	Checked	Approved	
		Bill Cotton Director of Communities Operations Oxfordshire County Council County Hall New Road Oxford OX1 1ND Tel: 0845 310 1111				
Project title						
Bletchington 20mph Limit						
Drawing title						
General Layout						
Drawing Status						
Scale @ A3	Drawn by	ER	Checked by	GJB	Approved by	GJB
	Date drawn	6/01/23	Date checked	6/01/23	Date approved	6/01/23
Oxfordshire Project No. & File Ref						
Drawing No.		Revision				

RESPONDENT	COMMENTS
<p>(1) Traffic Management Officer, (Thames Valley Police)</p>	<p>Concerns – Thames Valley Police welcome the opportunity to engage on plans for road safety improvement and acknowledge that 20mph limits can be a useful tool in road safety. There are other reasons 20mph 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 20mph 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) • existing traffic speeds • road environment

	<p>However I recognise Oxfordshire County Council now have their own Policy for Setting Speed Limits and I expect full compliance of that policy going forward in relation to both monitoring , future engineering and self-enforcement through Community Speed Watch .</p> <p>Our stance remains that primarily 20 mph speed limits and zones should be self-enforcing 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 substantial numbers of motorists.</p>
<p>(2) Head of Strategic Development and the Built Environment, (Stagecoach Bus Company)</p>	<p>No objection – This response is submitted as an informative only. It must not be construed as an objection by the Council or any other party.</p> <p>Bletchingtondon is on route 250 operated currently under contract to the Council by another bus operator. The route is currently funded by s106 contributions from Heyford Park.</p> <p>There is a significant background here that it is not appropriate for me to elaborate on in detail. This and other communities south of Heyford Park are already apprised, however, that the route will be removed for these villages at the end of 2022. I understand that some kind of replacement provision might be anticipated.</p> <p>What I would say is that one problem with the 250 and its predecessor route 25A - that Stagecoach ran under contract for some time - was extremely ambitiously timed. Not only that but the condition of roads between villages was such that both vehicles and passenger comfort suffered.</p> <p>Whether scheduled or demand responsive, a 20mph here, when looked at cumulatively with Kirtlington and other settlements on the current 250 route, only makes the prospect of either retaining or replacing the 250 in any form, that much harder to achieve. The inability to sustain a regular clock-face timetable at peak hours is one problem with the current service. Extending running times would make it impossible to provide an off-peak clock-face facility - without which already-patronage in our experience would no doubt drop substantially.</p> <p>As the Council looks at this proposal it will want to have regard to many things. It may well be that the bus service on the 250 corridor is a closed matter and as such, the 20mph proposals in this village are immaterial to the outcome. However, it is worth flagging.</p>

(3) Cherwell District Council, (Development Management)	No objection – Upon review of the information forming part of the consultation, I have no observations to make.
(4) Member of public, (Moulsford, Ferry Lane)	<p>Object – This proposal for 20mph limit is in nobody's interest. As a motorist I always strive to strictly observe 20mph limits just as I observe other limits, but it usually leads to a very unpleasant driving experience owing to tailgaters, and often leads to dangerous overtakes by less patient drivers.</p> <p>As a pedestrian, when stepping into or crossing a road I certainly won't simply assume that oncoming traffic is crawling along at 20mph, just because there's a 20mph sign. Most will be going much faster and and therefor there is absolutely no benefit to the pedestrians - we still have to treat all traffic as travelling at similar speeds to a 30mph limit. Even worse, just occasionally, a vehicle will turn out to be actually driving at 20mph thereby causing me to wait longer for it to pass, before I can safely cross behind it.</p> <p>Regarding speed limit TROs, they have no legal significance for cyclists, yet many reasonably fit cyclists often exceed 20mph. This will give rise to the bizarre situation whereby those few motorists who actually observe the limit could find ourselves tailgated by impatient cyclists and when assisted by a slight gradient, perhaps even overtaken by cyclists - which is highly unlikely to be a safe manoeuvre. It may also give rise to a further temptation for cyclists to illegally ride on the footway, if it allows them to get past 20mph traffic more easily.</p>