

Divisions affected: *Hendreds & Harwell*

CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT – 14 DECEMBER 2023

UPTON: PROPOSED 20MPH SPEED LIMITS

Report by Corporate Director, Environment and Place

RECOMMENDATION

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

Executive summary

2. The report presents responses to a statutory consultation on the proposed introduction of 20mph speed limits in Upton as shown in **Annex 1**.
3. Additionally, as part of the development of improved facilities for pedal cyclists & pedestrians on Chilton Road, the existing 30mph speed limit is planned to be extended from its current terminal point to the junction with Hagbourne Hill, replacing the entire remaining 40mph speed limit as a result. This aspect has previously been consulted on, which was subsequently approved in March 2021 – no comments were received in relation to this during the consultation period.

Financial Implications

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

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 would help encourage walking and cycling within Upton by making them safer and more attractive.

Formal consultation

7. Formal consultation was carried out between 01 November and 24 November 2023. A notice was published in the Oxfordshire Herald Series 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, Upton parish council, and the local County Councillor representing the Hendreds & Harwell division.

Statutory Consultee Responses:

8. Thames Valley Police re-iterated views concerning OCC's policy and practice regarding 20mph speed limits which they consider as 'concerns' rather than an objection. The 'Go Ahead' Group (which includes: Thames Travel & Oxford Bus Company) support the proposals.

Other Responses:

8. 23 online and an email response were received, with 12 local residents expressing support, and one also seeking a 20 limit on the A417 Reading Road. Five local residents objected, four expressed concerns, and one had no opinion. Objections were also received from two members of the public.
9. The following table is a summary of the objections with the views of some respondents covering more than one category:

| View/Opinion | Number of responses |
|--|---------------------|
| Unnecessary | 7 |
| Waste of money / spend on other measures | 5 |
| Will not be enforced | 2 |
| Only needed on the A417 | 2 |
| It's too slow / do not place on the A417 / enforce the 30 limit instead / No accident justification / Improve public transport instead | 1 each |

10. Those who responded online were also asked whether if the 20mph speed limit proposals were implemented, would it likely influence a change to their mode of travel in the area, the results of which are shown below:

| Travel Change | Number |
|-----------------------|----------|
| Yes – walk/wheel more | 2 (9%) |
| No | 20 (87%) |
| Other | 1 (4%) |

11. The consultation 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 improve road safety and to encourage greater use of active travel by reducing speeds; this will also reduce collisions. 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'.

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




Bill Cotton
Corporate Director, Environment and Place

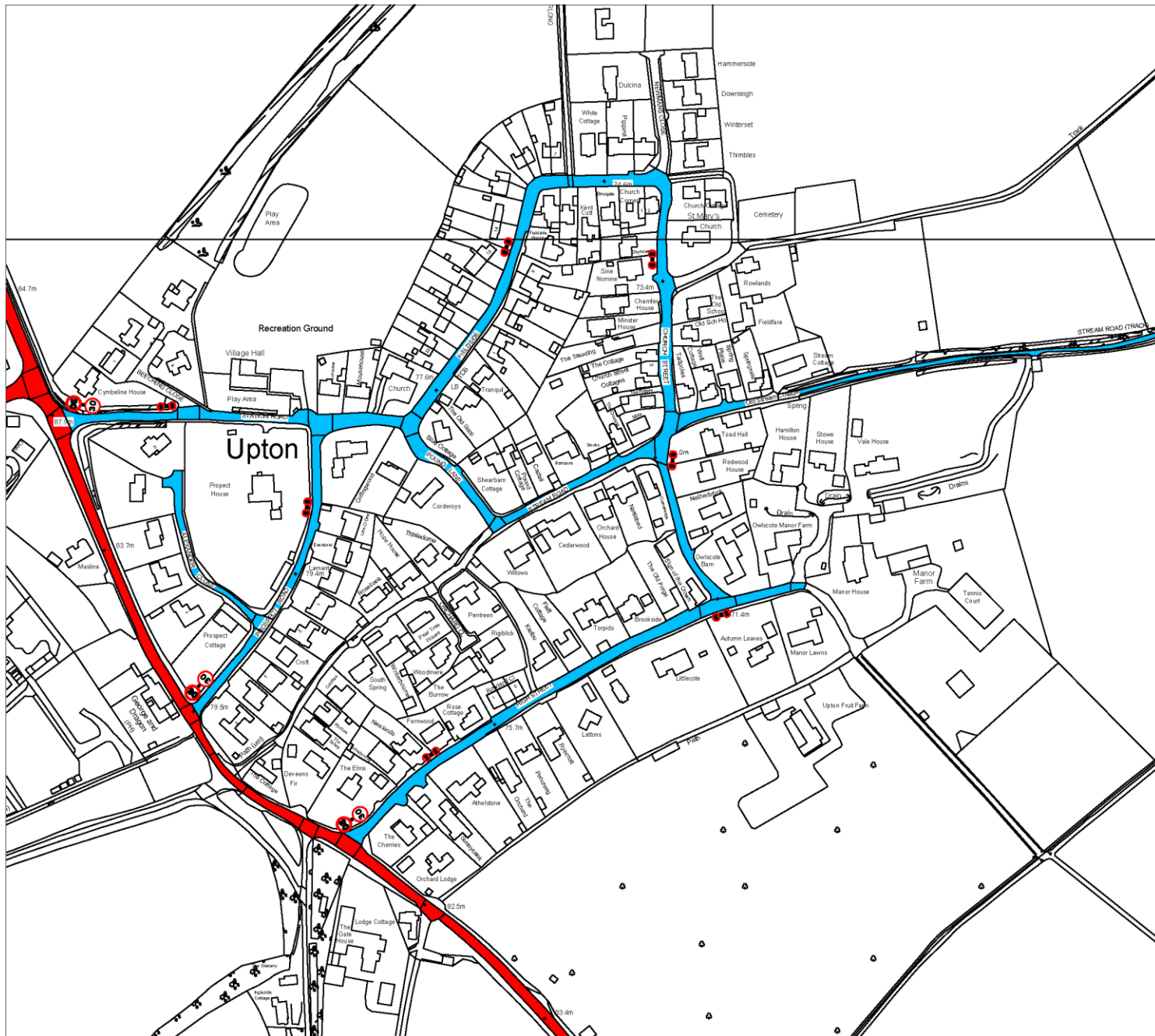
Annexes Annex 1: Consultation plan
 Annex 2: Consultation responses

Contact Officers: Geoff Barrell (Team Leader – Traffic and Road Safety)

December 2023

Upton 20mph Overview

| Legend | |
|--------------------|---|
| Proposed 20 |  |
| Existing 30 |  |
| Not Public Highway |  |



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| Rev. | Date | Purpose of revision | Drawn | Checked | Approved |
|------|----------|---------------------|-------|---------|----------|
| 1.0 | 03.08.23 | Proposal 1 | C.R | | |


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Project title: Upton 20mph Scheme

Drawing title:
Upton 20mph Scheme Overview

Drawing Status

| Scale @ A3 | Drawn by: C.R | Checked by: G.JB | Approved by: G.JB |
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| | Date drawn: 03.08.23 | Date checked: 04.08.23 | Date approved: 04.08.23 |

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| RESPONDENT | COMMENTS |
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| (1) Traffic Management Officer, (Thames Valley Police) | <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 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 (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) |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 20mph 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) Business Development and Partnerships Manager, (Go Ahead Group) | <p>Support – The village is currently served by Thames Travel service 94 to and from Didcot which operates via Station Road and Prospect Road. Given the nature of the 94 route and these roads we are happy to support these proposals.</p> |
| (3) Member of public, (Abingdon, Drayton) | <p>Object – Completely unnecessary and would be more of a danger as your are coming from a 50 and leaving to 50. This involves hard braking down to the required speed limit when entering the village.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p> |
| (4) Member of public, (Bicester) | <p>Object – Reducing speed limits from 30mph to 20mph has "little impact" on road safety, according to a study from Queen's University Belfast, Edinburgh University and the University of Cambridge:</p> <p>https://www.rac.co.uk/drive/news/motoring-news/do-20mph-speed-limits-reduce-the-number-of-car-crashes-and-casualties/</p> <p>This 20mph scheme is all about more control and making life harder for drivers. The council is paid by us to serve us, not to run ideological wars on us.</p> |

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| | Travel change: No |
| (5) Local resident, (Upton, Chilton Road) | <p>Object – Unlike the A 417, there is no problem with speeds within the village as the roads are too narrow and frequently further restricted by parked cars. There is no through traffic. The cost, estimated at £3500 by Geoff Barrell, would be a complete waste of OCC resources. The only speeding on Chilton Road is by cyclists so changing the signage would again be a waste of funds.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p> |
| (6) Local resident, (Upton, Chilton Road) | <p>Object – It is a waste of time and money as it will not be enforced, no one will bother to check if anyone is speeding around a little village like Upton where it is not easy to get above 20mph in any case. We have a 30mph limit on the A417 but that is ignored by at least 80% of the vehicals and I know one vehical has been recorded by the smilie man at over 80mph with the average about 45mph.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p> |
| (7) Local resident, (Upton, Chilton Road) | <p>Object – 20mph is a complete waste of time unless it is applied on the A417.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p> |
| (8) Local resident, (Upton, Station Road) | <p>Object – I live on station road and this is the busiest part of Upton so we see a lot of traffic and buses. It is not possible to go 30mph and I don't think this signage will have any impact on driving behaviour both in Upton and onto the A417.</p> <p>It is a terrible waste of money that should be utilised elsewhere, where it can make a difference to residents. The section towards hagbourne hill already approved for 20mph was a senseless decision which will only need to more traffic and delays. We anticipate a huge amount of traffic at this same roundabout following the development of Valley Park, which will add to driver frustrations.</p> |

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| | Travel change: No |
| (9) Local resident, (Upton, Church Street) | <p>Object – Apart from the A417 that runs through the village, I know of no accidents, crashes or injuries that have occurred in the last 3 decades within the village. Most of the internal roads require considerate driving, . . at speeds less than 20mph. Bad or inconsiderate parking is more likely to contribute to endangering villagers on foot or cycling.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p> |
| (10) Local resident, (Upton, High Street) | <p>Concerns – It feels like a significant waste of money. The roads in Upton (not including the A417, which I believe is not part of the proposal) do not, in my experience, suffer from excess speed. How will 20mph be enforced? I can't remember ever seeing a police officer in Upton village. I feel the funds used for this would be much better used for enforcement of the 30mph on the A417 through the village, which is regularly abused.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p> |
| (11) Local resident, (Upton, Prospect Road) | <p>Concerns – The 30 mile speed limit is not adhered to, particularly on the A417. Measures to reduce the speed of traffic throughout the village would be better use of funds, and improve safety for everyone.</p> <p>The public transport available in Upton compared to other local Villages such as Chilton, Harwell and Steventon are abysmal, improvements on this should be a priority rather than reducing the speed limit to 20.</p> <p>Upton has an established older population who need to drive to remain independent, other forms of sustainable transport are not viable for many who would be isolated if they were to rely on public transport. Cabs are prohibitively high cost.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p> |

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| <p>(12) Local resident, (Upton, Stream Road)</p> | <p>Concerns – No objection to 20 mph in village but don't think this should apply to main roads -A417 and Hagbourne Hill</p> <p>Travel change: No</p> |
| <p>(13) Local resident, (Upton, High Street)</p> | <p>Concerns – Too slow</p> <p>Travel change: No</p> |
| <p>(14) Local resident, (Upton, Prospect Road)</p> | <p>Concerns – We would like to make representations for extending the 20 mph speed limit to include the A417 that passes the George and the Dragon pub.</p> <p>On numerous occasions, we have been shocked by the speed of cars, even since the introduction of the traffic lights.</p> <p>Walking from Stream Road along the little bit of pavement to Prospect Road I have nearly been knocked off by cars speeding past. They also travel very close to that part of the pavement before the bend in the road. (see attached photos.)</p> <p>Now that the pub is back up and running, it is particularly difficult for customers to cross the A417 with speeding cars. In my opinion, it won't be long before there is a serious accident.</p> <p>I have also seen a massive tractor and trailer go through the traffic lights whilst on red!</p> <p>Even if a 20 mph speed limit was introduced along this part of the A417, cars probably wouldn't keep to 20 mph but at least they might reduce their speed to 30 mph.</p> <p>Safety is paramount and if the council are waiting for a fatality before they do anything, in my opinion that is too late!!</p> |
| <p>(15) Local resident, (Upton, Chilton Road)</p> | <p>Support – There are no pavements in Upton and so a lower speed limit will be safer for everyone. Children are often walking to the park and it should be as safe as possible for them. The roads are quite narrow and bendy so speed should be kept low. 20 mph would help with all the above.</p> |

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| | Travel change: Yes – walk/wheel more |
| (16) Local resident, (Upton, Church Street) | <p>Support – Although I don't think it will stop those who drive without care through the village it will at least be a reminder to some who maybe just are not thinking about their speed. I feel signage needs to be in keeping with a small village with clear signs as you enter to say it is a 20mph zone.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p> |
| (17) Local resident, (Upton, Church Street) | <p>Support – There is nowhere within the village that you can safely drive at more than 20mph. However, the 417 should stay at 30mph</p> <p>Travel change: No</p> |
| (18) Local resident, (Upton, Fieldside) | <p>Support – The roads within Upton village are narrow with cars often parked on them. There are tight corners & blind bends. We get a lot of cyclists, walkers, runners, horse riders & families with small children using the roads, none of which have footpaths. A 20mph limit on these solely residential roads makes perfect sense.</p> <p>It would also make it safer for people if the stretch of road from the West Hagbourne roundabout towards Upton was made 30mph rather than 50mph.</p> <p>Travel change: Other Not really as the car is only used for essential journeys that could not be done on foot/cycle</p> |
| (19) Local resident, (Upton, High Street) | <p>Support – Narrow roads with no pavements means 20mph makes sense. However, exiting Prospect Road and High Street on to London Road can be dangerous. I'd prefer the money being spent on fixing the road surface than 20 mph signs.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p> |

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| <p>(20) Local resident, (Upton, High Street)</p> | <p>Support – Narrow lanes through the village with no footpaths the only pathway for walkers is the road How will cyclists be monitored as they can exceed the existing 30mph signs</p> <p>Travel change: No</p> |
| <p>(21) Local resident, (Upton, Newmans Close)</p> | <p>Support – I support the plan to turn Upton village into 20mph. Most residents don't often drive above 20 but there are some residents and deliver drivers who are careless and respect the importance of driving slowly you d the village. I</p> <p>Travel change: No</p> |
| <p>(22) Local resident, (Upton, Prospect Road)</p> | <p>Support – Upton is a small village with no pavements or street lighting. It is also a link road for cyclists from Didcot to Harwell Campus.</p> <p>Travel change: Yes – walk/wheel more</p> |
| <p>(23) Local resident, (Upton, Church Street)</p> | <p>Support – My neighbours cat was run over by a motorist doing thirty in a narrow village road where 15 is a more reasonable speed. Putting a formal twenty limit in the interior of the village (not the A417) will have zero impact on responsible drivers current behaviour, but may help reduce the speed of the irresponsible ones. The only reason I can see not to do it is exactly the same - is it worth spending money replacing speed limit signs on roads that are so narrow and restricted visibility already? Bad drivers will ignore the 20 and good drivers are generally already doing less than that.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p> |
| <p>(24) Local resident, (Upton, Prospect Road)</p> | <p>Support – We would like to make representations for extending the 20 mph speed limit to include the A417 that passes the George and the Dragon pub.</p> <p>On numerous occasions, we have been shocked by the speed of cars, even since the introduction of the traffic lights. Walking from Stream Road along the little bit of pavement to Prospect Road I have nearly been knocked off by cars speeding past. They also travel very close to that part of the pavement before the bend in the road.</p> |

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| | <p>Now that the pub is back up and running, it is particularly difficult for customers to cross the A417 with speeding cars. In my opinion, it won't be long before there is a serious accident.</p> <p>Even if a 20 mph speed limit was introduced along this part of the A417, cars probably wouldn't keep to 20 mph but at least they might reduce their speed to 30 mph.</p> <p>Safety is paramount and if the council are waiting for a fatality before they do anything, in my opinion that is too late!</p> <p>Travel change: No</p> |
| (25) Local resident, (Upton, Reading Road) | <p>Support – Safer for walking on the village roads as there are no pavements on most of the village roads.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p> |
| (26) Local resident, (Upton, Fieldside) | <p>No opinion – 20MPH is fine for around the village but not along the A417</p> <p>Travel change: No</p> |