

Divisions affected: *Hanborough & Minster Lovell*

CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAY MANAGEMENT – 2 SEPTEMBER 2021

NORTH LEIGH: A4095 – PROPOSED EXTENSION OF 40MPH SPEED LIMIT AND TURNING RESTRICTIONS

Report by Corporate Director, Environment and Place

RECOMMENDATION

1. The Cabinet Member for Highway Management is RECOMMENDED to approve:
 - a) the proposed extension of the 40mph speed limit on the A4095 at North Leigh;
 - b) the proposed turning restriction prohibiting vehicles turning from the A4095 into new access for Eynsham Hall;

as originally advertised.

Executive summary

2. This report presents responses received to a statutory consultation on the proposed extension of the 40mph speed limit on the A4095 at North Leigh and introduction of turning restrictions in conjunction with the construction of a new access on the A4095 for Eynsham Hall as part of approved development. The matter had previously been brought to the Cabinet Member for Highway Management at his delegated decisions meeting on 3 June 2021 when, following consideration of the consultation responses and additional representations made by County Councillor Liam Walker, the local member, he had deferred a decision to allow for further consultation with Eynsham Hall on provision of additional measures and funding for those additional measures.

Financial Implications

3. Funding for consultation on the original proposals had been provided by the developers of adjacent land.

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 facilitate the safe movement of traffic.

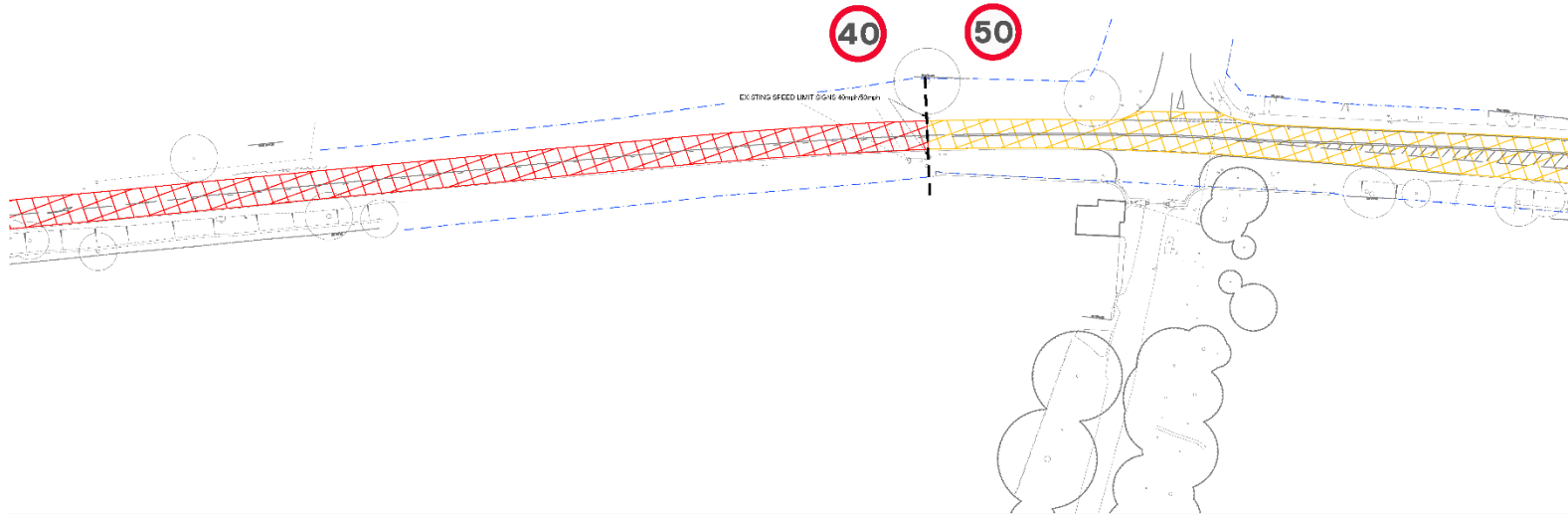
Consultation

6. Formal consultation was carried out between 31 March and 30 April 2021. A notice was published in the Witney Gazette newspaper and an email sent to statutory consultees, including Thames Valley Police, the Fire & Rescue Service, Ambulance service, West Oxfordshire District Council, North Leigh Parish Council and local County Councillor.
7. Seven responses were received during the formal consultation. One objection, five in support and one expression of concern. The responses are shown at Annex 2 with copies of the original responses available for inspection by County Councillors.
8. Thames Valley Police objected on the grounds of road safety, expressing concerns that compliance with the proposed extended 40mph speed limit and turning restrictions was uncertain and, taking account of the restricted sight lines at the existing access due to the vertical alignment of the road in the vicinity, the safety of the proposals.
9. Noting the above concerns, it should be emphasised that the proposed new access, speed limit and turning restrictions have been proposed to mitigate safety risks in the context of additional traffic movements to and from Eynsham Hall as a result of the approved development. While accepting that police resources for enforcement of the proposed restrictions will be very limited, the proposals are judged to be appropriate and proportionate, and have been subject to an independent road safety audit.
10. The local member expressed support, with his response focussing on the opportunities to complete a continuous cycle route on the north side of the A4095, taking account of the current gap in the cycle provision between its junctions with Common Road and Park Road. It should, however, be noted that the cycle track works are outside the scope of these specific proposals.
11. A District Councillor expressed support, also mentioning the benefits of the above cycle track provision and also requesting consideration of extending the proposed 40mph speed limit westwards to just west of the A4095 junction with Common Road and eastwards to meet the existing 40mph limit at Freeland, noting the new residential access on the north side of the A4095 between Common Road and Park Road and more generally the overall character of the route at North Leigh.
12. North Leigh Parish Council also expressed concerns that the opportunity was not being taken to extend the 40mph speed limit as requested above. That same view was also expressed by three members of the public who while supporting the proposals also considered that additional measures were needed on road safety grounds and for providing an attractive and safe route for cyclists.

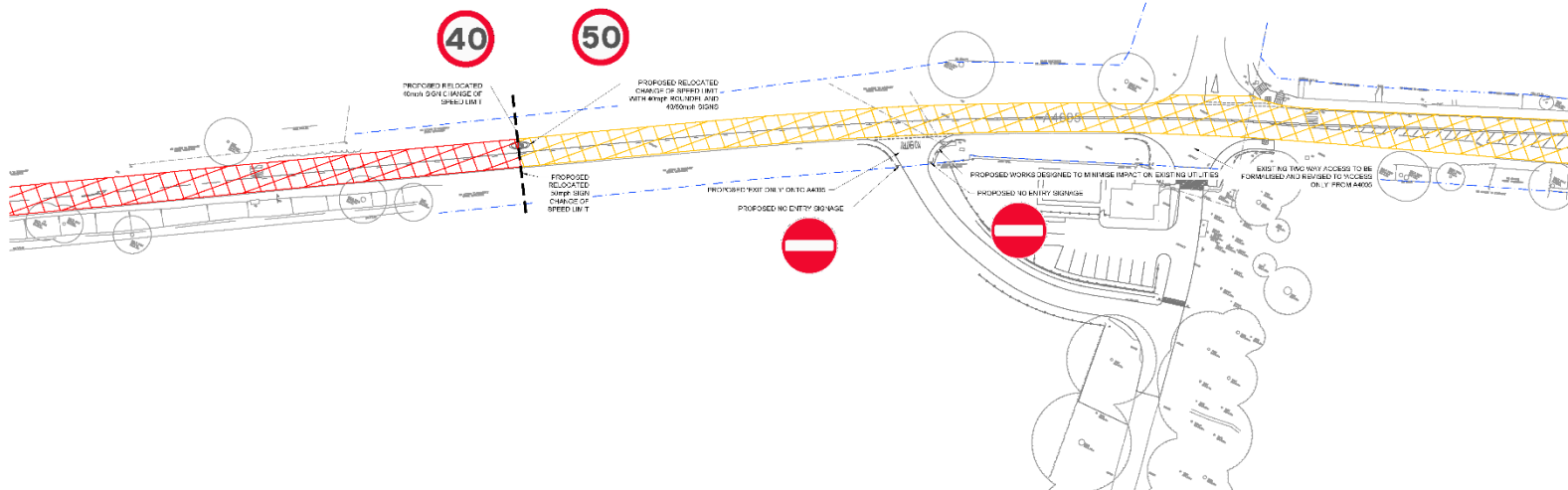
Further investigations following deferral of the decision on the scheme at the Cabinet Member for Highway management decisions meeting on 3 June 2021

13. At the Cabinet Member for Highway Management delegated decisions meeting on 3 June 2021 a decision on the advertised proposals was deferred to allow for further consultation with Eynsham Hall on additional measures and their funding following consideration of the consultation responses and the additional representations made by County Councillor Walker, the local member, at the meeting.
14. Officers have discussed with the developers of Eynsham Hall the funding of a more extensive 40mph speed limit. However, they felt that the scope of this request was unreasonable and should not preclude the approval of their application for the extension of the 40mph speed limit as consulted on and in accordance with the consented planning application, noting that the extension of the TRO requested would add approximately a further 1.8km of revision to the existing TRO. They considered that to be beyond the remit of the consented development and would come at a significant financial cost, and as such considered it to be an unreasonable request.
15. In determining what is reasonable to request of a developer, an important point to note is that the planning process is not a mechanism by which betterment can be sought. What is required is that mitigation measures must meet the three tests of the Community Infrastructure Levy, namely to make the development acceptable in planning terms, directly related to the development and fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development. This is required to ensure compliance with national planning policy.
16. Noting that the discussions at the Cabinet Member for Highway Management meeting on 3 June 2021 also referred to safety concerns, the advertised proposals have been subject to a Road Safety Audit (RSA) of the detailed design and in response to the comments made within the audit, the developer is proposing the 'new road layout ahead' signage to supplement the advertised extension of the 40mph speed limit. While Vehicle Activated signage, as referred to in the RSA is not currently being proposed as it is not favoured by the internal asset teams due to the ongoing maintenance and cost to run. However, a stage 3 road safety audit will be carried out after construction, which can confirm if they still recommend this feature. The same applies to the possible provision of direction signs (as referred to in the RSA) for drivers using the new egress from the development. No other recommendations were made in the RSA.
17. Taking account of the above it is recommended that the proposals as advertised are approved while noting that should future funding be identified for promoting a more extensive 40mph speed limit, there would be minimal abortive costs should that be approved following consultation at a later date.

EXISTING SITUATION



PROPOSED TRO CHANGES



- GENERAL NOTES
1. THIS DRAWING SHOULD NOT BE APPROVED IN WHOLE OR IN PART WITHOUT THE APPROVAL OF LINK ENGINEERING.
 2. DO NOT SCALE FROM THIS DRAWING UNLESS UNLESS OTHERWISE SPECIFIED.
 3. THE CONTRACTOR IS TO CHECK ALL DIMENSIONS FROM THE PRIOR TO COMMENCING WORKS AND CHECK CLARIFICATION FROM THE ENGINEER IN RESPECT TO ANY AMBIGUITY FOUND.
 4. THIS DRAWING SHOULD BE HELD IN CONJUNCTION WITH ALL OTHER SCHEME SPECIFIC DRAWINGS.

- GENERAL KEY
- EXTENT OF HIGHWAY BOUNDARY
 - 40MPH ZONE
 - 50MPH ZONE

Rev	Description	By	Date

Client

ARCACIA

Link
ENGINEERING
Travis@linkeng.co.uk

Project
LE20192 - EYNESHAM HALL - PRE PLANNING S278

Drawing
TRO CONSULTATION PLAN

Scale @ A1
1:200

Drawn
JVM

Checked
RCG

Rev

DATE: 15/01/2024 10:00 AM

SCALE: 1:200

STATUS: APPROVAL (SA)

RESPONDENT	COMMENTS
(1) Traffic Management Officer, (Thames Valley Police)	<p>Object – my response reflects concern for road safety given the new access onto the A4095 from the detail provided without knowledge of the alternative access/exit ?</p> <p>I have visited the location several times and note the location of the new access 'T' junction which is located adjacent to a rise in the road. Sight lines are limited and although the lower speed limit may temper speeds I am not convinced that this junction is a safe idea? Whilst the proposal attempts to limit movements to exit only this will be fraught with danger given likely residual speeds and visibility with judgement of speed and distance? The potential for illegal access is also a concern which could elevate unsafe movement and demand for Police supervision which could not be anything other than passing and infrequent.</p> <p>I have not seen where the alternative exit from the development is but assume this is out onto the existing village road network? If so a safer option would be to direct all traffic through that using the existing junctions rather than add additional risk onto a busy A class road.</p> <p>Thames Valley Police formally object to the proposal on road safety casualty reduction grounds.</p>
(2) Local County Cllr, (Witney North & East)	<p>Support – I strongly support this proposal it is a very nerve-wrecking ride on the bike at present (a route I do very regularly) and the detour is quite long.</p> <p>On that note I notice that traffic tends to pick up a lot of speed along Common Road too (when doing the detour). The missing link is much needed.</p>
(3) District Councillor , (North Leigh ward)	<p>Support – know that many drivers (especially motorbikes at w/es) break the 50mph speed limit along the section of A4095 between Common Road and Park Road junctions. Motorbikes often do about c.100mph in this section - I have seen and heard them believe me.</p> <p>The new access for Eynsham Hall is a great improvement as the visibility and width has always been a problem with</p>

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	<p>the Park Road opposite... As you will be aware there is now a new access onto the A4095 about 300 metres towards Witney where a housing estate for 50 dwellings is currently under construction so that will involve movements of maybe 100 plus vehicles a day in and out of that site.</p> <p>Can I suggest that the 40mph limit is extended westwards towards Witney and starts just to the west of the Common Road junction and then runs all the way to the 30mph limit at Long Hanborough. Given the number of junctions bends and blind summits involved along this length of the A4095 there seems to me to be a strong case to slow speeds down.</p> <p>I am hopeful that funding will be secured for a cycle way /footway along this section of the A4095 where it is currently missing (Common Road to Park Road junction) and some funding has been secured already from both developments mentioned above - so slowing traffic down along this section of A4095 makes absolute sense whilst this missing link remains missing as it is clearly dangerous for cyclists to have cars so close at over 40mph - give it a try as I have!!</p>
<p>(4) North Leigh Parish Council</p>	<p>Concerns – Extension of the 40 mph limit south-westwards is insufficient to deal with the additional hazard created by the construction of 50 new dwellings by Bewley a further 100 metres southwest. Indeed, the 40mph limit would better be extended to at least 100 metres SW beyond the Common Road junction.</p> <p>The recent housing developments on the A4095 between Common Road and Long Hanborough will increase traffic flow to and from Witney dramatically with a subsequent increase in the risk of traffic incidents. It is illogical to install intermittent 40mph stretches on the road.</p> <p>Additionally, the Parish Council, with the active support of our District and County Councillors have succeeded in finding funding to extend the cycleway between Park Road and Common Road junctions. Reducing the speed limit to 40mph along that section makes eminent sense</p> <p>The North Leigh PC proposes a continuous 40mph limit be applied from 100metres SW of Common Road. through to the 30mph limit at Long Hanborough.</p>
<p>(5) Local Resident, (North Leigh)</p>	<p>Support – this section of A4095 needs additional safety or traffic calming measures, the new housing development entrance could potentially cause accidents by sudden breaking for those entering the new road. As an addition not enough is being done to signpost cyclists off this section of the A4095 and through the village it won't be long before a tragic accident involving a cyclist occurs</p>

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(6) Local Resident, (North Leigh)	<p>Support – A reduced speed limit of 40 MPH from 100 meters before the Common Road junction, travelling from Witney towards Oxford, and continuing through to the 40 MPH limit at Freeland is appropriate.</p> <p>A roundabout at the North Lodge / Park Road junction on the A4095 may be appropriate. Otherwise traffic lights during the rush hour may solve the dangerous nature of the junction.</p>
(7) Local Resident, (North Leigh)	<p>Support – Safety concerns with additional traffic from new development on the A4095.</p>