

Divisions affected: *Wheatley*

DELEGATED DECISIONS BY CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT

18 JULY 2024

WOODEATON PROPOSED 20MPH SPEED LIMITS

Report by Director of Environment and Highways

RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet Member is **RECOMMENDED** to:

- a) **Approve the proposed introduction of 20mph speed limits at Woodeaton.**

Executive Summary

1. The report presents responses to a statutory consultation on the proposed introduction of 20mph speed limits at Woodeaton 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.

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 Woodeaton by making the roads safer and more attractive.

Formal Consultation

6. Formal consultation was carried out between 23 May and 14 June 2024. A notice was published in the Oxford Times 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, South Oxfordshire District Council, the local District Cllrs, Woodeaton Parish Council, and the local County Councillor representing the Wheatley division.

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 there would be no impact on their local bus services.

Other Responses:

9. Nine further responses were received, all of which supported the proposals.
10. The responses are shown in full 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 Counties carbon footprint. This forms part of a countywide programme of works that seeks to deliver 'a safer place with a safer pace'.
12. The concerns of Thames Valley Police comprise observations applicable to the overall 20mph project but no site-specific comments relating to the proposals for Woodeaton.
13. 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

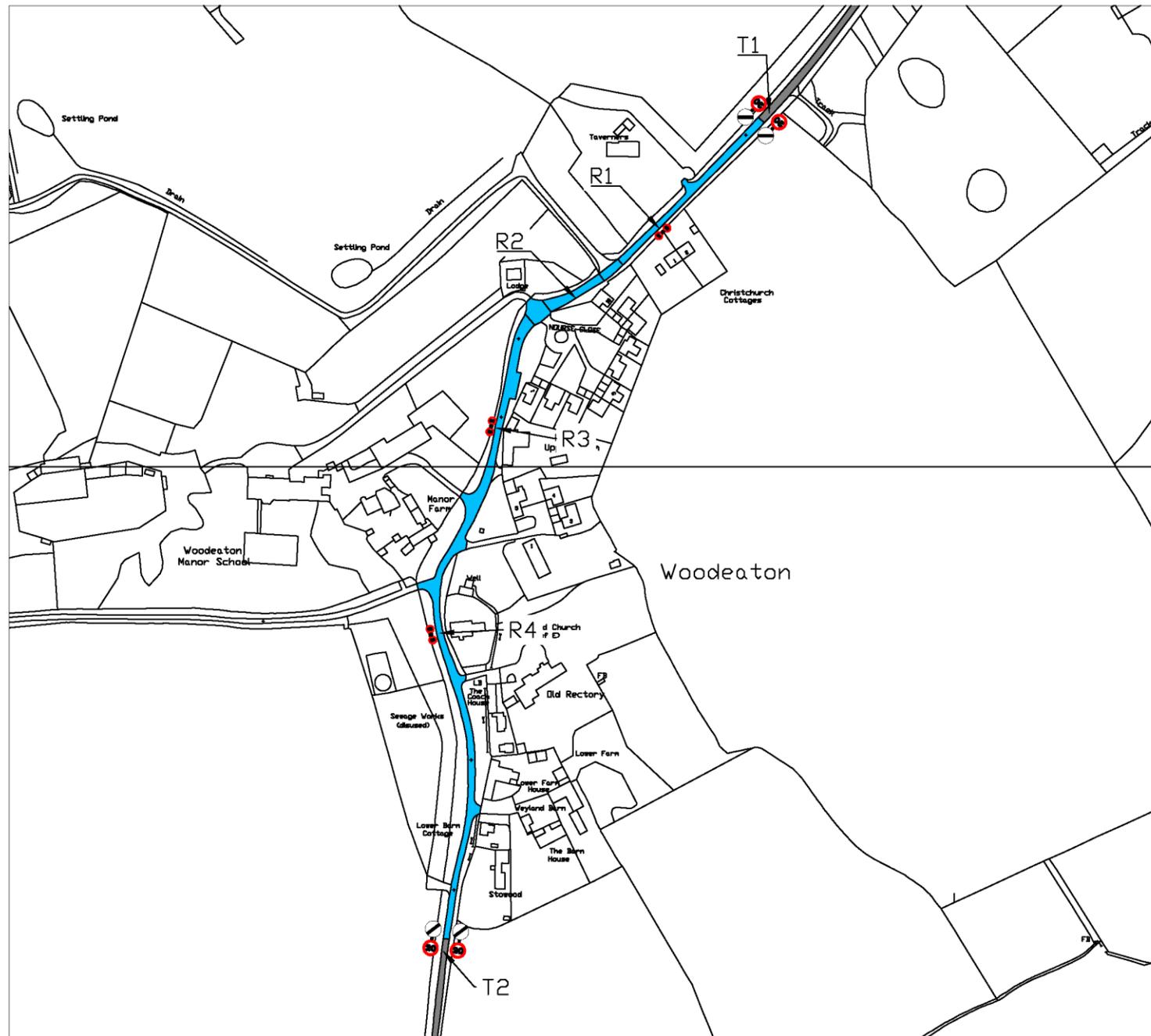
Annexes

Annex 1: Consultation plan
Annex 2: Consultation responses

Contact Officers:

Anthony Kirkwood (Team Leader – Vision Zero)
Matt Archer (Portfolio Manager - Programme Delivery)

July 2024



Woodeaton 20mph Overview Revision 1.0

Legend	
Proposed 20	
Existing NSL	
Not Public Highway	

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Rev.	Date	Purpose of revision	Drawn	Checked	Approved
1.0	18.01.24	Proposal 1	C.R		


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Project title: Woodeaton 20mph Scheme

Drawing title:
Woodeaton 20mph Scheme 20mph Overview

Drawing Status			
Scale @ A3	Drawn by: C.R	Checked by: G.JB	Approved by: G.JB
	Date drawn: 18.01.24	Date checked: 19.01.24	Date approved: 19.01.24

Oxfordshire Project No. & File Ref	
Drawing No. 1.0	Revision 1.0

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 Strategic Development and the Built Environment, (Oxford Bus & Thames Travel)	<p>No objection – I have reviewed the consultation material briefly and can confirm that there are no impacts on bus services. Accordingly we offer no objection.</p>
(3) Local resident, (Woodeaton Oxfordshire, Nourse Close)	<p>Support - I live in the village. We presently have a 30 mph speed limit which is rarely adhered to. Traffic speeds through in a dangerous way, at 40 or 50 mph. There is no pavement, so pedestrians have to walk on the road. It is also risky for cyclists, and of course there is a school for autistic children in the centre of the village. Perhaps a 20 limit would have some impact. If drivers do 40+ when the limit is 30, maybe if the limit is 20, it will slow them down to 30?</p>
(4) Local Cllr, (Woodeaton, Nourse Close)	<p>Support - Woodeaton Parish Meeting supports this proposal in the hope that Woodeaton will become a safer place in which to live.</p>
(5) Local resident, (Woodeaton, Nourse Close)	<p>Support - Despite being relatively narrow the road in question (locally referred to as "Woodeaton Lane") is quite heavily used during commuting hours. There are sections of the road with no verge for walking on, so reducing traffic</p>

	speed will make the road safer for local people and both pupils and staff at Woodeaton Manor School. A reduced speed limit would also reduce noise and pollution.
(6) Local resident, (Woodeaton, Unnamed road)	Support - No pavement. Increasing numbers of young children. School in the village. Help for the environment. Road increasingly used as a "rat-run" with poor compliance with existing speed limit.
(7) Local resident, (Woodeaton, Unnamed road)	Support - Traffic goes too fast through a village that has no pavements, blind corners and a school
(8) Local resident, (Woodeaton, The Green)	Support - There are no footpaths through the village and walking along the main road through the village should become much safer with a 20mph speed limit. It should also become a safer environment for cyclists and for children playing on the grassy areas of The Green and Nourse Close near to the road
(9) Local resident, (Woodeaton, Unnamed road)	Support - Improved road safety
(10) Local resident, (Woodeaton, Unnamed road)	Support - This road can be busy especially peak times. Vehicles frequently drive faster even than the currently required 30mph limit. There are no footpaths in the village and a school is located in the centre of the village for which no local 20mins restriction has yet been put in force. The bend by the church at the southern end of the village is deceptively sharp and the driveway to my property and those adjacent is close to the apex of the bend creating a hazard both to ourselves and to road users alike.
(11) Local resident, (Woodeaton)	Support - The village is small, the road very narrow and there is no footpath through the village so when walking between properties or to the Church or school it is necessary to walk in the road and therefore a 20mph limit is appropriate for safety. The school is also an important part of the village and 20mph is appropriate for this.