

Division(s): Hendreds & Harwell, Didcot East & Hagbourne
--

## **CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT – 14 JANUARY 2016**

### **PROPOSED TRAFFIC IMPROVEMENTS (SPEED LIMITS & CROSSINGS) – HAGBOURNE & CHILTON AREA**

**Report by Deputy Director of Environment & Economy (Commercial)**

#### **Introduction**

1. This report presents comments and objections received in the course of the statutory consultation on the proposals to introduce various traffic restrictions in the Science Vale UK (SVUK) area, in relation to the Chilton Interchange Improvement scheme.

#### **Background**

2. Details of the various proposals under consideration are shown in the plans located in Annexes 1 – 3 attached and comprise a number of traffic related proposals in the SVUK area:-
  - (a) Annex 1 shows the proposed 50mph speed limit on Hagbourne Hill in line with the decision to re-consult at the Decisions Meeting on 3 September 2015;
  - (b) Annexes 2 and 3 show proposed changes in relation to the Chilton Interchange scheme, including a 30mph speed limit through the modified junction and for two Toucan crossings located on the A4185 Newbury Road and on Hagbourne Hill to facilitate access to relocated bus stops and also to the restricted Byway north of Chilton village

#### **Consultation**

3. The formal consultation on the majority of the proposals (other than the Chilton Toucan crossings) was carried out between 29 October and 27 November 2015. Public notices were published in the Didcot Herald and the Oxford Times, while street notices were placed on site in the vicinity.
4. The consultations included that in relation to the proposed Harwell Link Rd scheme. The results of this consultation and final scheme proposals are still being developed and will be brought to a future Cabinet Member Decision meeting for consideration.
5. An email was sent to the statutory consultees including Thames Valley Police, the Fire and Ambulance services, local Town and Parish Councils and the local Members, while a dedicated page was added to the County's online consultation portal to allow people to view and respond. A total of 12

## CMDE6

responses were received during the consultation period – these are summarised at Annex 4 and discussed below.

6. The consultation on the Toucan crossings proposed as part of the Chilton Interchange scheme took place between 18<sup>th</sup> November and 18<sup>th</sup> December 2015. A public notice was published in the Didcot Herald and street notices placed on site in the vicinity of the proposed crossings.
7. An email was sent to the statutory consultees including Thames Valley Police, the Fire and Ambulance services, Chilton Parish Council and the local Members, while a dedicated page was added to the County's online consultation portal. A total of 31 responses were received during the consultation period – the issues raised are summarised at Annex 5 and discussed below.
8. Copies of all the consultation responses are available for inspection in the Members' Resource Centre.

### **Objections and concerns**

9. With regard to the proposals other than the Toucan crossings in Chilton, whilst none were objections a number of respondents, including Thames Valley Police, have raised points of detail or issues beyond the scope of these proposals.
10. With regard to the proposals for the two Toucan crossings as part of the Chilton Interchange 30 responses were from the members of the equestrian community strongly objecting that the crossing near Townsend is not intended to be a Pegasus (i.e. horse-friendly) crossing; respondents included the Director of Access of the British Horse Society and from its County Chair, along with the manager of a local equestrian facility and a number of riders, as well as Chilton Parish Council. In addition, one respondent objects to both the crossings as they consider the intended locations to be unsafe.

### **Response to objections and concerns**

11. Many of the points raised by respondents to the proposals other than the Chilton toucan crossings can be dealt with during detailed design stage or considered as possible future schemes.
12. With regard to the objectors requests that the proposed Toucan crossing near Townsend be constructed as a Pegasus crossing to facilitate equestrian use, this was considered following the initial Public Consultation for the Chilton Interchange project but was not found to be feasible as set out below.
13. The scoping of the Chilton scheme did not identify a need for a Pegasus crossing and a subsequent video survey showed no equestrian traffic crossing the road at this location during the survey; furthermore there are no commercial stables, race courses or training facilities within the immediate vicinity of this crossing point, which suggests a low demand for equestrian use of this route. Pegasus crossings are usually located where there is a high

## CMDE6

equestrian demand and in addition, such crossings are normally located where a road crosses a bridleway. This crossing point is not on such an equestrian route, with a restricted by-way on the north side only. It is deemed inappropriate to encourage equestrians to use a controlled crossing when there is no facility for them to use on the other side.

14. There would also be significant deliverability challenges to installing such a facility. Traffic Advisory Leaflet 03/03 recommends that cyclists and pedestrians are segregated from equestrians at crossings. A separate equestrian crossing would need to be installed adjacent to the proposed toucan crossing, extending the total crossing width by a minimum of 8m. Any crossing relocation would bring the crossing closer than is recommended to the junction with Townsend (as highlighted in Local Transport Note 02/95), with resulting potential safety issues.
15. There is currently insufficient space to provide an equestrian holding area on the north side of the proposed crossing location. Additional land would be required, and with land acquisition at this location having proven to be very difficult, any additional land would only likely to be obtained through a Compulsory Purchase Order process – due to the lack of need and the fact it is not part of a bridleway route, means this is unlikely to be successful.
16. It is important to recognise and note that horse riders would still be able to cross the road here as they do currently.

### **How the Project supports LTP3 Objectives**

17. The proposals would help facilitate the easier flow of motor traffic in the area.

### **Financial and Staff Implications (including Revenue)**

18. Funding for the proposals is being delivered by Department for Transport monies, whilst the appraisal of the proposals and consultation has been undertaken by officers as part of their normal duties.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

19. **The Cabinet Member for the Environment is RECOMMENDED to approve the implementation of the proposals set out in this report as advertised.**

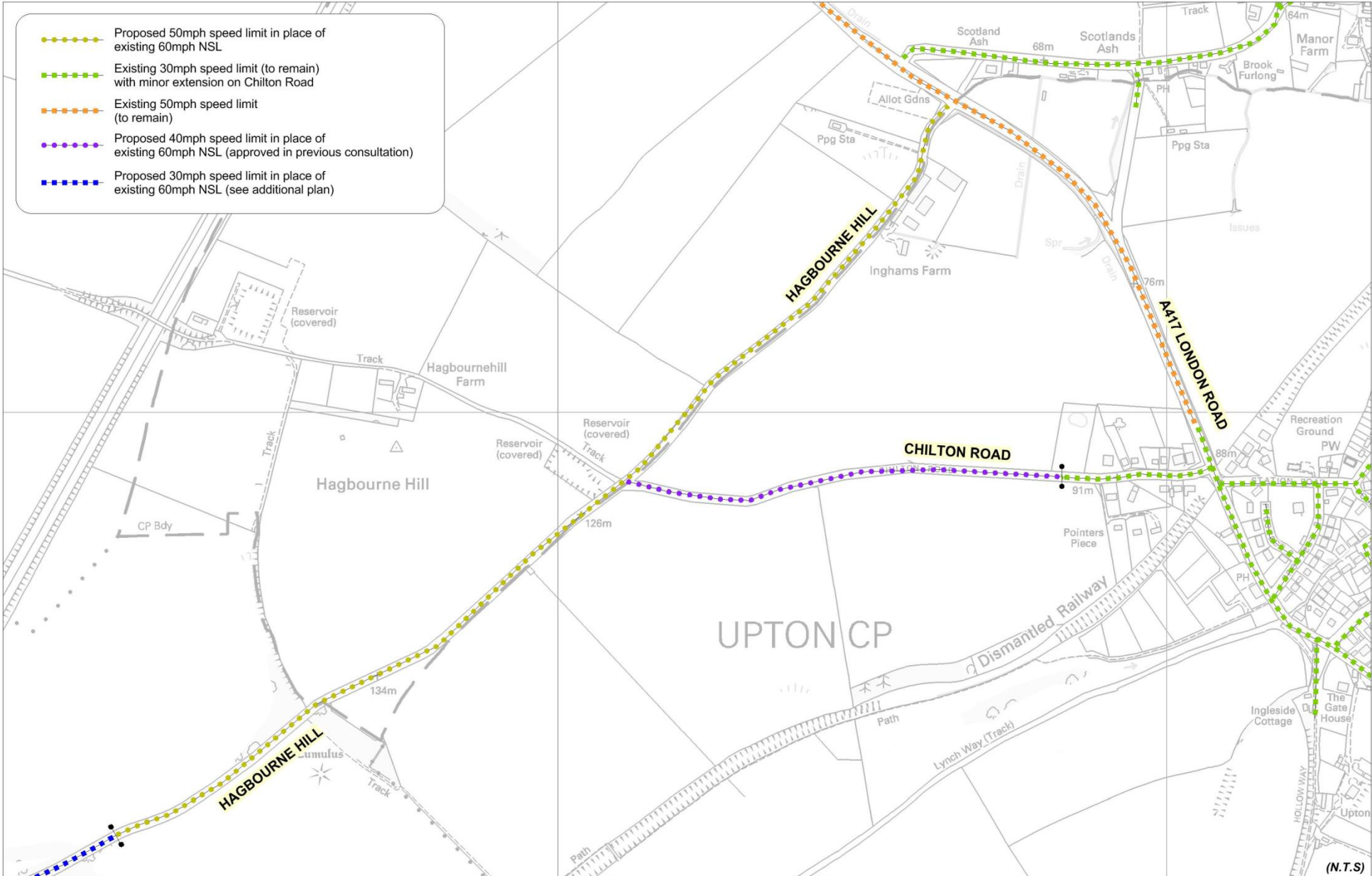
MARK KEMP

Deputy Director of Environment & Economy (Commercial)

Background papers: Consultation responses

Contact Officers: Owen Jenkins 01865 323304

January 2016



Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey mapping with permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown Copyright  
 Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings.  
 Oxfordshire County Council. © Crown Copyright and database rights 2015. 100023343

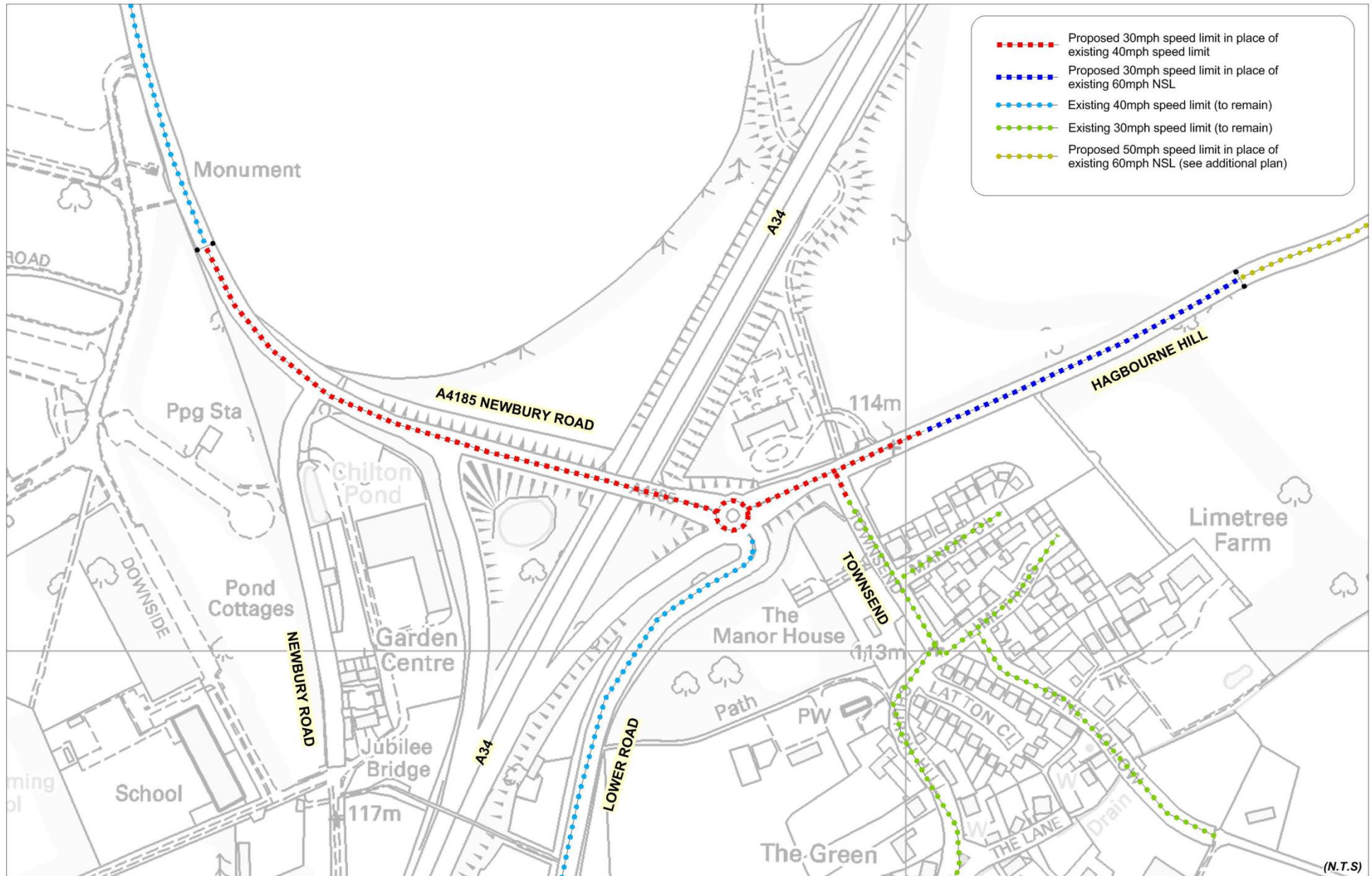


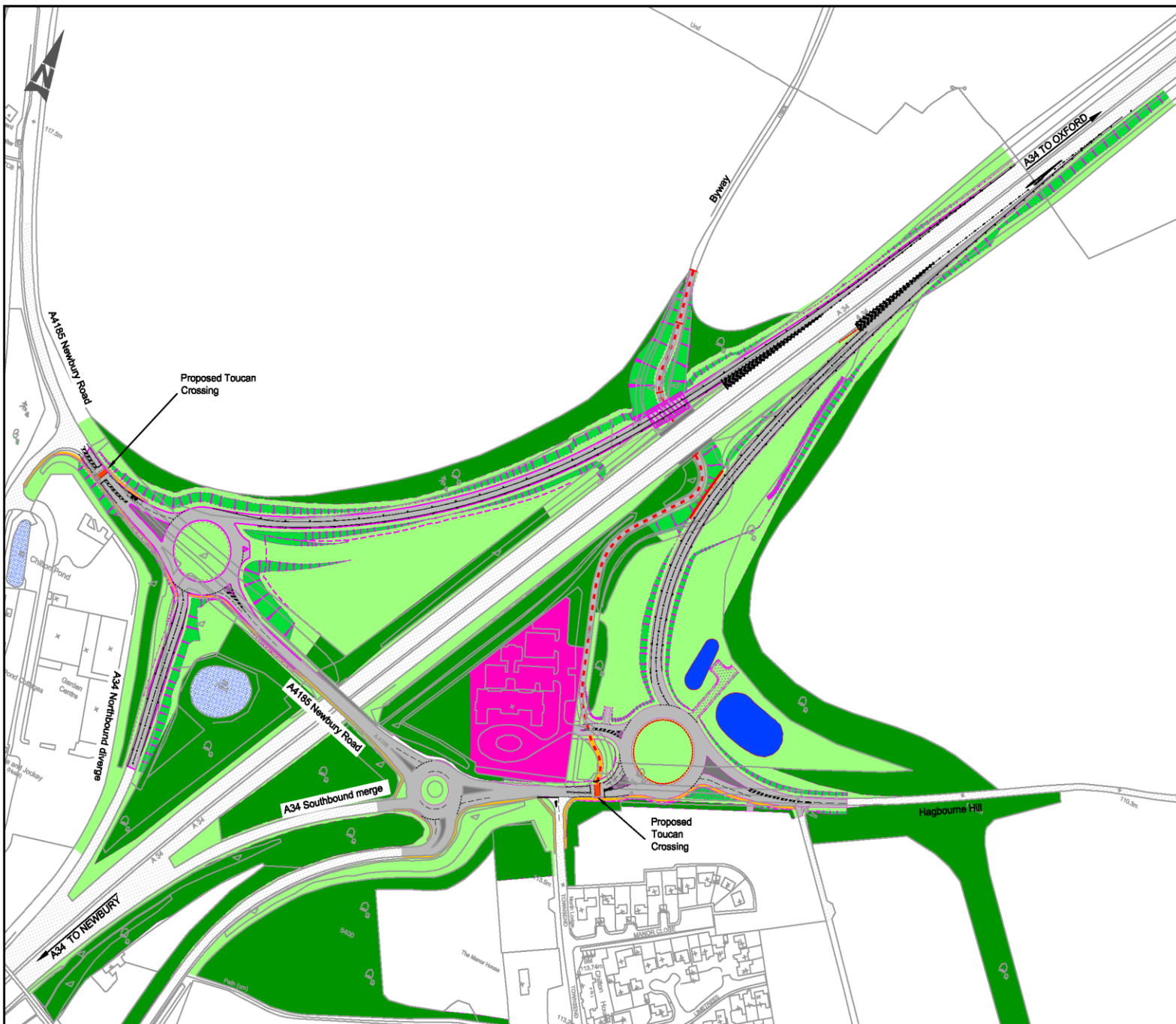
Date drawn: 29/09/2015  
 Drawn by: CJM

Map centre:  
 easting. 450210, northing. 186950

(N.T.S)

CMDE6





Drawing No. S-000967/X/ING/01 0

Manufactured from the Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright, and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Ordnance Survey, Church Road, Leicester, LE9 7BQ.

Rev	Date	Proposed description	Drawn	Checked	Approved
0		ORIGINAL ISSUE	SEE	TITLE	BLOCK

Mark Vinter  
 Deputy Director of  
 Environment & Economy  
 Oxfordshire County Council  
 Speedwell House  
 Speedwell Street  
 Oxford  
 OX1 1HE  
 Tel: 01865 215700  
 Fax: 01865 245277

**OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

Project No. CHILTON INTERCHANGE

Drawing Title PROPOSED TOUCAN CROSSINGS

Drawing Status					
CONSULTATION					
Scale @ A3	Drawn by	Checked by	LD	LD	LD
NTS	03/11/12	03/11/12	03/11/12	03/11/12	03/11/12

Calculate the Project No & File Ref S-5123398

Drawing No. S-000967/X/ING/01 0

## SUMMARY OF RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION (EXCEPT PROPOSED CROSSINGS IN CHILTON)

## ANNEX 4

RESPONDENT	SUMMARISED COMMENTS
Thames Valley Police	<p>No objection but notes the following:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The speed limit for Hagbourne Hill has been increased to 50 mph. Although strictly not fully supported by the speed data gathered it is more appropriate and consistent with other rural roads in the County.</li> <li>• Do not understand the need to lower the speed limit to 30mph in the Chilton area especially when other roads linking the village are to remain at 40mph .This proposal is not consistent with other speed limits in this area.</li> <li>• Regarding the proposed Pegasus crossing – asks that the layout meets the requirements accepted within Local Transport Note 2/95 and that speed monitoring has taken place to determine current traffic speed meet these requirements.</li> </ul>
Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service	No objection.
Online Response	No objection – but does not understand the rationale for extending the 30mph limit from Chilton Interchange so far up Hagbourne Hill, which is proposed to be reduced to 50 mph anyway. Can understand why there is a desire to reduce the 40mph to 30mph with the increased levels and mixing of traffic but to extend the 30mph limit half way up the hill seems stupid.
Resident, (Chilton)	No objection – but questions why the speed limit on Lower Road, Chilton is proposed to remain at 40mph, while the speed limit on the A4185 and Hagbourne Hill in the vicinity of the village is proposed to be reduced to 30mph. The existing speed limit in the rest of Chilton village is 30mph, so the 40mph stretch on Lower Road would be an anomaly.



CMDE6

<p>Resident, (Chilton)</p>	<p>No objection – but questions why no provision has been made to incorporate a cycle lane along the A4185 as part of the improvements, considering the current number of cyclists and the likely increase in numbers as the Science area expands.</p>
<p>Resident, (Rowstock)</p>	<p>Supports – but requests that the proposed 30mph speed limit on the A4185 Newbury Road/Hagbourne Hill be extended to cover the full length of the A4185 to the Rowstock roundabout. Speeds on this section of the road at the moment are excessive and represent a clear danger to the many cars, and cyclists, using this route.</p>
<p>Resident, (Rowstock)</p>	<p>No objection – but requests an extension of the 30mph limit for a distance of circa 600 metres south of the Rowstock Roundabout, this would then align the speed limit for this section of the A4185 with the proposed 30mph changes along the A417 in Rowstock and similar new speed limits in Chilton.</p>
<p>Harwell Campus Bicycle Users Group</p>	<p>No objection – but comment that Chilton Road forms part of Sustrans route and is a main commuter cycle route between Didcot and the Harwell Campus. This is the only section of road on the route from Didcot and it has fast traffic. Don't believe that the 40mph limit will be enough to make it a safe cycle route. Want the centre line removed and cycle lanes marked on either side of the carriageway, ideally with some form of traffic calming (humps, rumble strips) in the centre. Since the Hagbourne Hill has been upgraded, fast traffic, HGVs and wide loads can be diverted to use this road instead,</p>

CMDE6

**SUMMARY OF ISSUES REGARDING PROPOSED CROSSINGS IN CHILTON**

On behalf of the British Horse Society its Director of Access objects to the installation of a Toucan crossing rather than a Pegasus crossing at the location near Townsend for the following reasons:

1. The Society's Access & Bridleway Officer for Oxfordshire has previously made representations on the need and reasons to provide for horse riders where the restricted byway meets the road to Hagbourne Hill on the east side of the A34, including the provision of a Pegasus, not Toucan, crossing for horse riders.
2. We note from scheme drawings that the key denotes a path for non-motorised users both to the north and to the south of the proposed signal controlled crossing. Horse riders are recognized as non-motorised users by Highways England and local authorities and the correct type of signal controlled crossing for horse riders is a Pegasus, not Toucan, crossing.
3. Signalized crossings for equestrian use are normally located wherever equestrians have lawful access and there is a need to cross a road from a byway, a restricted byway, a bridleway or other path or road with equestrian access. The path to the north of the crossing is of restricted byway status. Restricted byways are lawfully used by walkers, cyclists, horse riders and carriage drivers.
4. Currently, horse riders use the minor road opposite the restricted byway into Chilton village. Horse riders have a lawful right to use all metalled roads, except motorways. Chilton village is not on a road through route and traffic volumes are quite acceptable for equestrians.
5. Regarding the likely usage of a Pegasus crossing, within 4km of the crossing there are 4 large equestrian establishments with up to 40 horses kept at each. The network of rights of way in the area, with safe crossing points of roads, is part of the vital infrastructure to support the viability of these equestrian enterprises. By not providing for horse riders at the Chilton interchange, the rights of way network will be severed. It should be noted that the byway running south from Harwell village connects with the network of bridleways and byways south of Upton on the east side of the A34. It is still the main off-road route that riders from Harwell village and the BHS approved Silverdown Riding establishment in Harwell village use to access this network, including access to the Ridgeway National Trail.

Other respondents making similar points:-

- The Regional Access & Bridleways Officer, BHS
- County Chair, Access & Bridleways Officer, BHS
- Chilton Parish Council
- Manager of Grove Farm Equestrian (Milton Hill)
- 25 individual horseriders resident in various locations in southern Oxfordshire

## CMDE6

The non-equestrian respondent objects to both crossings as they are both in dangerous positions. The western site is felt to be too close to the new roundabout – instead it and the associated bus stop should be further north away from the A34 junction. The crossing proposed near Townsend is felt to be too close to the new roundabout and should instead be located further from it.