

Divisions affected: *Deddington*

## **DELEGATED DECISIONS BY CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT**

**23 MAY 2024**

### **BARFORD ST MICHAEL AND BARFORD ST JOHN: PROPOSED 20MPH & 30MPH 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 Barford St Michael and Barford St John, as well as lengths of 30mph speed limits on Bloxham Road, as advertised.**

#### **Executive Summary**

1. The report presents responses to a statutory consultation on the proposal to introduce 20mph speed limits within Barford St John & Barford St Michael, replacing the majority of the 30mph speed limit in the process, as well as introducing lengths of 30mph speed limit on the Bloxham Road between the proposed two 20mph speed limits for each settlement & leading northwards from Barford St John, 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 Barford St Michael and Barford St John by making them safer and more attractive.

## **Formal Consultation**

6. Formal consultation was carried out between 07 March and 29 March 2024. A notice was published in the Banbury Guardian 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, Barford St Michael and Barford St John Parish Council, and the local County Councillor representing the Deddington 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 roads concerned serving the villages.
9. The Development Management Team Leader at Cherwell District Council confirmed that the local planning authority had no observations to make.

## **Other Responses:**

10. One local resident objected to the proposals, stating that the proposals were an unnecessary waste of valuable taxpayers money which could be better spent on projects to benefit communities. They also 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. The consultation responses are shown in **Annex 2**, and copies of the original responses are available for inspection by County Councillors.

## **Officer Response to Objections/Concerns**

12. The main purpose of the scheme is to encourage greater use of active travel by reducing speeds; this is also expected to 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 help 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'.

13. The authority considers objections along the lines of it being unjustified, anti-car, a waste of money, not enforceable or pointless to not warrant amendments to a proposal. As such the authority has not addressed any specific comments made of this nature in this report.

Bill Cotton  
Corporate Director for Environment and Place

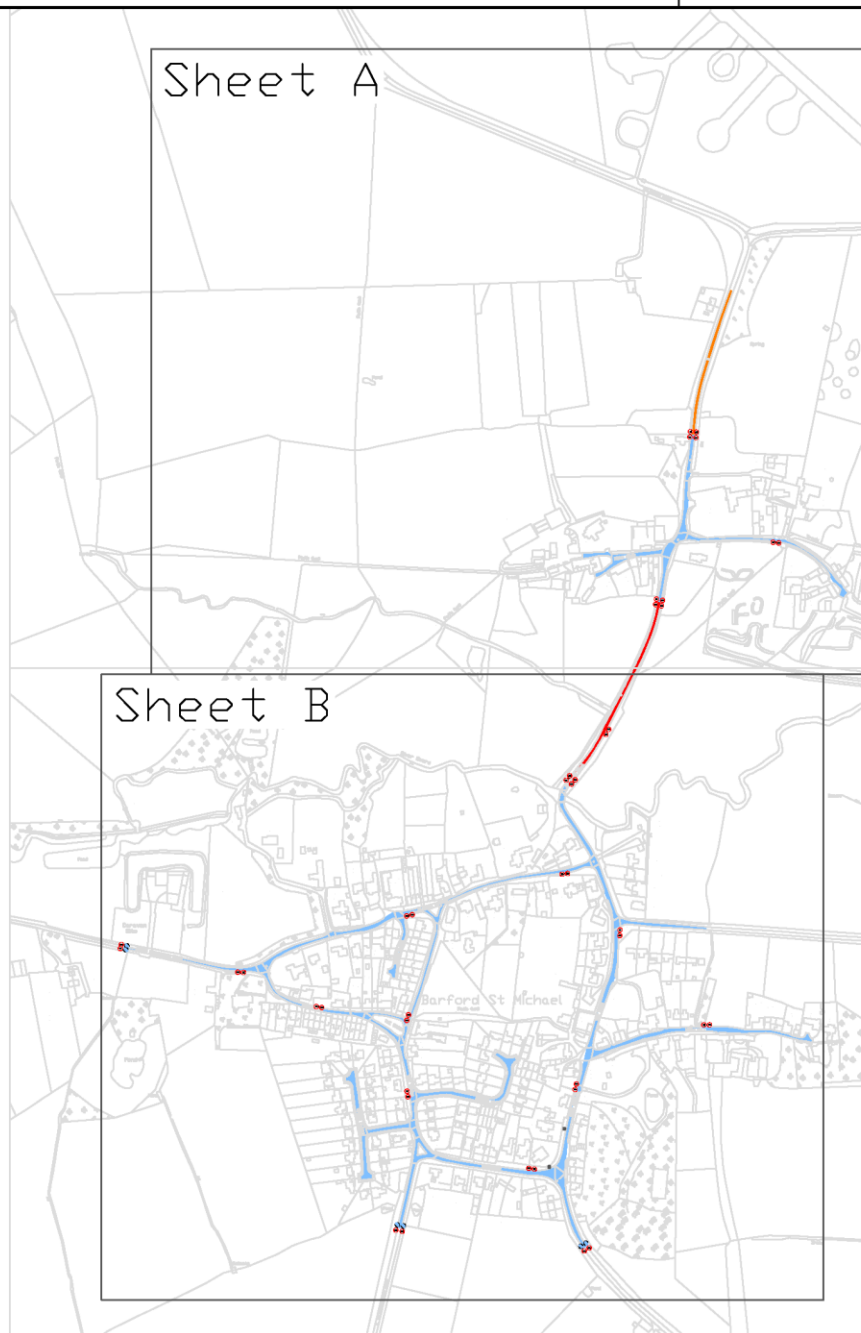
Annexes                      Annex 1: Consultation plan  
                                      Annex 2: Consultation responses

Contact Officers:            Anthony Kirkwood (Team Leader – Vision Zero)  
                                      Matt Archer (Portfolio Manager - Programme Delivery)

May 2024

Sheet A

Sheet B



Drawing No. \_\_\_\_\_

Notes:

- Proposed 20mph limit
- Existing 30mph limit
- Proposed 30mph limit

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Rev.	Date	Purpose of revision	Drawn	Checked	Approved

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**Project title**

Barford St John &  
St Michael 20mph

**Drawing title**

General Layout

**Drawing Status**

Scale @ A3	Drawn by ER	Checked by GJB	Approved by GJB
	Date drawn 08/01/24	Date checked 08/01/24	Date approved 08/01/24

Oxfordshire Project No. & File Ref \_\_\_\_\_

Drawing No. _____	Revision _____
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RESPONDENT	COMMENTS
(1) Traffic Management Officer, (Thames Valley Police)	<p><b>Concerns</b> –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 (<a href="http://www.gov.uk">www.gov.uk</a>)) 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"> <li>• history of collisions</li> <li>• road geometry and engineering</li> <li>• road function</li> <li>• composition of road users (including existing and potential levels of vulnerable road users)</li> <li>• existing traffic speeds</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>road environment</li> </ul> <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)	<p><b>No objection</b> – No regular public buses services operate along the roads concerned serving these villages. We thus offer no objection.</p>
(3) Cherwell District Council, (Development Management)	<p><b>No objection</b> – Upon review of the information forming part of the consultation, I confirm the local planning authority has no observations to make.</p>
(4) Local resident, (unknown)	<p><b>Object</b> – 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</p>

	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.
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