

Divisions affected: *Wroxton & Hook Norton*

## **CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAY MANAGEMENT – 20 JULY 2023**

### **WROXTON & BALSQUOTE: PROPOSED 20MPH SPEED LIMITS**

Report by Corporate Director, Environment and Place

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

1. The Cabinet Member for Highway Management is **RECOMMENDED** to approve the introduction of 20mph speed limits in Wroxton and Balscote as advertised.

#### **Executive summary**

2. The report presents responses to a statutory consultation on the proposed introduction of 20mph speed limits in Wroxton and Balscote as shown in **Annexes 1 to 3**.

#### **Financial Implications**

3. Funding for consultation and the proposals themselves has been provided by the County Council's 20mph Speed Limit Project.

#### **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 Wroxton and Balscote by making them safer and more attractive.

#### **Formal consultation**

6. Formal consultation was carried out between 01 June and 23 June 2023. 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, Wroxton & Balscote parish council, and the local County Councillor representing the Wroxton & Hook Norton division.

### **Statutory Consultee Responses:**

7. Two responses were received from statutory consultees. 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. Cherwell District Council (CDC) suggested that consideration be given to reducing the extent of the proposals on Stratford Road.

### **Other Responses:**

8. Two online responses were received. The single objection was received from a Witney resident who considered the proposals were unnecessary, a waste of money, and politically motivated. A local resident expressed support on the basis of it being safer for vulnerable road users.
9. The responses are shown in **Annex 4**, and copies of the original responses are available for inspection by County Councillors.

### **Officer response to objections/concerns**

10. 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'.
11. 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 the comments made of this nature in this report.
12. While there is arguably some potential to reduce the extent of the 20mph speed limits on each end of the main Stratford Road, the reduced distance at each end would be minimal. The current proposal for a direct 30mph to 20mph swap simplifies the signing and road marking process. It is therefore considered that CDC's view merits no change to the proposals.

Bill Cotton  
Corporate Director, Environment and Place

Annexes

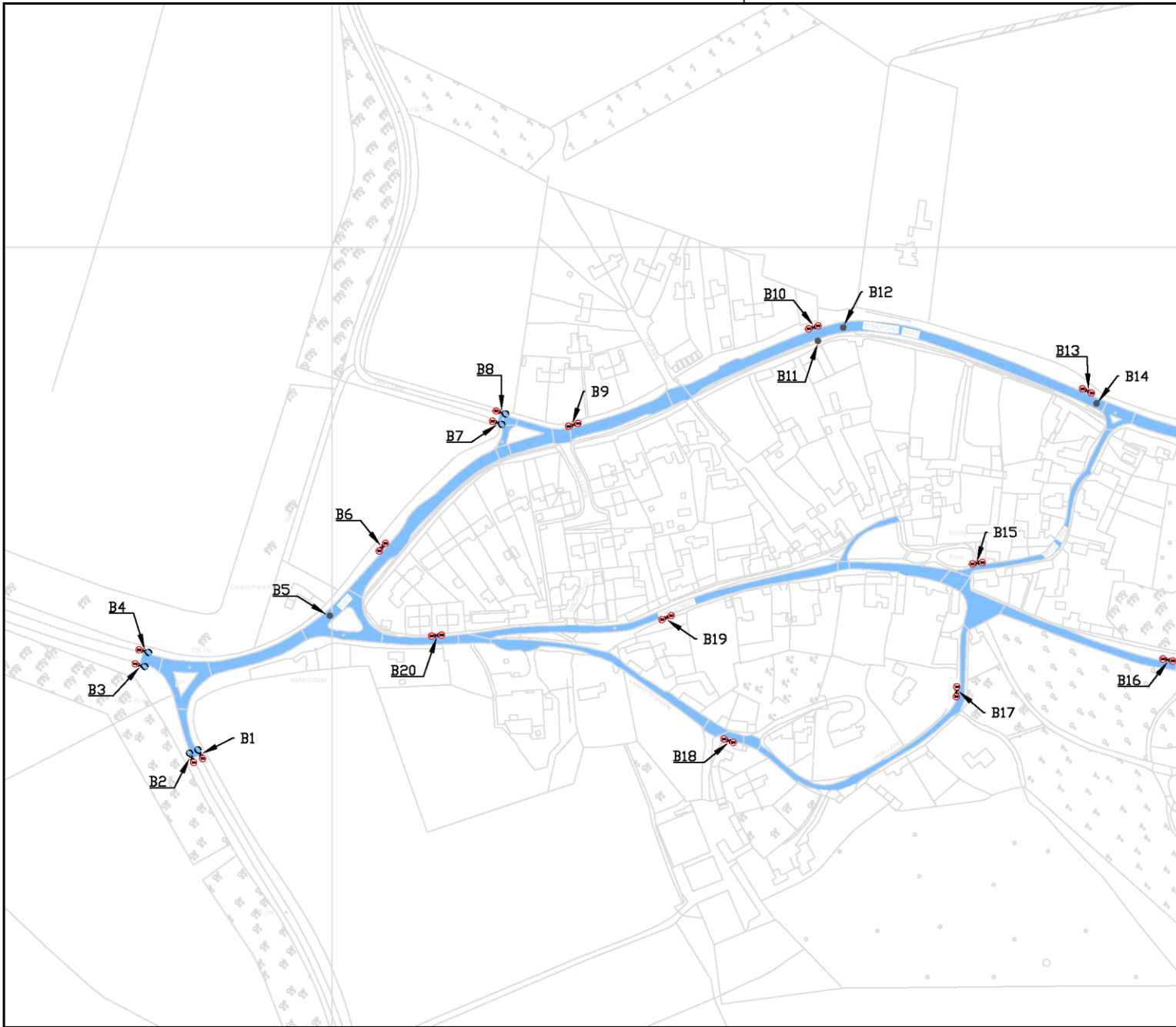
Annex 1-3: Consultation plans  
Annex 4: Consultation responses

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July 2023



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

Notes:

Proposed 20mph limit

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Rev.	Date	Purpose of revision	Drawn	Checked	Approved

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Project title  
**Wroxton & Balscote 20mph**

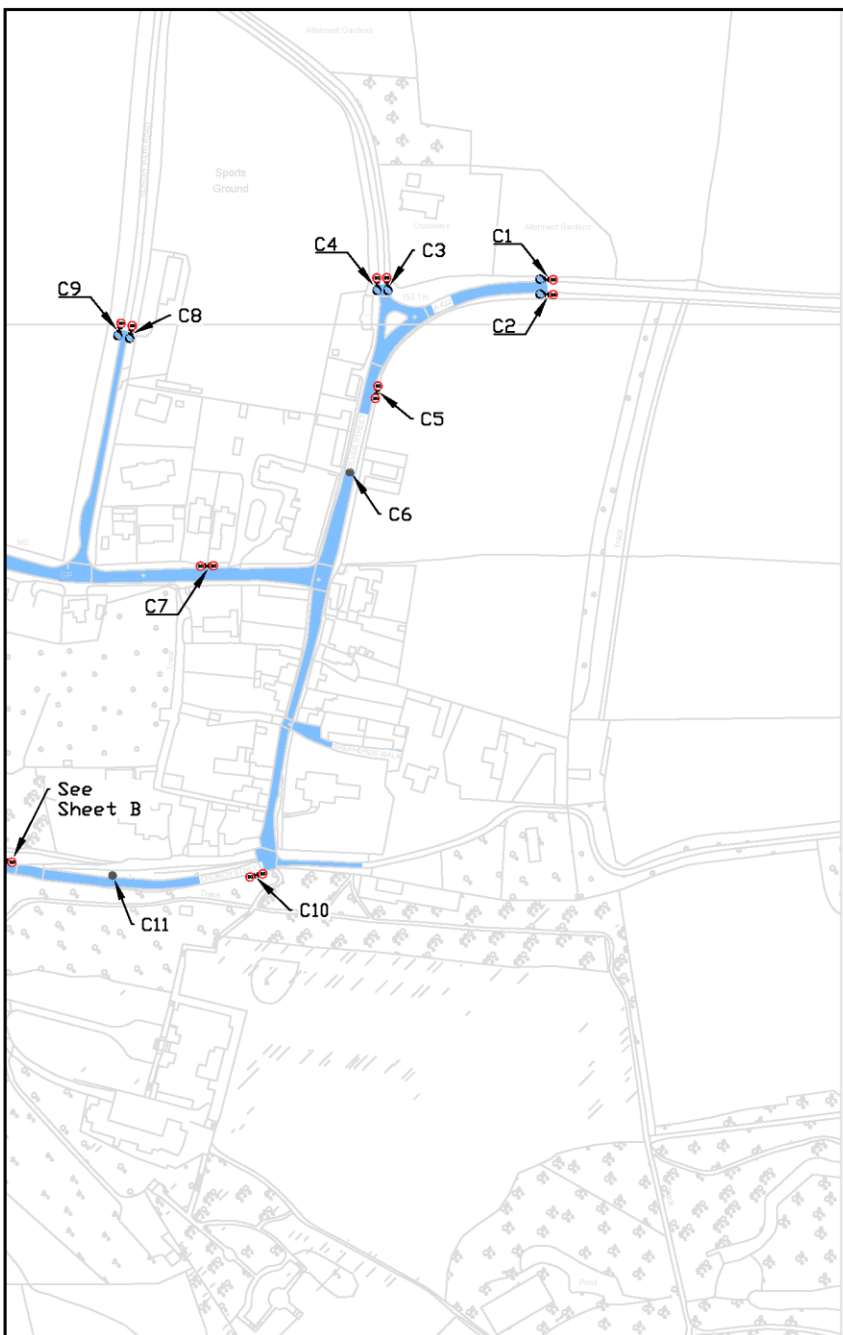
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**Sheet B**

Drawing Status

Scale @ A3	Drawn by ER	Checked by GJB	Approved by GJB
	Date drawn 24/04/23	Date checked 27/04/23	Date approved 27/04/23

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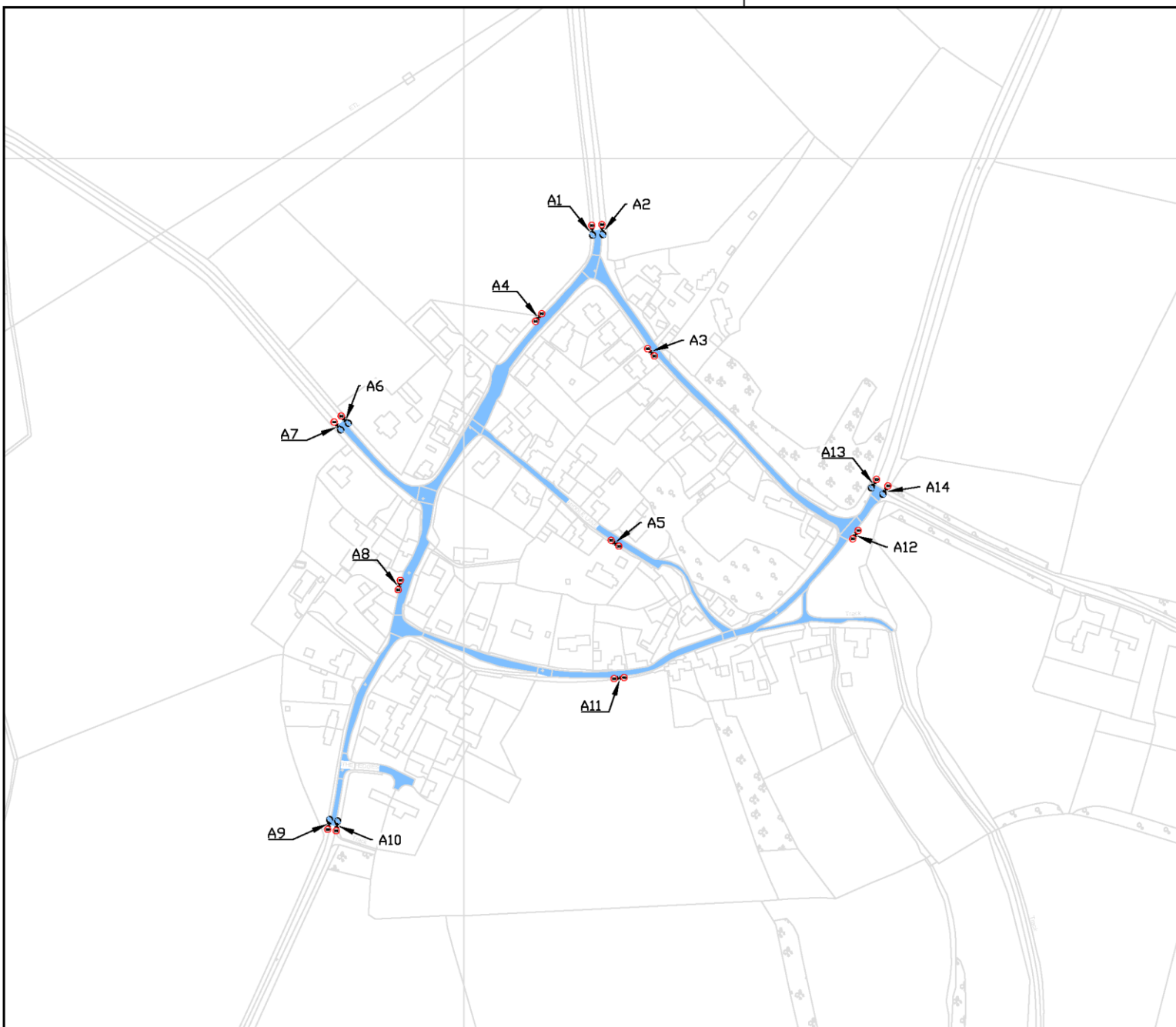
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Drawing Status

Scale @ A3	Drawn by ER	Checked by GJB	Approved by GJB
	Date drawn 24/04/23	Date checked 27/04/23	Date approved 27/04/23

Oxfordshire Project No. & File Ref

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Drawing title  
**Sheet A**

Drawing Status

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	ER	GJB	GJB

Date drawn	Date checked	Date approved
24/04/23	27/04/23	27/04/23

Oxfordshire Project No. & File Ref

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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> <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) Cherwell District Council	<p><b>Support</b> – Planning officers are regularly users of the roads in Wroxton, both as a destination and means of travel to destinations in all direction to and from the village. The proposal seems a sensible idea given the number of roads in the village that are narrower and/or have bends and/or have parked cars. That said, the preponderance of parked cars tends to regulate the speeds used. In addition, there are some roads where there may appear to be less justification, principally due the nature and linearity of some of the roads:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Stratford Road</li> </ul> <p>We wonder whether further consideration may be given to the above alterations.</p>
(3) Member of public, (Witney, Oxford Hill)	<p><b>Object</b> – No reason for implementing this to the Village. 20s every 10 yards like Zs in a Russian street will affect the village landscape especially one that has been a pleasure as always to drive through and clearly does not need the speed to be reduced. Disappointing to see the residents and members of the public views not being respected.</p> <p>No road safety issues according to recent data showing 0 evidence or need to change the speed limit here. Monies from signs need to be prioritized onto Oxfordshire roads not slowing down cars to 20 and then start trying to take cars off the road like some globalist agenda. This attack on the motorist only plays into the hands of skeptics that see that this has no benefit to transport or to housing communities. People are responsible at either 20ish mph or 30 and is time for this witch hunt on the motorist to stop otherwise we'll end up seeing data showing how high abuse to Politicians are which goes up year after year unfortunately. No place for that obviously but it is likely this Council</p>



	regardless of ideology is creating a huge wedge on motorists and residents of Oxfordshire that are deeply upset by this attack on our roads making homes and streets depressing to live in.
(4) Local resident, (Adderbury, Round Close Road)	<b>Support</b> – For the safety of pedestrians and cyclists.



