Divisions affected: Chalgrove and Watlington

CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAY MANAGEMENT – 27 JANUARY 2022

WATLINGTON - PYRTON LANE: PROPOSED 20MPH SPEED LIMIT ZONE AND TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES

Report by Corporate Director, Environment and Place

RECOMMENDATION

- 1. The Cabinet Member for Highway Management is RECOMMENDED to approve as advertised:
 - a) the introduction of a 20mph speed limit zone on Pyrton Lane between its junction with the B480 Cuxham Road to the south, and at the northern end to the current 30/60mph terminal point 120m northeast of St Leonards Close. The proposed speed limit zone is illustrated on the plan at Annex 1a.
 - b) traffic calming measures within the 20mph zone comprising two full width flat top road humps and a single speed cushion to be placed in the centre of the carriageway. The proposed traffic calming measures are illustrated on the plan at Annex 1b.

Executive summary

2. This report presents responses received to a statutory consultation to introduce a 20mph speed limit zone and supporting traffic calming measures at Pyrton Lane Watlington.

Financial Implications

3. Funding for consultation on the proposals has been provided by CIL funding.

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 facilitate walking and cycling and the safe movement of traffic.

Consultation

- 6. Formal consultation was carried out between 25 November 2021 and 31 December 2021. A notice was published in the Oxford Times newspaper and an email sent to statutory consultees including Thames Valley Police, the Fire & Rescue Service, Ambulance service, Bus operators, Watlington Parish Council, South Oxfordshire District Council and local County Councillor. Additionally, notices were placed on site in the immediate vicinity and letters sent to approximately 135 properties in the area.
- 7. Forty-two responses were received during the formal consultation and these are summarised in the table below:

Proposal	Object	Concerns	Support	No opinion / objection	Total
20mph speed limit zone	3	7	31	1	42
Flat-top hump calming	4	10	27	1	42
Speed cushion calming	5	10	26	1	42

- 8. The responses are shown at Annex 2 with copies of the original responses available for inspection by County Councillors.
- 9. Thames Valley Police did not object.
- 10. The local member supports the proposals.
- 11. Watlington Parish Council supports the proposals.
- 12. Of the remaining 39 responses from members of the public, 79% support the speed limit, 69% support the flat-top humps and 67% support the speed cushion. In those 39 responses, the following concerns and objections were raised:
 - a) Some comments question the merit of introducing a 20mph speed limit on the grounds it is either unnecessary or it would not be effective. <u>Officer response</u> The County Council wants to make our built environments safer and more attractive places to walk and cycle. To enable this to happen 20mph speed restrictions are being used to help promote alternative modes of transport for local travel. Department for Transport (DfT) guidance clearly states that 20mph speed limits must be self-enforcing, to avoid additional demand on police resources, and that the 85th percentile should be 24mph or below. Largely due to the narrowness of the lane, which also has a double bend, average speeds are already less than 24mph, in both directions, as surveyed in May 2018 so a high degree of compliance with a 20mph limit is expected.

b) Some comments ask why one of the three traffic calming features is a 'cushion' rather than a full width road hump and again question its effectiveness.

Officer response

The proposed speed cushion is situated next to an existing pedestrian walkway, albeit only a short length of about 10 metres, outside property number 30. That walkway offers wheelchairs users and/or those with prams and buggies an alternative to negotiating the steep sides (1:8 gradient) of the speed cushion on the carriageway. Whereas the 2 full-width road humps would have slightly less-steep approaches (1:12 gradient) as there is there is no alternative for wheelchair users etc.

c) Concerns about the continuing issues caused by traffic in the centre of Watlington and that the proposals would exacerbate that and suggestions of possible changes that could be made in the village centre instead. Officer response

These proposals only relate to Pyrton Lane and are in response to a particular request from the Parish Council and local residents. All traffic restrictions can, and frequently do, redistribute vehicles onto other parts of the network. The Highway Authority needs to take a balanced approach to restricting (or in this case calming) traffic to make roads safer or use more appropriate routes. The issues of through traffic, speeding and parking in the centre of Watlington would need to be addressed by a separate proposal.

d) The traffic calming would increase noise and pollution, as cars brake and then accelerate away.

Officer response

There is already some degree of this occurring, as the lane is of insufficient width for two-way traffic along the section of the route subject to the proposals. So traffic already has to brake and then accelerate sometimes with little forward visibility of oncoming traffic. It is considered, on balance, that the proposals make a valid compromise between road safety, protecting the local amenity especially for pedestrians and continuing to allow through traffic in a calmed manner.

e) The traffic calming proposals would inhibit cyclists.

Officer response

The full-width road humps are designed with a slightly less steep gradient of 1:12 (in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act) with wheelchair users in mind. It is, therefore, considered that cyclists should be able to negotiate them. The speed cushion would have a 750mm gap either side to offer a 'bypass' for cyclists to negotiate it.

f) The people who walk down the lane (using the road surface) do so because there is no footpath and/or that they are overgrown with hedges. Effort would, therefore, be better spent into clearing the paths by the side of the road and making them safe for walkers.

Officer response

There is some evidence of private vegetation obscuring footways. However, this has grown over a period of decades and there is no guarantee that a consistent footway width could now be achieved without significant and costly improvement works as well as clearance by private frontagers. Also, in discussions with the Parish Council and local residents, it was made clear that they did not want to see the lane widened, as they felt this would ultimately only serve to encourage nonessential through traffic.

g) Pyrton Lane would become a no through road once the new houses and an edge road were built, so speed bumps would be a waste of money. Passing places would be of more value or the calming could be installed as a temporary measure only, to be removed at such time as the lane is closed to through traffic.

Officer response

The edge road is still subject to negotiation with developers. Only when it is agreed and constructed, with the possibly of the 'through route' via Pyrton Lane being severed, could the traffic calming measures then be reconsidered for removal. This would be an option that can be reconsidered at that stage.

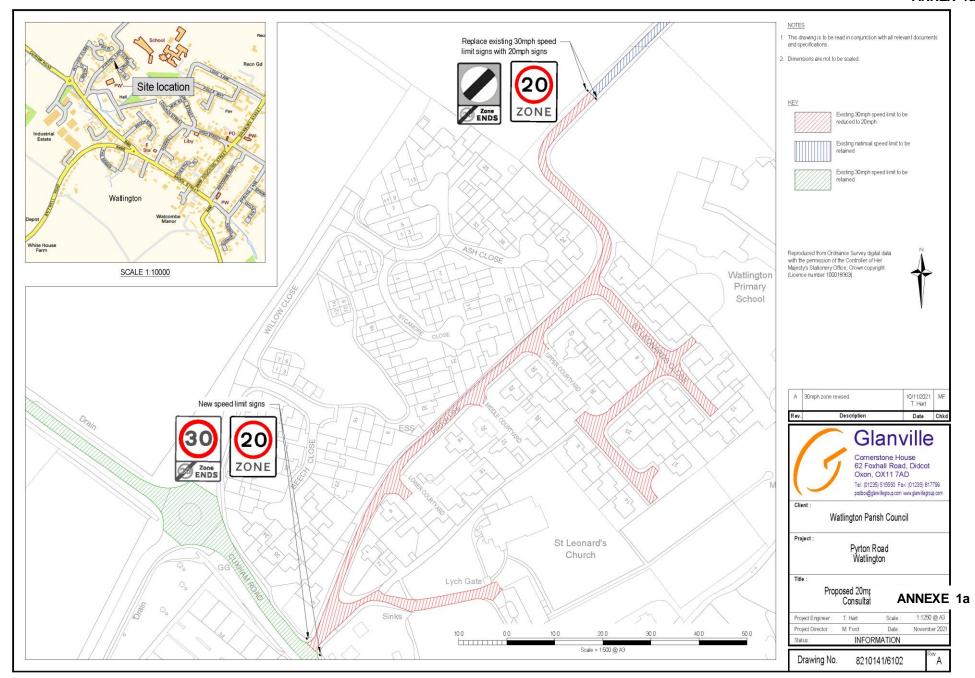
BILL COTTON Corporate Director, Environment and Place

Annexes	Annex 1a and 1b: Consultation Plans Annex 2: Consultation responses
Contact Officers:	Tim Shickle 07920 591545

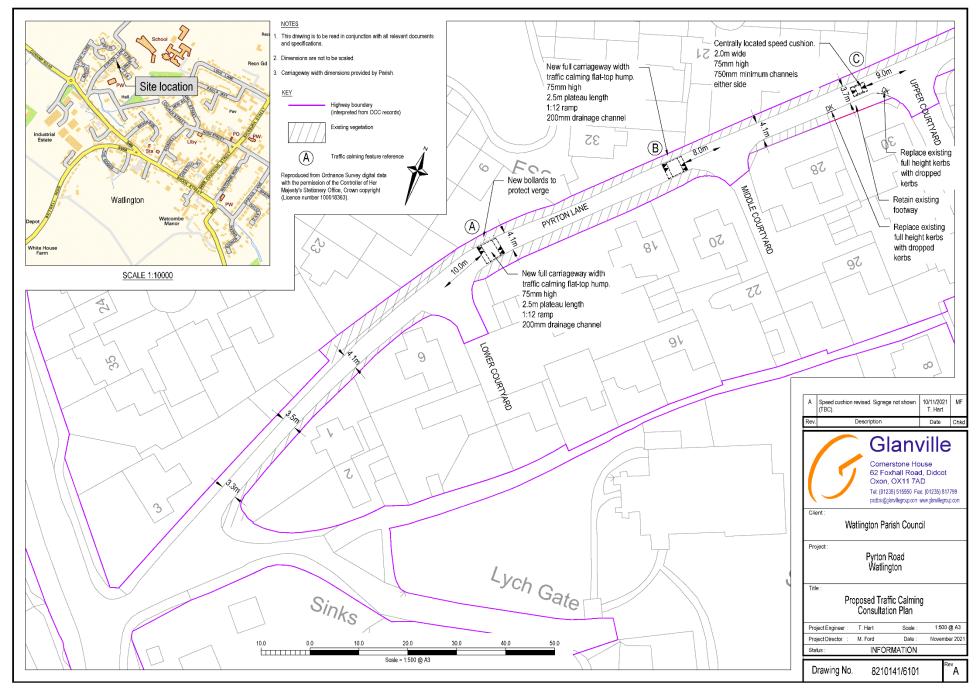
Mike Horton 07912 474356

January 2022

ANNEX 1a



ANNEXE 1b



RESPONDENT	COMMENTS
(1) Traffic Management Officer, (Thames Valley Police)	No objection - Thames Valley Police are not opposed to lowering speed limits providing they are appropriate to the road environment and likely to have casualty reduction benefits .All aspects of the proposed speed limit are taken into account i.e. collision history ,speed of existing traffic, road environment, enforcement, road character and driver perception etc.
	There is a proven link between road environment/character and drivers speed .Drivers must respect the need for a speed limit .If it is not accepted as realistic it will quickly be abused and be the source of constant demands for police action.
	The police stance still reflects that 20 mph limits and zones should still be self-enforcing. I am aware that speed data has already been obtained and that this scheme also includes an element of physical engineering.
(2) Local County Cllr, (Chalgrove & Watlington division)	Support - I'm very pleased to see these plans be brought forward. Residents of Pyrton Lane and St Leonards close have long highlighted the safety issues surrounding the volume and speed of traffic using the lane. I am happy to support these proposals, and the parish and residents of Pyrton Lane.
(3) Local group/organisation, (Oxfordshire Cycling Network)	20mph speed limit - Support Flat-top humps - Support Speed cushion - Support We support 20mph speed limits and appropriate traffic calming to improve the safety of people walking, wheeling and cycling, and to encourage the use of these active and healthy modes. The reduced limit will also feed through to sat- navs and reduce rat-running on this road. We have no comments on the full width humps. The Speed cushion is a balance between width and effectiveness, and also it would normally need side passes of 1.5m to allow clear space for 3 and 4-wheeled cycles to pass without impediment or tilting - however that is not possible in this space. We think the current proposal is acceptable but will not be effective at slowing down many wider vehicles. It may be worth

	considering a third full-width flat top hump instead.
(4) Local Resident, (Watlington, Brook street)	20mph speed limit - Object Flat-top humps - Concerns Speed cushion - Concerns You can't get above 15mph along the stretch at the best of times with traffic! Speed bumps or calming cushions are a waste of time and money a bypass is much needed to remove traffic along the lane
(5) Local Resident, (Oxford, Rymers Lane)	20mph speed limit - Object Flat-top humps - Object Speed cushion - Object I've cycled through Watlington on a number of occassions recently and do not believe these are necessary. The use of raised road surfaces and 'build-out' features increase pollution as cars brake and then accelerate away. They also inhibit those cycling. Should a 20mph zone be deemed to be required just for the period when pupils enter and leave the site (e.g. 2 hours per day - via flashing lishts) then I would not object to this.
(6) Rather not say, (Watlington, Spring Lane)	20mph speed limit - Object Flat-top humps - Object Speed cushion - Object 30mph is adequate max speed limit on this road. Limited residential properties. If we accept the above there is no need for traffic calming measures of any description which cause damage to vehicles, induce the revving of engines and this increased emissions.
(7) Local Resident, (Watlington, St Leonards Close)	20mph speed limit - Concerns Flat-top humps - Object Speed cushion - Object

	Will have to drive over them every day causing damage to my car
(8) Local Resident, (Watlington, St Leonards Close)	20mph speed limit - Support Flat-top humps - Object Speed cushion - Object Because there is no issue of speeding on Pyrton Lane! I have travelled by car to and from work almost every day for the past 10 years. Not once in all that time have I ever come across a speeding vehicle. Cars don't speed down there because they can't - it is to narrow and visibility is poor. It is quite likely that the people concerned with 'speeding' are the residents just off Pyrton Lane who have to walk down there. They have to walk in the road because there is no footpath - or rather the footpaths are overgrown with hedges! Any car coming along looks like it's 'speeding' if you're walking in the road. If the footpaths were made clear, as they should be, then there will be no need to use the road as a path, which obviously is dangerous to all concerned. The speed humps are a waste of time - you should consider putting your time and effort into clearing the paths by the side of the road and making them safe for walkers.
(9) Local Resident, (watlington, Spring Lane)	20mph speed limit - Support Flat-top humps - Support Speed cushion - Object Object to speed cushions because they don't seem to make any difference to the speed of cars but do make life harder for cyclists. Approve of the other measures, they would definitely improve the traffic on Pyrton lane. I'd love to see the same speed limit and traffic calming features throughout the whole village. Traffic is too fast and too aggressive everywhere but particularly along couching Street, brook Street & Shirburn Street.
(10) Local Resident, (Watlington, Ash Close)	20mph speed limit - Concerns Flat-top humps - Concerns Speed cushion - Concerns

	Most vehicles who use Pyrton Lane as a short cut do not take any notice of current speed limit. I also think the speed humps will create issues for larger lorries. Finally, I understood Pyrton Lane would become a no through road once the new houses were built, creating an edge road, so putting in speed bumps would be a waste of money.
(11) Local Resident, (Watlington, Chestnut)	20mph speed limit - Concerns Flat-top humps - Concerns Speed cushion - Concerns Stop all parking with yellow lines on Couching St! Because of parked car and playing dodgems you never ever get to 20 MPH so why put a limit that is not achievable? Calming humps etc cause more pollution and damage car tyres and suspension - will you pay out on claims?
(12) Local Resident, (Watlington, Love Lane)	20mph speed limit - Concerns Flat-top humps - Concerns Speed cushion - Concerns The only reason for either the traffic calming or the reduced speed limit is the councils failure in maintain country roads, Pyrton Lane used to be a 2 lane road, now it is a narrow single lane. Do your jobs and we would all have safer roads to travel
(13) Local Resident, (Watlington, Pyrton Lane)	20mph speed limit - Concerns Flat-top humps - Concerns Speed cushion - Support Speed humps are helpful but Pyrton Lane has large vehicles and farm vehicles also and that plus humps will increase air pollution as vehicles idle to facilitate passing. Also the road surface increases noise pollution.
(14) Local Resident, (Watlington, Brook Street)	20mph speed limit - Support Flat-top humps - Concerns Speed cushion - Concerns

	In general I can understand the residents of Pyrton Lane and St. Leonards wanting these measures but my concern is that the humps will not really be needed once the Edge Road is in place which hopefully won't be too long now.
(15) Local Resident, (Watlington, Pyrton Lane)	20mph speed limit - Support Flat-top humps - Concerns Speed cushion - Concerns Pyrton Lane is a very narrow lane with a hairpin/chicane on it. Many times when I leave the house, people are driving in the middle of the road and too fast as they come around the chicane. Because Pyrton Lane is also used as a rat run, it gets very busy with lorries as well. Traffic calming humps or cushions concern me because people move to the centre of the road to avoid them and that may risk pushing traffic further into the road rather than encouraging them to stay tight to the side. Passing places would be of more value.
(16) Local Resident, (Watlington, Pyrton lane)	20mph speed limit - Support Flat-top humps - Concerns Speed cushion - Concerns I support the humps as a temporary measure only, to be removed at such time as the lane is closed to through traffic
(17) Local Resident, (Watlington, Sycamore Close)	20mph speed limit - Support Flat-top humps - Support Speed cushion - Concerns I have concerns about the noise level that could be generated by the speed cushion calming feature. I have read it can cause noise and vibrations and our house backs onto Pyrton Lane with our bedroom windows above where one of the cushions is earmarked for. I would like to see bollards all down the verge side to protect it as drivers are destroying it by forcing their way past each other.
(18) Local Resident, (Watlington, Ash close)	20mph speed limit - Support Flat-top humps - Support

	Speed cushion - Support
	Often used by HGV's travelling too fast. Speed humps would be far more valuable than a 20mph limit. The road is too narrow for mobile speed cameras and drivers will know that. Speed humps will force the drivers to slow down
(19) Local Resident, (Watlington, Cuxham Road)	20mph speed limit - Support Flat-top humps - Support Speed cushion - Support To much traffic using the residential, country road without pavements and often moving to fast
(20) Local Resident, (Watlington, Hill Road)	20mph speed limit - Support Flat-top humps - Support Speed cushion - Support Traffic and drivers in particular don't pay attention and are driving at speed along Pyrton Lane. Something needs to be done to slow them down.
(21) Local Resident, (Watlington, Hill Road)	20mph speed limit - Support Flat-top humps - Support Speed cushion - Support As a residential area and especially with the limited footpaths along the lane, I believe that the safety of residents of Pyrton Lane should be paramount, and that these measures would help to reduce vehicle speeds in this area.
(22) Local Resident, (Watlington, Pyrton Lane	20mph speed limit - Support Flat-top humps - Support Speed cushion - Support As a resident of Pyrton Lane, I am only too aware of the colossal misuse of this winding, rural road by construction traffic and rat runners. I strongly support the traffic calming measures as action is desperately needed.

(23) Local Resident, (Watlington, Pyrton Lane)	20mph speed limit - Support Flat-top humps - Support Speed cushion - Support We live on the lane and have to walk our children along here for school, to get into town etc. Cars use the lane as a cut through often travelling at speed, most of the lane has no pedestrian walkway so many residents have to walk on the lane. The lane is an accident waiting to happen and we have had a lot of near misses when on the lane with our children.
(24) Local Resident, (Watlington, Pyrton Lane)	20mph speed limit - Support Flat-top humps - Support Speed cushion - Support I am fully supporting the proposals because I live in Pyrton Lane which is currently used as a 'ratrun' and 'racetrack'by inconsiderable motorists who have no respect for the residents.These measures are long overdue and hopefully will prevent a serious accident happening in the future
(25) Local Resident, (Watlington, Pyrton Lane)	20mph speed limit - Support Flat-top humps - Support Speed cushion - Support The one important thing that concerns me is that as traffic slows down by my house either to pass another vehicle or to approach a speed bump, it swerves onto my property. Is the Council prepared to restore the. damage done to the surface, and to continue to maintain it? Isn't this ruled in the payment of Community Charge? As the damaged surface is the entrance to shared access that is.
(26) Local Resident, (Watlington, Pyrton Lane)	20mph speed limit - Support Flat-top humps - Support Speed cushion - Support Pyrton Lane is increasingly being used as a 'rat run' for vehicles going to or coming from the M40. There is no

	footpath or pavement on either side of Pyrton Lane. These two factors combine to make it extremely dangerous for pedestrians. There are a number of elderly people living on the lane, as well as families with children. Both these groups can justifiably be described as 'vulnerable' when they walk along the lane.
(27) Local Resident, (Watlington, Pyrton Lane)	20mph speed limit - Support Flat-top humps - Support Speed cushion - Support I wholeheartedly support delivery of this scheme. Myself and the residents group have been working for 4 years to petition, consult on and develop this scheme with WPC, OCC and others. It included us working with Watlington Parish Council to deliver a residents' survey in Dec 2019 that demonstrated very strong support for almost any measure that will mitigate the dangerous speeds on a lane that is narrow, has residences and entrances along in (often blind) and lacks footpaths. There have been many incidents of pedestrians having physical or verbal encounters with vehicles, including unwelcome HGVs. We look forward to these measures being implemented and to a calmer, safer lane
(28) Local Resident, (Watlington, Pyrton Lane)	20mph speed limit - Support Flat-top humps - Support Speed cushion - Support To improve Pyrton Lane for residents and hopefully pedestrians
(29) Local Resident, (Watlington, Pyrton Lane)	20mph speed limit - Support Flat-top humps - Support Speed cushion - Support I live on Pyrton Lane. It is increasingly used as a rat run by through traffic avoiding the centre of Watlington. Often the traffic is travelling too fast for the conditions. There is very little pavement along the road and so it is dangerous for pedestrians. Safety measures such as those proposed are long overdue.

(30) Local Resident, (Watlington, Pyrton Lane)	20mph speed limit - Support Flat-top humps - Support Speed cushion - Support I live on Pyrton Lane and there are many fast and aggressive drivers using it for a cut through.
(31) Local Resident, (Watlington, Pyrton Lane)	20mph speed limit - Support Flat-top humps - Support Speed cushion - Support There is too much traffic, going too fast, making Pyrton Lane a very dangerous road for both pedestrians and vehicles.
(32) Local Resident, (Watlington, Shirburn Street)	20mph speed limit - Support Flat-top humps - Support Speed cushion - Support speed of traffic
(33) Local Resident, (Watlington, St Leonard's Close)	20mph speed limit - Support Flat-top humps - Support Speed cushion - Support Parton Lane is now a rat run which is getting worse. Larger and larger vehicles are using it and the drivers do not adhere to any speed limit.
(34) Local Resident, (Watlington, St Leonard's Close)	20mph speed limit - Support Flat-top humps - Support Speed cushion - Support Pyrton lane is used as a rat run by those travelling from the m40 to surrounding villages it has become increasingly busy as Watlington itself becomes congested people use the lane as a short cut

	Increasingly large vans & lorries are using the lane which in many places is single lane & so destroying the verges & resulting in blockages & bottle necks as vehicles have to reverse into driveways & side roads. They travel at high speed to justify the perceived short cut. There are areas where there are no pavements & so pedestrians are forced to walk in the road putting themselves at risk from vehicles travelling at high inappropriate speeds in narrow & some blind corners - I support all measures to reduce speed & deter use as a rat run.
(35) Local Resident, (Watlington, St Leonards Close)	20mph speed limit - Support Flat-top humps - Support Speed cushion - Support The speed of traffic along Pryton Lane is too fast, dangerous and reckless. I fear for pedestrians who regularly use this part of the road.
(36) Local Resident, (Watlington, St Leonards Close)	20mph speed limit - Support Flat-top humps - Support Speed cushion - Support Traffic on Pyrton Lane is now becoming totally unacceptable with cars speeding down the lane and HGV's using it as with all other traffic as a rat run.
(37) Local Resident, (Watlington, St. Leonards Close)	20mph speed limit - Support Flat-top humps - Support Speed cushion - Support Fast cars on dangerous bends so need measures in place to slow cars down to keep pedestrians and other road users safe.
(38) Local Resident, (Watlington, St. Leonard's Close)	20mph speed limit - Support Flat-top humps - Support Speed cushion - Support

	There is an unacceptable volume of traffic on Pyrton Lane, a narrow country lane, and the traffic situation will only get worse owing to the massive developments near the lane. Much of the traffic moves at too fast a speed, posing a risk to other drivers, who frequently have to pull into the bushes, and to the pedestrians who have no choice but to use the lane. The risk to pedestrians is enhanced by the absence of pavements for most of the lane. Drivers need to be deterred from using a lane that is completely unsuitable for the volume of traffic it's already getting.
(39) Local Resident, (Watlington, Sycamore Close)	20mph speed limit - Support Flat-top humps - Support Speed cushion - Support I use the lane as a pedestrian and consider it extremely dangerous due to the volume of traffic including lorries and farm machinery.
(40) Local Resident, (Marle Brook Estate)	Concerns - It is a constant surprise to me that no one has been killed or injured crossing the road where Pyrton Lane joins Cuxham Road. It is a very sharp corner and difficult to see in all directions. Surely putting in traffic calming measures will make drivers go through the centre of Watlington to avoid the bumps. Would that be a desirable outcome?
(41) Email response, (unknown)	Concerns - If they are making changes to the road lay out it would be good to have one of the mirrors at the end of the lane /on Cuxham road junction because visibility is poor and crossing with children continues to be lethal!
(42) Watlington Parish Council	20mph speed limit - Support Flat-top humps - Support Speed cushion - Support WPC has been actively supporting the residents of the area in requesting this change since 2017 Pyrton Lane is a narrow lane that has been in use for well over 300 years, connecting Watlington with the neighbouring village of Pyrton. In the built up area it is narrow and in places does not allow two cars to pass without one going onto the verge It has a narrow footpath alongside part of its length but now usable footpath for at least half of its length In recent years it has been used by through traffic as a convenient cut-through to avoid the congestion in the centre of Watlington

In particular heavy vehicles have taken to using it for the same purpose Watlington provides the only access route to Junction 6 of the M40, so through traffic either has to pass through the narrow medieval streets in central Watlington or use Pyrton Lane In 2018 a traffic survey recorded an average speed for the 7am to 7pm period of 29mph with peak speeds up to
40mph, and a total traffic flow of nearly 1000 vehicles. Many of the houses in the three closes leading off Pyrton Lane are occupied by families with no pedestrian routes to
the schools and the town centre other than walking along Pyrton Lane
This situation is inherently unsafe, although there have been no serious incidents. The plan that is presented is essentially that which was drawn up by a group or residents who consulted all residents
in the area. The results of that survey were strongly supportive of the proposal.