

Divisions affected: Charlbury & Wychwood

CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAY MANAGEMENT – 26 JANUARY 2023

FIFIELD: 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 Fifield 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 Fifield 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, West Oxfordshire District Council, the local District Cllrs, Fifield Parish Meeting, and the local County Councillor representing the Charlbury & Wychwood division.

Statutory Consultee Responses:

7. Two responses were received from statutory consultees. Thames Valley Police re-iterated their views concerning OCC's policy and practice regarding 20mph speed limits; they consider their response as 'having concerns' rather than an outright objection. Stagecoach Bus Company responded but had no objection or comments to make.

Other Responses:

8. A single online reply was received which registered their support.
9. The responses are shown in **Annex 2**, and copies of the original responses are available for inspection by County Councillors.

Officer response to objections/concerns

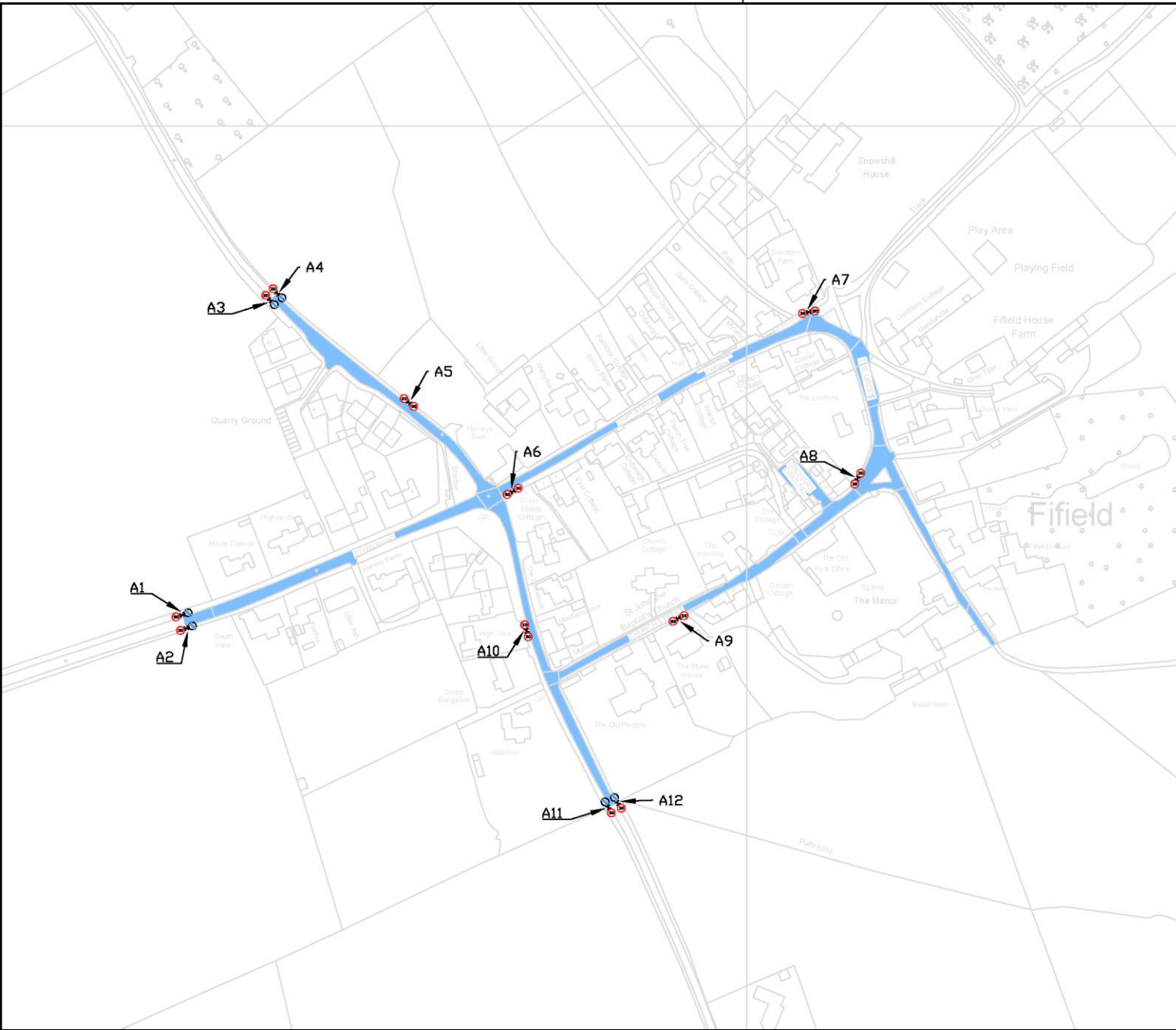
10. The main purpose of the scheme is to improve road safety and to encourage greater use of active travel by reducing speeds; this will also reduce accidents. The aim of reducing speed limits is to change driver's mindsets to make speeding socially unacceptable and make more environmentally friendly modes of travel such as walking and cycling more attractive – and also reduce the Counties carbon footprint. This forms part of a countywide programme of works that seeks to deliver 'a safer place with a safer pace'.

Bill Cotton
Corporate Director, Environment and Place

Annexes Annex 1: Consultation Plan
 Annex 2: Consultation responses

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January 2023



Drawing No.		Revision			
Notes:					
<div style="display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center; gap: 5px;"> <div style="width: 20px; height: 10px; background-color: #add8e6; border: 1px solid black;"></div> Proposed 20mph limit </div>					
© Crown Copyright and Database rights 10023943 2017					
Rev.	Date	Purpose of revision	Drawn	Checked	Approved
<div style="display: inline-block; font-size: x-small; vertical-align: middle; margin-left: 10px;"> Bill Cotton Director of Communities Operations Oxfordshire County Council County Hall New Road Oxford OX1 1ND Tel: 0845 310 1111 </div>					
Project title					
Fifield 20mph Limit					
Drawing title					
Sheet A					
Drawing Status					
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	Date drawn	Date checked	Date approved		
		6/01/23	6/01/23		
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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>
(2) Head of Strategic Development and the Built Environment, (Stagecoach Bus Company)	<p>No objection – In line with our general practice, I am again happy to confirm that Stagecoach has no comments or observations to make and offers no objection to these proposals.</p>
(3) Local Resident/Member of public, (Fifield, Church Street)	<p>Support – The current speed limit of 30Mph creates an unsafe environment for pedestrians. The streets are way too narrow for such a high speed limit. In regards to speed limits I sincerely hope that the small country roads speed is also revised as it also is not safe at present, from my perspective. A 20Mph speed limit will create a much safer environment for the village. I sincerely hope the new speed limit of 20 Mph is respected and enforced.</p> <p>Travel change: Yes – walk/wheel more</p>