

CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT – 7 JUNE 2018

WEST WITNEY AREA – PROPOSED SPEED LIMITS AND WEIGHT LIMIT

Report by Director for Infrastructure Delivery

Introduction

1. This report presents responses received to a statutory consultation to introduce lower speeds limits on the A40 Witney bypass and Downs Road, and a 7.5 tonne environmental weight on the B4047 between its junction with the A40 at the west end of the Witney bypass and Downs Road.

Background

2. The above proposals have been put forward as part of the major West Witney residential and commercial development. Plans showing the various proposals are provided at Annexes 1 through to 4.

Consultation

3. Formal consultation on the proposal was carried out between 28 March and 27 April 2018. A public notice was placed in the Witney & West Oxfordshire Gazette newspaper, and sent to statutory consultees, including Thames Valley Police, the Fire & Rescue Service, Ambulance service, West Oxfordshire District Council, Witney Town Council and local County Councillors.
4. Ten responses were received. The local member commented that all the proposals appeared sensible but commented on the need for enforcement. Witney Town Council expressed support for all the proposals. Brize Norton Parish Council while expressing no views on the proposed speed limits, expressed an objection in respect of the proposed weight limits on the grounds that it could lead to an increased use of roads within the village by goods vehicles. Curbridge Parish Council expressed support for all the proposals excepting the proposed 40mph speed limit on Downs Road, which they considered should be 30mph. Oxfordshire County Council's Trading Standards team who have responsibility for enforcing weight limits, expressed no objection to the weight limit but noted the need to seek to make the limit as self-enforcing as possible by the provision of adequate signing etc. and noting their limited resources for enforcement.

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5. Responses were received from five members of the public which included a specific objection to the proposed 50mph speed limit on the A40 Witney bypass in the vicinity of the proposed new roundabout junction and a generic objection to all the proposals on the grounds of increased traffic and its aggravation of existing maintenance issues including on Downs Road and Tower Hill.
6. No response was received from Thames Valley Police.
7. The table below provides a summary of the responses.

| Measure | Support | Object | Neither |
|--|---------|--------|---------|
| B4047 – weight limit | 5 | 2 | 3 |
| B4477 Brize Norton Road – weight limit | 5 | 2 | 3 |
| A40 – 50mph speed limit | 4 | 2 | 4 |
| A4095 Curbridge Road – 40mph speed limit | 4 | 1 | 5 |
| Downs Road – 40mph speed limit | 3 | 2 | 5 |

Response to objections and other comments

8. The objection of Brize Norton Parish Council to the proposed weight limits is noted but, following careful consideration of this matter by officers, it seems highly unlikely that these proposals would have any adverse impact on Brize Norton village noting the location of the latter in respect of the proposals and the adjacent road network.
9. Curbridge Parish Council's objection to the proposed 40mph speed limit on Downs Road is similarly noted. However, their request that a 30mph speed limit should be introduced on all of the road is not considered to be consistent with national guidance on setting local speed limits taking account of the character of the road.
10. The objection to the proposed 50mph speed limit on the A40 Witney bypass from a member of the public was on the grounds of increased journey times that would be imposed on traffic. While it is accepted that a grade separated interchange rather than the at-grade roundabout included in the current proposals would have avoided the need to consider a lower speed limit on the bypass, the choice of junction type was determined as part of the very extensive consideration of the development by West Oxfordshire District Council.
11. The generic objection to all the proposals is noted but no specific grounds were cited other than the wider impact of traffic growth in the Witney area including the increased pressures on road maintenance.

How the Project supports LTP4 Objectives

12. The proposals would help facilitate the safe movement of traffic.

Financial and Staff Implications (including Revenue)

13. Funding for the proposed speed limits and weight limit has been provided by the developers of adjacent land.

RECOMMENDATION

14. **The Cabinet Member for the Environment is RECOMMENDED to approve proposals to introduce lower speeds limits on the A40 Witney bypass and Downs Road, and a 7.5 tonne environmental weight on the B4047 between its junction with the A40 at the west end of the Witney bypass and Downs Road as advertised**

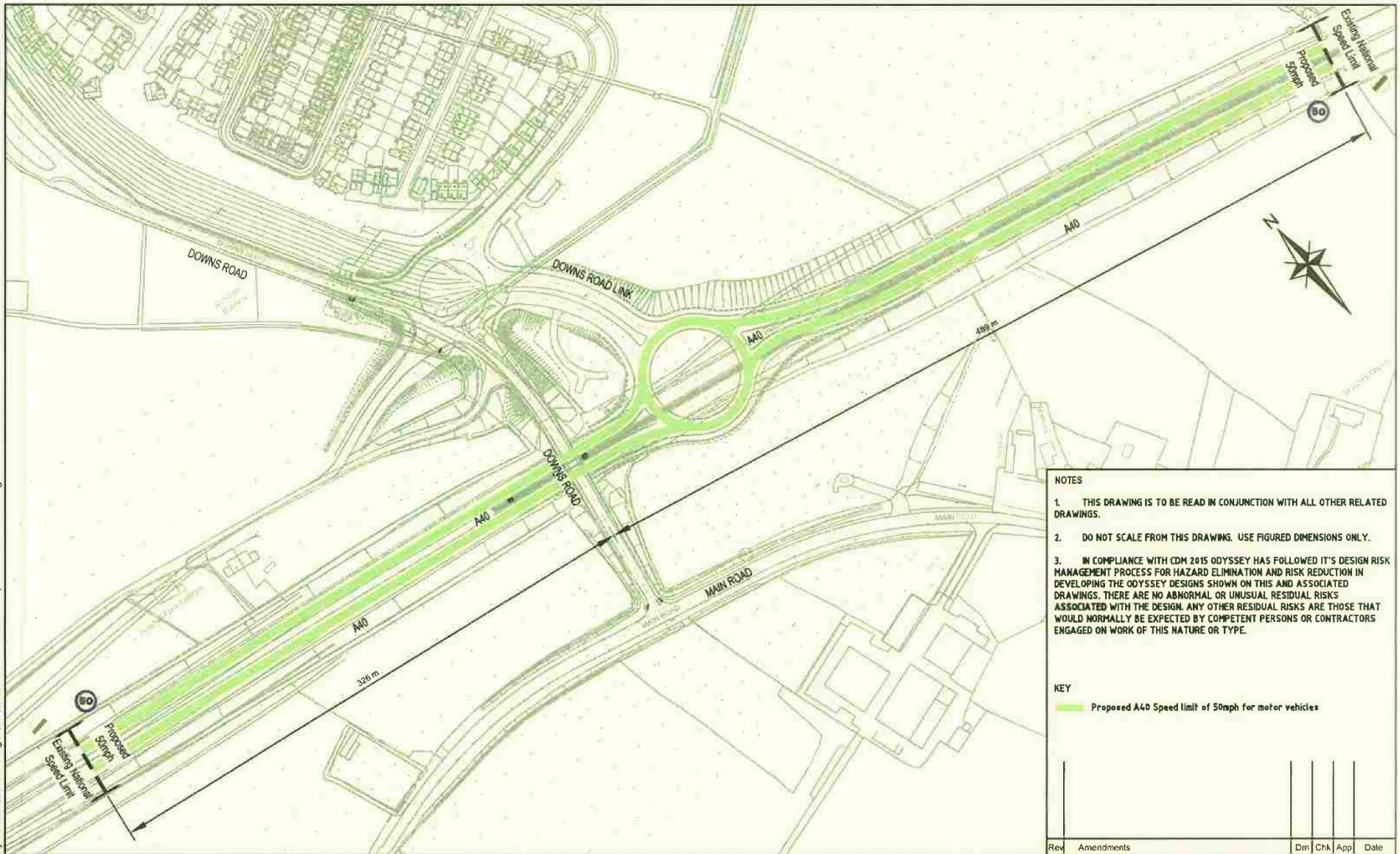
OWEN JENKINS
Director for Infrastructure Delivery

Background papers: Plan of proposed speed limits and weight limits
 Consultation responses

Contact Officers: Hugh Potter 07766 998704

May 2018

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- NOTES**
1. THIS DRAWING IS TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH ALL OTHER RELATED DRAWINGS.
 2. DO NOT SCALE FROM THIS DRAWING. USE FIGURED DIMENSIONS ONLY.
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KEY

— Proposed A40 Speed limit of 50mph for motor vehicles

| Rev | Amendments | Des | Chk | App | Date |
|--------|------------|------------|--------------|----------|------|
| | | | | | |
| Scale | 1:2000 @A3 | Date | DEC 2017 | Designed | DC |
| Drawn | DC | Checked | JHM | Approved | JHM |
| Job No | 13-161 | Drawing No | 13-161-SK352 | Rev | - |

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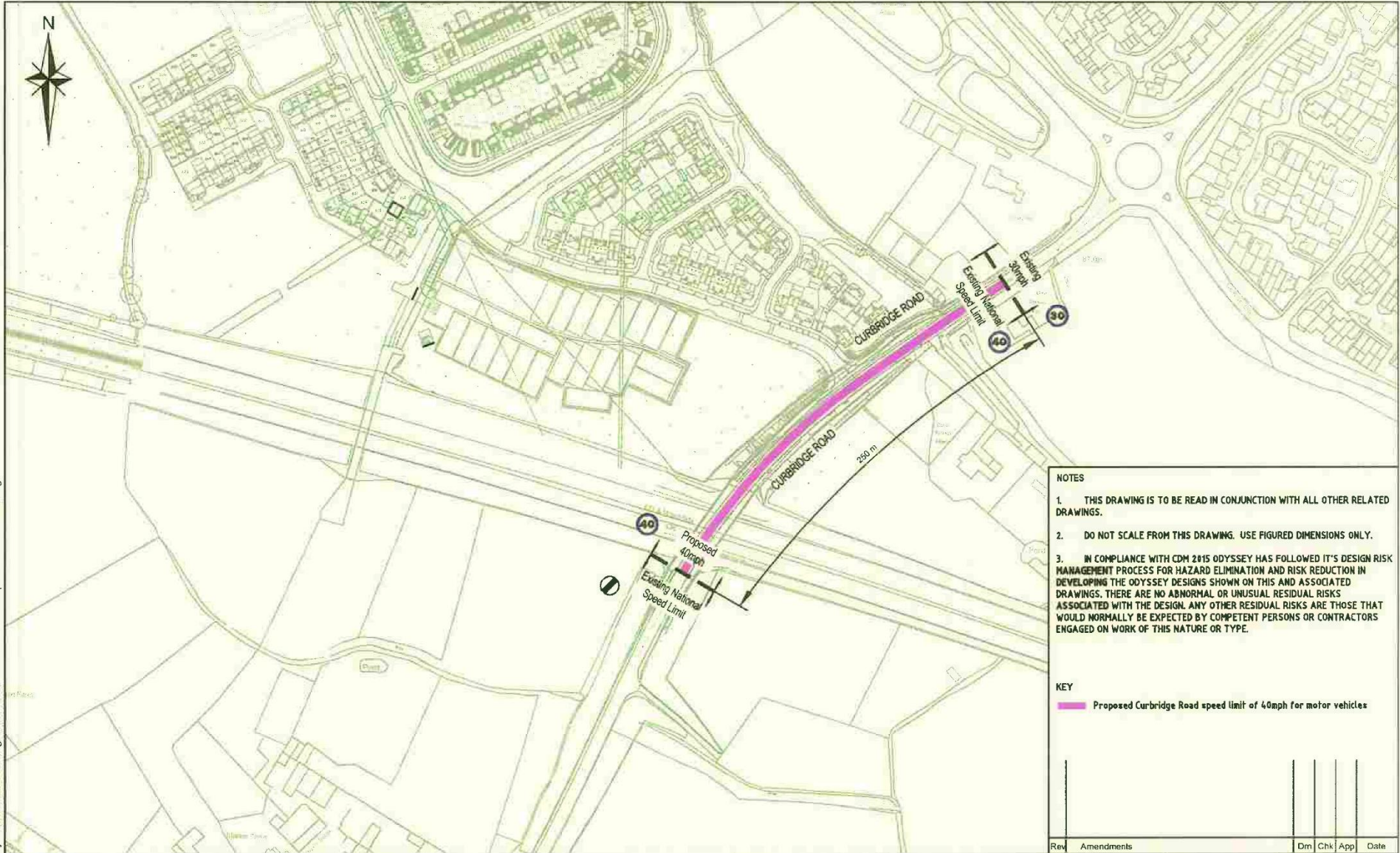
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Job Title
A40 WEST WITNEY

Drawing Title
A40 PROPOSED TRO FOR 50 MPH AREA

Client
OXFORDSHIRE LAND LTD.

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KEY

Proposed Curbridge Road speed limit of 40mph for motor vehicles

| Rev | Amendments | Drn | Chk | App | Date |
|-----|------------|--------------|----------|-----|------|
| | Scale | Date | Designed | | |
| | 1:2000 @A3 | DEC 2017 | DC | | |
| | Drawn | Checked | Approved | | |
| | DC | JHM | JHM | | |
| | Job No | Drawing No | Rev | | |
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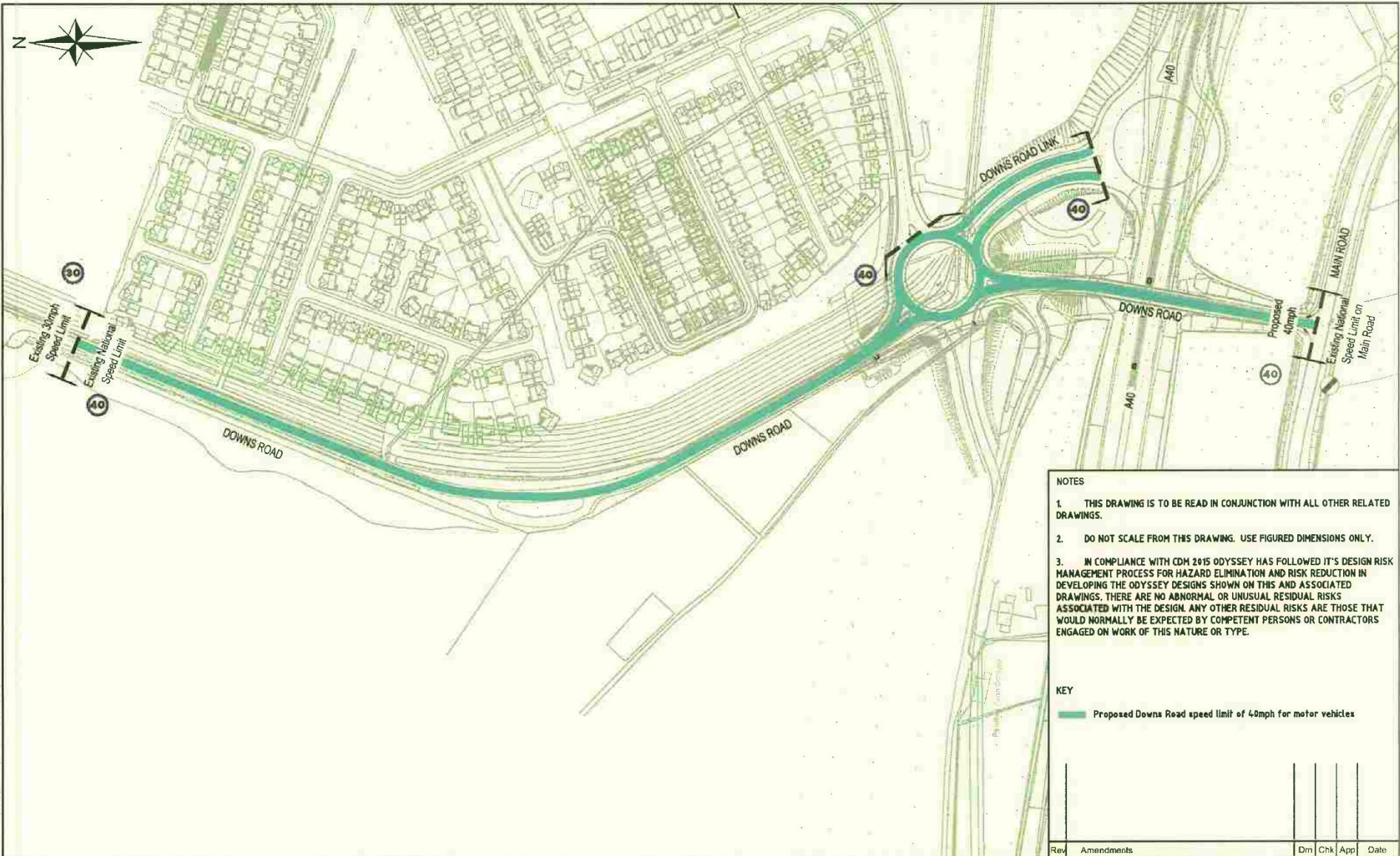
Job Title
**CURBRIDGE ROAD
WEST WITNEY**

Drawing Title
**CURBRIDGE ROAD PROPOSED TRO
FOR 40 MPH AREA**

Client
OXFORDSHIRE LAND LTD.

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KEY

— Proposed Downs Road speed limit of 40mph for motor vehicles

| Rev | Amendments | Drm | Chk | App | Date |
|--------|------------|------------|--------------|----------|------|
| Scale | 1:2000 @A3 | Date | DEC 2017 | Designed | DC |
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| Job No | 13-161 | Drawing No | 13-161-SK354 | Rev | - |

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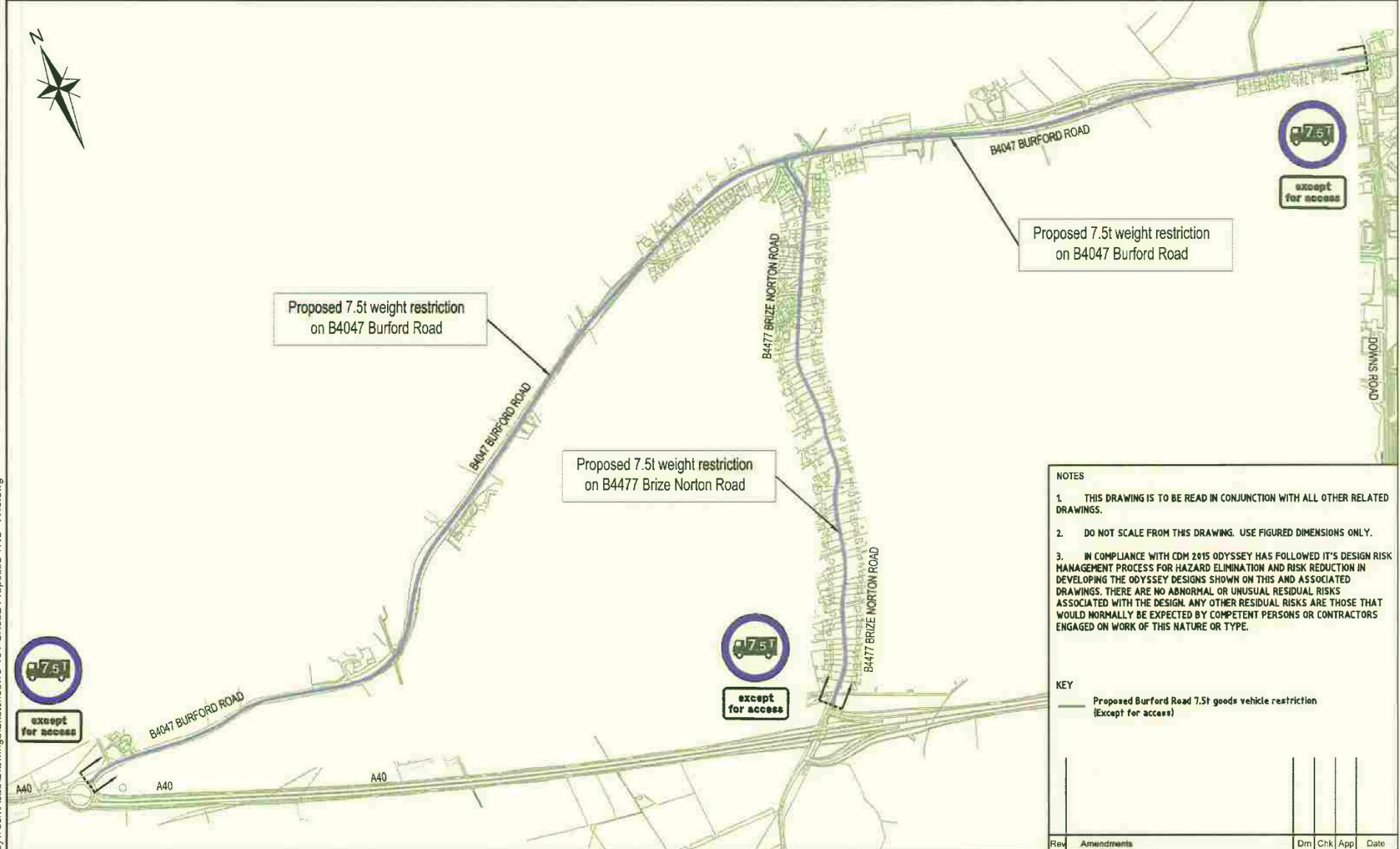
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Job Title
**DOWN'S ROAD
WEST WITNEY**

Drawing Title
**DOWN'S ROAD PROPOSED TRO
FOR 40 MPH AREA**

Client
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KEY

— Proposed Burford Road 7.5t goods vehicle restriction (Except for access)

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Job Title
**B4047 BURFORD ROAD AND
B4477 BRIZE NORTON ROAD - WEST WITNEY**

Drawing Title
**PROPOSED GOODS VEHICLE
7.5t PROHIBITION TRO**

Client
OXFORDSHIRE LAND LTD.

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| Drawn | DC | Checked | JHM | Approved | JHM |
| Job No | 13-161 | Drawing No | 13-161-SK355 | Rev | - |

| RESPONDENT | SUMMARISED COMMENTS |
|---|--|
| (1) Traffic Management Officer, (Thames Valley Police) | A response from the police is still awaited and will be reported verbally at the meeting. |
| (2) Local County Cllr (Witney West & Bampton Division) | No objection - my view is that these seem eminently sensible, if they can be enforced |
| (3) Witney Town Council | Support - Witney Town Council is in favour of the proposal as set out. |
| (4) Brize Norton Parish Council | Object - concerns have been expressed in relation to these proposals. Whilst consideration has clearly been given in relation to the village of Minster Lovell. However, our concerns are that this heavy traffic will take an alternative route through Brize Norton Village. At this time the highways in the village already receive a high amount of heavy traffic, not only owing to the nearby airbase but also as a cut through to the A420 and an often less congested route into Oxford. As a consequence of this already heavy traffic the local highways are unable to cope as can be seen the collapse of the speed cushions within the village. In addition to the physical inability of the road surface being unable to cope with an increase of heavy traffic there is also the issue of parking within Station Road, Brize Norton. Householders often have no alternative but to park cars of the main road, essentially resulting in Station Road becoming a single-track road. The knock-on effect of the proposals would therefore be of detriment to Brize Norton village. On this basis we are resisting your proposals at this time. That said we would be happy to enter into dialogue with the County Council. |
| (5) Curbridge & Lew Parish Council | Support - The Parish Council is in agreement with the various proposed Orders with the exception of <u>.40mph (Downs Road)</u> – Object – should be made 30mph throughout. If we understand the proposal correctly, vehicle travelling towards Curbridge will be released from the current 30mph restriction into a 40mph restriction, just as they hit a blind bend before the new crossing and new roundabout. This neither makes sense nor is particularly safe. |
| (6) Trading Standards Team Leader, (Oxfordshire County Council) | <u>Weight Restrictions</u> – No objection - no view on whether a weight restriction should be put in place in the proposed area. Our concerns are to do with: 1. Prevention: helping HGV drivers to avoid breaching the restriction in the first place 2. The practicalities of enforcement where prevention has failed. As a result, we have a query about one business located within the proposed weight restriction and comments on places where we would like to see advance warning signs put in place. 3. Resourcing work (i.e. effective signage) |

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|---|---|
| <p>(7) Local Resident, (Ripley Avenue, Minster Lovell)</p> | <p><u>40mph (Downs Road)</u> – Support – No comment. <u>40mph (A4095 Curbridge Road)</u> – Support – No comment. <u>50mph (A40 dual-carriageway)</u> – Object – The UK has a chronic productivity problem and slowing traffic on roads that are designed to move large volumes of traffic quickly is totally unacceptable. The Witney by-pass is one of the few pieces of road on all of Oxfordshire that is effective, the addition of a 'cheap' roundabout placed in the middle of the road is disgraceful. It should be a overhead roundabout with four-way slip roads on and off. The current 70mph limit should remain as compensation for this planning shambles!" <u>7.5 tonne Weight Limit (B4047 Burford Road)</u> – Support – No comment. <u>7.5 tonne Weight Limit (B4477 Brize Norton Road)</u> – Support – Need to ensure that the single lane bridge in Old Minster Lovell mirrors this restriction.</p> |
| <p>(8) Local Resident, (Upper Crescent, Minster Lovell)</p> | <p><u>40mph (Downs Road)</u> – No opinion. <u>40mph (A4095 Curbridge Road)</u> – No opinion. <u>50mph (A40 dual-carriageway)</u> – Support – No comment. <u>7.5 tonne Weight Limit (B4047 Burford Road)</u> – Support – HGV vehicles thunder down this stretch of road from five thirty each morning in droves so this proposal would make life for those living on and near the road much more bearable as well as making the footpaths and road safer for all users. <u>7.5 tonne Weight Limit (B4477 Brize Norton Road)</u> – Support – As above.</p> |
| <p>(9) Local Resident, (Thorney Leys, Witney)</p> | <p><u>40mph (Downs Road)</u> – Support – No comment <u>40mph (A4095 Curbridge Road)</u> – Support – I think it should be 40mph all the way from the Lord Kitchener pub people drive over 60mph on that road all the time and it doesn't feel safe to walk along the footpath. <u>50mph (A40 dual-carriageway)</u> – Support – Why not extend the 50mph limit for the full length of the bypass close to Witney this would reduce noise which can be heard all over the town and also help to ease congestion at the bottle neck where the road goes back down single carriage way where there is always a queue every day. <u>7.5 tonne Weight Limit (B4047 Burford Road)</u> – Support – Good idea keep all the HGVs on the main road. But can the A4047 also be changed to 50mph people always go too fast along here? <u>7.5 tonne Weight Limit (B4477 Brize Norton Road)</u> – Support – No comment.</p> |
| <p>(10) Email Response, (unknown)</p> | <p>Object - I am not opposed to the introduction of the proposed Speed limits and in principal to the Weight Limits. I do however object to the proposed scheme due to the omission of any review of the effect of the scheme on traffic within West Witney. Although not stated I have concluded that the aim of the Weight restrictions is to channel along Downs Road to access the A40. The current state of Downs Road is such to dissuade traffic. Am I correct to assume that the road is due to be repaired prior to these regulations coming into force? My particular concern is the recent and increasing use of Tower Hill by heavy traffic, in particular Articulated Lorries. I fear that the restrictions will lead to more heavy traffic using Tower Hill to access the A40 at Ducklington rather than via Downs Road..</p> |
| <p>(11) Email Response, (unknown)</p> | <p>No objection - however I have concerns that HGVs will continue to use Thorney Leys & Deer Park Road/Range Road, Witney to access the industrial sites in Downs Road. Would it not be prudent to instigate a weight restriction on Thorney Leys & Deer Park Road, as a result of which the HGVs will have to use the A40 Witney By-pass?</p> |

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