

Divisions affected: *Sutton Courtenay & Marcham*

## **CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAY MANAGEMENT – 7 SEPTEMBER 2023**

### **MARCHAM: PROPOSED 20MPH SPEED LIMITS**

Report by Corporate Director, Environment and Place

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

1. The Cabinet Member for Highway Management is RECOMMENDED to approve the introduction of 20mph speed limits in Marcham as advertised.

#### **Executive summary**

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

#### **Financial Implications**

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

#### **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 encourage walking and cycling within Marcham by making them safer and more attractive.

#### **Formal consultation**

6. Formal consultation was carried out between 28 June and 21 July 2023. A notice was published in the Oxfordshire Herald 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, Vale of White Horse District Council, the local District Cllrs, Marcham Parish Council, and the local County Councillor representing the Sutton Courtenay & Marcham division.

### **Statutory Consultee Responses:**

7. Three statutory consultees responded. Thames Valley Police re-iterated their views concerning OCC's policy and practice regarding 20mph speed limits, they consider their view as 'having concerns' rather than an objection. Oxford Bus Company do not object, but believe the lower limit will not be self-enforcing and its only effect will be to slow bus services down. Marcham Parish Council support the proposals but feel consideration should be given to amendments at the A415 West of the village (Frilford Road), the point in Sheepstead Road where 20mph becomes 30mph, the A415 (Marcham Road), at the eastern side of Marcham, and on Sheepstead Road.

### **Other Responses:**

8. 26 online responses were received with 16 local residents and a local councillor in support of the scheme. Two local residents expressed concerns and seven others objected to the proposals. The main reasons for objection and concern were that the proposals were not needed and so a waste of money (five) and it would increase pollution (five).
9. The following disadvantages were cited only once: increased journey times / increase rat-running / cause driver frustration / will not be enforced / parish council did not make any real attempt to consult residents. The charity Unlimited Oxfordshire wholly support the proposals.
10. Five (19%) of those that responded online stated that they would consider changing their mode of travel in the area by cycling more, and six (23%) by walking/wheeling more if the 20mph speed limit proposals were implemented.
11. 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**

12. 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 help reduce the Counties carbon footprint. This forms part of a countywide programme of works that seeks to deliver 'a safer place with a safer pace'.
13. Officers were previously aware of the Parish Council's views but consider the current proposals provide the best option for lower limits to protect the most vulnerable areas while being best respected by drivers. Extending proposals to new development junctions with no associated frontage will dilute the effect of terminal signs where frontages commence.

14. 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 to a proposal. As such the authority has not addressed the comments made of this nature in this report.

Bill Cotton  
Corporate Director, Environment and Place

Annexes                      Annex 1: Consultation plan  
                                    Annex 2: Consultation responses

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September 2023

Marcham Overview

Revision 1.0

Legend	
Proposed 20	
Existing 20	
Existing 30	
Existing 40	
Existing 50	
Existing NSL	
Not Public Highway	

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Rev.	Date	Purpose of revision	Drawn	Checked	Approved
1.0	18.04.23	Proposal 1	C.R		



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 Marcham 20mph Scheme Overview

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RESPONDENT	COMMENTS
(1) Traffic Management Officer, (Thames Valley Police)	<p><b>Concerns</b> – 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 dis-proportionate 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 (<a href="http://www.gov.uk">www.gov.uk</a>)) 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"> <li>• history of collisions</li> <li>• road geometry and engineering</li> <li>• road function</li> <li>• composition of road users (including existing and potential levels of vulnerable road users)</li> <li>• existing traffic speeds</li> <li>• road environment</li> </ul>

	<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) Marcham Parish Council	<p><b>Support</b> – Marcham Parish Council fully supports the proposal. It would, however ask for consideration to be given to the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A415 West of the village (Frilford Road) - the change from 30 mph to 20 mph is located at a point which is not easily visible when approaching from the West. The Council would like to see the 20 mph limit extended further west, particularly as there is a vehicle exit point from the Frilford Road recreation ground, and also pedestrians cross the A415 to walk the public footpath route in Kiln Copse.</li> <li>2. The point in Sheepstead Road where 20 mph becomes 30 mph should be moved further North to include the junctions of The Farthings, Kings Avenue and Harding Way.</li> <li>3. A415 at the Eastern side of Marcham, the 20 mph should be extended to include the entrance into the new housing development by Bloor Homes, south of the A415.</li> <li>4. Consideration should be given to changing the speed limit on Sheepstead Road from 60 mph to 50 mph, then from Cow Lane southwards could become 20 mph and the 30 mph section could be removed.</li> </ol>
(3) Business Development and Partnerships Manager, (Go-Ahead Group Bus subsidiaries)	<p><b>No objection</b> – Two Go-Ahead subsidiaries operate through Marcham as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oxford Bus Company X1 between Oxford and Wantage via Abingdon</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pulhams 15 between Witney and Abingdon via Kingston Bagpuize</li> </ul> <p>The X1 operates up to every 30 minutes Monday to Saturday with buses approximately hourly on Sundays. The 15 operates approximately every two hours Mondays to Saturdays.</p> <p>We have concerns about the 20mph to be applied to the A415 Frilford Road /Packhorse Lane and to Howard Cornish Road. Buses operate along Howard Cornish Road in order to serve bus stops along the road and by so doing reducing the walking distances to a bus service for the residential areas to the north of the village. The road is relatively wide with generally gentle curves and good sight lines. Many of the houses are set back from the road with a wide verge along the northern edge of the road.</p> <p>Therefore we doubt that a 20mph limit will be self-enforcing and that the main effect of the changes will be to slow bus services down making them less attractive to passengers. However, given the nature of the roads we do not object to the proposed 20mph speed limits being introduced.</p> <p>Given the location of Marcham and the distances involved it is unlikely that cycling or walking will make up significant mode share for journeys to/from or through the village. Therefore the council should be seeking to maximise support for public transport on this corridor to help achieve our decarbonisation aims.</p>
(4) Local group/organisation, (Oxfordshire Unlimited)	<p><b>Support</b> – This is an excellent proposition. Along the A415 through the village there is no footway for a considerable length. Also, some drivers use the residential street Howard Cornish Road to bypass most of this difficult length of the A415.</p> <p>Therefore Unlimited Oxfordshire strongly supports these proposed speed limits.</p>
(5) Local Cllr, (Marcham, Harding Way)	<p><b>Concerns</b> - I whole-heartedly support the overall objective of improving road safety in Marcham. The introduction of (more) 20mph zones will contribute towards this but is insufficient without (1) suitable enforcement of speed limits and (2) other measures, e.g. smart traffic lights around the tight chicane on Packhorse Lane</p> <p>The A415 through Marcham in particular has seen a strong increase in traffic over recent years, with recent incidents illustrating this: (1) a fatal single-vehicle collision and (2) residents along Packhorse Lane receiving no post for around 2 weeks, as the postal worker at the time was 'brushed by a vehicle' when trying to deliver in the area. Sections of Packhorse Lane and North Street have narrow or no footpath along the roadside, meaning pedestrians often have to walk on the road and so putting them at heightened risk of being hit by a vehicle.</p>

	<p>Some minor concerns about the details of this proposal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* The new 20mph signs on Frilford Rd to the SW of Church St will be seen by drivers heading into the village just after they turn a corner, and so will be easily missed by many. The 20mph zone needs to be extended further west along Frilford Rd towards Frilford, so that drivers approaching from the west see the signs more clearly.</li> <li>* The retention of a 30mph limit along the northern section of North St and the southern section of Sheepstead Rd is illogical. The 20mph should extend further north, past the junctions for The Farthings, Kings Avenue, and Harding Way. I can see the argument for a 30mph 'buffer' zone around the residential areas of the village to be covered by the new 20mph zone, but why are the entrances to The Farthings, Kings Avenue, and Harding Way not treated in the same way as all other residential streets on the periphery of the village?</li> </ul> <p>Travel change: <b>Yes – walk/wheel more</b></p>
(6) Local Cllr, (Abingdon, Thurston Close)	<p><b>Support</b> - Safer streets</p> <p>Travel change: <b>Yes - cycle more</b></p>
(7) Local Cllr, (Frilford, Ford Lane)	<p><b>Support</b> - The proposed 20mph new zones are in residential areas and Marcham is a village with both an elderly population and young families. We want to encourage community and that involves pedestrians and cyclists feeling safe. Due to the A415 being sometimes busy Marcham can at times be a short cut for drivers and excessive speeds are frequently reported through the village. This is of course above the current 30mph. by moving to 20mph in the proposed areas , it will reduce to safer speeds , normal traffic, and encourage those taking short cuts to slow down.</p> <p>Travel change: <b>Yes - cycle more</b></p>
(8) Local Resident, (Marcham, Duffield Place)	<p><b>Object</b> - 20mph limits cause drivers to just overtake eachother, creating more danger, nevermind being undertaken by cyclists! 30mph is slow enough and does not massively increase risk to pedestrians</p> <p>Travel change: <b>No</b></p>
(9) Local Resident, (Marcham, Farthings)	<p><b>Object</b> - Current limits are adequate</p>

	Travel change: <b>No</b>
(10) Local Resident, (Marcham, Frilford Road)	<p><b>Object</b> - 20mph reduces air quality. It increases journey times and driver frustration. It leads to rat running on unsuitable roads.</p> <p>Travel change: <b>No</b></p>
(11) Local Resident, (Marcham, Howard Cornish Road)	<p><b>Object</b> - I object on the grounds of:</p> <p>1/ There being no evidence that this is democratically what the village is requesting. The proposal was put forward by the Parish council with no consultation.</p> <p>2/ Lack of due process. As a resident of Marcham I found the link for this survey on a Facebook page, which someone has kindly referred to. There appears again to be no effort to ensure all villagers are aware of this survey.</p> <p>3/ Reasons and evidence as to why this is in our best interest have not been provided. Is there evidence that 20 mph limits increase safety? How will it be policed when the existing speed limit is not policed? What alternative options have been considered?</p> <p>4/ With pollution being a significant issue in the village, where is the independent analysis on the impact of reduced speed limits? Most information I have read suggests they increase pollution.</p> <p>Travel change: <b>No</b></p>
(12) Local Resident, (Marcham, Leas Lane)	<p><b>Object</b> - If pedestrians follow the 'Green Cross Code' and drivers comply with the 30mph speed limit, then there isn't a problem which needs an oppressive solution.</p> <p>Travel change: <b>No</b></p>
(13) Local Resident, (Marcham, Parkside)	<p><b>Object</b> - I have lived in the village for 22 years and have only know 2 or 3 major crashes to happen, the 30 mph speed limit is more than acceptable for this road however I think the state of the road and the curbs around the corners</p>

	<p>should be fixed and rounded off to prevent further issues, reducing the speed limit will only cause more air pollution and for someone who lives by this road I do not want to be around this!!! 30mph is sufficient, driving speed is by choice so making everyone suffer for the sake of a few idiots is a ridiculous waste of money</p> <p>Travel change: <b>No</b></p>
(14) Local Resident, (Marcham, Packhorse Lane)	<p><b>Concerns</b> - I live on Packhorse and my wife suffers from asthma so im concerned if a 20mph limit increases emissions with cars being on the road longer</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
(15) Local Resident, (Marcham, Parkside)	<p><b>Concerns</b> - I object to 20mph on the A415, it is a main route and will not add any value to the area. The cost is wasteful and this should be spent on repairing the road. 20mph will make no difference because the road is usually busy and has a few bends that naturally slow your speed. As a cyclist It is more dangerous for cyclist because cars are going similar speeds and will get even closer. The road condition is poor and is a higher danger so the money should be used to repair the roads to make it safer for cyclist. Around the housing estates is fine for 20 mph but not A415 .</p> <p>Travel change: <b>No</b></p>
(16) Local Resident, (Marcham, Packhorse Lane)	<p><b>Concerns</b> - We live on Packhorse Lane and worry that this will slow traffic down and cause more emissions . I'm asthmatic so particularly worried.</p> <p>Travel change: <b>No</b></p>
(17) Member of public, (Abingdon, Bailie Close)	<p><b>Support</b> - The main road in Marcham is busy, narrow and in places with very tight, blind corners. Decreasing the limit to 20mph will improve the safety of the road for more vulnerable road users, particularly the increasing numbers of residents (pedestrians).</p> <p>Travel change: <b>Yes - cycle more</b></p>

<p>(18) Local Resident, (Abingdon, Bostock Road)</p>	<p><b>Support</b> - Marcham has narrow roads with tight corners. Particularly in the middle it can result in close or dangerous passing. Although I am usually driving through Marcham on my way between Abingdon and Wantage, I would be happy to have my journey a few seconds longer in order to be safer.</p> <p>Travel change: <b>No</b></p>
<p>(19) Member of public, (Abingdon, Caldecott Road)</p>	<p><b>Support</b> - I live in Abingdon. I generally avoid cycling through Marcham because of the narrow streets and heavy traffic and instead prefer to go through Cothill/Frilford/Tubney. Slower traffic will make me more likely to visit Marcham and the surrounding villages.</p> <p>Travel change: <b>Yes - cycle more</b></p>
<p>(20) Local Resident, (Abingdon, Darrell Way)</p>	<p><b>Support</b> - Lower speed limit means a more pleasant environment for locals, less danger on roads, and reduces the dominance of cars and lorries over pedestrians and cyclists.</p> <p>Travel change: <b>Yes - cycle more</b></p>
<p>(21) As part of a group/organisation, (Abingdon, Winsmore Lane)</p>	<p><b>Support</b> - To make our streets safer</p> <p>Travel change: <b>Yes – walk/wheel more</b></p>
<p>(22) Local Resident, (Marcham, Howard Cornish Road)</p>	<p><b>Support</b> - I am supporting the 20mph speed limit because marcham road is very dangerous with a lot of cars speeding through,the crossing is situated in a bad spot which is scary to use as cars speeding along do not get much chance to stop as the crossing is right after a sharp bend.</p> <p>Travel change: <b>No</b></p>
<p>(23) Local Resident, (Marcham, Monks Walk)</p>	<p><b>Support</b> - High number of fatal accidents on the A415 Too much traffic through the village</p>

	<p>Traffic too fast through the village</p> <p>Travel change: <b>Yes – walk/wheel more</b></p>
<p>(24) Local Resident, (Marcham, Packhorse Lane)</p>	<p><b>Support</b> - I live in the village, road with speeding traffic goes through residential areas and a blind bend. Only last week we saw a terrible traffic accident with 3 young lives lost. Children and noone are not safe even walking along the road as its so narrow that you never know that a speeding van or lorry or car can swerve slightly and hit the pedestrians. Its just shameful that this has not been resolved!</p> <p>Travel change: <b>No</b></p>
<p>(25) Local Resident, (Marcham, Packhorse Lane)</p>	<p><b>Support</b> - Even with the current 30mph speed limit drivers, for some unknown reason, tend to speed through Marcham at speeds in excess of the current speed limit. The main road has become 'Brands Hatch' - especially late at night during the weekend, with cars driving at high speeds. The village has a high number of children and side roads need to have the extra protection of a lower speed limit to protect them. Would help to reduce pedestrian accidents and near misses, especially on Packhorse Lane.</p> <p>Travel change: <b>Yes – walk/wheel more</b></p>
<p>(26) Local Resident, (Marcham, Pointer Place)</p>	<p><b>Support</b> - As a small village with tight bends, no speed cameras and only one light controlled crossing, reducing the speed would help when trying to cross the roads</p> <p>Travel change: <b>Yes – walk/wheel more</b></p>
<p>(27) Local Resident, (Marcham, The Croft)</p>	<p><b>Support</b> - To regulate unnecessary speed through our village - where we regularly see inattention even at 30mph leading to near misses and occasional incidents.</p> <p>Travel change: <b>Yes – walk/wheel more</b></p>
<p>(28) Local Resident, (Marcham, Chancel Way)</p>	<p><b>Support</b> - Drivers too fast entering the village</p>

	Travel change: <b>No</b>
(29) Local Resident, (Marcham, Frilford Road)	<b>Support</b> - Road is too fast and there have been numerous concerns about the sites into the village and the various pedestrian crossings where cars approach too fast  Travel change: <b>No</b>
(30) Local Resident, (Marcham, Mill Road)	<b>Support</b> - I live by the Marcham crossing and bend, the cars don't even stop most of the time and I have been first on the scene at a pedestrian hit by a car in the last 12 months. We need the bypass, 20mph and 7.5 tonne restriction in the village or someone will be killed.  Travel change: <b>No</b>