

CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT – 19 NOVEMBER 2020

OXFORD - A40 WEST OF WOLVERCOTE ROUNDABOUT: PROPOSED 30MPH & 40MPH SPEED LIMITS, BUS LANE, PROHIBITION OF U TURNS & WEIGHT LIMITS AT SIDE ROAD JUNCTIONS

Report by Interim Director of Community Operations

Recommendation

1. The Cabinet Member for Environment is RECOMMENDED to approve:
 - (a) proposed amended speeds limits comprising an extension of the 30mph speed limit west of the Wolvercote roundabout, westwards to beyond the A34 flyover bridge, and the introduction of a new 40mph speed limit (replacing parts of the existing 40mph & 60mph national speed limit);
 - (b) introduction of a bus lane for eastbound buses approaching Wolvercote roundabout from near the A34 flyover;
 - (c) the prohibition of U-turns on the A40, 200 metres east of the A34 Flyover at the new service sideroads on the A40 and 7.5tonne weight limits on the side roads being created as part of approved development adjacent to the A40 west of the Wolvercote roundabout at Oxford.
 - (d) introduction of 7.5 tonne weight restrictions (with exemptions) on the 4 new access roads either side of the A40:
North side, approximately 300 metres west of Wolvercote roundabout, and 200 metres east of the A34 flyover; and
South side, approximately 270 metres west of Wolvercote roundabout, and 200 metres east of the A34 flyover.

Executive summary

2. Speed limits and the introduction of new or amended bus lanes, weight limits and turning restrictions are reviewed when there are changes to the road layout or usage as a result of development and when requested by the local member or local councils due to concerns over road safety.

Introduction

3. As a part of the wider western A40 Corridor improvement project, it is proposed to introduce a number of measures aimed at improving the flow of

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traffic to reduce journey times and help to improve road safety along the stretch of the A40 Northern By-pass approaching Wolvercote roundabout. This report presents responses received to a statutory consultation on the following proposals which require the introduction of Traffic Regulation Orders:

- a) Extension of the 30mph speed limit west of the Wolvercote roundabout, westwards to beyond the A34 flyover bridge, and the introduction of a new 40mph speed limit (replacing parts of the existing 40mph & 60mph national speed limit)
 - b) Introduction of 7.5 tonne weight restrictions (with exemptions) on the 4 new access roads either side of the A40:
North side, approximately 300 metres west of Wolvercote roundabout, and 200 metres east of the A34 flyover; and
South side, approximately 270 metres west of Wolvercote roundabout, and 200 metres east of the A34 flyover.
 - c) Prohibition of U-turns on the A40, 200 metres east of the A34 Flyover at the new service sideroads.
 - d) Introduction of a Bus lane for eastbound buses approaching Wolvercote roundabout from near the A34 flyover.
4. The proposals are shown in the following Annexes: 1 (speed limits), 2-5 (bus lane), 6 (turn restrictions) and 7-8 (weight limits).

Consultation

5. Formal consultation on the proposals was carried out between 13 August and 11 September 2020. A public notice was placed in the Oxford Times newspaper and sent to statutory consultees, including Thames Valley Police, the Fire & Rescue Service, Ambulance service, Oxford City Council and local County Councillor.
6. 24 responses were received. These are summarised in the table below:

Proposal	Object	Support	No objection/ Concerns	No opinion
30mph speed limit	9 (38%)	9 (38%)	4	1
40mph speed limit	8 (35%)	10 (44%)	3	2
Bus lane	15 (65%)	5 (22%)	3	0
Prohibition of U turns	6 (26%)	11 (48%)	4	2
Weight limits on side roads	4 (17%)	11 (48%)	4	4

7. The full responses - with any personal information removed - are recorded at Annex 9. Copies of the original responses are available for inspection by County Councillors.

Response to objections and other comments

8. Thames Valley Police did not object to the proposals but raised some concerns regarding future enforcement of the restrictions, adding that

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enforcement should not fall upon Thames Valley Police. In recent years enforcement of Bus Lanes and Environmental Weight Restrictions have always been low in terms of TVP policing priorities and they stated that the new restrictions would be no different. Their belief is that both the Bus Lane and Weight Restrictions would need to have technology-based enforcement to make them work effectively.

9. It should be noted that both the local authority and the Police can enforce weight restriction orders. However, for the County Council, this is a non-statutory function. The county has a large number of weight restrictions, with some restrictions creating a significant concern to local residents due to the number of perceived contraventions. The resources available for the enforcement of weight restrictions is finite and are spread across the weight restrictions covering the county. Any new weight restriction orders, without new resources being identified, will dilute these resources further.
10. Whilst the concerns regarding the Weight Limits and the potential issue regarding enforcement are noted, it should be stressed that they are being put in place as part of the developer's restrictions and as such are likely to be focussed on scheme specific traffic as opposed to general freight. Therefore, it is not expected that there would be a high level of non-compliance, meaning high levels of enforcement activity are not anticipated.
11. In terms of bus lane enforcement, this falls within the civil enforcement remit and as such would not be reliant on police activity to ensure compliance.
12. The concerns regarding the speed limits are noted but the 30mph speed limit is the preferred (and designed for) speed for the new road layout within the extent of the scheme. The use of a 40mph 'buffer', which should be at least 400m long – (the Police prefer 800m), is to provide an appropriate transition zone for the traffic speeds between the more rural setting (national speed limit - 60mph) to the west and the built-up urban-type environment as traffic nears Oxford.
13. The proposed Turn prohibitions are being introduced primarily to protect the pedestrian crossings on the exit of the new junction arrangement and, by ensuring traffic movements are kept to a minimum in this area, should allow pedestrians a greater confidence when crossing.
14. The Bus Only lane has been applied to keep the scheme in-line with proposals for the other A40 HIF schemes. In addition, because of the Bus Stop located after the junction, it is felt that allowing other vehicles to use the bus lane may create a safety issue with vehicles needing to pull out round a bus at the bus stop into traffic on the exit of the junction.

Sustainability implications

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

Financial and Staff Implications (including Revenue)

16. Funding for the proposals has been provided from the Housing Infrastructure Funding scheme.

Equalities and Inclusion implications

17. On equalities and financial implications have been identified in respect of these proposals.

JASON RUSSELL
Interim Director of Community Operations

Background papers: Plans of proposed speed limits, bus lane, prohibition of U
 turns and weight limits
 Consultation responses

Contact Officers: Hugh Potter 07766 998704
 Amrik Manku 07920 084259

November 2020

KEY:

- Existing 30mph speed limit
- Proposed 30mph speed limit (between existing 30mph termination near Wolvercote Roundabout and western side of the A34 flyover, and including status as the new junctions up to the terminal signs location)
- Proposed 40mph speed limit (buffer as per RSA 1 recommendation extending 700m west to line up with the 'Welcome to Oxford' tourist sign west of King'sbridge Brook)
- Existing national speed limit

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ISSUE/REVISION

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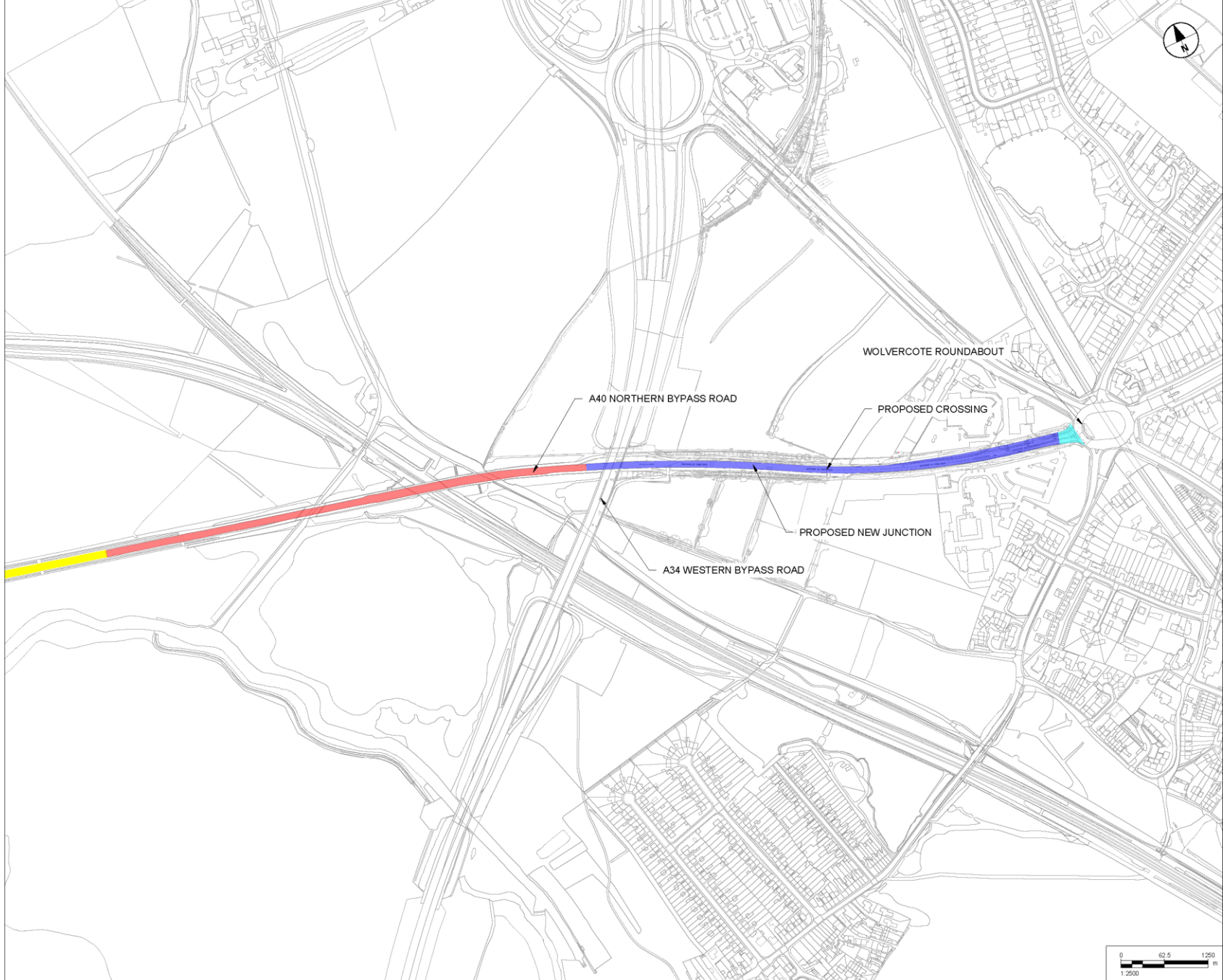
PROJECT NUMBER
60614745

SHEET TITLE

A40 OXFORD NORTH
TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDERS
PROPOSED SPEED LIMITS

SHEET NUMBER
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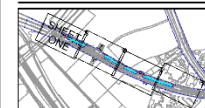
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2. The highway boundary shown is indicative and was provided by PBA. This was cross referenced with a paper records provided by OCC.
3. Bus lane TRO for use of buses only. Hours of operation: 24/7

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NO	DATE	DESCRIPTION
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KEY PLAN



PROJECT NUMBER

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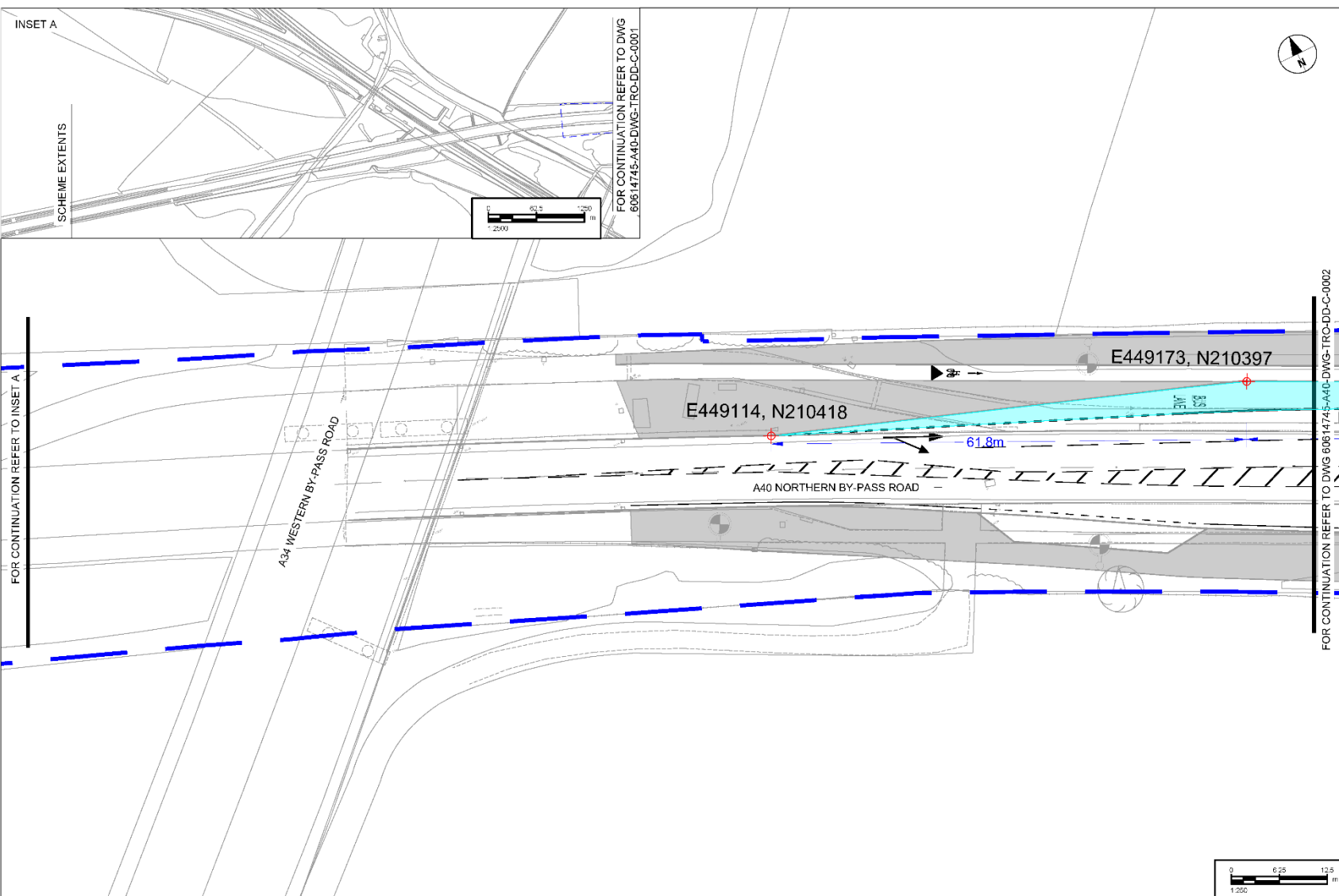
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A40 OXFORD NORTH
 TRO - BUS LANE
 SHEET 1 OF 4

SHEET NUMBER

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Key

- Highway boundary
- Proposed white road markings
- Boundaries, Verges, Kerblines, OS and TOPO
- Proposed bus lane
- + Reference eastings and northings

E, N



INSET A

SCHEME EXTENTS

FOR CONTINUATION REFER TO DWG
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FOR CONTINUATION REFER TO INSET A

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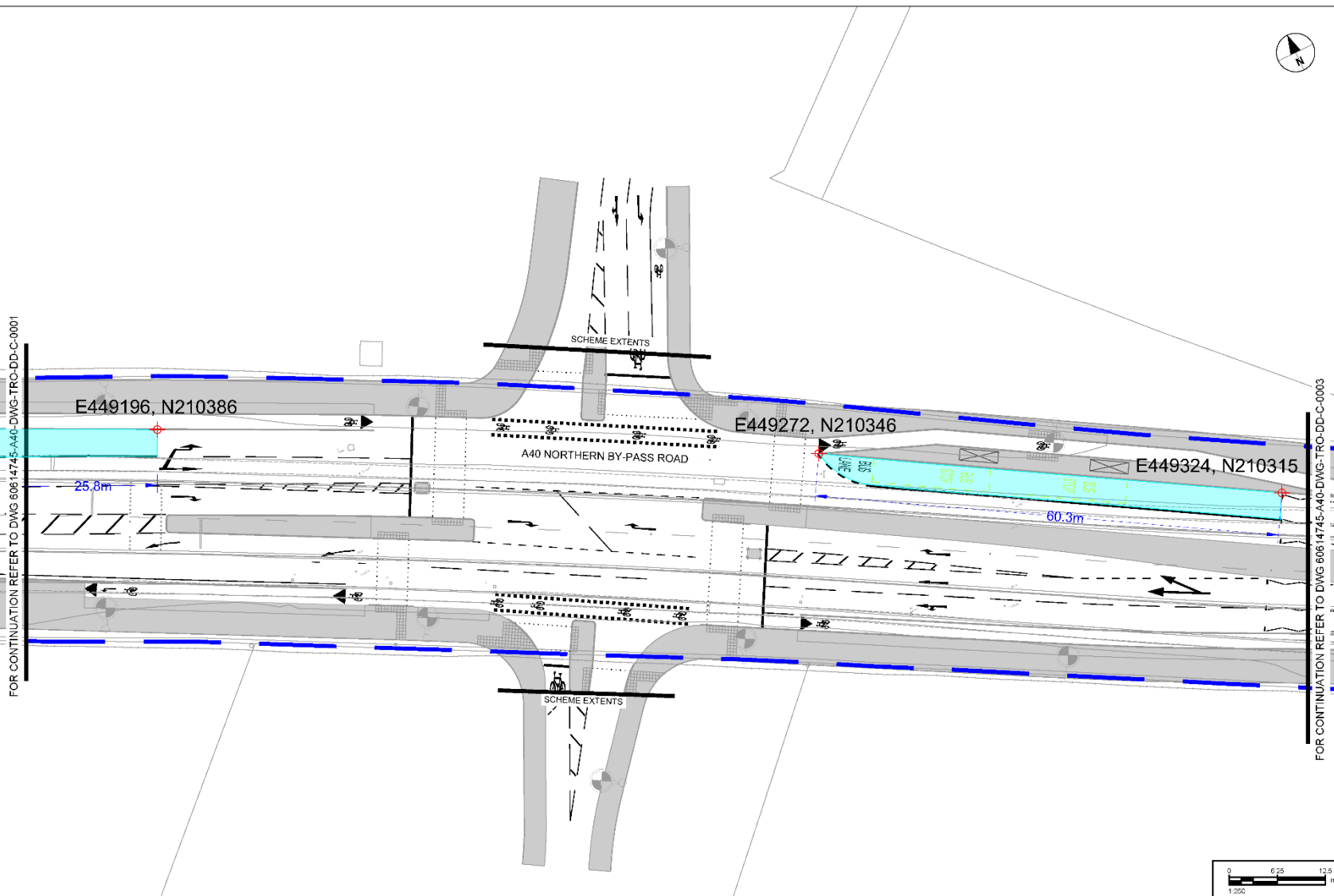
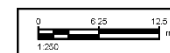
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PROJECT NUMBER
 60614745

SHEET TITLE
 A40 OXFORD NORTH
 TRO - BUS LANE
 SHEET 2 OF 4

SHEET NUMBER
 60614745-A40-DWG-TRO-DD-C-0002



- Key**
- Highway boundary
 - Proposed white road markings
 - Proposed yellow road markings
 - Boundaries, Verges, Kerblines, OS and TOPO
 - Proposed bus lane
 - + Reference eastings and northings
- E, N**

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0	24/07/2022	DETAILED DESIGN
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KEY PLAN



PROJECT NUMBER

60614745

SHEET TITLE

A40 OXFORD NORTH
 TRO - BUS LANE
 SHEET 3 OF 4

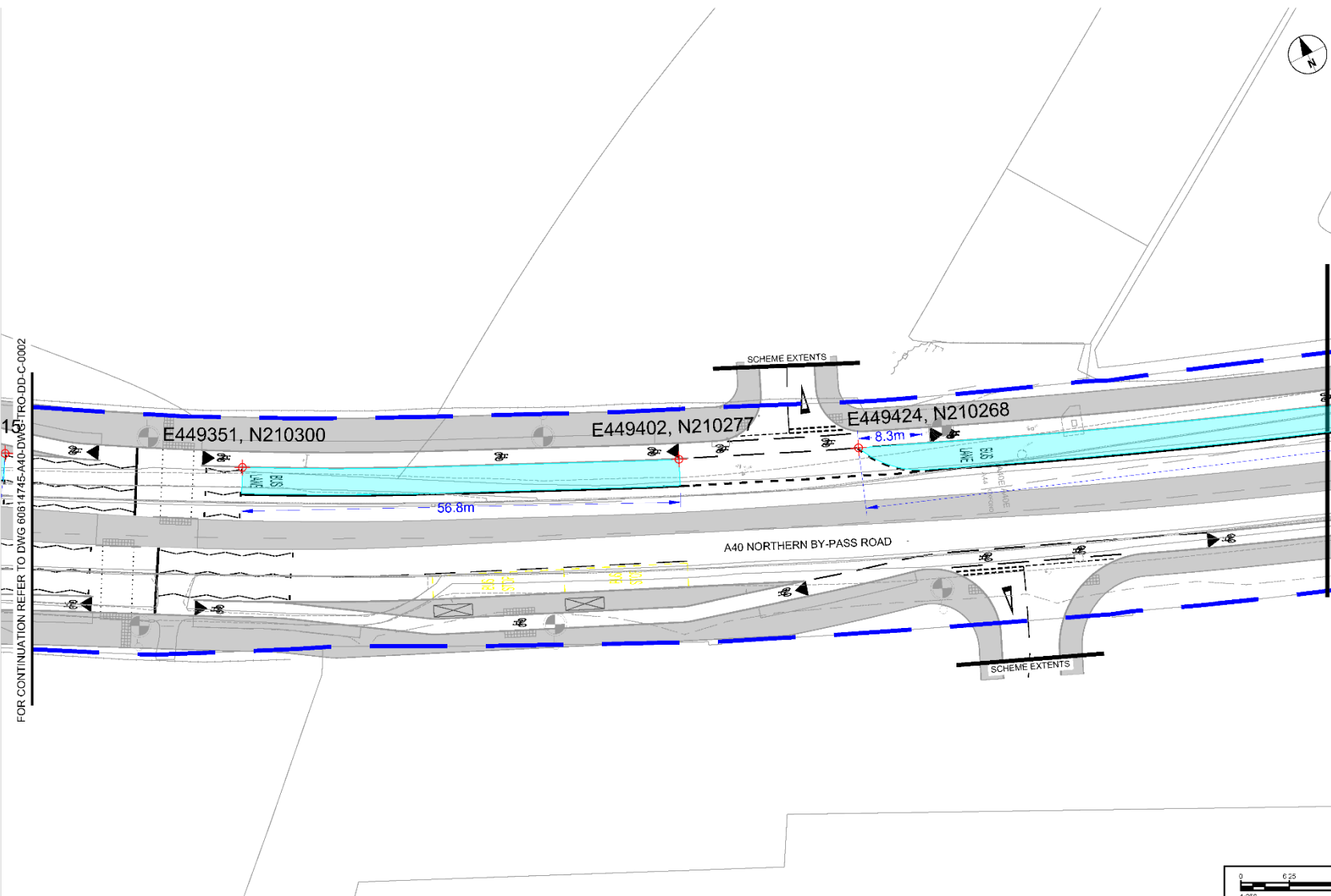
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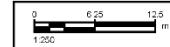
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- Key**
- Highway boundary
 - Proposed white road markings
 - Proposed yellow road markings
 - Boundaries, Verges, Kerblines, OS and TOPO
 - Proposed bus lane
 - + Reference eastings and northings
- E, N**



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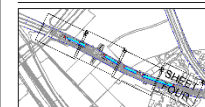
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3. Bus lane TRD for use of buses only. Hours of operation: 24/7

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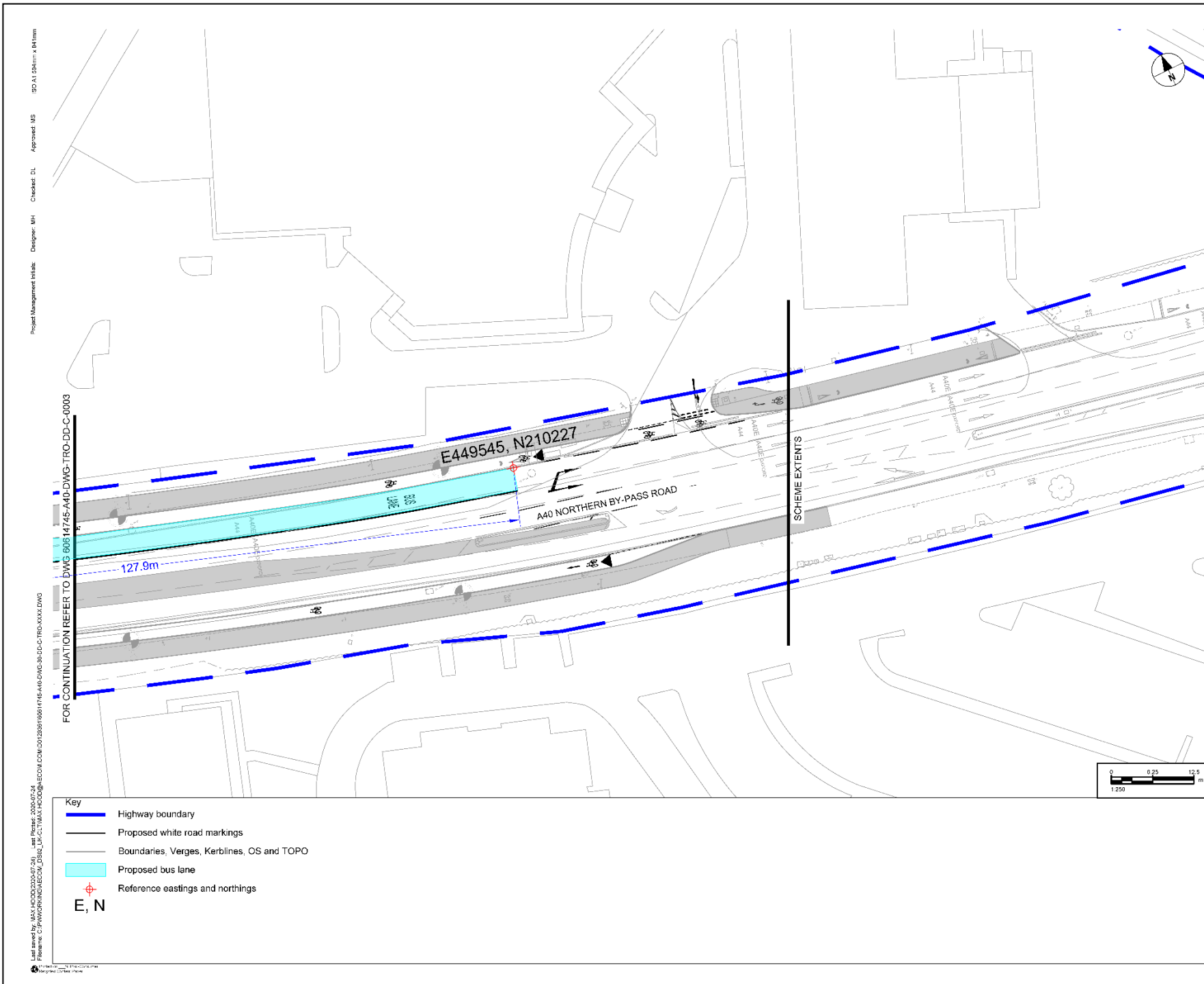
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SHEET TITLE

A40 OXFORD NORTH
TRO - BUS LANE
SHEET 4 OF 4

SHEET NUMBER

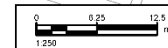
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- Key
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 - Boundaries, Verges, Kerblines, OS and TOPO
 - Proposed bus lane
 - + Reference eastings and northings

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NOTES

KEY

	7.5t weight restriction expect authorised vehicles
	Proposed kerb line
	Existing highway boundary

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ISSUE/REVISION

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0	24/04/2020	PRELIMINARY DESIGN

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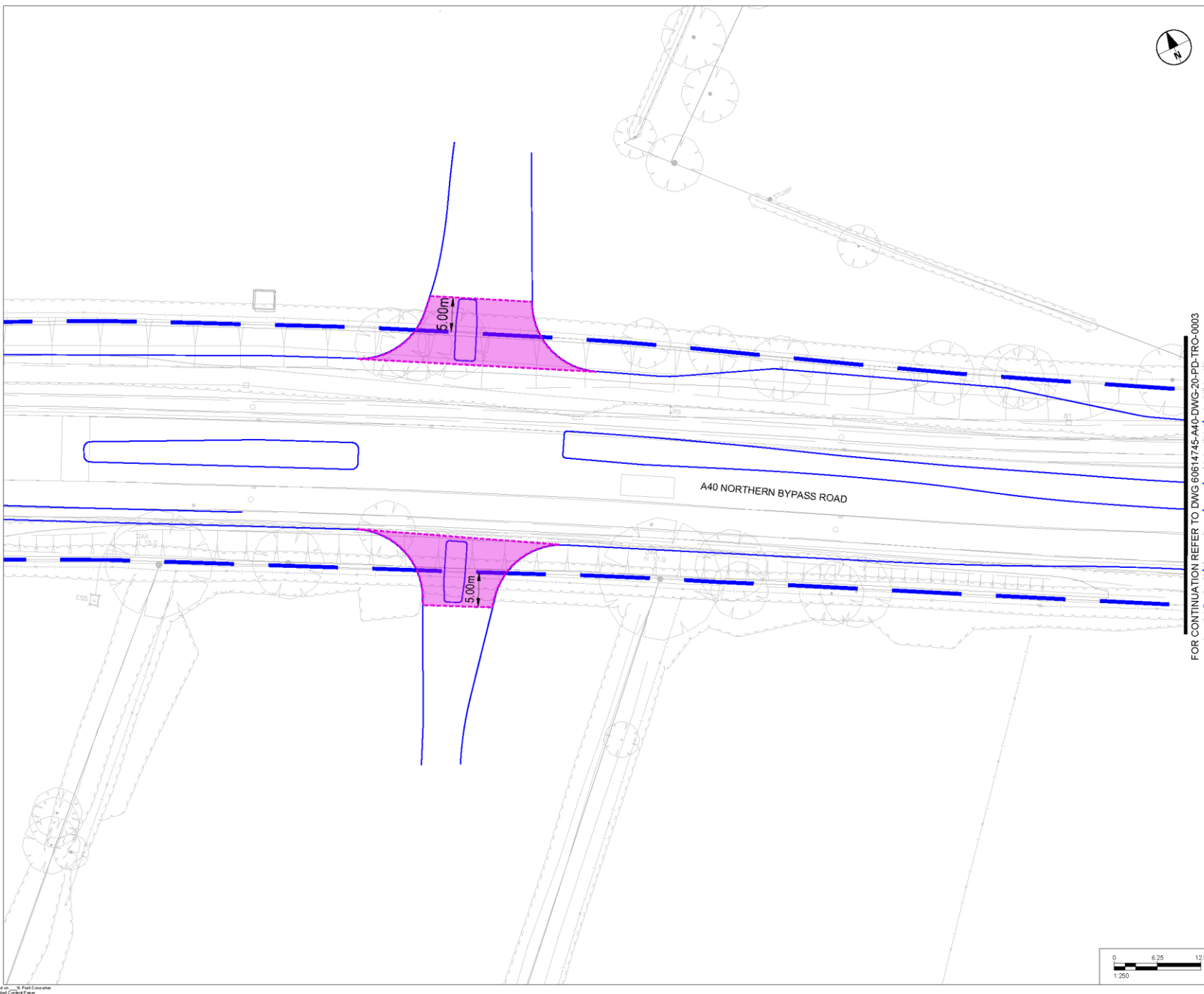
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TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDERS
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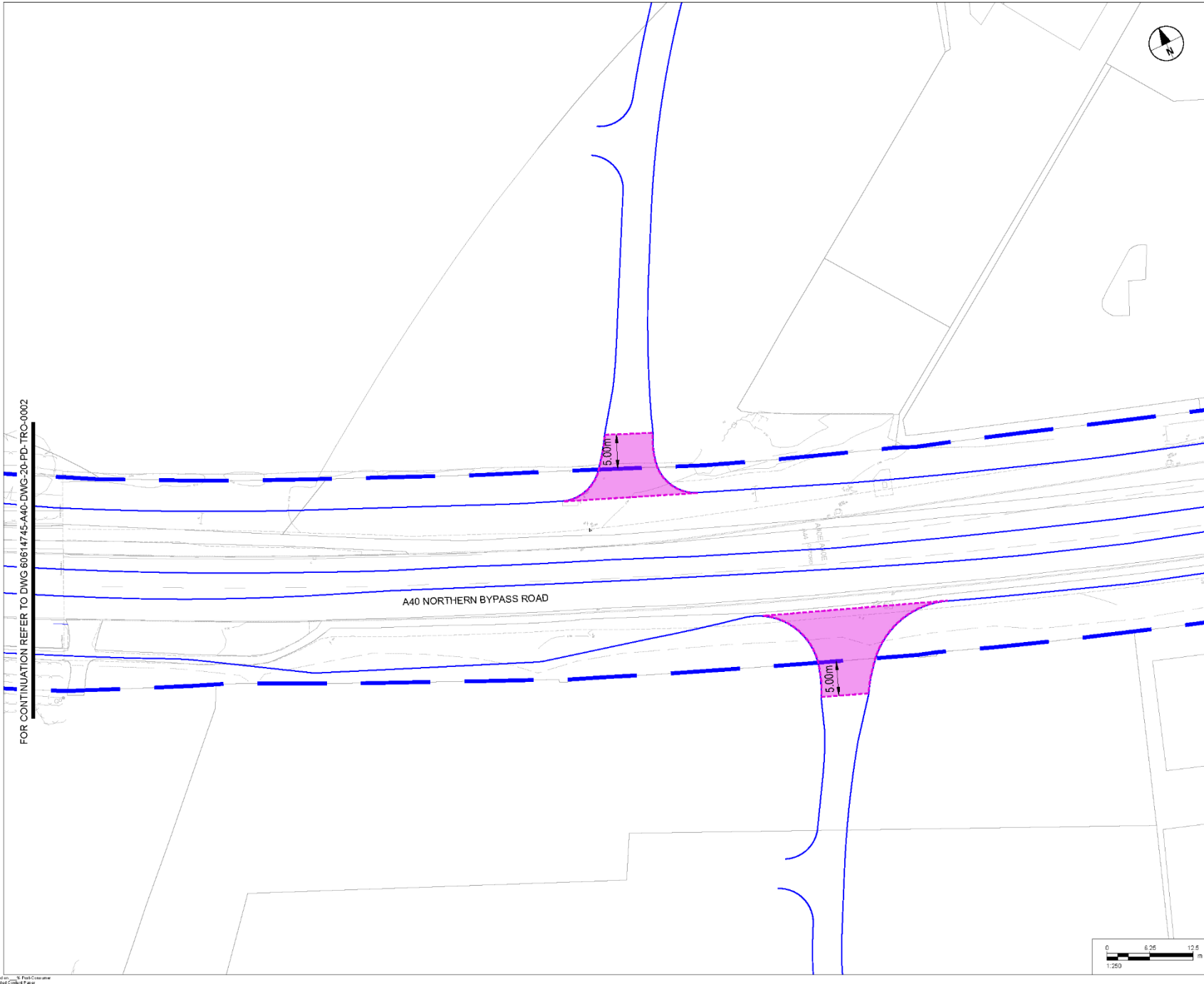
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NOTES

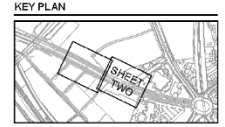
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- 7.5t weight restriction expect authorised vehicles
- Proposed kerb line
- Existing highway boundary

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ISSUE/REVISION

NO	DATE	DESCRIPTION
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PROJECT NUMBER
 60614745

SHEET TITLE
 A40 OXFORD NORTH
 TRAFFIC REGULATION DESIGN
 SIDE ROADS - WEIGHT RESTRICTIONS

SHEET NUMBER
 60614745-A40-DWG-20-PD-TRO-0003



RESPONDENT	COMMENTS
(1) Traffic Management Officer, (Thames Valley Police)	<p>Concerns – In principle I do not object to these proposals. I would however raise some concerns regarding the future enforcement of these restrictions and add that enforcement should not fall upon Thames Valley Police.</p> <p>In recent years enforcement of Bus Lanes and Environmental Weight Restrictions have always been low in terms of our Policing priorities, and these new restrictions are no different. Our current working environment will always focus where there are clear benefits to Road Safety and Casualty reduction.</p> <p>Both Bus Lane and Weight Restrictions must have technology-based enforcement to make them work, otherwise both of these restrictions will suffer high levels of abuse.</p> <p>I have strong reservations concerning the link road that will connect the A40 and A44 and how any enforcement authority would ever manage this desirable route that's avoids the existing Wolvercote Roundabout.</p> <p>With regards to changing the speed limit, again what control measures are being included to control traffic speeds especially during quiet times. By way of example the A40 at Barton Park is a constant source of complaint for both speeding and 'U' turning. Can I assume that speed monitoring has already taken place and the results support the new measures?</p>
(2) Cherwell District Council, (Development Management)	No objection
(3) Oxford City Council	<i>(waiting for official response)</i>

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<p>(4) Local Group/Organisation, (COLTA)</p>	<p>30mph speed limit - Neither/Concerns 40mph speed limit - Object 7.5 tonne weight restrictions - No opinion U-Turns prohibitions - Support Oxford-bound Bus lane - Object</p> <p>I represent Oxford's Hackney carriage (black cab) trade. We object to the proposal for excluding our trade from the bus lane proposed between the A34 flyover on the A40 towards the Wolvercote roundabout. Traffic in the area regularly builds up with drivers travelling from west approaching the Wolvercote roundabout. Our taxi trade should be given unrestricted access to the bus lane (as is the case in Oxford) so we can avoid the traffic and operate without hinderance. Where possible, the black cab trade must not be lumped with the regular traffic on the roads. Every effort must be made to remove any obstacles in our paths so we may provide an efficient Taxi service.</p> <p>On a final note. Very rarely will you get a taxi using this bus lane so it will not be congested at all. But to have unrestricted access to the bus lane will help the trade immensely.</p>
<p>(5) Local Group/Organisation, (Oxford)</p>	<p>30mph speed limit - No opinion 40mph speed limit - No opinion 7.5 tonne weight restrictions - No opinion U-Turns prohibitions - No opinion Oxford-bound Bus lane - Object</p> <p>As a Cabbie I am providing a service for the people, businesses and the visitors of Oxford. Therefore I fail to understand why Taxis will not be allowed to use the new proposed Bus lane.</p> <p>Especially the fact that we are already using the Bus Lane from Peartree car park to Wolvercote roundabout; there are a lot of villages in the area that require transport into Oxford- mainly older and wheelchair users. So I don't understand why this would change with these new proposals?</p>
<p>(6) Local Group/Organisation, (Oxford)</p>	<p>30mph speed limit - Support 40mph speed limit - Support 7.5 tonne weight restrictions - Support</p>

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	<p>U-Turns prohibitions - Support Oxford-bound Bus lane - Object</p> <p>Although I support the provision of a bus lane in principle, it will have the very unfortunate effect of increasing congestion on the eastbound A40 approaching Wolvercote roundabout. Increased amounts of very slow-moving traffic will increase pollution from vehicular traffic in an area which is already above acceptable safe levels,</p> <p>A road taking traffic from the A40 to the A44 and thence to the A34 would be an excellent way of reducing congestion at the Wolvercote roundabout, but despite Government funding of this road, and its inclusion in the Northern Gateway AAP, there appears to be no sign of this being built.</p>
<p>(7) Local Resident, (Oxford)</p>	<p>30mph speed limit - Support 40mph speed limit - Support 7.5 tonne weight restrictions - Support U-Turns prohibitions - Neither/Concerns Oxford-bound Bus lane - Object</p> <p>I object to taxis not being allowed to use bus lanes. They are a form of public transport</p>
<p>(8) Online Response, (Oxford)</p>	<p>30mph speed limit - Object 40mph speed limit - Object 7.5 tonne weight restrictions - No opinion U-Turns prohibitions - Object Oxford-bound Bus lane - Object</p> <p>I use a taxi to get from (Witney) to Oxford. I use Oxford city licensed taxis. Why are they being excluded from the bus lane?</p>
<p>(9) Local Resident, (Oxford)</p>	<p>30mph speed limit - Support 40mph speed limit - Neither/Concerns 7.5 tonne weight restrictions - Support U-Turns prohibitions - Neither/Concerns</p>

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	<p>Oxford-bound Bus lane - Support</p> <p>I support bus lane but would also like Oxford issued Licensed Taxis to Be able to use bus lanes too.</p>
(10) Local Resident, (Oxford)	<p>30mph speed limit - Object 40mph speed limit - Support 7.5 tonne weight restrictions - Object U-Turns prohibitions - Object Oxford-bound Bus lane - Object</p> <p>You should be dialling the whole a40 and allowing everyone's journey to be pleasant not the grid lock you will create for everyone else</p>
(11) Local Resident, (Oxford)	<p>30mph speed limit - Neither/Concerns 40mph speed limit - Support 7.5 tonne weight restrictions - Neither/Concerns U-Turns prohibitions - Object Oxford-bound Bus lane - Object</p> <p>As resident.</p>
(12) Online Response, (Oxford)	<p>30mph speed limit - Object 40mph speed limit - Object 7.5 tonne weight restrictions - Object U-Turns prohibitions - Object Oxford-bound Bus lane - Object</p> <p>Because there is no need whatsoever for these changes.</p>
(13) Local Resident, (Oxford)	<p>30mph speed limit - Support 40mph speed limit - Support 7.5 tonne weight restrictions - Neither/Concerns</p>

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	<p>U-Turns prohibitions - Object Oxford-bound Bus lane - Support</p> <p>As a black cab driver I need this facility.</p>
<p>(14) Local Resident, (Oxford)</p>	<p>30mph speed limit - Object 40mph speed limit - No opinion 7.5 tonne weight restrictions - No opinion U-Turns prohibitions - No opinion Oxford-bound Bus lane - Object</p> <p>I am objecting this proposal of excluding taxis using this bus lane. We (Hackney Carriage) can use Bus Lane nationwide, the why this stretch of the road is an exception. I could be restricted for private hire cars like in some cities but Hackney carriage should be allowed to use the bus lane. As an effect of proposal, this could increase journey time and also the fare for the normal public while we sit in the traffic despite having the bus lane available next to us.</p>
<p>(15) Local Resident, (Oxford)</p>	<p>30mph speed limit - Object 40mph speed limit - Support 7.5 tonne weight restrictions - Support U-Turns prohibitions - Support Oxford-bound Bus lane - Object</p> <p>40 mph is quite acceptable and there is already far too much provision for too many buses.</p>
<p>(16) Local Resident, (Oxford)</p>	<p>30mph speed limit - Support 40mph speed limit - Support 7.5 tonne weight restrictions - Support U-Turns prohibitions - Support Oxford-bound Bus lane - Object</p> <p>I use the A40 cycle lanes, it is my belief that the proposed bus lane is too close to the cycle lane and if my understanding of the drawing is correct merges with it and separated by only a painted line.</p>

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	<p>The 4 service roads provide dangerous junctions on a busy traffic road to negotiate for cyclists.</p>
<p>(17) Local Resident, (Oxford)</p>	<p>30mph speed limit - Object 40mph speed limit - Object 7.5 tonne weight restrictions - Object U-Turns prohibitions - Support Oxford-bound Bus lane - Object</p> <p>Millions have Been spent on the stretch of road and the roundabout to no effect. The county council have no long-term strategy and keep wasting money on incremental changes at great cost and with very little benefit. No one are using busses right now with Covid. So why dedicated bus lane? You need to suspend all plans until the area understand the consequences of the current Covid nightmare and has a clear long term plan. This indicates all you want is to facilitate oxford north development so the council can earn millions in business rates and council tax. No thoughts at all for the residents you are meant to be serving</p>
<p>(18) Local Resident, (Oxford)</p>	<p>30mph speed limit - Support 40mph speed limit - Object 7.5 tonne weight restrictions - Support U-Turns prohibitions - Support Oxford-bound Bus lane - Support</p> <p>People, not cars.</p>
<p>(19) Local Resident, (Oxford)</p>	<p>30mph speed limit - Object 40mph speed limit - Object 7.5 tonne weight restrictions - Support U-Turns prohibitions - Object Oxford-bound Bus lane - Object</p> <p>Leave as it is including existing speed limits. Allow Taxis to use the bus lane.</p>

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<p>(20) Local Resident, (Oxford)</p>	<p>30mph speed limit - Object 40mph speed limit - Object 7.5 tonne weight restrictions - Object U-Turns prohibitions - Support Oxford-bound Bus lane - Object</p> <p>I do think U-Turns creates dangerous situations that should be avoided. There is no point with the other restrictions.</p>
<p>(21) Local Resident, (Oxford)</p>	<p>30mph speed limit - Support 40mph speed limit - Support 7.5 tonne weight restrictions - Support U-Turns prohibitions - Support Oxford-bound Bus lane - Support</p> <p>Fully support the revised speed limits, but please ensure that the signs are large and include road markings as well. The 50mph limit sign on the A40 westbound approaching Jackson Road and the Cutteslowe roundabout is too small and barely noticeable due to the curve in the road - please improve.</p> <p>A40 East of Wolvercote roundabout 2. Sunderland Avenue (North side) eastern-most junction A40 North Way Right - westwards.</p> <p>This from the traffic management plan.</p> <p>Please also include a left turn prohibition from A40 west of the Wolvercote roundabout into the western-most junction - Blandford Avenue/Sunderland Avenue south side. This to prevent rat running up to the Wolvercote roundabout.</p>
<p>(22) Local Resident, (Oxford)</p>	<p>30mph speed limit - Support 40mph speed limit - Support 7.5 tonne weight restrictions - Support</p>

CMDE6

	<p>U-Turns prohibitions - Support Oxford-bound Bus lane - Support</p> <p>We need to reduce speeds to make them safer for walking and cycling and to reduce the severity of injury when collisions occur.</p> <p>Furthermore, reducing speeds will assist in reducing air pollution through less braking. It will also reduce noise for residents which has a detrimental effect on health.</p>
<p>(23) Local Resident, (Banbury)</p>	<p>30mph speed limit - Object 40mph speed limit - Support 7.5 tonne weight restrictions - Support U-Turns prohibitions - Support Oxford-bound Bus lane - Object</p> <p>Reducing speed on ring road will reduce the traffic flow on peak times. Excluding Taxi's is unfair as taxis are the mode of public transportation. Which pays commercial road tax.</p>
<p>(24) Local Resident, (Eynsham)</p>	<p>30mph speed limit - Support 40mph speed limit - Object 7.5 tonne weight restrictions - Support U-Turns prohibitions - Support Oxford-bound Bus lane - Neither/Concerns</p> <p>I see no reason to extend the 40mph speed limit west of the railway bridge. The A40 west of the railway bridge is straight with no junctions.</p> <p>If speed limits are set artificially low without good reason, this can be counter-productive.</p>