

Divisions affected: *Deddington*

DELEGATED DECISIONS BY CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT

05 SEPTEMBER 2024

SOULDERN - PROPOSED 20MPH SPEED LIMITS

Report by Director of Environment and Highways

RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet Member is **RECOMMENDED** to:

- a) **Approve the proposed introduction of 20mph speed limits in Souldern, as advertised.**

Executive Summary

1. The report presents responses to a statutory consultation on the proposed introduction of 20mph speed limits in Souldern, as shown in **Annex 1**.

Financial Implications

2. Funding for consultation and the proposals themselves has been provided by the County Council's 20mph Speed Limit Project.

Legal Implications

3. No legal implications have been identified in respect of the proposals, with proposed changes to existing Traffic Regulation Orders governed by the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and other associated procedural regulations. Failure to adhere to these statutory processes could result in the proposals being challenged.

Equality and Inclusion Implications

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

Sustainability Implications

5. The proposals would help to encourage walking and cycling within Souldern by making them safer and more attractive.

Formal Consultation

6. Formal consultation was carried out between 16 May and 07 June 2024. 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, Cherwell District Council, local District Cllrs, Souldern Parish Council, and the local County Councillor representing the Deddington division.

Statutory Consultee Responses:

7. Thames Valley Police re-iterated their views concerning OCC's policy and practice regarding 20mph speed limits and wish their response to be listed as 'having concerns' rather than an objection.
8. Oxford Bus Company offered no objection, citing that the village is not served by any current local bus services, nor had it been in the recent past.

Other Responses:

9. Two further responses were received via the online survey during the course of the formal consultation, comprising of one objection stating that the proposals were not needed, and were a waste of time & money, and one in support due to the safety & environmental benefits.
10. The responses are shown in **Annex 2**, and copies of the original responses are available for inspection by County Councillors.

Officer Response to Objections/Concerns

11. The main purpose of the scheme is to encourage greater use of active travel by reducing speeds; this is also expected to reduce accidents. The aim of reducing speed limits is to change driver's mindsets to make speeding socially unacceptable and make more environmentally friendly modes of travel such as walking and cycling more attractive – and also reduce the County's carbon footprint. This forms part of a countywide programme of works that seeks to deliver 'a safer place with a safer pace'.
12. The concerns of Thames Valley Police comprise observations applicable to the overall 20mph project but no site-specific comments relating to the proposals for Souldern.
13. The authority considers objections along the lines of it being unjustified, anti-car, a waste of money, not enforceable or pointless to not warrant amendments

Drawing No.

Notes:

 Proposed 20mph limit

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Rev.	Date	Purpose of revision	Drawn	Checked	Approved



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Project title

Souldern 20mph

Drawing title

General Layout

Drawing Status

Scale @ A3	Drawn by ER	Checked by GJB	Approved by GJB
	Date drawn 22/02/24	Date checked 22/02/24	Date approved 22/02/24

Oxfordshire Project No. & File Ref

Drawing No.

Revision

Sheet B

Sheet A



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 disproportionate 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 • 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>
(2) Head of Built Environment and Infrastructure, (Go-Ahead Group)	<p>No objection – I am able to record a null response here as this village is not served by buses (nor has been in the last 20 years as far as I am aware).</p>
(3) Local resident, (Souldern, Foxhill Lane)	<p>Object – Absolutely no requirement complete waste of time and money.</p>
(4) Local resident, (Souldern, High Street)	<p>Support – Improve safety and reduce environmental impact.</p>