

Divisions affected: *Charlbury & Wychwood*

**CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAY MANAGEMENT
12 OCTOBER 2023**

**ASCOTT UNDER WYCHWOOD: LONDON LANE – PROPOSED
40MPH SPEED LIMIT**

Report by Corporate Director, Environment and Place

RECOMMENDATION

1. The Cabinet Member for Highway Management is RECOMMENDED to approve as advertised the 40mph speed limit on London Lane, Ascott-under-Wychwood.

Executive summary

2. This report presents responses to a consultation on a proposal to introduce a 40mph speed limit on London Lane, leading south-eastwards for 300 metres out of Ascott-under-Wychwood, as shown in **Annexes 1 & 2**.
3. The proposal will help support the recently proposed 20mph speed, by introducing a 'buffer' speed limit in order to help better manage the speed of traffic entering/exiting the village.

Financial Implications

4. Funding for implementation of the proposal will be met from the Parish Council.

Equality and Inclusion Implications

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

Sustainability Implications

6. The proposals seek to improve road safety for road users by ensuring that danger is minimised whilst facilitating the effective and safe passage of traffic.

Formal consultation

7. A formal consultation was carried out between 20 July and 11 August 2023. A notice was published in the Oxford Times newspaper, and an email was 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, West Oxfordshire District Council, the local District Cllrs, Ascott-under-Wychwood parish council, and the local County Councillor representing the Charlbury & Wychwood division.
8. 48 responses were received via the online survey during the course of the formal consultation, with: 40 in support (84%), four objecting (8%), and four raising concerns (8%).
9. Additionally, an email from Thames Valley Police (TVP) was received, stating they had no objection to the proposal.
10. The full responses are shown at **Annex 3**, and copies of the original submissions are available for inspection by County Councillors.

Officer response to objections/concerns

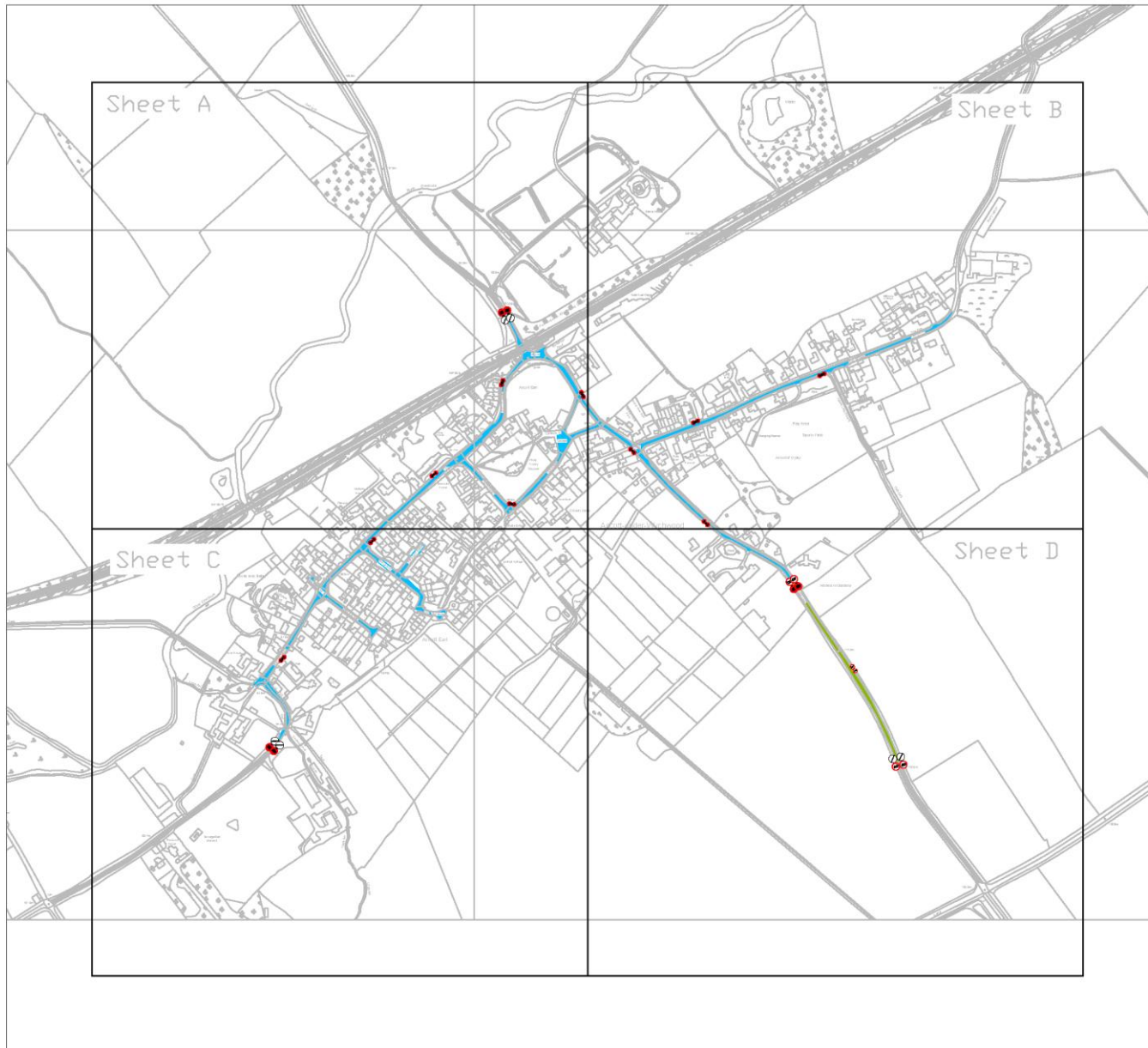
11. Thames Valley Police raised no objection to the proposal.
12. The “buffer” limit is proposed on this fast, narrow downhill approach to the newly implemented 20mph limit, with the aim of slowing vehicles at a suitable distance in advance. Despite the current limit being “derestricted”, this limit is not considered appropriate given the proximity to the village environment, 20mph speed limit and road alignment.
13. Several of the ‘concerns’ raised express fears that the current limit is too fast, this proposal is aimed at addressing those specific concerns.

Bill Cotton
Corporate Director, Environment and Place

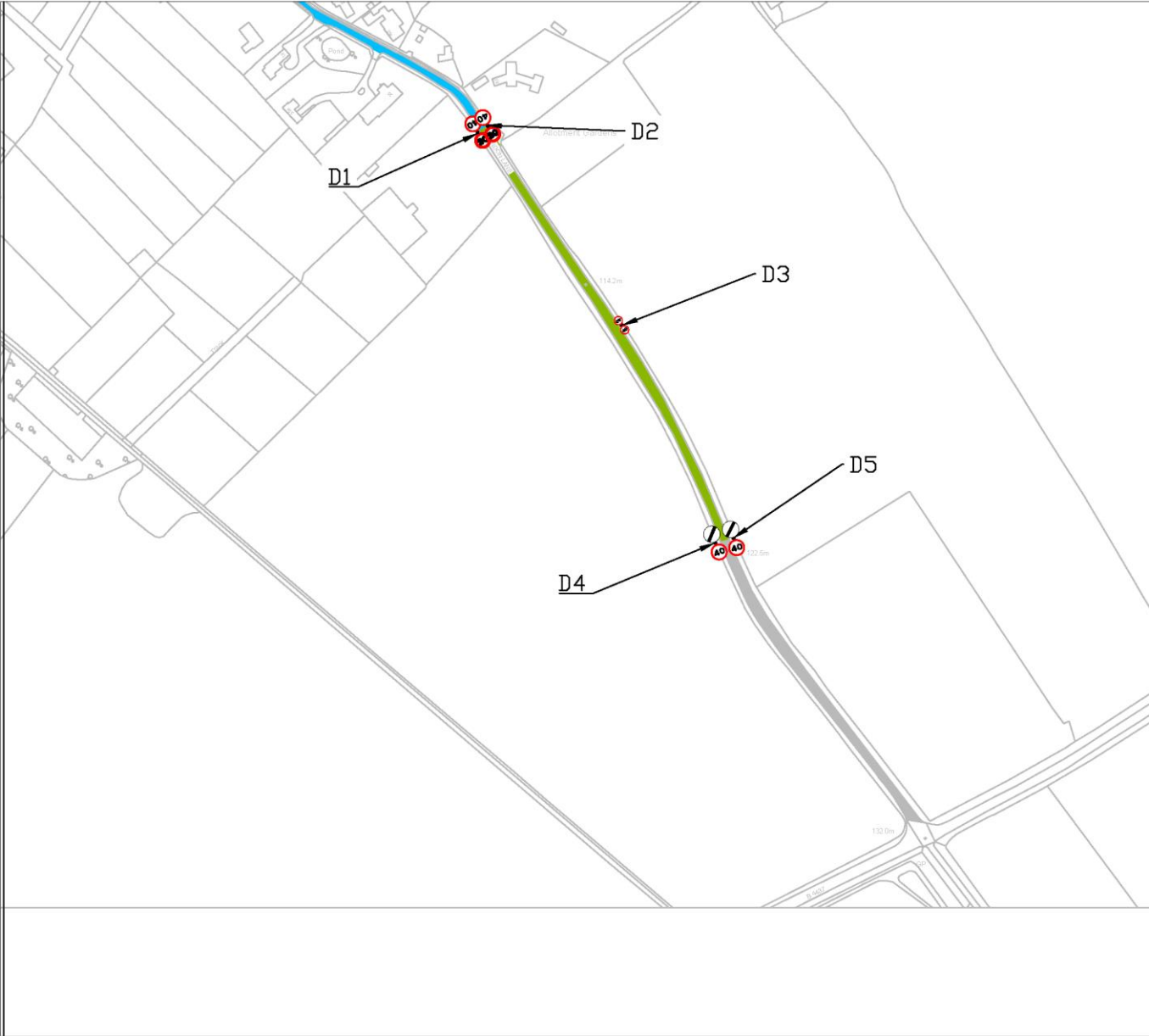
Annexes Annexes 1-2; Consultation plans
Annex 3 Consultation responses

Contact Officers: James Wright 07789 926984

October 2023



| | | |
|--|---------------|---------------------|
| Ascott-under-Wychwood | | Revision 2.0 |
| Legend | | |
| Proposed 20 | | |
| Proposed 40 | | |
| Existing NSL | | |
| Not Public Highway | | |
| © Crown Copyright and Database rights 1002343 2017 | | |
| Rev. | Date | Purpose of revision |
| Drawn | Checked | Approved |
| 2.0 | 21.06.23 | Second Draft |
| C.W | | |
| <div style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle; font-size: x-small; margin-left: 10px;"> Owen Jenkins Director for Infrastructure Delivery Communities Oxfordshire County Council County Hall New Road Oxford OX1 1ND Tel 0045 310 1111 </div> | | |
| Project title: Ascott-under-Wychwood 20mph Scheme | | |
| Drawing title: Ascott-under-Wychwood 20mph Scheme Overview | | |
| Drawing Status | | |
| Scale @ A3 | Drawn by: C.W | Checked by: C.JB |
| Date drawn | Date checked | Date approved |
| 21/06/23 | 27/06/23 | 27/06/23 |
| Oxfordshire Project No. & File Ref | | |
| Drawing No. 1.0 | | Revision 2.0 |



| Drawing No. Sheet D | | Revision 2.0 | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <th colspan="2">Legend</th> </tr> <tr> <td>Proposed 20</td> <td style="background-color: #00aaff; width: 15px; height: 10px;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Proposed 40</td> <td style="background-color: #90ee90; width: 15px; height: 10px;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Existing NSL</td> <td style="background-color: #cccccc; width: 15px; height: 10px;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Not Public Highway</td> <td style="background-color: #ffffff; width: 15px; height: 10px;"></td> </tr> </table> | | | | Legend | | Proposed 20 | | Proposed 40 | | Existing NSL | | Not Public Highway | |
| Legend | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Proposed 20 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Proposed 40 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Existing NSL | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Not Public Highway | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| Rev. | Date | Purpose of revision | Drawn | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2.0 | 21/06/23 | Second Draft | C.W | | | | | | | | | | |
| <div style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle; font-size: x-small; margin-left: 10px;"> Owen Jenkins Director for Infrastructure Delivery Communities Oxfordshire County Council County Hall New Road Oxford OX1 1ND Tel: 0845 310 1111 </div> | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Project title: Ascot-under-Wychwood 20mph Scheme | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Drawing title: Ascot-under-Wychwood 20mph Scheme Sheet D | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Drawing Status | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Scale @ A3 | Drawn by: C.W | Checked by: F. IR | Approved by: F. IR | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Date drawn: 21/06/23 | Date checked: 27/06/23 | Date approved: 27/06/23 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Oxfordshire Project No. & File Ref | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Drawing No. 1.0 | | Revision 2.0 | | | | | | | | | | | |

ANNEX 3

| Respondent | COMMENTS |
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| (1) Traffic Management Officer, (Thames Valley Police) | No objection |
| (2) Local Resident (Ascott-under-Wychwood, London Lane) | Object - There is a school on this road and I often walk it with my dog and young children. You need to be going slow to be able to respond to traffic or hazards in the area. Also the pathway along the side opposite the school isn't very clear so I often have to cross back and forth with the buggy |
| (3) Local Resident (Ascott-under-Wychwood, Shipton Road) | <p>Object - There are no properties, businesses, driveways or any other hazard on this stretch of road. It is appropriate and safe for this stretch of road to remain designated as a national speed limit.</p> <p>As an advanced roadcraft instructor for the IAM I strongly believe that lowering limits where there is no reasonable need encourages motorists to ignore the limits. Furthermore widespread and extreme limit lowering is causing inattention to the road by drivers who are having to travel unnecessarily slowly and are therefore becoming as distracted as they would in traffic jam.</p> <p>Studies conducted of traffic light controlled junctions where the lights are not functioning show that there are fewer accidents than when the lights are working because drivers are forced to pay close attention to the road and use their judgement. Removing the need for any judgement or skill by lowering the limit to this level will, I believe, create the risk of poorer driving and less care being taken as motorists switch into autopilot.</p> |
| (4) Local Resident (Ascott-under-Wychwood, Maple Way) | Object - The statement of reasons states 20mph speed restrictions are being used to promote alternative modes of transport for local travel, this application is to support that proposed speed limit. I don't believe reducing the speed limits in Ascott will promote alternative modes given there isn't really anywhere in the village people currently drive to due to it currently being 30mph, if the desire is to promote alternative methods, Oxfordshire CC should instead focus on sorting out the potholes which have been in place for weeks, if not months and focus on making it safe to walk/cycle to Shipton/Milton through the use of designated footpaths or just making the roads more cycle friendly. |

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| <p>(5) Member of public (Witney)</p> | <p>Object - No need to change the speed limit as everybody knows even the thickest of drivers know what the new speed limit is of the Village. Clearly another vendetta against motorists and again a waste of tax payers money wasting money on signage when it is useful elsewhere such as sorting out the potholes surrounding Ascott Under Wychwood.</p> |
| <p>(6) Local Resident (Ascott-under-Wychwood, High Street)</p> | <p>Concerns - Traffic regularly exceed 60 mph limit. Very dangerous to anyone coming out of the Allotments and the nearby properties. Likewise to any person walking in that area.</p> |
| <p>(7) Local Resident (Ascott-under-Wychwood, The Green)</p> | <p>Concerns - There are a few concerns. London Lane is a small, rural lane running through a small village where, during school dropping-off hours, many cars come down, park and congest the village centre. London Lane is also used as a short cut towards Chipping Norton - and cars tend to use it as a kind of challenge - to go down fast, disturbing the peace of the place and meeting up with the school drop-off.</p> |
| <p>(8) Local Resident (Ascott-under-Wychwood, Chestnut drive)</p> | <p>Concerns - Wild animals and domestic animals as well as pedestrians</p> |
| <p>(9) Member of public (Upper Rissington, Slingsby Close)</p> | <p>Concerns - There is a school on the corner of London Lane. West Oxfordshire has spent a lot of time reducing the speed limits in surrounding villages and Witney to 20. I fail to comprehend why the speed limit down London Lane has not been dropped to 20 mph as well. It is an accident waiting to happen</p> |
| <p>(10) Local Resident (Ascott, Shipton Road)</p> | <p>Support - Slow down</p> |
| <p>(11) Local Resident (Ascott , London Lane)</p> | <p>Support - I have direct experience of people driving down this lane far too fast into the village. There is a dangerous bend and the road is heavily used by walkers, cyclists and horses.</p> |
| <p>(12) Local Resident (Ascott-under-Wychwood, Chestnut Drive)</p> | <p>Support - The current 60mph limit terminates too closely to the built up area of the village and the 30mph signs are obscured by a bend in the road, so that drivers do not have sufficient time to slow down before they reach the High Street junction and the primary school.</p> |

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| (13) Local Resident (Ascott-under-Wychwood, Heritage Lane) | Support - Cars are currently driven too quickly along London Lane, which is the main road leading into the village; then have to slow down abruptly (and sometimes don't) when they reach the 30mph zone. |
| (14) Local Resident (Ascott-under-Wychwood, Heritage Lane) | Support - Traffic does need to be slowed down on this stretch as the current 30mph limit comes into force just at the sharp bend coming into the village |
| (15) Local Resident (Ascott-under-Wychwood, High Street) | Support - Lived here 10 years and this access to the Village is downhill & towards a blind, narrow bend. It is a constant danger because too many drive far too fast for those conditions before meeting the existing 30mph limit too close to that blind bend. |
| (16) Local Resident (Ascott-under-Wychwood, High Street) | Support - Ascott is a small village which, at certain times of the day plays host to a great deal of passing traffic. Anything which either deters, or slows down this traffic has to be a good thing. My only observation would bewhy 40mph? Why not 30mph? |
| (17) Local Resident (Ascott-under-Wychwood, High Street) | Support - Currently traffic, including large delivery and heavy goods vehicles, are able to travel at up to 60mph down London Lane to be met with the current speed restrictions with little time to adjust their speed before the road narrows and enters a blind bend and a series of driveways. The reduction of the current 30mph speed limit to 20mph is to be welcomed, but will serve only to exacerbate the current problem as potentially vehicles travelling downhill at 20mph will have only a limited distance in which to reduce their speed which, inevitably many will fail to do. The introduction of a 40mph limit on London Lane would therefore seem to go some way towards a solution. |
| (18) Local Resident (Ascott-under-Wychwood, High Street) | Support - Supporting the proposal as I am often walking, running, horse riding or cycling on this section of road and would feel safer with a lower speed limit in place |
| (19) Local Resident (Ascott-under-Wychwood, High Street) | Support - This may make a marginal difference but will be largely ignored. More practical improvements would be rumble strips coming up to the 30mph limit and a mirror on the corner |
| (20) Local Resident (Ascott-under-Wychwood, London Lane) | Support - London Lane is a narrow lane coming into Ascott with a blind corner as you enter the current 30mph from 60mph. There is no pavement there but many walkers. The current speed limits make it extremely dangerous as drivers brake hard one way or accelerate too quickly when they leave the village. |

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| <p>(21) Local Resident (Ascott-under-Wychwood, London Lane)</p> | <p>Support - There is a blind corner as the current 60mph hits the 30mph section and no footpath. Anyone walking on the road is in danger from cars that are still over the 30mph limit. Especially if they are walking dogs for example.</p> |
| <p>(22) Local Resident (Ascott-under-Wychwood, London Lane)</p> | <p>Support - London Lane is used as a 'rat run' for vehicles between the B4437 and the A361. Cars, lorries and HGVs zoom down the hill and pick-up speed due to the gradient. By the time the vehicles slow down they are approaching the Windrush Valley School, where there are lots of children in the roadway at drop-off and pick-up times. There are sections of the lane where it is so narrow two cars struggle to pass each other, which many try to do at 60 mph - so I have witnessed many near-misses! It is essential for the speed limit to be graduated down into the village for the safety of pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders.</p> |
| <p>(23) Local Resident (Ascott-under-Wychwood, London Lane)</p> | <p>Support - I support a speed reduction to 40mph prior to entering a 20mph zone for safety reasons. London Lane is a narrow lane on a hill and heavy braking from 60mph to 20mph would increase hazard.</p> |
| <p>(24) Local Resident (Ascott-under-Wychwood, Shipton Road)</p> | <p>Support - It is extremely dangerous for traffic to be travelling at high speeds as far as the 30mph (current) sign. They are not prepared and often do not reduce their speed quickly enough. The road becomes very narrow and it is a blind bend at that point. In the recent past a car lost control, demolished the garden wall and hit the front wall of No 27.</p> <p>Motorists unfamiliar with the territory are particularly taken by surprise.</p> <p>London Lane is used as a 'rat run' for vehicles, inc large vehicles, travelling from Witney to Chippy. They often take up the whole carriageway and vehicles travelling in the opposite direction have to very quickly take evasive action.</p> <p>90% of the pupils from Windrush Valley School (situated on the Green) are out of village residents so drop off and pick up times are very busy on London Lane. Parents can be in a hurry and would be reminded to slow down before reaching the built-up area rather than hitting the brakes hard when entering the 30mph limit.</p> <p>The footway becomes extremely narrow on the east side and eventually runs out close to the 30mph sign. There is no footway on the west side. This is a well trodden local walk which turns into the allotments area and links up with the west end of High St or the bridleway which turns southwards from the allotments. Dog walkers and riders on their horses are often in the road. They are alarmed by drivers who have not been prepared to reduce suddenly from 60mph to 30mph on a blind narrow bend.</p> |

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| (25) Local Resident (Ascott-under-Wychwood, Shipton Road) | Support - CARS ARE TRAVELLING TOO FAST DOWN THIS STRETCH OF ROAD. |
| (26) Local Resident (Ascott-under-Wychwood, Heritage Lane) | Support - It is a blind bend coming into London lane and not large enough for two big vehicles to pass at once |
| (27) Local Resident (Ascott-under-Wychwood, High Street) | Support - This is a small, quiet village shared with walkers and horses so a 60 mph limit is far to high for such an environment. |
| (28) Local Resident (Ascott-under-Wychwood, High Street) | Support - Safety |
| (29) Local Resident (Ascott-under-Wychwood, High Street) | Support - Safety |
| (30) Local Resident (Ascott-under-Wychwood, High Street) | Support - I have almost been killed on the blind bend. |
| (31) Local Resident (Ascott-under-Wychwood, High Street) | Support - Safety |
| (32) Local Resident (Ascott-under-Wychwood, High Street) | Support - It needs to be even slower but 40 would help |
| (33) Local Resident (Ascott-under-Wychwood, London Lane) | Support - Vehicles travel too fast down the hill and are going too fast & fail to slow at the 30 limit & there is no footpath on that part of London Lane & the road is narrow at the bend and it's dangerous for pedestrians, horse riders, and vehicles travelling up the hill. |
| (34) Local Resident (Ascott-under-Wychwood, The Green) | Support - Our Village is used as a cut through and as such we experience not only many fast cars up and down London Lane but there has been an increase of lorries as well. It's an accident waiting to happen. By introducing a 40mph, it won't stop some of the inconsiderate drivers but will make a lot of others more aware. |

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| (35) Local Resident (Ascott-under-Wychwood, High Street) | Support - Speed kills and this sensible reduction will play a part in making our roads safer. |
| (36) Local Resident (Ascott-under-Wychwood, Shipton Road) | Support - It's a very good idea and together with the proposed 20 mph limit in the village will be in line with what a lot of villages are doing |
| (37) Local Resident (Ascott-under-Wychwood, Dawls Close) | Support - We live in Ascott as a multigenerational family and have an age range. from 9.....77 we the oldies have an allotment off of London Lane and daily walk from shipton road to there. It's taking a big risk in walking the last sec. eg from the school upwards. The cars parked everywhere and the speed at which they travel, more 30 I would say. The children are not safe to ride there bikes in this area at all. All traffic should be slowed down before entering the village and even then 20 mph is more than adequate. we all support the speed restrictions. |
| (38) Local Resident (Ascott-under-Wychwood, High Street) | Support - Please can you also move the 30mph sign further up London Lane so that speed limit starts from where the sign showing "Ascott-under-Wychwood" is placed. Currently it sits inside the village after passing the driveway for the first house. |
| (39) Local Resident (Ascott-under-Wychwood, High Street) | Support - London Lane is a narrow, downhill, bendy road, where a 60 mph speed limit is dangerous. |
| (40) Local Resident (Ascott-under-Wychwood, High Street) | Support - To reduce the speed of (in particular) traffic cutting through the village |
| (41) Local Resident (Ascott-under-Wychwood, High Street) | Support - 40 mph is more than adequate for this short stretch of road which has a dangerous bend as it enters/leaves the village. |
| (42) Local Resident (Ascott-under-Wychwood, High Street/London Lane) | Support - Traffic comes off the 60 mph road and does not reduce speed as it approaches the 30 mph sign at the edge of the village, which is on a deceptive, blind bend. Nor does it reduce speed through the village. I live on the corner of London lane and the High St and observe this daily. Big bars and vans stay in the middle of the road at high speeds with no consideration of pedestrians or drivers coming the other way. |

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| <p>(43) Local Resident (Ascott-under-Wychwood, London Lane)</p> | <p>Support - I live in London Lane, close to the existing 30mph limit sign and am very aware of speeding traffic. It makes entering and leaving my drive potentially dangerous. On one occasion a speeding vehicle demolished my front wall and ended up in my front garden.</p> |
| <p>(44) Local Resident (Ascott-under-Wychwood, Shipton Road)</p> | <p>Support - London Lane is a hill and traffic often travels too fast when meeting the proposed 20 mph limit lower down in the village</p> |
| <p>(45) Local Resident (Ascott-under-Wychwood, Heritage Lane)</p> | <p>Support - To slow the traffic down the hill before entering a 20 mph at the entrance corner</p> |
| <p>(46) Local Resident (Ascott-under-Wychwood, Shipton Road)</p> | <p>Support - A dangerous accident involving personal injuries or worse is only a matter of time which will be made worse if further vehicle access is allowed off London Lane for housing developments.</p> |
| <p>(47) Local Resident (Ascott-under-Wychwood, Church View)</p> | <p>Support - The B4437 has a speed limit of 60mph and traffic tends to accelerate to that speed on the straight run down London Lane to the village. The 30mph speed limit sign at the entrance of the village is not easily visible from a distance, especially in summer when the contrast between full sun and the shade cast by trees in the vicarage garden makes the sign less obvious. Thus there are frequent occasions when vehicles coming down the lane are unable to reduce speed sufficiently to comply with the speed limit.</p> <p>There is no indication that the road narrows Just after the 30mph sign because of the blind corner, and drivers will have no idea of possible obstructions, pedestrians, horses or oncoming traffic.</p> |
| <p>(48) Local Resident (Ascott-under-Wychwood, Heritage Lane)</p> | <p>Support - For safety, cars need to slow down before they reach the current 30 mph sign because the 30 mph speed limit starts immediately before a sharp bend and the road at the bend is very narrow</p> |
| <p>(49) Local Resident (Ascott-under-Wychwood, The Green)</p> | <p>Support - Especially at night, a lot of cars drive through the village at approximately 40mph or more, and this feels and looks a lot more. Dangerous for people, pets and wildlife, and the drivers.</p> |