

CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT – 25 APRIL 2019

A415 BETWEEN ABINGDON AND CULHAM - PROPOSED 40MPH SPEED LIMIT

Report by Director for Infrastructure Delivery

Recommendation

1. The Cabinet Member for the Environment is RECOMMENDED to approve the proposed reduction in speed limit to 40mph speed limit (from the current national speed limit) on the A415 between Abingdon and Culham, and on The Burycroft between its junction with the A415 and the existing 30mph speed limit at Culham village as advertised.

Executive summary

2. Speed limits are reviewed when there are changes to the road layout as a result of development, when requested by local councils as a result of road safety concerns and as part of the on-going monitoring of reports on road accidents. Proposed changes are assessed applying the County Council's Procedure for Speed Limits.

Introduction

3. This report presents responses received to a statutory consultation to introduce a 40mph speed limit on the A415 between Abingdon and Culham (in place of the current national speed limit) as a result of safety concerns on the part of Culham Parish Council.

Background

4. The above proposal as shown at Annex 1 has been put forward at the request of Culham Parish Council and if approved would be funded by the parish council and the Councillors Priority Fund.
5. The initial request from Culham Parish Council was for a 30mph speed limit, but an appraisal carried out by officers taking account of national guidance on setting local speed limits and speed surveys carried out in November 2018 indicated that this would not be consistent with such guidance or Oxfordshire County Council's own speed limit policy and procedures. However, taking account of the character of the road and the measured speeds (average speeds being 44mph north of the junction with The Burycroft and 41mph to the south of this junction) a 40mph speed limit was judged to be appropriate. It was also judged appropriate if making a speed limit reduction on the A415

to include the length of The Burycroft between the A415 and the 30mph speed limit at Culham village, which is also currently subject to the national speed limit, in this proposal.

Consultation

6. Formal consultation on the proposal was carried out between 13 February and 15 March 2019. A public notice was placed in the Oxfordshire Herald series newspaper, and sent to statutory consultees, including Thames Valley Police, the Fire & Rescue Service, Ambulance service, the Vale of the White Horse District Council, Culham Parish Council and the local County Councillor.
7. Three responses were received. Two objections and one expression of support for the proposal. The responses are summarised at Annex 2. Copies of the full responses are available for inspection by County Councillors.

Response to objections and other comments

8. Thames Valley Police objected to the proposal on the grounds that the road environment and existing speeds on the road were not consistent with a 40mph speed limit and that the accident history was modest. An objection was also received from a member of the public on similar grounds.
9. It is accepted that the road environment is largely non-built up, with only a small number of accesses to private properties and one junction (The Burycroft) with a public highway, and that on these grounds the case for a 40mph speed limit might be considered marginal, noting also that the accident history here is also quite modest (one serious and one slight injury accident being reported in the most recent 5-year period). However, speed surveys carried out in November 2018 showed average speeds to be within the threshold considered appropriate - under the Oxfordshire County Council procedures for setting speed limits - for a 40mph speed limit without supporting traffic calming measures, noting also that there are a number of local precedents of 40mph speed limits in similar environments which have been effective in reducing accident frequency.

How the Project supports LTP4 Objectives

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

Financial and Staff Implications (including Revenue)

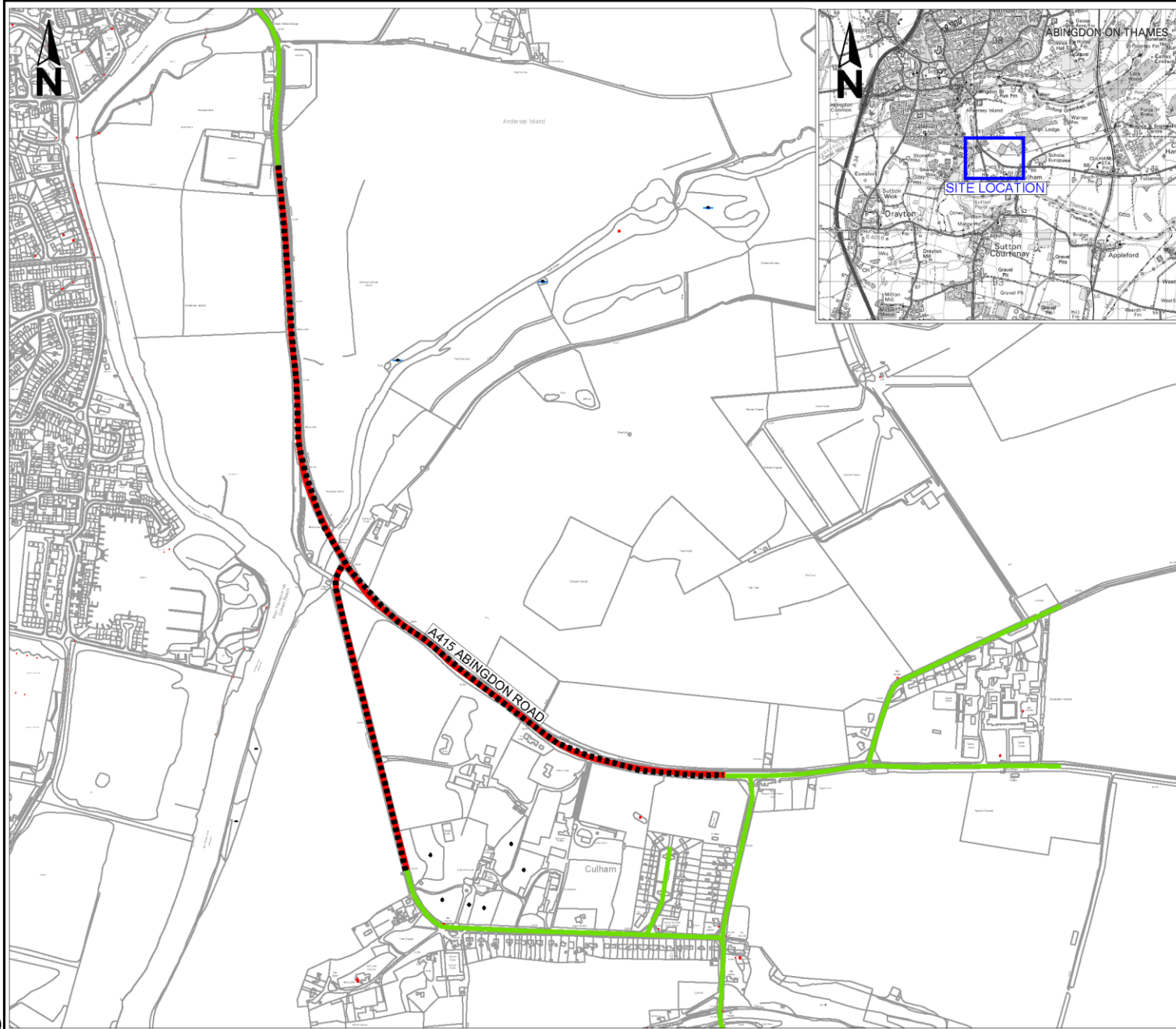
11. Funding for the proposed measures has been provided by Culham parish Council and the Councillors Priority Fund.

Director for Infrastructure Delivery

Background papers: Plan of proposed speed limit
Consultation responses

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April 2019



Drawing No.	Revision 0				
Key					
Proposed 40mph speed limit in place of existing National speed limit Existing 30mph speed limit (to remain)					
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Rev.	Date	Purpose of revision	Drawn	Checked	Approved
Owen Jenkins Director for Infrastructure Delivery Communities Oxfordshire County Council County Hall Oxford OX1 1ND Tel: 0345 310 11 11 Fax: (01865) 241577					
Project title					
PROPOSED 40MPH SPEED LIMIT					
Drawing title					
CULHAM A415					
Drawing Status					
Scale @ A3	Drawn by	JaC	Checked by	Approved by	
N.T.S.	Date drawn	01/19	Date checked	Date approved	
Oxfordshire Project No. & File Ref					
Drawing No.					Revision 0

RESPONDENT	SUMMARISED COMMENTS
(1) Traffic Management Officer, (Thames Valley Police)	<p>Object – After careful consideration of the documents and speed data provided object to the proposals for the reasons given below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 85th percentile speeds 50.6 mph and 47.8 mph, • The speed data gathered in November 2018 show considerable high numbers of vehicles already exceeding the speed limit prosecution threshold of 46 mph, • Recorded collision history shows only 4 injury collisions in a 5-year period with none at The Burycroft junction, • The current environment does not justify a speed limit as low as 40 mph. (Little development), • The analysis of need given in the application made by the Parish is not evidenced in the history and data already gathered. <p>Based upon factual evidence I cannot see any justification for this limit being lowered to 40 mph.</p>
(2) Local Resident, (Kennington)	<p>Object – Do not consider there is justification for a 40 mph limit along what, after the Culham lights and heading east, is an open stretch of road with no houses along it. In my view limits need to be reasonable otherwise drivers will constantly disobey them which doesn't help the police in their enforcement and the law falls into disrepute</p>
(3) Local Resident, (Kennington)	<p>Support – <i>No comment</i></p>