

Divisions affected: *Ploughley*

DELEGATED DECISIONS BY CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT

05 SEPTEMBER 2024

MIDDLETON STONEY: PROPOSED 20MPH & 30MPH SPEED LIMITS

Report by Director of Environment and Highways

RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet Member is **RECOMMENDED** to:

- a) **Approve the introduction of 20mph & 30mph speed limits in Middleton Stoney, as advertised.**

Executive Summary

1. The report presents responses to a statutory consultation on the proposed introduction of a 20mph & 30mph speed limits in Middleton Stoney 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 Middleton Stoney 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, Middleton Stoney 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 response as 'having concerns' rather than an objection, however they did emphasis that they were very concerned regarding the 20mph proposals on the B430. They are of the belief that the B430 through Middleton Stoney should remain at 30mph, which would put it in line with the proposals for Ardley.
8. Oxford Bus Company offered no formal objection, however they considered the proposed approach disproportionate and lacking a due level consideration for the achievement of the wider transport policy objectives set out in the Oxfordshire Local Transport and Connectivity Plan and Bus Service Improvement Plan.

Other Responses:

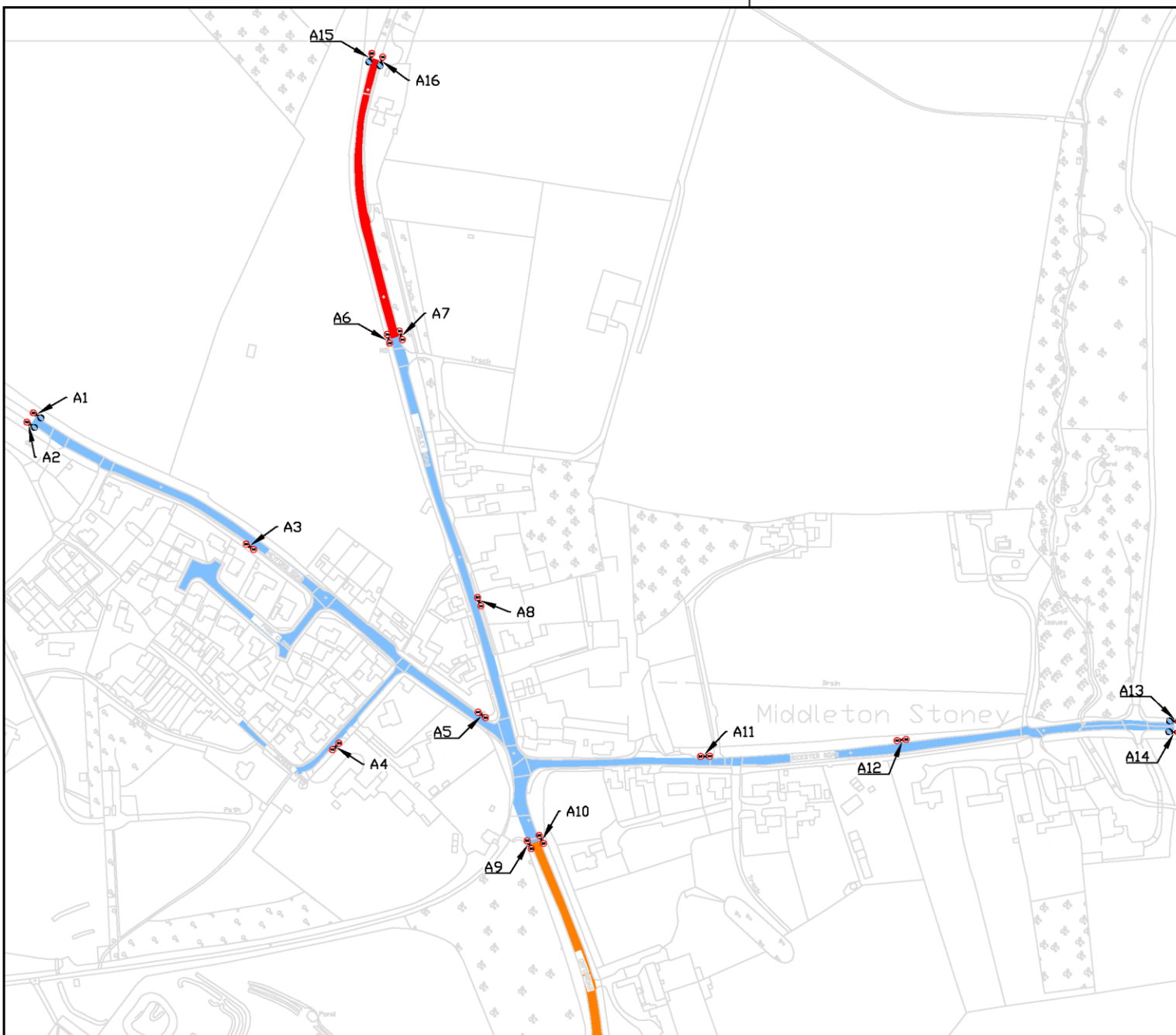
9. 18 responses were received via the online consultation survey during the course of the formal consultation, and these are summarised in the table below:

Proposal	Object	Partially support	Support	No opinion/ objection	Total
20mph	9 (50%)	4 (22%)	5 (28%)	-	18
30mph	8 (44%)	1 (6%)	7 (39%)	2 (11%)	18

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	5 (28%)
No	11 (61)
Other	2 (11%)

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



Drawing No.		revision			
Notes:					
	Proposed 20mph limit				
	Proposed 30mph limit				
	Existing 30mph limit				
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Rev.	Date	Purpose of revision	Drawn	Checked	Approved
<div style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle; font-size: x-small; 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					
Middleton Stoney 20mph					
Drawing title					
Sheet A					
Drawing Status					
Scale @ A3	Drawn by	Checked by	Approved by		
	ER	GJB	GJB		
Date drawn	Date checked	Date approved			
17/08/23	16/11/23	16/11/23			
Oxfordshire Project No. & File Ref					
Drawing No.					Revision

RESPONDENT	COMMENTS
<p>(1) Traffic Management Officer, (Thames Valley Police)</p>	<p>Concerns – Very concerned especially the B430 proposals.</p> <p>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 disproportionate 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</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> <p>Further to my comments on this one . I strongly believe the B430 through Middleton Stoney should remain at 30mph in line with the new proposals for Ardley.</p>
<p>(2) Head of Built Environment and Infrastructure, (Go-Ahead Group Bus Operator)</p>	<p>No objection – Regular public buses services operate through the village between Bicester and Upper Heyford, along the roads concerned. The route is operated under contract to the Council by another operator.</p> <p>The Council should already be aware that the economics of this routes are amongst the most challenging of any in the County, to the extent that securing a contractor has proven to be exceptionally difficult for several years. In particular, the intention of Planning and or the Councils public transport strategy for the Upper Heyford New Settlement, is to provide service at a 30 minute frequency. The ability to timetable this within a 60-minute round trip cycle is, to say the least, challenging. Anything that makes the route materially slower to operate, for no very clearly evidenced safety outcome that is pertinent to this specific settlement, is most likely to make the bus service impossible to operate at an attractive of marketable frequency and as such will prejudice the ability of the existing or future service to achieve the County's wider policy objectives for the site , and for public transport more generally.</p> <p>We thus urge the Council, in line with previous representations and discussion, to consider the implications of this extremely carefully.</p> <p>Whilst we offer no formal objection, as we do not operate the current service, nor are we likely to in future, we consider the proposed approach disproportionate and lacking a due level consideration for the achievement of the wider transport policy objectives set out in the Oxfordshire Local Transport and Connectivity Plan and Bus Service Improvement Plan.</p>

<p>(3) Local resident, (Heyford Park, Bicester, Wilson Close)</p>	<p>20mph speed limit – Object I object to the reduction in the current speed limits to 20mph and 30mph as a way to address safety concerns. The roads identified are arterial routes to surrounding communities, business and other major arterial routes. Reducing the speed limit in these areas will not help to address safety concerns. I believe there are more effective ways to improve road safety such as repairing and maintaining roads instead of letting them become hazardous, littered with pot holes, have insufficient kerbing / edging with general inadequate surfacing across all these areas. Keeping the roads maintained will stop users having to swerve, drive on the other side or up the middle of road to avoid cavernous pot holes, broken kerbs and poorly maintained roads and thus risking constantly damaging cars and increased accident opportunities. Addressing these issues first will go a long way to reduce safety concerns and improve traffic movements on the roads.</p> <p>30mph speed limit – Object I object to the reduction in the current speed limits to 30mph as a way to address safety concerns. The roads identified are arterial routes to surrounding communities, business and other major arterial routes. Reducing the speed limit in these areas will not help to address safety concerns. I believe there are more effective ways to improve road safety such as repairing and maintaining roads instead of letting them become hazardous, littered with pot holes, have insufficient kerbing / edging with general inadequate surfacing across all these areas. Keeping the roads maintained will stop users having to swerve, drive on the other side or up the middle of road to avoid cavernous pot holes, broken kerbs and poorly maintained roads and thus risking constantly damaging cars and increased accident opportunities. Addressing these issues first will go a long way to reduce safety concerns and improve traffic movements on the roads.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
<p>(4) Local resident, (Middleton Stoney, Ardley Road)</p>	<p>20mph speed limit – Object It is different compared with other villages that has an extremely busy traffic light junction on the b430 joining the a43/m40 to a34 & road between Bicester-Lower Heyford. There are significant large amount of lorries especially of 40 tonnes from 0630-2200 every day, plus large agricultural vehicles (as Turney's agricultural engineering business is located at the junction of this impacted area), coaches & cars as well. It being slowed down will make it longer queues for all village residents - due to current traffic levels, reduced air quality due to standing vehicles as it will take longer to travel through the junction, over 6000 houses being built in the area & both roads are major transport routes for this area. If there is a crash or</p>

	<p>disruption on m40, then all traffic is diverted through this junction. The air quality will impact a children's playground nearby & a local primary school.</p> <p>30mph speed limit – Object Same as no. 3 as this rolls upto the 20 mph consultation area. It is different compared with other villages that has an extremely busy traffic light junction on the b430 joining the a43/m40 to a34 & road between Bicester-Lower Heyford. There are significant large amount of lorries especially of 40 tonnes from 0630-2200 every day, plus large agricultural vehicles (as Turney's agricultural engineering business is located at the junction of this impacted area), coaches & cars as well. It being slowed down will make it longer queues for all village residents - due to current traffic levels, reduced air quality due to standing vehicles as it will take longer to travel through the junction, over 6000 houses being built in the area & both roads are major transport routes for this area. If there is a crash or disruption on m40, then all traffic is diverted through this junction. The air quality will impact a children's playground nearby & a local primary school.</p> <p>Travel change: Other No would not change. Rely on my car to work/academic studies & poor public transport. There is no safe pavement & traffic speeds anyway!</p>
<p>(5) As a business, (Middleton Stoney, Heyford Road)</p>	<p>20mph speed limit – Object Crossroads with traffic lights already slows traffic. 20mph is unnecessary as no school / village shop and therefore very limited pedestrians.</p> <p>30mph speed limit – Object Unnecessary</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
<p>(6) Local resident, (Middleton Stoney, Heyford Road)</p>	<p>20mph speed limit – Object 20 is too slow.</p> <p>30mph speed limit – Object Keep to existing limits</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>

<p>(7) Local resident, (Middleton Stoney, Bicester Road)</p>	<p>20mph speed limit – Object 20mph is purgatory and unnecessary if 30mph is enforced as it should be. Stop penalizing respectful drivers and start catching those who flagrantly ignore the limits.</p> <p>30mph speed limit – Object Just enforce existing limits.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
<p>(8) Local resident, (Not given)</p>	<p>20mph speed limit – 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. 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>30mph speed limit – Object no reason to change existing limit</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>

<p>(9) Local resident, (Steeple Aston, South Side)</p>	<p>20mph speed limit – Object Makes it even more difficult and time-consuming for local villagers to access their nearest shops (e g at Bicester). This will lead to the death of local shopping areas. The 20mph should be restricted to the side road and cut-de-sacs and not the through roads from the Heyfords to Bicester and from Ardley to Weston-on-the-Green</p> <p>30mph speed limit – Object Unnecessary with too many changes of limits which is confusing to drivers.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
<p>(10) Local resident, (Middleton Stoney, Ardley Road)</p>	<p>20mph speed limit – Object I think 20mph zones are a waste of time without speed bumps or chicanes, and if you plan to put in either of these it may decrease speed but it will increase noise (this road has many large vehicles travelling on it due to all industrial, commercial and construction sites which have mushroomed around us in recent years), and already the noise of gear changes, brakes, revving which happens due to the traffic lights will only increase exponentially if further barriers to speed or in particular 'facilitators in changes of speed' were put in place. The phrase 'traffic calming measures' is a misnomer. They are speed calmers, yes, but they increase - NOT calm or decrease - traffic and noise. The only way they sometimes decrease traffic is if there is an alternative way around the village that provides perhaps longer but quicker journey times now that the speed limits and measures are in place. But until you have the bypass, this alternative does not exist.</p> <p>30mph speed limit – Support It stops people speeding up or slowing down within the village itself around the peripheral residences. It makes sense for people to slow down or speed up outside the village and not within its confines. It's the noise of large vehicles changing speed that is the most important consideration in our village, with the amount of freight coming through.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
<p>(11) Local resident, (Middleton Stoney, B4030)</p>	<p>20mph speed limit – Object Unnecessary, already got traffic lights to slow traffic.</p> <p>30mph speed limit – Support Currently 30 which is fine</p>

	<p>Travel change: No</p>
<p>(12) Local resident, (Middleton Stoney, Heyford Road)</p>	<p>20mph speed limit – Partially support I do not believe that changing the speed limit in the village to 20mph will help with the traffic management or safety of the village. In the first instance money should be spent on clearing & widening the paths, making it possible for pedestrians to cross at the traffic lights safely and installing fixed permanent speed cameras. We regularly have cars overtaking us through the 30mph limit and sadly those drivers will still overtake if it's a 20mph limit. There also needs to be some road deterrent in place on the B430 to stop non local traffic using the B430 as a rat run between A34 & M40 Junction 10. It seems at the moment the traffic lights in the village favour the B430 traffic over the Heyford and Bicester Roads.</p> <p>30mph speed limit – No objection This is a sensible proposal, it will slow cars coming into the village from M40 Junction 10 direction and also, hopefully, be a deterrent for using the B430 as a rat run to the A34.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
<p>(13) Local resident, (Middleton Stoney, School Lane)</p>	<p>20mph speed limit – Partially support Concerned a reduction in speed will cause more traffic idling in the village. As soon as there is congestion on the motorway people cut through the village. With a 20mph limit will they cause more traffic waiting at the lights?</p> <p>30mph speed limit – Partially support There is no need for a 30mph limit unless it effectively slows drivers through the village. The majority of speeding is frustrated drivers trying to get through the lights.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
<p>(14) Local resident, (Middleton Stoney, Ardley Road)</p>	<p>20mph speed limit – Partially support We live within close proximity to the traffic lights at Middleton Stoney (MS) crossroads. The long tailbacks vehicles, constantly spewing out exhaust fumes, is already appalling. Air quality is already considerable below recommended. The</p>

	<p>fear that reducing the speed through the village may increase the 'log jam' at the lights and the time it takes to clear 'rush hour' or rather 'prolonged queuing traffic hour/s is considerable.</p> <p>There is no point in reducing speed without consistent enforcement - the current 30mph is ignored and the occasional token police speed van park (always in the same spot) at the MS traffic lights is too little too infrequently...</p> <p>Any solution has to be taken in the broader context of the roads thorough MS being a 'rat run' to avoid slow of stopped traffic on the M40. We are NOT a designated M40 relief road and other arrangements should be made as part of reviewing the 'big picture'</p> <p>30mph speed limit – Support</p> <p>If enforcement is consistently applied otherwise it's token and irrelevant.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
<p>(15) Local resident, (Middleton Stoney, School Lane)</p>	<p>20mph speed limit – Partially support</p> <p>Significant issues in village is overall increase in traffic; increase volume in HGV traffic and lack of safe pedestrian footways...</p> <p>20mph limits certainly a consideration but needs to be part of more balanced and considered approach.</p> <p>30mph speed limit – Support</p> <p>Speed indicators have helped over recent months but still traffic accelerating too quickly on approach and exit to village...my kids have had a couple of near misses...</p> <p>Would support additional measures to further reduce speed.</p> <p>Travel change: Other</p> <p>Lack of safe walkways in village are a real issue.</p> <p>Recent pavement widening in Chesterton has seen an anecdotal increase in walkers, joggers and cyclists...would love to see similar in Middleton Stoney.</p>
<p>(16) Local resident, (Middleton Stoney, Bicester Road)</p>	<p>20mph speed limit – Support</p> <p>The speeding is a big problem on this road going into but also leaving the village. The houses are very close to the road. We have many small children in the community but also many pets. It is very dangerous for both.</p> <p>30mph speed limit – No objection</p>

	<p>People travel with great speed which is extremely dangerous for the local residents</p> <p>Travel change: Yes – walk/wheel more</p>
<p>(17) Local resident, (Middleton stoney, Heyford Road)</p>	<p>20mph speed limit – Support I live just up from the traffic lights on heyford road.. The speed in which cars/lorries/car transporters rattle through the village... (when they should be directed solely to the m40 from heyford) is astoundingly dangerous. I would wager that the information provided to the carriers would state this anyway and is being ignored... I would suggest some sort of weight limit on lorry's coming from heyford to Bicester so that they are forced to use the a road....</p> <p>30mph speed limit – Object Should be 20 like all the other villages..... and should be weight limited for lorry's coming from heyford to the south so they have to use the a roads not the already dilapidated b roads that link heyford and Middleton... Although I'm sure this was accounted for when the council approved thousands of houses being built in heyford...</p> <p>Travel change: Yes – walk/wheel more</p>
<p>(18) Local resident, (Middleton Stoney, Bicester Road)</p>	<p>20mph speed limit – Support Traffic goes too fast at present making roads unpleasant to walk alongside.In addition to proposals there should be a 30mph limit on approach to village from east starting at Bucknell Road</p> <p>30mph speed limit – Support See above</p> <p>Travel change: Yes – walk/wheel more</p>
<p>(19) Local resident, (Middleton Stoney)</p>	<p>20mph speed limit – Support Support but please extend down the Oxford Road to the south of the traffic lights. We live there and cars consistently speed coming into the village round the corner - and going out of the village towards Weston. Please move the 20 limit to the white gates on this road - as you have done for each of the other roads in the village - don't understand why we have</p>

	<p>been ignored? And we desperately need a footpath for us to be able to walk into the village - it's just not safe to walk along the road.</p> <p>30mph speed limit – Support need 20mph across the whole village</p> <p>Travel change: Yes – walk/wheel more</p>
<p>(20) Local resident, (Middleton Stoney, School Lane)</p>	<p>20mph speed limit – Support Safety at road crossings and when walking on narrow footpaths. Making the village more accessible across the community</p> <p>30mph speed limit – Support To prevent accelerating vehicles</p> <p>Travel change: Yes – walk/wheel more</p>