

Divisions affected: *Ploughley*

CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAY MANAGEMENT – 7 SEPTEMBER 2023

CHESTERTON & LITTLE CHESTERTON – PROPOSED MOTOR VEHICLE PROHIBITION & SPEED LIMITS

Report by Corporate Director, Environment and Place

RECOMMENDATION

1. The Cabinet Member for Highway Management is RECOMMENDED to approve the following as advertised:
 - a. New 20mph & 40mph speed limits on the unnamed road running through Little Chesterton,
 - b. 'Prohibition of Motor Vehicles' gate on the unnamed road running through Little Chesterton at the point of the proposed speed 20mph limit change, and
 - c. extension of the existing 20mph speed limit on The Green in Chesterton.

Executive summary

2. This report presents responses received to a statutory consultation on proposals to reduce the 60mph National speed limit on the unnamed road running through Little Chesterton, north of the A41 as shown in **Annex 1**. The proposals have been put forward due to adjacent commercial development, and will see a 20mph speed limit introduced, followed by a 40mph speed limit continuing for 600 metres to its junction with Green Lane. Also,
3. In order to prevent traffic `rat-running` through the village it is also proposed to introduce a gated 'Prohibition of Motor Vehicles', which will prevent all motor traffic from passing as shown in **Annex 2**. Exemptions to the restriction will include emergency vehicles and other essential service vehicles, which will have keyed access.
4. Additionally, the existing 20mph speed limit on The Green in Chesterton will be extended southwards as shown in **Annex 1**, following road safety concerns being raised by the parish council, due to the route (with no footway) often used by vulnerable road-users, including pedestrians.

Financial Implications

- Funding for consultation on the proposals has been provided by the Area Traffic Team.

Equality and Inclusion Implications

- No implications in respect of equalities or inclusion have been identified in respect of the proposals.

Sustainability Implications

- The proposals would help facilitate walking and cycling and the safe movement of traffic.

Formal consultation

- Formal consultation was carried out between 29 June and 28 July 2023. A notice was published in the Bicester Advertiser 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, Chesterton Parish Council, Cherwell District Council, and the local County Councillor representing the Ploughley division. Letters were also sent to approximately xx adjacent properties, and public notices placed on site in the immediate vicinity of the proposals.
- Four responses were received via the online survey during the course of the formal consultation, and these are summarised in the table below:

Proposal	Object	Concerns	Support	No opinion/objection	Total
20mph speed limit	1	-	3	-	4
40mph speed limit	1	1	2	-	4
Prohibition of Motor Vehicles	2	-	2	-	4
20mph speed limit on the The Green	1	-	3	-	4

- Additionally, two emails were also received, comprising of one in support, and one raising concerns. Cherwell District Council also emailed outlining that they had no observations to make in regard to the proposed speed limits.
- 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

12. Thames Valley Police raised concerns in relation to all aspects of the proposals; specifically stating that the introduction of the gated closure could affect emergency response times to the area, as well as possibly leading to anti-social behaviour and fly tipping.
13. The small risk of fly-tipping is acknowledged but Officers feel this is outweighed by the much greater risk of excessive rat-running once Great Wolf and Bicester Sports Association are under construction/operational.
14. The closure point will be constructed to facilitate free use by pedestrians, cyclists and wheelchair users, whilst enabling swift access when necessary for those authorised/exempted vehicles.
15. Emergency services are based in Bicester and their quickest route to Little Chesterton will still be via Chesterton village itself.
16. The proposed 20mph zone in Little Chesterton is deemed to be self-enforcing by virtue of the many natural traffic-calming features i.e. carriageway narrowing's and bends.
17. The proposed extension of the 20mph limit at The Green, Chesterton is in response to local demand, and will tie in with the existing village gateway by reducing the speed of incoming traffic prior to the 90-degree bend and the entrance to Bruern Abbey School. It is also a popular pedestrian route with no footway.
18. Closure of the road through Little Chesterton would inconvenience residents who currently use it as a short-cut northbound from the A41 to Chesterton, but Officers consider that alternative routes are straightforward.

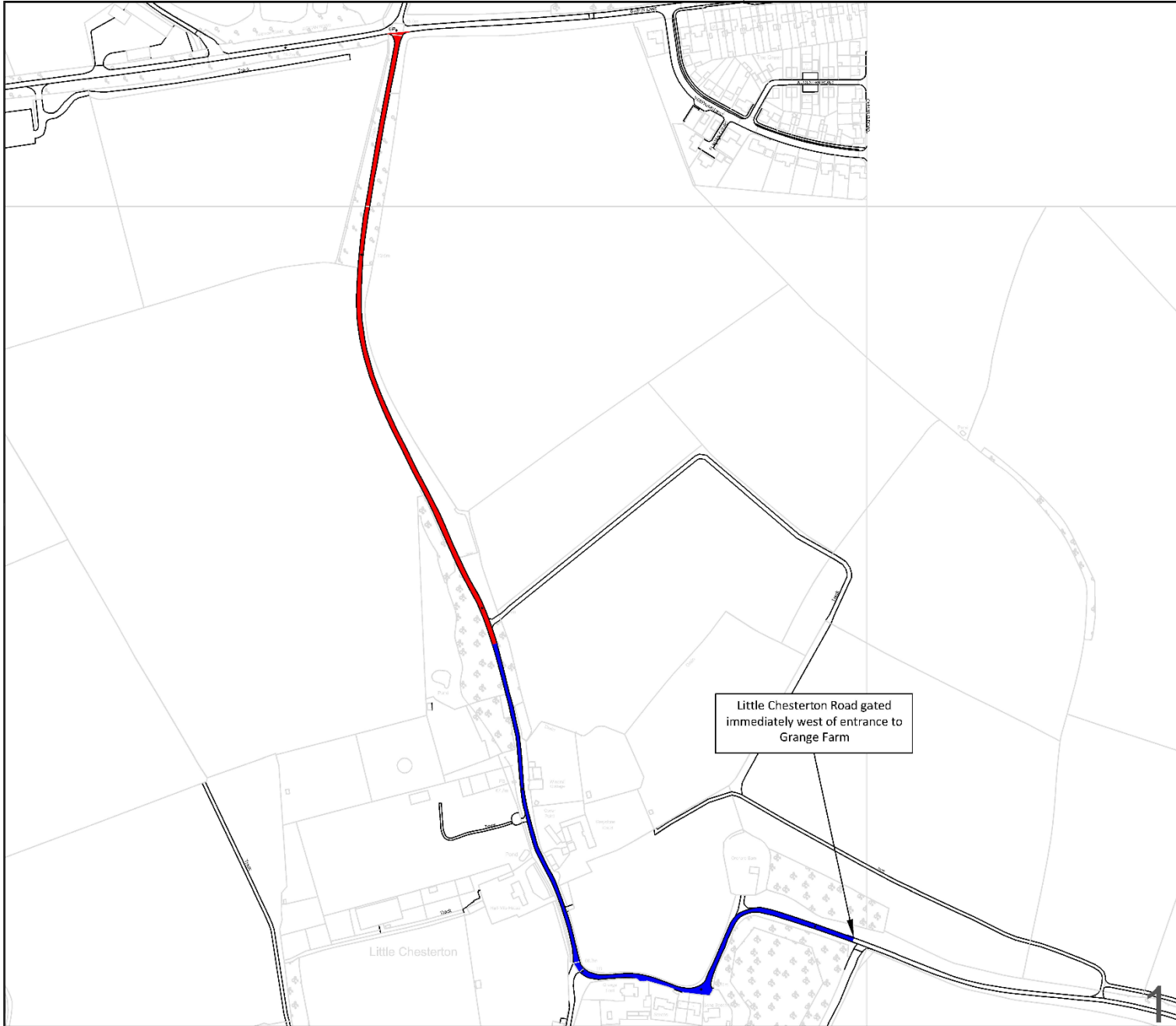
Bill Cotton
Corporate Director, Environment and Place

Annexes

Annex 1 & 2: Consultation plans
Annex 3: Consultation responses

Contact Officers: Dave Catling

September 2023



Drawing No. _____

NOTES

- DO NOT SCALE FROM THIS DRAWING.
- VERIFY ALL DIMENSIONS ON SITE PRIOR TO CONSTRUCTION.
- REPORT ALL DISCREPANCIES TO THE DRAWING ORIGINATOR IMMEDIATELY.
- THIS DRAWING IS TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH ALL RELEVANT DOCUMENTS, SCHEDULE "XXXXXXXX" AND STANDARD DRAWINGS "XXXXXXXX".

KEY

- Proposed 40MPH █
- Proposed 20MPH Zone █

LOCATION PLAN
NTS

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Rev.	Date	Purpose of revision	Drawn	Checked	Approved

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
Owen Jenkins
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Oxfordshire County Council
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Project title
Proposed Speed Limit Change

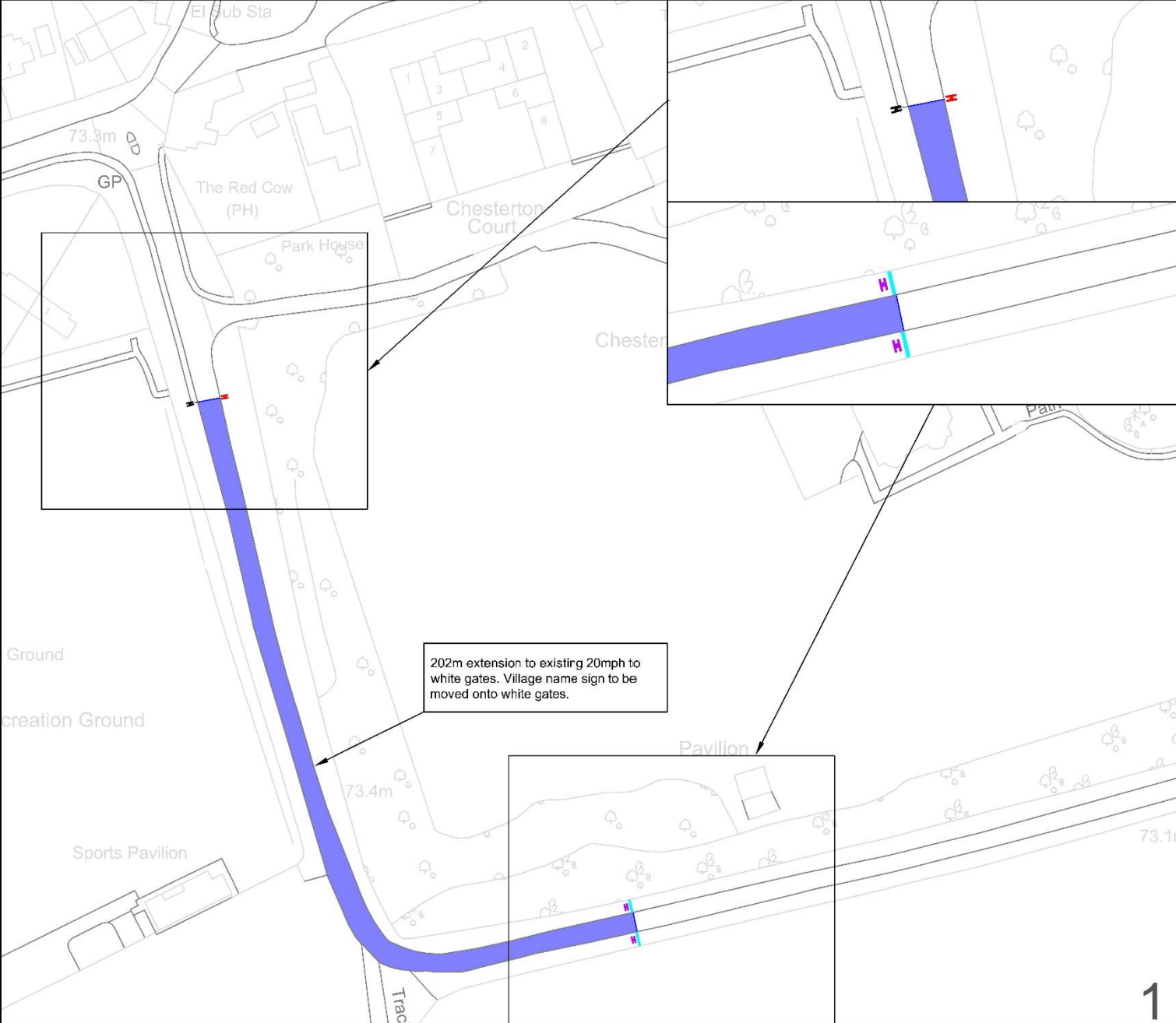
Drawing title
Little Chesterton Speed Limits and Gate

Drawing Status
Consultation

Scale @ A3 NTS	Drawn by LN Date drawn 15/03/2023	Checked by DC Date checked 15/03/2023	Approved by XXXXXX Date approved
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Oxfordshire Project No. & File Ref _____

Drawing No. _____	Revision _____
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Drawing No.

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KEY

- Proposed Sign & Post removed
- Proposed 20mph extension
- Proposed 20mph repeater on existing post
- Existing White Gates
- Relocated 20mph signs



LOCATION PLAN
NTS

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Rev.	Date	Purpose of revision	Drawn	Checked	Approved



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Project title
Proposed Speed Limit Extension

Drawing title
Church Road 20mph Extension

Drawing Status			
Consultation			
Scale @ A3 NTS	Drawn by LN	Checked by DC	Approved by XXXXXXX
	Date drawn 04/01/2023	Date checked 04/01/2023	Date approved xxxxxxxxx

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

RESPONDENT	COMMENTS
<p>(1) Traffic Management Officer, (Thames Valley Police)</p>	<p>Concerns – 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 • road function • composition of road users (including existing and potential levels of vulnerable road users) • existing traffic speeds

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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> <p>In relation to the Prohibition of Motor Vehicles restriction - I am not convinced by the statement of reason unless there are other factors that have not been shared why this road should be gated . If it is gated what is going to happen to the section from the Gate to the A41 junction . Closing this road could affect emergency response to this area and also lead to anti-social behaviour and fly tipping .</p>
(2) Local group/organisation, (Unlimited Oxfordshire)	<p>Support – We welcome the proposed speed limits, as they will improve safety for vulnerable road users.</p> <p>We note that the proposed gate will prevent vehicles from accessing Little Chesterton directly from the A41, that the gate will be locked, and that emergency service vehicles will carry a key. Also, that a key could be issued to drivers of vehicles used temporarily for work on the highway.</p> <p>The gate width and the gate posts would in total have to be almost the full width of the carriageway, so that the occasional large vehicle would be able to get through.</p> <p>Therefore, we would like a path to be constructed alongside the gate, for pedestrians, cyclists, mobility scooters and wheelchairs. The path will have to be constructed on the verge (at least partly), and vegetation will have to be cut back, and cut regularly to keep the path clear.</p> <p>Can you assure us that such a path will be constructed alongside the gate?</p>

<p>(3) Member of public, (Witney)</p>	<p>20mph speed limit: Object, 40mph speed limit: Object, Prohibition of Motor Vehicles: Object</p> <p>Objection especially to the prohibition of motor vehicles as this has a serious risk of life and death on here which needs looking at again. Any waste of time with LTN related gates wastes valuable time of emergency services getting to an emergency and this will undoubtedly be on the Oxfordshire County Council if heaven forbid a postmortem finds somebody could have been still alive to this day if the prohibition gate was not either left closed by another padlock or emergency vehicle did not have one on them. Same goes for access for residents etc.</p> <p>Government has already blocked funding for this and public will be very concerned that this Council plans to continue them. Unacceptable and a huge red line. The speed limit objection to be ignored obviously but I am extremely concerned that the LTN gate will be ignored as well hence urge serious consideration to above.</p> <p>20mph speed limit on The Green: Object</p> <p>There is no need to extend the 20 limit when already the stretch of road is away from residential area in question.</p>
<p>(4) Local Resident, (Cheserton, Fortescue Drive)</p>	<p>20mph speed limit: Support, 40mph speed limit: Support, Prohibition of Motor Vehicles: Object</p> <p>Putting a gate onto this road will create a huge diversion to my daily commute. This road is rarely used as a rat run due to it being a thin country road. However, it is my main route to my home in Chesterton. Particularly with the great wolf work being done. Closing this road would create huge issues for the village. Currently it is my quickest way to get anywhere! With the diversion for the A4095 resulting in needing to turn right out of the roundabout next to the holiday inn which is horrendous and I have been sat there for ages at times. I support introducing the speed limits but closing it is just too extreme.</p> <p>20mph speed limit on The Green: Support</p> <p>I have no concerns with this part of the plan</p>

<p>(5) Member of public, (Thame, North Street)</p>	<p>20mph speed limit: Support, 40mph speed limit: Concerns, Prohibition of Motor Vehicles: Support</p> <p>Safer for people.</p> <p>20mph speed limit on The Green: Support</p> <p>Safer</p>
<p>(6) Local Resident, (Little Cheserton)</p>	<p>20mph speed limit: Support, 40mph speed limit: Support, Prohibition of Motor Vehicles: Support</p> <p>Failure of the Government appointee to rule against specific water park planning request will only encourage this road to be used as a short-cut.</p> <p>20mph speed limit on The Green: Support</p> <p>Village needs protection from speeding drivers</p>