

Divisions affected: *Ploughley*

DELEGATED DECISIONS BY CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT

23 MAY 2024

HETHE: PROPOSED 20MPH SPEED LIMITS

Report by Corporate Director for Environment and Place

RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet Member for Transport Management is **RECOMMENDED** to:

- a) **Approve the introduction of 20mph speed limits in Hethe as advertised.**

Executive Summary

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

Financial Implications

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

Legal Implications

3. No legal implications have been identified in respect of the proposals.

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 Hethe by making them safer and more attractive.

Formal Consultation

6. Formal consultation was carried out between 22 February and 15 March 2024. A notice was published in the Bicester Advertiser 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, Hethe Parish Council, and the local County Councillor representing the Ploughley division.

Statutory Consultee Responses:

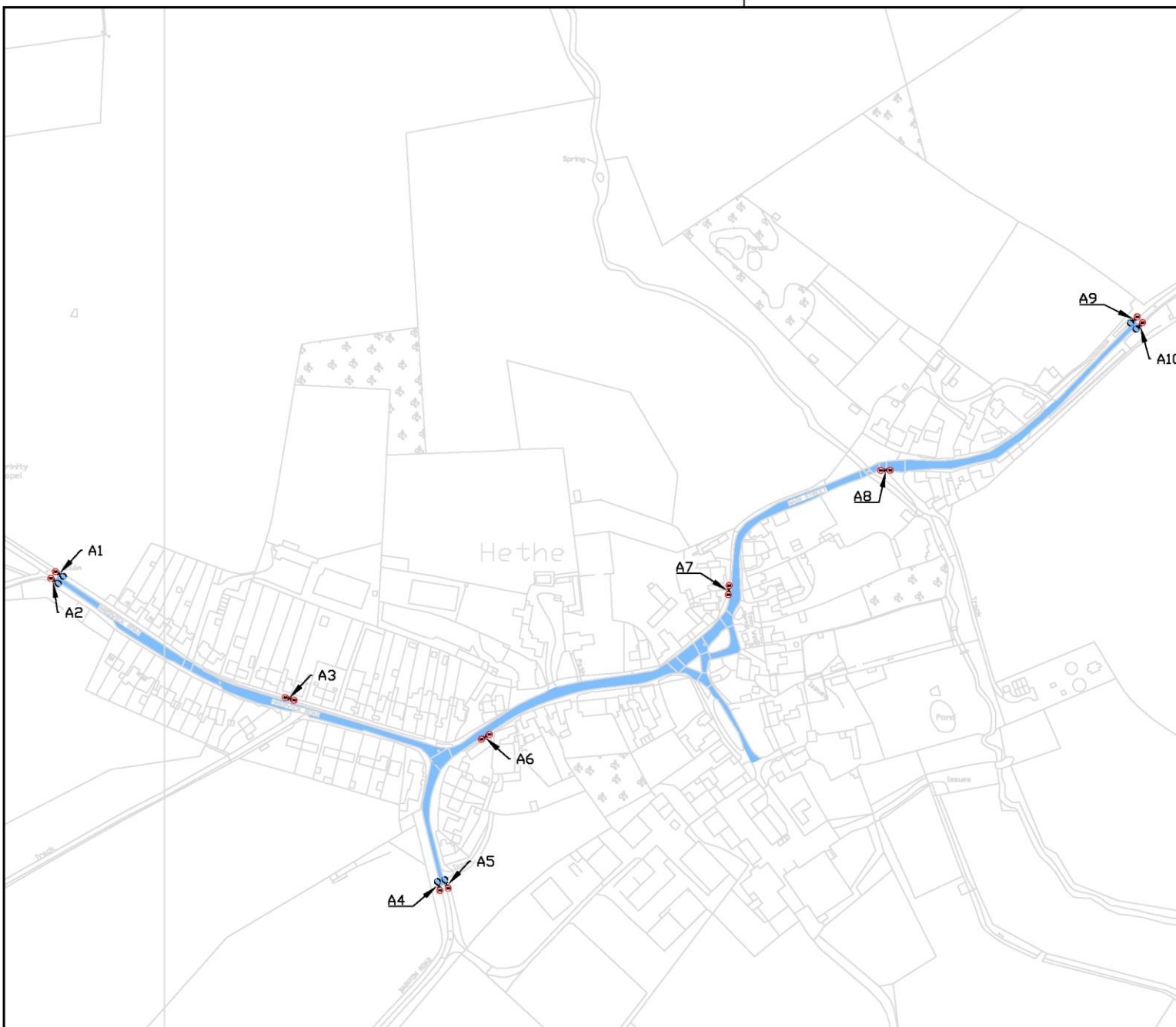
7. Thames Valley Police re-iterated their views concerning OCC's policy and practice regarding 20mph speed limits, they consider their view as 'having concerns' rather than a formal objection.
8. Oxford Bus Company offered no objection, confirming that no regular public bus services operate along the road concerned.

Other Responses:

9. 17 responses were received (from local residents, and two local Cllrs) via the online consultation survey during the course of the formal consultation, comprising of: two objections (12%), 13 in support (76%), and two non-objections (12%).
10. Both objections felt that the money could be better spent, with one suggesting that 20mph speed limits are ineffective without enforcement, and the other felt that 'blanket' 20mph zones are often disregarded by motorists, can increase conflict on the roads, and that zones which are actually really needed around areas such as schools could be ignored.
11. Those who responded online, were also asked whether if the 20mph speed limit proposals were implemented, would it likely influence a change to their mode of travel in the area, the results of which are shown below:

Travel Change	Number
Yes – walk/wheel more	3 (17.5%)
Yes - cycle more	1 (6%)
No	12 (70.5%)
Other	1 (6%)
Total	17

12. The responses are shown in **Annex 2**, and copies of the original responses are available for inspection by County Councillors



Drawing No. _____

Notes:

Proposed 20mph limit

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Rev.	Date	Purpose of revision	Drawn	Checked	Approved

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
 Bill Cotton
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Project title
 Hethe 20mph

Drawing title
 Sheet A

Drawing Status

Scale @ A3	Drawn by ER	Checked by GJB	Approved by GJB
	Date drawn 02/11/23	Date checked 02/11/23	Date approved 03/11/23

Oxfordshire Project No. & File Ref

Drawing No.	Revision

RESPONDENT	COMMENTS
(1) Traffic Management Officer, (Thames Valley Police)	<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

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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</p> <p>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 Built Environment and Infrastructure, (Go-Ahead Group)	No objection – No regular public buses services operate along the road concerned. We thus offer no objection.
(3) Local Cllr (Hethe, Hardwick Road)	<p>Support – 30 is far too fast for the village...there are lots of blind bends and parked cars on both sides of the road. I drive at max 20 currently and find it far more enjoyable for everyone...myself, as well as the residents I pass.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
(4) Local Cllr (Hethe, Main Street)	<p>Support – The village is frequently used as a cut through for traffic and speeds seen regularly exceed 30mph. The village roads are narrow with very limited parking and roads are used by farm vehicles. Footpaths and pavements are absent for large sections of the village meaning pedestrians are often unavoidably walking on the carriageway.</p> <p>Travel change: Yes – walk/wheel more</p>
(5) Local resident, (Hethe, Hethe Road)	Object – 20 mph speed limits are ineffective without enforcement, a 20mph limit through Hethe will not be enforced and funds will be wasted on nugatory activity (like this consultation) and new signage. Some of the allocated funds could be better spent on repairing the surface of the existing roads around and through Hethe.

	<p>Travel change: No</p>
<p>(6) Local resident, (unknown)</p>	<p>Object – Like all of the other 20mph zones installed in Oxfordshire, this is an unnecessary waste of valuable taxpayers money which should be spent on projects to benefit communities. Blanket 20mph zones are rightly disregarded by motorists, increase conflict on the roads and mean that zones which are actually really needed around areas such as schools are also ignored instead of being used properly to flag areas for greater safety awareness. Cllr Gant in particular is pushing these zones in the face of increasing opposition, evidence that they do not reduce accidents (increasing them in some areas) and needs to urgently reconsider what he is doing. Be bold enough to pause this policy, to evaluate the impact and to admit mistakes - many of the existing 20mph zones need reverting to 30mph, just as the Welsh Government are finding and are doing.</p> <p>The pity is that valuable public funds are being wasted in the face of clear need to spend on other genuine priorities or in not increasing taxation on those living in poverty - it is no exaggeration to say that families who cannot properly afford to feed their children or heat their homes are having to pay their council tax to pay for projects like this which is an absolute disgrace. I know OCC will not change policy, will not listen, but I live in hope that one day those responsible for this will look back and feel guilty that they missed their chance to effect meaningful benefit for the people of the county to push this agenda.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
<p>(7) Local resident, (Hethe, Hardwick Road)</p>	<p>Support – We have lived in the village for just over a year and witnessed a number of near-miss RTAs around the corner of the Hardwick Road/Main Street and Bainton Road junction where vehicles fail to slow down on the bend. There are many children and dog walkers in the village using the narrow paths to get to the village hall green and having to cross where there's no pavement in places. Cyclists and horse riders often use the roads in and out of the village too and, (sometimes speeding) vehicles entering/exiting the village cause concern with slower moving road users. Slowing down vehicles will be a huge benefit to all in the community.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>

<p>(8) Local resident, (Hethe, Hardwick Road)</p>	<p>Support – Not that Hethe gets a lot of traffic but 20 Mph would make the streets safer, cleaner and give people more of a chance to admire the village</p> <p>Travel change: Yes – walk/wheel more</p>
<p>(9) Local resident, (Hethe, Hardwick Road)</p>	<p>Support – The speed of the traffic along Hardwick Road in Hethe is ridiculous. It is an accident waiting to happen.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
<p>(10) Local resident, (Hethe, Hardwick Road)</p>	<p>Support – People drive too fast through the village, especially when exiting along the Hardwick Rd towards Hardwick. It is not safe, especially given the number of children and dogs in the village.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
<p>(11) Local resident, (Hethe, Hardwick Road)</p>	<p>Support – I think speed bumps are more efficient</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
<p>(12) Local resident, (Hethe, Main Street)</p>	<p>Support – I fully support this proposal to improve the safety of all road users and pedestrians in the village, particularly as there are areas where there are no footpaths or the paths are too narrow. Also, most of the roads through the village are narrow due to on street parking. My only concern is that a large area of the village is a designated Conservation Area and that signage and road markings should therefore be restricted to only those which are essential for safety reasons.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
<p>(13) Local resident, (Hethe, Main Street)</p>	<p>Support – Cars parked on the road make it narrow and require vehicles to slow down. We have a lot of big heavy farm vehicles being driven through the village. These need to go slowly.</p>

	<p>Many children walk to the playground and to and from school bus pick up points. They need a safer environment with cars travelling slowly.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
(14) Local resident, (Hethe, Main Street)	<p>Support – 20 mph is the correct maximum speed for a village. Too Many cars currently speed through Hethe, so a 20 mph limit will help slow people down. Fully support.</p> <p>Travel change: Yes – walk/wheel more</p>
(15) Local resident, (Hethe, Main Street)	<p>Support – Making our village a safer place. Cars travel Too quickly and with the twists and turns and a tiny bridge in the village, we need cars to slow down.</p> <p>Travel change: Other Run more</p>
(16) Local resident, (Hethe, Main Street)	<p>Support – Many people drive too fast, lots of children and animals in village so very dangerous.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
(17) Local resident, (Oxford, Cricket Road)	<p>Support – Safer streets less injury less danger of speeding cars and lorries</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
(18) Local resident, (Hethe, Hardwick Road)	<p>No objection – Everywhere else is going 20mph, no reason for Hethe to be an exception</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>

(19) Local resident,
(Hethe, Hardwick Road)

No objection – The speed of some of the drivers through the village is a danger, whether it's day or night. I have young children who play outside and wouldn't want them injured down to irresponsible humans disrespecting the road. We have animals, cattle, horses and even the hounds on exercise, surely preserving this is paramount to any human.

Travel change: **Yes - cycle more**