

Divisions affected: *Wroxton & Hook Norton*

DELEGATED DECISIONS BY CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT

05 SEPTEMBER 2024

SIBFORD FERRIS & SIBFORD GOWER - PROPOSED 20MPH SPEED LIMITS

Report by Director of Environment and Highways

RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet Member is **RECOMMENDED** to:

Approve, as advertised:

- a) **The proposed introduction of 20mph speed limits in Sibford Ferris,**
- b) **The proposed introduction of 20mph speed limits in Sibford Gower.**

Executive Summary

1. The report presents responses to statutory consultations on the proposed introduction of 20mph speed limits in Sibford Ferris and Sibford Gower, as shown in **Annexes 1 & 2**.

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, with proposed changes to existing Traffic Regulation Orders governed by the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and other associated procedural regulations. Failure to adhere to these statutory processes could result in the proposals being challenged.

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 to encourage walking and cycling within Sibford Ferris and Sibford Gower by making them safer and more attractive.

Formal Consultation

6. Formal consultation was carried out separately for each parish between 27 June and 19 July 2024. Notices were published in the Banbury Guardian newspaper, and emails 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, local District Cllrs, Sibford Ferris, and Sibford Gower Parish Councils, and the local County Councillor representing the Wroxton & Hook Norton division.

Statutory Consultee Responses:

7. Thames Valley Police – for both sets of proposals – re-iterated their views concerning OCC’s policy and practice regarding 20mph speed limits; in this case they specifically objected to the proposals for these villages though in doing so did not raise any site specific concerns.
8. Oxford Bus Company – for both sets of proposals - offered no formal objection, but raised concerns citing that the proposals would affect a major long distance bus corridor between Banbury & Stratford, which serves a number of communities along the route. They also re-affirmed their view regarding the cumulative impact of extensive application of 20mph limits in multiple villages – each of which involves considerable lengths of classified road – which can only be expected to have a substantial impact on bus running times, ultimately undermining their ongoing economic and practical sustainability.
9. The Development Management Team at Cherwell District Council made had no formal objection too either of the proposals but did raise queries regarding a) whether the 20mph limit at the southern end of Sibford Ferris started/finished slightly too far southward, and b) whether the 20mph limit to the south-western end of Sibford Gower started/finished too far southward, and whether the number of repeater signs was warranted.
10. Sibford Ferris Parish Council submitted a response partially in support of the proposals affecting their parish, confirming that they supported a replacement of the current 30mph speed limit with a reduced limit of 20mph for the same extents as presently exists, but objected to the proposed extension of the speed limit from its current terminal point on Hook Norton Road.

Other Responses:

11. The responses received via the online survey during the course of the formal consultation are summarised in the table below:

Proposal	Object	Partially support	Support	No opinion/ objection	Total
Sibford Ferris	4 (44%)	1 (11%)	4 (44%)	-	9
Sibford Gower	8 (73%)	-	2 (18%)	1 (9%)	11

12. The responses are shown in **Annexes 3** (Sibford Ferris) & **4** (Sibford Gower), and copies of the original responses are available for inspection by County Councillors.

Officer Response to Objections/Concerns

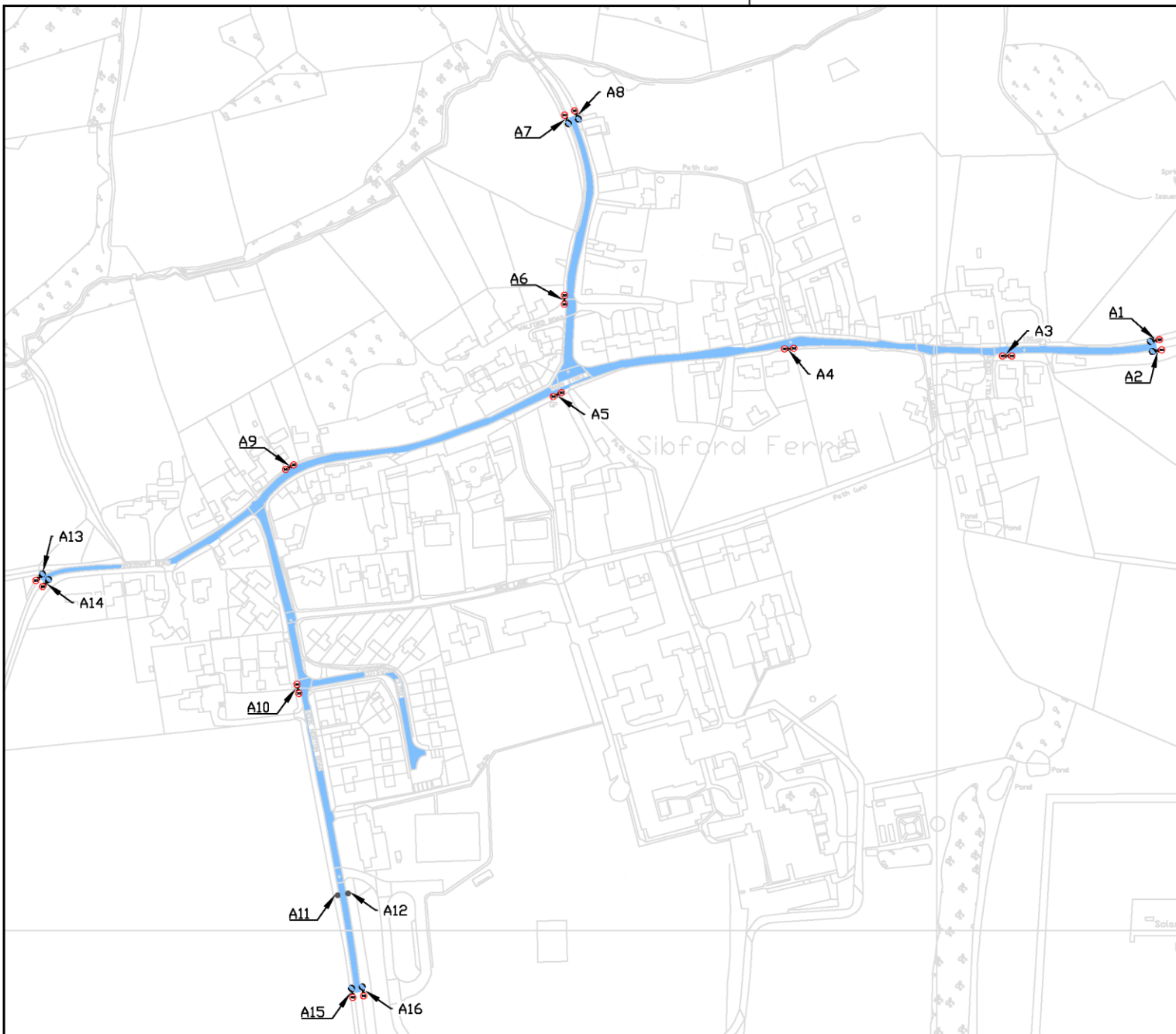
13. The main purpose of the scheme is to encourage greater use of active travel by reducing speeds; this is also expected to reduce accidents. The aim of reducing speed limits is to change driver's mindsets to make speeding socially unacceptable and make more environmentally friendly modes of travel such as walking and cycling more attractive – and also 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'.
14. The objection of Thames Valley Police is noted, with though their response did not make any specific comments in respect of the proposals.
15. Noting the objection of Sibford Ferris Parish Council and the comment from the Development Management Team at Cherwell District Council in respect of the 20mph speed limit on the Hook Norton Road, officers from the Highways Agreement Team advise that the proposed location of the speed limit terminal is in accordance with the visibility splay requirements for a new access being provided for residential development, such that the visibility splay falls entirely within the reduced speed limit.
16. The Development Management Team at Cherwell District Council comments on the whether the 20mph limit to the south-western end of Sibford Gower started/finished too far southward, and whether the number of repeater signs was warranted are noted. Although these observations are noted the current proposals in respect of the location of the terminal point and the number of repeater signs are considered appropriate.
17. 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.

Paul Fermer
Director of Environment and Highways

Annexes Annexes 1 & 2: Consultation plans
 Annex 3: Consultation responses (Sibford Ferris)
 Annex 4: Consultation responses (Sibford Gower)

Contact Officers: Roger Plater (Senior Officer - Vision Zero)
 Matt Archer (Portfolio Manager – Programme Delivery)

September 2024



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
Sibford Ferris 20mph

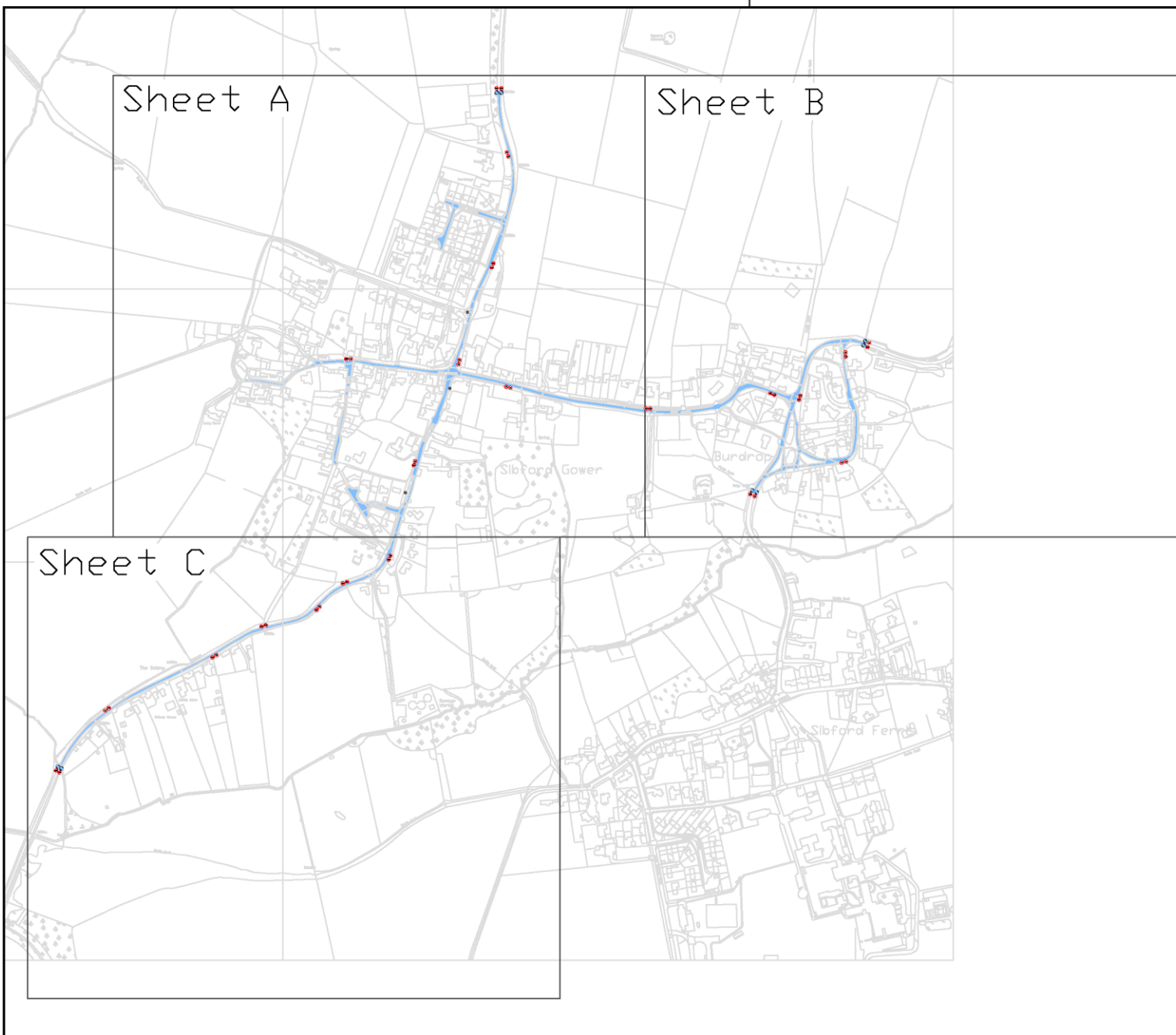
Drawing title
Sheet A

Drawing Status

Scale @ A3	Drawn by ER	Checked by GJB	Approved by GJB
	Date drawn 21/02/24	Date checked 21/02/24	Date approved 21/02/24

Oxfordshire Project No. & File Ref

Drawing No.	Revision



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Project title
 Sibford Gower 20mph

Drawing title
 General Layout

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Scale @ A3	Drawn by ER	Checked by GJB	Approved by GJB
	Date drawn 29/11/23	Date checked 11/12/23	Date approved 11/12/23

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ANNEX 3 – Sibford Ferris responses

RESPONDENT	COMMENTS
<p>(F1) Traffic Management Officer, (Thames Valley Police)</p>	<p>Object – 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>(F2) Head of Built Environment and Infrastructure, (Go-Ahead Group)</p>	<p>Concerns – These proposals affect a major longer-distance bus corridor between Banbury and Stratford, serving a significant number of relatively remote communities, of which the village concerned is just one. The corridor runs with local authority financial support, including, I understand, a contribution from Warwickshire County Council.</p> <p>As we have consistently pointed out, the cumulative impact of extensive application of 20mph limits in multiple villages, each involving what can be considerable lengths of classified road, can only be expected to have a substantial deleterious impact on bus running times, ultimately undermining its ongoing economic and practical sustainability. Blanket arbitrary imposition of signed 20mph limits runs counter to formal Government policy and technical advice set out in DfT Circular 01/2013 “setting local speed limits” re-issued March 2024, explicitly for this reason, among many others. We note concurrent consultations for two other villages on this route corridor.</p> <p>We are not the operator of the service corridor concerned. While we are expressing “in- principle” concern, it is not appropriate in our view, to present a formal objection. Notwithstanding this, we trust the Council will pay due regard to its separate obligations under the Statutory Network Management Duty and any concerns and observations made regarding the impacts of these specific proposals by the bus operator concerned.</p>
<p>(F3) Cherwell District Council, (Development Management Team)</p>	<p>No objection – Upon review of the information forming part of the consultation, we wonder whether the 20mph zone to the southern end of the village starts/finishes slightly too far southward, i.e. it will be at a point when one has not yet entered/exited the village and may well lead to a lower level of compliance.</p>

	<p>Aside from the above, I confirm the local planning authority has no observations to make.</p>
<p>(F4) Sibford Ferris Parish Council</p>	<p>Partially support – I wanted to emphasise the Parish Council's collective position on behalf of the local community - which is 'Partial Support' for the proposal.</p> <p>SFPC fully supports the replacement of the current 30mph speed limit with a reduced limit of 20mph - for the same zone of coverage as presently exists. SFPC objects to the proposed extension of the speed limit zone from its current boundary on the Hook Norton Road, at signs A11 and A12 on the Consultation Plan, to a new one further south shown by signs A15 and A16 on the Consultation Plan. OCC have said that the "road agreements team have asked that we extend the 20mph limit to include the development, which we agreed to due to safety concerns". The development referred to is the Deanfield Homes Hook Norton Road one, currently under construction, the entrance to which is well within the existing 30mph speed limit zone - making any extension unnecessary.</p> <p>Accordingly, SFPC request that the village speed limit zone remains unchanged - apart from the limit itself being reduced to 20mph from 30mph.</p>
<p>(F5) Local resident, (Sibford, Main Street)</p>	<p>Object - There is no requirement to change as roads mean very few cars travel at 30mph in village. It will incur costs to change that are better spent elsewhere. Eg give the money to the local school. It will not change travel habits as plenty walk or cycle in village.</p>
<p>(F6) Local resident, (Sibford Ferris, Hook Norton Road)</p>	<p>Object - 30mph is safe enough for people who drive responsibly, the people who will not drive responsibly will speed and drive dangerously no matter how much the speed limit is reduced, i fear this will just cause more congestion and can push drivers who get aggravated easily to speed and cause more danger to everyone else, this is shown in wroxton where the speed limit was changed to 20mph, i've had people dangerously overtake me through the village because i'm going the speed limit and they dont want to abide to the 20mph limit</p>
<p>(F7) Local resident, (Sibford Ferris, Woodway Road)</p>	<p>Object - I don't see any need for 20 mph as the roads have enough potholes which slows drivers down now..</p>

<p>(F8) Local resident, (Sibford Ferris, Woodway Road)</p>	<p>Object - It isn't necessary there are so many parked cars etc on the road and tight narrowing of road due to high walls that cause drivers to drive slowly enough</p>
<p>(F9) Local Cllr, (Sibford Ferris, Woodway Road)</p>	<p>Partially support - Sibford Ferris Parish Council (SFPC) support the proposed change to the existing 30mph speed limit zone within the village of Sibford Ferris - reducing the limit to 20mph while keeping the zone of coverage the same as it presently is. SFPC object to the proposed extension of the speed limit zone from its current boundary (at signs A11 and A12 on the Consultation Plan) to a new one further towards Hook Norton (shown by signs A15 and A16 on the Consultation Plan). Oxfordshire County Council say that the "road agreements team have asked that we extend the 20mph limit to include the development, which we agreed to due to safety concerns". The development referred to is the Deanfield Homes one, currently under construction, the entrance to which is well within the existing speed limit zone - making an extension unnecessary.</p>
<p>(F10) Local resident, (Sibford Ferris, Cotswold Close)</p>	<p>Support - Sibford Ferris is used as a race track by some people and the bad parking makes oncoming traffic impossible to see in places. 20 mph is an excellent scheme and much needed in our village.</p>
<p>(F11) Local resident, (Sibford Ferris, Main Street)</p>	<p>Support - Many of the roads in Sibford Ferris are narrow, quite heavily parked and lacking adequate footpaths and therefore a 20mph limit is entirely appropriate.</p>
<p>(F12) Local resident, (Sibford Ferris, Mannings Close)</p>	<p>Support - I believe the lower speed limit significantly lowers the risk to pedestrians on the parts of Main Street that have no pavement, while making little difference to vehicle journey times through the village.</p>
<p>(F13) Local resident, (Sibford Ferris, Mannings Close)</p>	<p>Support - The traffic through the Main Street and Mannings Hill is currently too fast for the safety of pedestrians, and the lanes are too narrow for two cars in places. There are very few pavements.</p>

ANNEX 4 – Sibford Gower responses

RESPONDENT	COMMENTS
<p>(G1) Traffic Management Officer, (Thames Valley Police)</p>	<p>Object – 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>(G2) Head of Built Environment and Infrastructure, (Go-Ahead Group)</p>	<p>No objection – These proposals affect a major longer-distance bus corridor between Banbury and Stratford, serving a significant number of relatively remote communities, of which the village concerned is just one. The corridor runs with local authority financial support, including, I understand, a contribution from Warwickshire County Council.</p> <p>As we have consistently pointed out, the cumulative impact of extensive application of 20mph limits in multiple villages, each involving what can be considerable lengths of classified road, can only be expected to have a substantial deleterious impact on bus running times, ultimately undermining its ongoing economic and practical sustainability. Blanket arbitrary imposition of signed 20mph limits runs counter to formal Government policy and technical advice set out in DfT Circular 01/2013 “setting local speed limits” re-issued March 2024, explicitly for this reason, among many others. We note concurrent consultations for two other villages on this route corridor.</p> <p>We are not the operator of the service corridor concerned. While we are expressing “in-principle” concern, it is not appropriate in our view, to present a formal objection. Notwithstanding this, we trust the Council will pay due regard to its separate obligations under the Statutory Network Management Duty and any concerns and observations made regarding the impacts of these specific proposals by the bus operator concerned.</p>
<p>(G3) Cherwell District Council, (Development Management Team)</p>	<p>No objection – Upon review of the information forming part of the consultation, we wonder whether the 20mph zone to the south-western end of the village starts/finishes too far southward, i.e. it will be at a point when one has not yet entered/exited the village and may well lead to a lower level of compliance. 30mph seems the right speed on The Colony. One would think it more appropriate for the 20mph zone to start/finish by the salt bin (the 5th set of 20mph indicators</p>

	<p>currently shown on that road), which is just to the east of footpath 348/3/10. Perhaps the 30mph could remain where it currently starts/finishes, and the 20mph begin/end at the point mentioned above.</p> <p>Also, there appears to be an over-proliferation of signs proposed in this instance. (If these are to be road markings then this comment doesn't apply)</p> <p>Aside from the above, I confirm the local planning authority has no observations to make.</p>
(G4) Rather not say, (Banbury, Langford Park)	<p>Object - There have not been high occurrence rates of road traffic accidents, deaths or injuries on these roads in and around Sibford, that require a change to our regular 30mph limit on these roads. This action of 20mph is disproportionate, as no problems are currently affecting the community. 20mph is acceptable around school's in term time, school hours. Sibford's is not a boy racer rally track, let's use common sense.</p>
(G5) Local resident, (Sibford Ferris, High Street)	<p>Object - It's not necessary is it. Can you demonstrate a need for this with measurements and statistics or is there just some bureaucratic machine churning out 20mph zones everywhere it can?</p> <p>There is already all the necessary traffic calming around the school.</p> <p>Why are you wasting time on this when there are plenty other traffic issues in Sibford, like the Grange Lane crossroads where there are frequent collisions.</p>
(G6) Local resident, (Sibford Gower, Acre Ditch)	<p>Object - There is no need for a 20 mph speed limit through the Sibford villages. There have been no accidents or incidents in the last 50 years due to speeding traffic that I'm aware of. With parking and generally how the villages roads are you cannot speed anyway!! This is absolutely ridiculous and a complete waste of time and money doing this consultation. Money better spent on the appalling state and condition of the roads in and around the Sibfords I think most people would prefer potholes filled and roads re topped than having a shiny new 20 mph signs installed which everyone would ignore anyway and secondly you cannot speed on the roads through the village just take a drive through yourselves to see....bonkers!!</p>
(G7) Local resident, (Sibford Gower, Barley Close)	<p>Object - The roads in Gower are narrow and you rarely go above 20mph in any event. I do not see this as necessary and it is a waste of tax payers money changing signs and cost of advertising changes etc.</p>

	<p>the only place I don't object is outside the school.</p> <p>There are plenty of cyclists walkers horse riders in the village and changing speed limit will not increase given the limited speed in any event. All you are doing is incurring unnecessary costs.</p>
(G8) Local resident, (Sibford Gower, Hawks Lane)	<p>Object - I feel it is totally unnecessary to change the current speed limits within the Sibfords. You cannot speed through the village due to the amount of road side parking which is constantly there and the actual road itself.</p> <p>The amount of potholes and poor road condition is more of a hazard and concern. I have not seen or heard of any incidents or accidents due to speeding in the Sibfords. Come and drive through and see it is not a problem for the village at all.</p>
(G9) Local resident, (Sibford Gower, Hawks Lane)	<p>Object - This is completely unnecessary and a waste of time and money, which could be better spent elsewhere There is no reason for a 20mph in the village of Sibford Gower there has been no comments as such on the parish council meeting minutes and no accidents or incidents reported!</p> <p>Absolutely bonkers there are parked cars and potholes everywhere throughout the village you can't speed and the roads are twisty so where on earth this has come from is unbeknown to locals!</p>
(G10) Local resident, (Sibford Gower, Main Street)	<p>Object - A 20 mph speed limit is completely unnecessary through the Sibfords...the roads are minor B roads and I'm not aware of any issues with speeding, accidents etc... in the villages in The last 70 years! I understand where a village is on a main A road like Swalcliffe or Tadmarton it might be more appropriate</p>
(G11) Local resident, (Sibford Gower, Pound Lane)	<p>Object - As a delivery driver I feel 20 mph is to slow.30 limit is perfect. I see alot of drivers ignoring 20 limits in most areas and drivers that follow the 20 limit are paying more attention to the speedometer on the dash than on the road itself. Unless a camera is installed with it I know it will be ignored by most</p>
(G12) Local resident, (Burdrop, Hawks Lane)	<p>Support - Currently the amount of pot holes in the road in the village act as an effective traffic calming measure - however if they are ever repaired then speeding will increase.</p>

(G13) Local resident, (Sibford Gower, High Meadow off Pound Lane)	Support - I'm supporting this proposal as traffic speeds through the village in excess of 30 ph. There are areas where there are no footpaths, the edges of the lanes are unwalkable and speeding traffic have no regard for pedestrians.
(G14) Local resident, (Sibford Gower, High Meadow)	No objection - New speed limit might slow drivers down to 30.....although the potholes in various parts of the village slow people down too