

Divisions affected: *Berinsfield & Garsington*

**CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT –
14 DECEMBER 2023**

**MARSH BALDON & TOOT BALDON: PROPOSED 20MPH SPEED
LIMITS**

Report by Corporate Director, Environment and Place

RECOMMENDATION

1. The Cabinet Member for Transport Management is RECOMMENDED to approve the introduction of 20mph speed limits in Marsh Baldon and Toot Baldon as advertised.

Executive summary

2. The report presents responses to a statutory consultation on the proposed introduction of 20mph speed limits in Marsh Baldon and Toot Baldon as shown in **Annexes 1 & 2**.

Financial Implications

3. Funding for consultation and the proposals themselves has been provided by the County Council's 20mph 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 Marsh Baldon and Toot Baldon by making them safer and more attractive.

Formal consultation

6. Formal consultation was carried out between 14 September and 06 October 2023. 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, South Oxfordshire District Council, the local District Cllrs, The Baldons parish council, and the local County Councillor representing the Berinsfield & Garsington division.

Statutory Consultee Responses:

7. Thames Valley Police re-iterate their views concerning OCC's policy and practice regarding 20mph speed limits which they consider as 'concerns' rather than an objection. The Parish Council strongly supports the proposals but supports some residents' petition to them seeking further extensions to encompass rural areas used by vulnerable road users, especially the link to the A4074.

Other Responses:

8. 17 local residents responded online, and the Parish Council received 8 submissions in support of the proposals, several citing a wish for the 20mph limit to link Marsh Baldon to the A4074 at Nuneham Courtenay. An email respondent made the same plea. Analysis of replies suggests these are not those also replying online. The consultation invited views on each village separately and 10 online respondents supported both, one expressed concern over both, and three objected to both. One had no opinion and in two cases the local resident supported one proposal and expressed concerns over the other.
9. In broad terms, 20 respondents were supportive, three objected citing the proposals as unnecessary, and there were several calls to extend the proposals, especially to link to the A4074.
10. 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	7 (39%)
No	10 (55.5%)
Other	1 (5.5%)

9. The consultation responses are shown in **Annex 3**, 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 collisions.

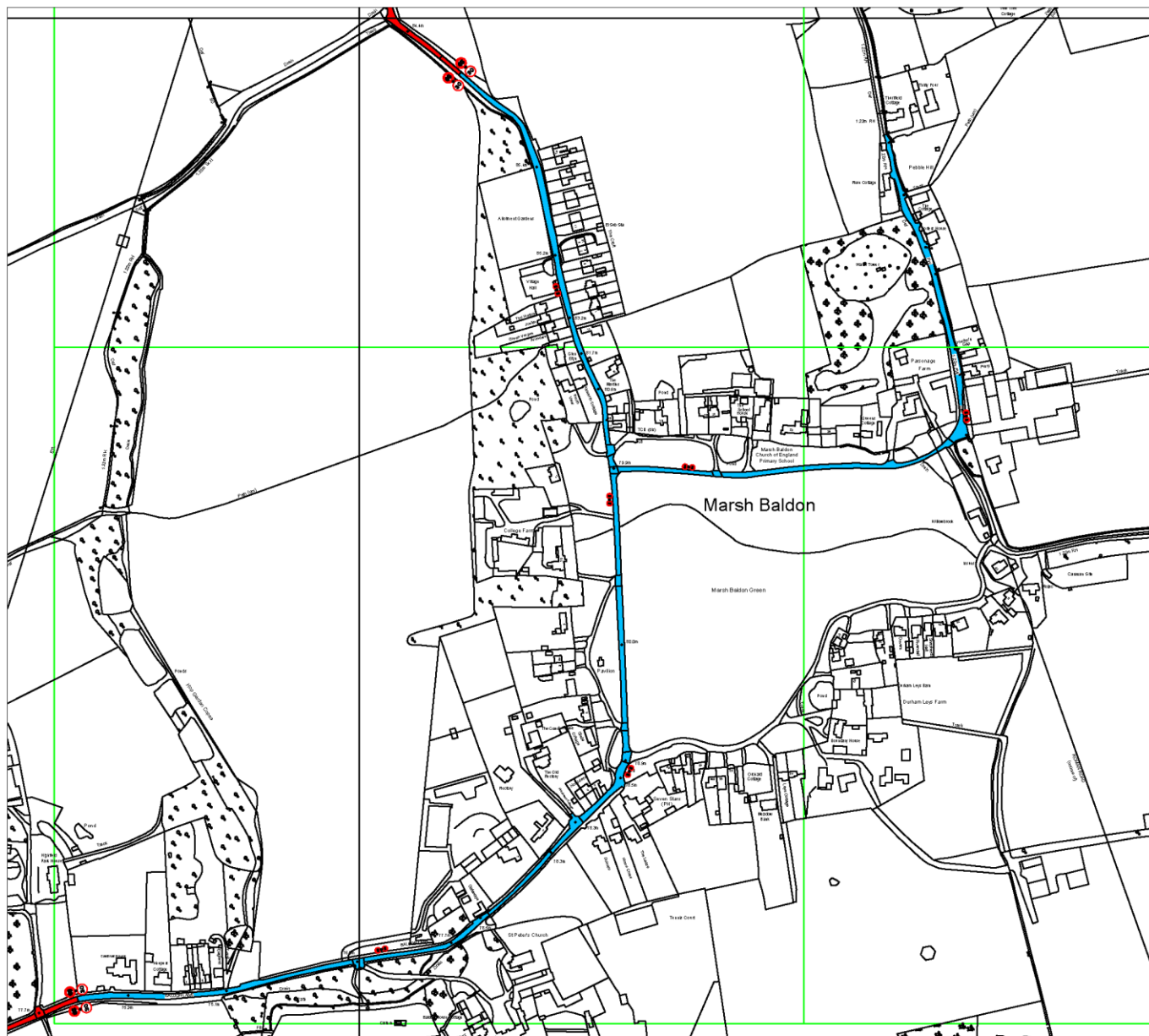
11. The aim of reducing speed limits is to change driver's mindsets to make speeding socially unacceptable and make more environmentally friendly modes of travel such as walking and cycling more attractive – and also reduce the County's carbon footprint. This forms part of a countywide programme of works that seeks to deliver 'a safer place with a safer pace'.
12. Officers believe the proposals to be a reasonable interpretation of the 20mph limits policy. There is sympathy with the concerns about unduly fast traffic beyond the proposed 20mph limits but their extension into rural environments is not considered an effective solution as it weakens the link between 20mph limits and places where people live hence diluting their effect where they have the best chance of being effective.

Bill Cotton
Corporate Director, Environment and Place

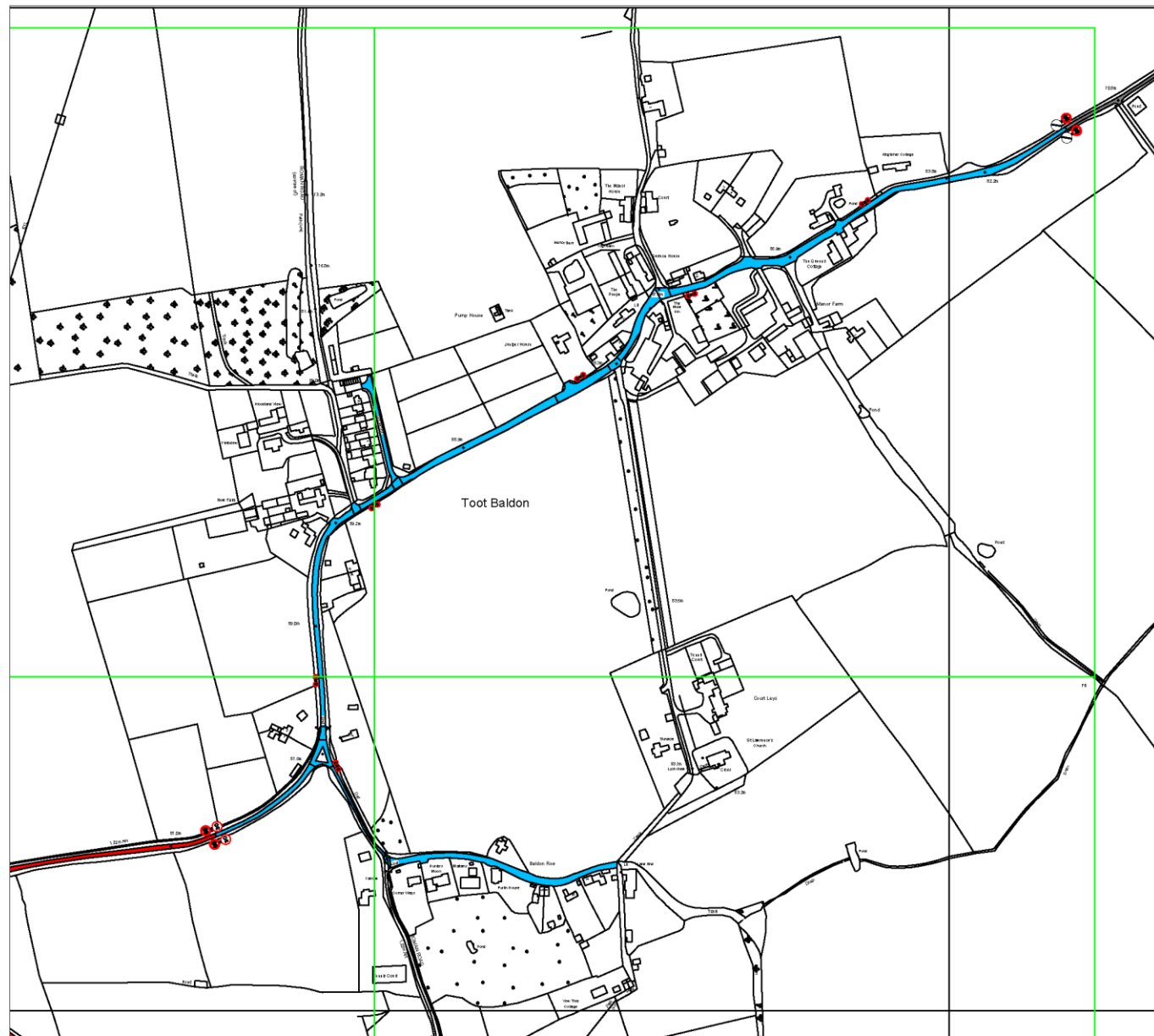
Annexes	Annexes 1-2: Consultation plans Annex 3: Consultation responses
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Contact Officers: Geoff Barrell (Team Leader – Traffic and Road Safety)

December 2023



Marsh Baldon Overview		Revision 1.0								
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Drawing title: Marsh Baldon 20mph Scheme Overview										
Drawing Status										
Scale @ A3	Drawn by: C.R.	Checked by: E.J.J.	Approved by: G.J.B.							
Date drawn 18.08.23	Date checked 18.08.23	Date approved 18.08.23								
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Toot Baldon Overview					Revision 1.0											
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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) The Baldons Parish Council	<p>Marsh Baldon 20mph – Support Toot Baldon 20mph – Support</p> <p>The Baldons Parish Council is strongly in support of this speed limit. From the outset the Council has campaigned for a reduction in the speed limit</p>
(3) Local resident, (Marsh Baldon)	<p>Marsh Baldon 20mph – Object Toot Baldon 20mph – Object</p> <p>The current speed works well and people are respectful of the environment and adjust their speed accordingly. We do not need more government intervention and the money would be better used in addressing potholes.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
(4) Local resident, (Marsh Baldon, The Croft)	<p>Marsh Baldon 20mph – Object Toot Baldon 20mph – Object</p>

	<p>I object to the 20mph proposal as I feel it is inappropriate for our rural environment. As a resident, I drive the stretch regularly and often find above this to be a gentle, non-aggressive, safe driving speed. That is not to say that 30mph is safely achievable at every point in every condition. But is the purpose of a limit to guarantee a speed at which it shall always be safe to drive?</p> <p>There are several places both in and out of the proposed limit where 20mph would be too high a speed for safety's sake. This change will slow down traffic where it is safe to drive higher and not be slow enough in the more hazardous areas.</p> <p>How does reducing things improve the experience, but rather exacerbate drivers and incite them to break the law. Given the same number of journeys, reducing the speed limit from 30mph to 20mph will increase the number of vehicles on the road at any one time by up to 1.5 times. Imagine, instead of six cars on the road, nine. Is that a more attractive place to walk and cycle?</p> <p>I applaud the intentions of safety and beautification. However, what will be the actual result? More road signs. The penalization of those who keep the law. And no difference to those who do not.</p> <p>These are my opinions as a resident who regularly walks and drives these roads. I do so under the 30mph limit and have tried it under the proposed 20mph. I urge decision-makers to do the same before implementing any changes.</p> <p>Travel change: Other</p> <p>No. I already walk within the villages. We have no bus. I do catch the Nuneham Courtenay buses where appropriate. Few of us have any other choice but to drive.</p>
(5) Local resident, (Toot Baldon)	<p>Marsh Baldon 20mph – Object Toot Baldon 20mph – Object</p> <p>I am not sure of the point of having 20mph just around the green at marsh baldon and Baldon Row at Toot and the rest remaining at 30mph. How many incidents have there been of concern with speeding in these 2 areas? Most people are sensible past the school and pub areas. Also the track round the green already has 20mph signs. You have to go slowly round baldon road as it is in effect single track.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>

<p>(6) Local resident, (Toot Baldon, Road through Toot Baldon)</p>	<p>Marsh Baldon 20mph – Concerns Toot Baldon 20mph – Concerns</p> <p>In the proposal it talks alternative means of transport but I am unaware of any alternative means of transport for the villages. There is no bus route especially not for Toot Baldon. We use bikes as much as we can and it will help with this but I do feel we need more options for transport for the villages.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
<p>(7) Local resident, (Toot Baldon, The Row)</p>	<p>Marsh Baldon 20mph – Concerns Toot Baldon 20mph – Support</p> <p>I very much support the introduction of a 20mph limit in general in the Baldons. I have specific concerns over the two exceptions to the 20 mph limit.</p> <p>Firstly The Croft - it is not clear if the part of the Croft with houses would be 20 or 30 mph but this is the area where children are walking up and down in the road to and from school and the green, and where the need for 20mph limit is greatest.</p> <p>The road between Marsh and Toot Baldon has some sharp bends. It is possible to drive around a corner and find horses or pedestrians in the road that you can't see until you are almost on top of them. So I would support a 20mph limit along the whole of this stretch including where the Croft houses are.</p> <p>Secondly Baldons Lane is the most hazardous part of the Baldons from a traffic point of view and I would support a 20mph limit along there. Many pedestrians use this road as there is no pavement, including with buggies, on the way to and from the bus in Nuneham Courtenay. It is sometimes hard to see them in the dark. Additionally, the bend by the Seven Stars is hazardous because oncoming traffic is not visible until it is almost upon you. Parked cars along Baldons Lane, pushing cars onto the wrong side of the road, increase the hazard. 20mph would reduce the hazard. Finally, the Baldons is supposed to be access only; a 20mph limit throughout would support this and deter motorists from using it as a through route (which they currently do).</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>

<p>(8) Local resident, (Marsh Baldon, The Green)</p>	<p>Marsh Baldon 20mph – Support Toot Baldon 20mph – Concerns</p> <p>Why keep 30mph on the Croft , why not make all of Toot and Marsh Baldon 20mph and then there is no confusion</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
<p>(9) Local resident, (Marsh Baldon, Baldon Lane)</p>	<p>Marsh Baldon 20mph – Support Toot Baldon 20mph – Support</p> <p>As a resident I am concerned about the safety in the village. Currently a number of cars and vehicles drive with excess speed through a quiet village endangering people and children as well as animals. In line with moves to 20mph limits elsewhere particularly for safety reasons I wholeheartedly support the speed reduction to make this residential area safer.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
<p>(10) Local resident, (Marsh Baldon, The Croft)</p>	<p>Marsh Baldon 20mph – Support Toot Baldon 20mph – Support</p> <p>20mph seems like a sensible limit for these sections of road due to the number of pedestrians and the lack of visibility in some areas</p> <p>Travel change: Yes – walk/wheel more</p>
<p>(11) Local resident, (Marsh Baldon, The Croft)</p>	<p>Marsh Baldon 20mph – Support Toot Baldon 20mph – Support</p> <p>Support as the village roads are used by residents and their children to walk and cycle on the roads to access the school, pubs, bus stop at Nuneham Courtney and friends houses. The slower speed limit will help make it safer to do so.</p>

	<p>I would request that due to several residents walking or cycling to the bus stop at Nuneham Courtney that consideration is given to extending the 20mph limit up to the A4074; whilst there is no active frontage the road has no footpath and is not lit (nor would I wish it to be) and as such a slower speed limit would make it safer when using the road to walk and cycle to the bus stop.</p> <p>Travel change: Yes – walk/wheel more</p>
<p>(12) Local resident, (Marsh Baldon, The Green)</p>	<p>Marsh Baldon 20mph – Support Toot Baldon 20mph – Support</p> <p>I agree with proposals. However in Marsh, they should be extended to the junction with the A4074.</p> <p>This stretch of road is used by local pedestrians and cyclists to get to and from the bus as well as the Arboretum. It is hazardous, especially in winter. I strongly suggest considering extending 20mph to this point.</p> <p>Travel change: Yes – walk/wheel more</p>
<p>(13) Local resident, (Marsh Baldon, The Green)</p>	<p>Marsh Baldon 20mph – Support Toot Baldon 20mph – Support</p> <p>Living in village, with no pavements, walking along the roads is hazardous. Walking to the bus stop in Nuneham Courtenay, along Baldons Lane is particularly dangerous as cars tend to speed along this road from the A4074</p> <p>Travel change: Yes – walk/wheel more</p>
<p>(14) Local resident, (Marsh Baldon, The Croft)</p>	<p>Marsh Baldon 20mph – Support Toot Baldon 20mph – Support</p> <p>I live in Marsh Baldon and have 2 children who I walk to school everyday and with speed of the cars coming troughs the village it's becoming increasingly difficult and on occasions a little terrifying especially with no paths and very tight roads and blind bends.</p>

	Travel change: Yes – walk/wheel more
(15) Local resident, (Marsh Baldon, The Croft)	Marsh Baldon 20mph – Support Toot Baldon 20mph – Support It will help slow traffic down through the villages. Also it would be helpful if there was a pedestrian crossing in Nuneham Courtney and a designated cycle path on the A4074 from Nuneham Courtney to Sandford. Travel change: No
(16) Local resident, (Nuneham Courtenay)	Marsh Baldon 20mph – Support Toot Baldon 20mph – Support I think the impact on road safety is huge and also on the environment Travel change: No
(17) Local resident, (Toot Baldon)	Marsh Baldon 20mph – Support Toot Baldon 20mph – Support Traffic through the villages speeds all the time and it is dangerous. Slowing down traffic will improve safety for walkers and other cars. Travel change: No
(18) Local resident, (Toot Baldon, Wilmots)	Marsh Baldon 20mph – Support Toot Baldon 20mph – Support People drive too fast along the narrow roads and blind corners making it dangerous for pedestrians, especially children, other road users, horses and cyclists.

	<p>Travel change: Yes – walk/wheel more</p>
<p>(19) Local resident, (Marsh Baldon, The Green)</p>	<p>Marsh Baldon 20mph – No opinion Toot Baldon 20mph – No opinion</p> <p>No objection to proposal although doubt if it will have a large impact on speeds or behaviour.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
<p>(20) Local resident, (Not specified)</p>	<p>Support – I fully support the 20mph limit proposal in this area.</p> <p>I am most dismayed to read the council is not proposing to include Baldon Lane from the A4074 start point into the village.</p> <p>I and many other bus users alighting in Nuneham Courtney, including children, teenagers, adults and more elderly people, have to endure the dangers of being a pedestrian on Baldon Lane as we walk home into the village. Vehicles race along Baldon Lane at an incredible speed, leaving inches as they pass pedestrians. There is no pavement for us to retreat to. In short, we risk our lives as we walk home. I myself have had near misses with vehicles and dread when an accident will happen. I hope the council will not leave it until this occurs.</p> <p>I sincerely hope the council will reconsider including the entirety of Baldon Lane. I should maybe have added that the irony of the proposal is that Baldon Lane is perhaps the most hazardous road of all in the village. It is the only road in from that direction so sees heavy use, there is a blind bend at Cardinal House (which incidentally attracts a fair amount of traffic) and none of the verges are low or even enough to 'escape' onto.</p>