

## **CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT – 14 FEBRUARY 2019**

### **CHESTERTON THE HALE- PROPOSED 30MPH SPEED LIMIT**

**Report by Director for Infrastructure Delivery, Communities**

#### **Recommendation**

1. The Cabinet Member for the Environment is RECOMMENDED to approve the proposed introduction of a 30mph speed limit as advertised.

#### **Executive summary**

2. Speed limits are reviewed when there are changes to the road layout as a result of development, when requested by local councils as a result of road safety concerns, and as part of the on-going monitoring of reports on road accidents. Proposed changes are assessed applying the County Council's Procedure for Speed Limits.

#### **Introduction**

3. This report presents responses received to a statutory consultation to reduce the speed limit to 30mph (from the national speed limit of 60mph) on the road known locally as 'The Hale' at Chesterton from the terminal point of the existing 30mph speed limit just south of its junction with the A4095 southwards by approximately 180 metres, to include the access to a new residential development.

#### **Background**

4. The above proposal as shown at Annex 1 has been put forward in conjunction with approved residential development on the east side of The Hale.

#### **Consultation**

5. Formal consultation on the proposal was carried out between 10 January and 8 February 2019. A public notice was placed in the Bicester Advertiser newspaper and sent to statutory consultees including Thames Valley Police, the Fire & Rescue Service, Ambulance service, Cherwell District Council, Chesterton Parish Council and the local County Councillor.
6. Six responses were received. 1 objection from the Parish Council, 3 expressions of support (although 2 of these requested the limit be extended further) and 2 non-objections from the Thames Valley Police and the local County Councillor – who raised queries regarding the extent of the proposal.

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The responses are recorded at Annex 2 with copies of the full responses available for inspection by County Councillors.

### **Response to objections and other comments**

7. Thames Valley Police expressed no objection to the proposal.
8. Chesterton Parish Council expressed a strong objection on the grounds that the 30mph speed limit should be extended to include all of The Hale (i.e. to its junction with Akeman Street), noting that this narrow road which has no footway is regularly used by pedestrians and also that the narrow width presents a hazard to traffic.
9. County Councillor Corkin, the local member, while expressing no opinion for or against the proposal, noted that he was aware of concerns that the proposed 30mph limit would not apply to the whole length of the road, but presumed that there were technical reasons explaining this.
10. Three expressions of support for the proposal were received from members of the public, although it should be stressed that two of these were qualified on the grounds that the proposed limit should apply to the full length of the road.
11. The concerns of Chesterton Parish Council and other parties expressing the view that the limit should extend the full length of the road are noted. In considering the extent of the proposals, officers took account of the national guidance on setting local speed limits issued by the Department for Transport and also the normal practice applied in the county when new development is approved outside a current 30mph limit. In these cases, a 30mph speed limit will be extended to approximately 50 metres beyond the new access; it is considered extending a limit further beyond this point - where there is no roadside development - risks devaluing the impact of the limit as drivers will not see the reason for the 30mph restriction.
12. There are many comparable examples in the county of roads with no roadside development and no footway but with appreciable usage by pedestrians and it is accepted that despite there being typically very few reported injury accidents (as is the case at The Hale where no such accidents of any type have been reported in the past 5-years between its junctions with the A4095 and Akeman Street) there are nevertheless understandable local concerns over safety. Speed limits alone will not be an effective way of addressing such concerns but could potentially be considered if accompanied by appropriate traffic calming measures. Officers would be willing to meet Chesterton Parish Council to explore options for such measures subject to funding being available.

### **How the Project supports LTP4 Objectives**

13. The proposals would help facilitate the safe movement of traffic.

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

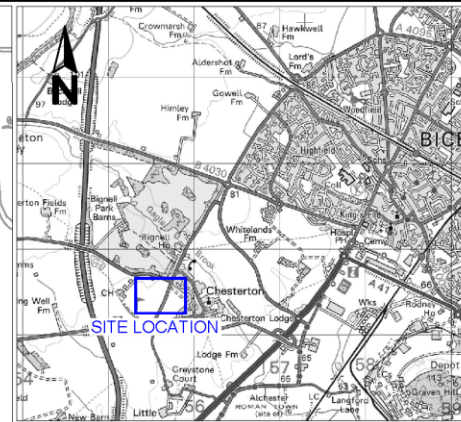
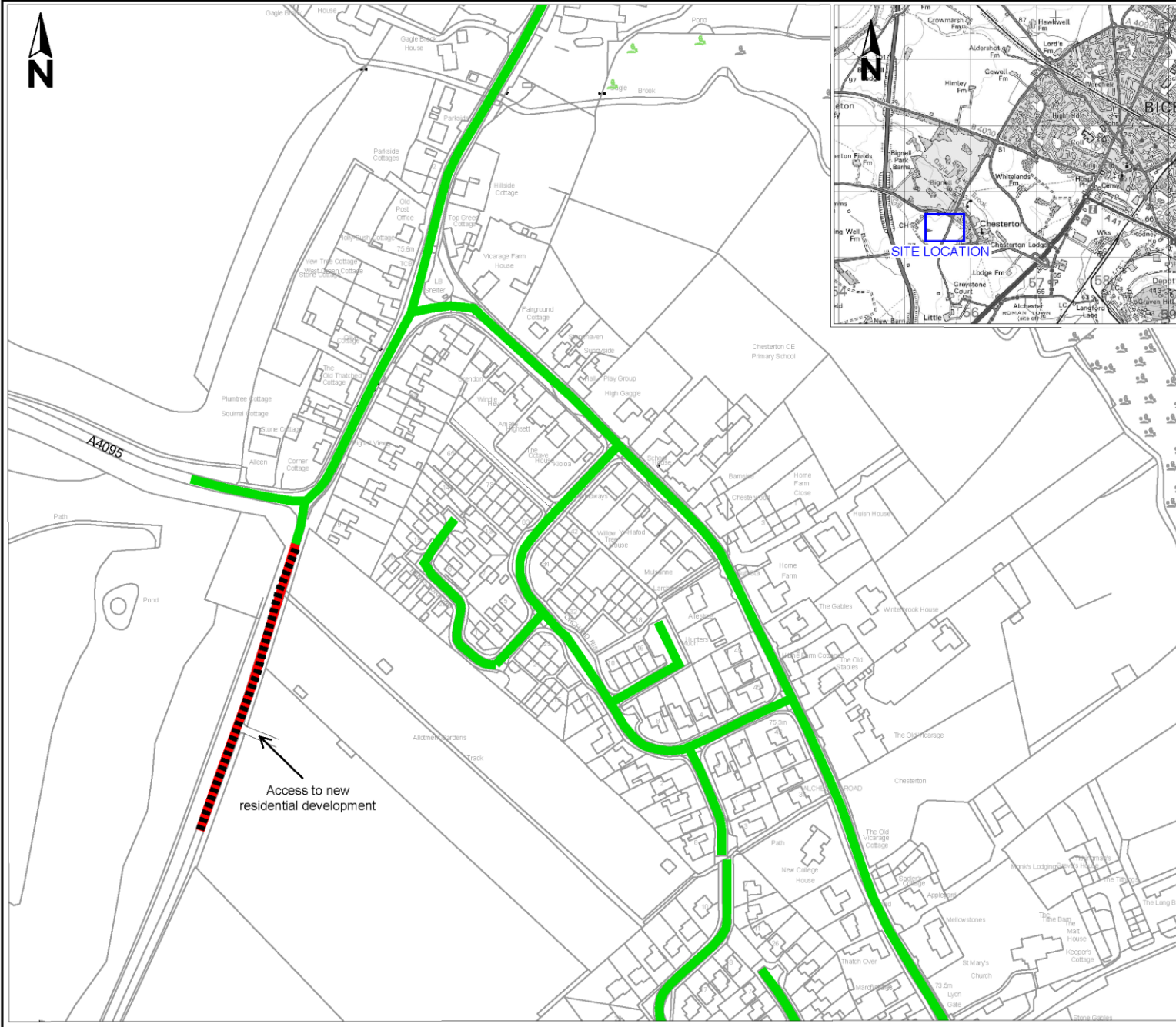
14. Funding for the proposed measures has been provided by the developers.

OWEN JENKINS  
Director for Infrastructure Delivery

Background papers:      Plan of proposed speed limit  
   Consultation responses

Contact Officers:            Hugh Potter 07766 998704

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Drawing No. Revision 0

- Key**
- Proposed 30mph Speed Limit approximately 180 metres
  - Existing 30mph Speed Limit (to remain)

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Rev.	Date	Purpose of revision	Drawn	Checked	Approved

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**Project title**  
PROPOSED 30MPH SPEED LIMIT

**Drawing title**  
CHESTERTON

**Drawing Status**

Scale @ A3	Drawn by	Checked by	Approved by
N.T.S.	JaC		
	Date drawn 12/18	Date checked	Date approved

Oxfordshire Project No. & File Ref

Drawing No. Revision 0

RESPONDENT	SUMMARISED COMMENTS
(1) Traffic Management Officer, (Thames Valley Police)	<p><b>No objection</b> - I have visited the location and note the location of new housing and access to the existing Hale Lane length. Whilst the character of road will not change the justification of inclusion is understood within the village curtilage.</p>
(2) Chesterton Parish Council	<p><b>Object</b> - There is general disbelief that the 30mph limit will only apply to the 180 metres (with a wide footpath) from the A4095 to just beyond the entrance to Audley Gardens, leaving the rest of this narrow road (with no footpath) with a 60mph limit over the most dangerous section up to the junction with Green Lane. We would request that the 30mph limit be extended from the A4095 to the junction with Green Lane/Akeman Street.</p> <p>We have been in discussion with OCC for some time over the S106 Agreement which states that 'the unnamed road from the A4095 to Green Lane will be widened' and this has yet to be resolved.</p> <p>Measurements on the section over which the 30mph speed limit is not proposed suggest that the width of The Hale is as low as 4.3m in this section as opposed to nearly 4.8m approaching the junction with the A4095.</p> <p>We are already in receipt of letters from residents on Audley Gardens warning us of this dangerous section with no footpath when pushing prams or exercising dogs or simply going for a walk.</p> <p>Already Highways are examining the possibility of widening the access from The Hale to Akeman Street because of the very limited visibility.</p> <p>We will welcome a site visit which will demonstrate the difficulties of two cars passing in this section often at some speed. Also, please note that there is signage indicating that The Hale is unsuitable for HGVs – this is conveniently ignored on many occasions.</p> <p>We recognise that the County Council is committed to ensuring the safe movement of both motor vehicles and other traffic. This proposal will not minimise vehicle or pedestrian safety or the safe passage of traffic unless the 30mph limit</p>

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	<p>is extended to the Green Lane/Akeman Street junction.</p> <p>We ask that the Council re-consider this situation and extends the proposed 30mph limit instead of the current national speed limit on this section of The Hale.</p>
(3) Local County Councillor, (Ploughley Division)	<p><b>Neither</b> - I have had a number of residents say they would support a 30mph speed restriction along the entire length of The Hale. I assume there are reasons why this is not the case?</p>
(4) Local Resident, (Chesterton)	<p><b>Support</b> (with concerns) - I would propose that the full length of The Hale together with an additional stretch from the Bicester Golf Hotel into Green Lane Chesterton is restricted to 30mph if not 20. The Hale is used as a shortcut to avoid the M40 J9 rush hour queues and the tendency of drivers is to speed where they can, to justify the extra distance travelled. The crossroads at the bottom of The Hale has had many near misses and several actual collisions over the last few years that I have lived here. I would also propose additional traffic calming measures to discourage drivers from using The Hale for reasons apart from local access, especially given the lack of provision for pedestrians.</p>
(5) Local Resident, (Cheserton)	<p><b>Support</b> (with concerns) - I feel that while this is a step in the right direction it does not go far enough to protect the safety of pedestrians and other road users. Extending the 30mph zone to cover the entirety of The Hale down to the crossroads would be a much better option and one that would be in the public interest. It would certainly make the area much safer for residents who are out walking or cycling. Furthermore, the cost difference to the council would be negligible but the safety benefits greatly improved.</p>
(6) Local Resident, (Bicester)	<p><b>Support</b> - I live in the new development off the Hale (Audley Gardens). At present cars travel at fast speeds down the Hale before slamming on their brakes. I have two young children, and I would like them to be able to go out and about without having to worry about cars travelling 60mph (and in some cases exceeding that) down the adjacent road. It also makes it difficult some mornings to turn onto the road as many use it as a cut-through.</p>