

Divisions affected: *Sutton Courtenay & Marcham*

DELGATED DECISIONS BY CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT

18 JULY 2024

MILTON (ABINGDON): MILTON HEIGHTS – PROPOSED 20MPH SPEED LIMIT

Report by Director of Environment and Highways

RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet Member is **RECOMMENDED** to:

- a) **Approve the proposed introduction of a 20mph speed limit in Milton Heights, as advertised.**

Executive Summary

1. The report presents responses to a statutory consultation on the proposal to introduce a 20mph speed limit within Milton Heights, replacing the existing 30mph speed limit on those roads east of Milton Hill in the process, 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, 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 encourage walking and cycling within Milton Heights by making them safer and more attractive.

Formal Consultation

6. Formal consultation was carried out between 05 June and 28 June 2024. A notice was published in the Oxfordshire Herald Series newspapers, 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, Vale of White Horse District Council, the local District Cllrs, and Milton (Abingdon) Parish Council.

Statutory Consultee Responses:

7. Thames Valley Police re-iterated their views concerning OCC's policy and practice regarding 20mph speed limits and wish their response to be listed as 'having concerns' rather than an objection.
8. Oxford Bus Company offered no objection, citing that the proposals wouldn't affect any scheduled bus services in the area.

Other Responses:

9. Two further responses were received, with one objection from a local resident citing Milton village as an example, where they believed the scheme didn't work and caused traffic congestion instead. A Vale of White Horse District Cllr for the Hendreds Ward (which includes Milton) submitted their support, highlighting the area as being residential and including a primary school, with the hope that lower speeds would help to improve safety for all road users.
10. The responses are shown at **Annex 2**, and copies of the original responses are available for inspection by County Councillors.

Officer Response to Objections/Concerns

11. The main purpose of the scheme is to encourage greater use of active travel by reducing speeds; this will also 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'.

Milton Heights Overview

Revision 1.0

Legend	
Proposed 20	
Existing 30	
Not Public Highway	

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Rev.	Date	Purpose of revision	Drawn	Checked	Approved
1.0	06.09.23	Proposal 1	C.R		



OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

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Project title: Milton Heights 20mph Scheme

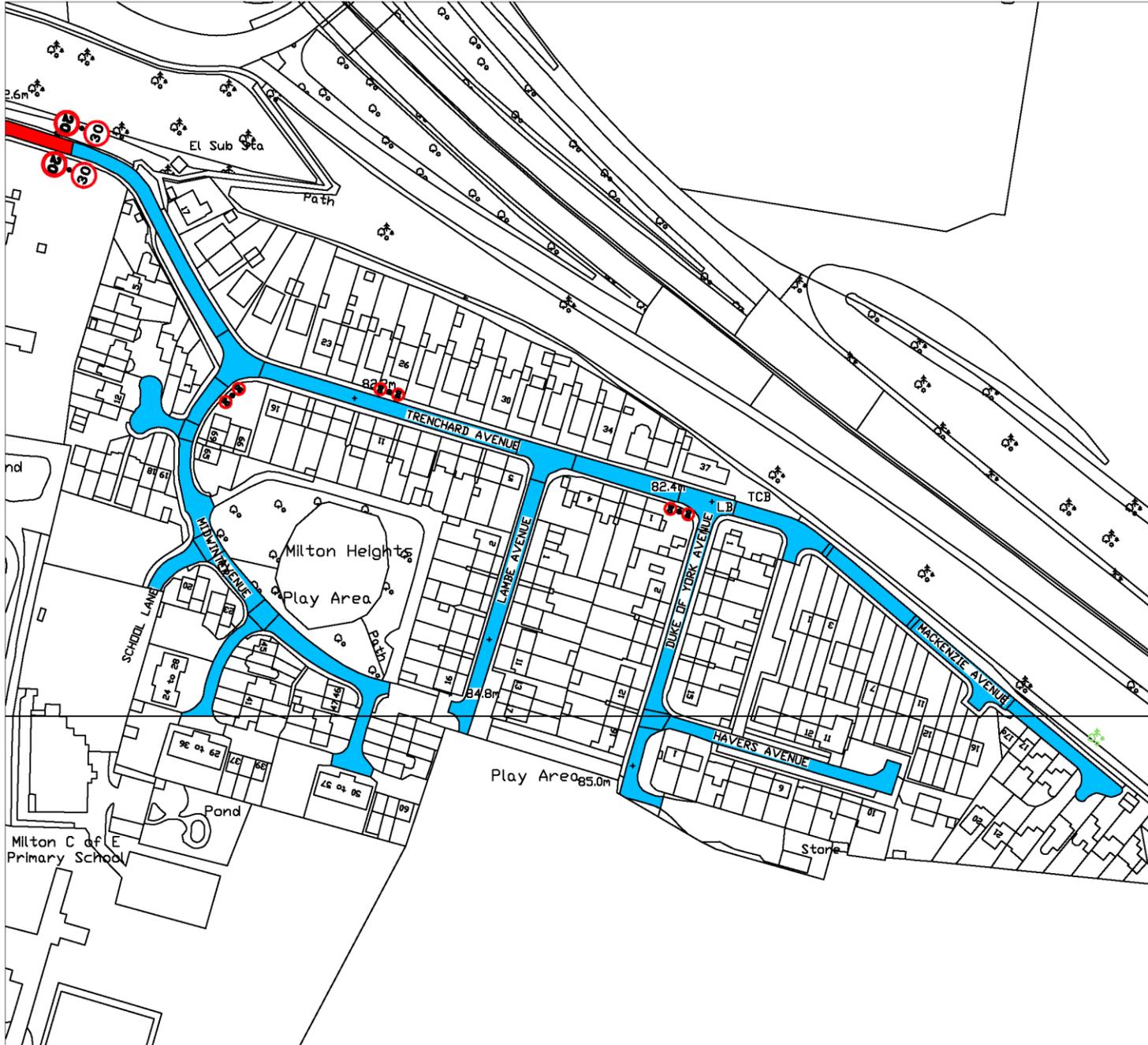
Drawing title:
Milton Heights 20mph Scheme Overview

Drawing Status

Scale @ A3	Drawn by: C.R	Checked by: G.J.B	Approved by: G.J.B
	Date drawn: 06.09.23	Date checked: 18.09.23	Date approved: 18.09.23

Oxfordshire Project No. & File Ref

Drawing No. 1.0	Revision 1.0
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RESPONDENT	COMMENTS
(1) Traffic Management Officer, (Thames Valley Police)	<p>Concerns - Thank you for the consultation documents, in relation to the proposed speed limit change.</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 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 (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

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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>
(2) Head of Built Environment and Infrastructure, (Oxford Bus & Thames Travel)	<p>No objection – I can confirm that this affects no scheduled bus services. In fact knowing this little community the proposals are entirely appropriate.</p> <p>We thus offer no objection.</p>
(3) Local District Cllr, (Hendreds ward)	<p>Support – I welcome the reduction in speed limit in this area which is residential and includes a primary school. Lower speeds will help to improve safety for all road users and I hope that it will encourage residents who want to walk or cycle to feel safe to do so.</p>
(4) Local resident, (Milton, Willow Lane)	<p>Object – The one in Milton village is not working and causing tailbacks</p>