

Divisions affected: *Ploughley*

## **DELEGATED DECISIONS BY CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT**

**20 JUNE 2024**

### **CHESTERTON: PROPOSED 20MPH & 40MPH SPEED LIMITS**

Report by Corporate Director, Environment and Place

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

The Cabinet Member is **RECOMMENDED** to:

- a) **Approve the introduction of 20mph & 40mph speed limits in Chesterton as advertised.**

#### **Executive Summary**

1. The report presents responses to a statutory consultation on the proposals to extend the existing 20mph speed limit within Chesterton, replacing sections of existing 30mph speed limit on the A4095 Bicester Road/Kirtlington Road and The Hale in the process, and then introduce new 40mph speed limits in place of the existing 60mph National speed limits on the A4095 Bicester Road northwards to the existing 40mph speed limit south of Vendee Drive, and on the A4095 Kirtlington Road westwards, 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**

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

## **Sustainability Implications**

- The proposals would help encourage walking and cycling within Chesterton by making them safer and more attractive, and will assist with the slowing of traffic approaching the existing village 20mph speed limit.

## **Formal Consultation**

- Formal consultation was carried out between 14 March and 5 April 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, the local District Cllrs, Chesterton Parish Council, and the local County Councillor representing the Ploughley division.

## **Statutory Consultee Responses:**

- Thames Valley Police objected to the proposals based on poor compliance in neighbouring parishes such as Kirtlington. They were concerned that current consultation follows previous ones, citing that previously the A4095 had not been considered, and failed to see justification for it to be included this time. The lack of evidence or history of recent collisions was used to question the proposals and asked that it remained at 30mph. They also re-iterated their views concerning OCC's policy and practice regarding 20mph speed limits.
- Oxford Bus Company offered no formal objection; however they drew attention to the proposed extensive development of land to the south & west of the village, and that the delivery and operation of potential new routes servicing these may well be affected by the proposals, and would make it harder to offer the frequency of service the Council has required within reasonable resource requirements.
- The Senior Planning Officer at Cherwell District Council had no specific observations to make.

## **Other Responses:**

- Eight responses were received via the online consultation survey during the course of the formal consultation, and these are summarised in the table below:

<b>Proposal</b>	<b>Object</b>	<b>Partially support</b>	<b>Support</b>	<b>No opinion/ objection</b>	<b>Total</b>
20mph	3 (37%)	1	2 (25%)	2	8
40mph	5 (62%)	-	2 (25%)	1	8

11. Additionally, two emails were received from local residents – with one objecting stating that the 20mph speed limit covering the residential area of the village was more than enough, whilst the second was broadly supportive but suggested the proposed 40mph was extended towards the motorway bridge to cover the traffic (slow moving agricultural) turning into and out of the adjacent farmland (an online submission also mirrored this view).
12. 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**

13. 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 Counties carbon footprint. This forms part of a countywide programme of works that seeks to deliver 'a safer place with a safer pace'.
14. In respect of the request from a member of the public to extend the proposed 40mph speed limit on the A4095 further westwards to the M40 bridge is noted and will be assessed separately as part of a wider review of speed limits on the County's A and B road network under the Vision Zero programme.
15. 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:              Anthony Kirkwood (Team Leader - Vision Zero)  
                                        Matt Archer (Portfolio Manager – Central Programme)

June 2024



Drawing No. \_\_\_\_\_

Notes:

- Existing 20mph limit
- Proposed 20mph limit
- Existing 40mph limit
- Proposed 40mph limit

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Rev.	Date	Purpose of revision	Drawn	Checked	Approved

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RESPONDENT	COMMENTS
<p>(1) Traffic Management Officer, (Thames Valley Police)</p>	<p><b>Object</b> – Based on poor compliance in neighbouring parishes. I use Kirtlington as an example. I am also aware this is now the 3rd consultation on 20 limits from this parish. Previously the A4095 has not been considered and I fail to see the justification for it now. There is no evidence or history of recent collisions to justify and ask that it remains at 30.</p> <p>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 (<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> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <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>
<p>(2) Head of Built Environment and Infrastructure, (Go-Ahead Group)</p>	<p><b>No objection</b> – We offer the following by way of observation. No bus services currently operate in or around Chesterton.</p> <p>However, the Council should be aware of the consent for the “Great Wolf Lodge” resort west of the village, and the quite lavish package of developer-funded public and passenger transport services that are anticipated to support this. This resort is technically implemented, however we note that development has been suspended pending a strategic review of the company’s strategy for the UK.</p> <p>Furthermore, there an active promotion of land south and west of Chesterton is ongoing, for up to about 850 houses, making this of strategic scale. We are apprised that the transport strategy for the promotion depends quite heavily on finding some synergies between the GWLR package and the potential new development. The promotion has been taken up by Cherwell District Council as Local Planning Authority as a draft allocation, albeit for a rather lesser number of about 500 homes. While it does not yet form part of a plan formally submitted as sound to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up Housing and Communities as “sound”, and may not ultimately be taken forward in any event, it does have some planning policy status.</p> <p>The delivery and operation of these services may well be affected by the proposals, albeit in my professional judgement, not to a degree that makes them undeliverable. It will however, make it harder to offer the frequency of service the Council has required within reasonable resource requirements. There is a risk that experience would show, post implementation, that complying with the planning obligations requires substantially more resource than anticipated and in this eventuality</p>

	<p>this in turn would potentially lead to an application to adjust the obligation under s73 or s106a of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.</p> <p>I trust that the foregoing is considered a constructive intervention. For the avoidance of doubt, Oxford Bus Co. has no objection to make.</p>
(3) Cherwell District Council, (Communities Directorate)	<b>No objection</b> – I can advise that Cherwell District Council wish to make no observations with regard to the proposal.
(4) Local resident, (Chesterton)	<p><b>Object</b> – I am a long time resident of Chesterton and I wish to object to any extension of the existing 20 mph. The residential area of the village is covered by the 20 mph and that is more than enough. The only area of concern is The Hale which should have a pavement and the limit be reduced to 30mph.</p> <p>My reasons are that councils should use common sense and not reduce speeds to far too low a level for people to move around at a reasonable speed. I do not wish to live with Welsh restrictions.</p>
(5) Member of public, (Oxford, Laburmun Road)	<p>20mph – <b>Object</b> waste of money and not needed and won't be enforced. also presents a confusing range of speed limits in a short journey i use this road a lot it is a useful diversion</p> <p>40mph – <b>Object</b> if OCC was serious then speed cameras would be outside schools and other areas where needed. The speed camera van often sits on the approach to Bicester on the A41 and is clearly aimed at people going to work and targetted to raise money. No more speed limits going down.</p> <p>Travel change: <b>No</b></p>
(6) Local resident, (Chesterton, Alchester Road)	<p>20mph – <b>Object</b> When local government finances are in such a poor state and there are so many groups and individuals that desperately need support, spending money on a 'problem' that barely exists seems to be a massive waste of taxpayers money.</p>

	<p>40mph – <b>Object</b>  This is the same answer as 3. When local government finances are in such a poor state and there are so many groups and individuals that desperately need support, spending money on a 'problem' that barely exists seems to be a massive waste of taxpayers' money.</p> <p>Travel change: <b>No</b></p>
<p>(7) Local resident,  (Chesterton,  Vespasian Way)</p>	<p>20mph – <b>Object</b>  As a driver there is no need to extend the zones beyond what is currently present. In most cases drivers do not adhere to the 20 mph zone unless it is watched over by someone with a speed gun. Unless there is the intention to slow down the road for cycles will simply not hold.</p> <p>40mph – <b>Object</b>  Same reasons as before</p> <p>Travel change: <b>No</b></p>
<p>(8) As a business,  (Chesterton,  Kirtlington Road)</p>	<p>20mph – <b>Partially support</b>  Helps make journeys via bicycle safer</p> <p>40mph – <b>Object</b>  Support in principle but would like to see the 40 mph limit begin at the M40 Motorway bridge. We have increasing visitors / employees using bicycles for their transport and this would make their journey to Bignell safer.</p> <p>Travel change: <b>Yes - cycle more</b></p>
<p>(9) Local resident,  (Chesterton,  Kirtlington Road)</p>	<p>20mph – <b>No objection</b>  Happy with 20mph through Chesterton</p> <p>40mph – <b>Object</b>  The speed limit of 40mph should go back to the motorway bridge on the Kirtlington Road into Chesterton. As the owner of Bignell Park Barns, a number of the people who work here come to work on bicycles and this would make the road safer.</p>



	<p>Travel change: <b>No</b></p>
<p>(10) Local resident, (Chesterton, Alchester Road)</p>	<p>20mph – <b>Support</b> Too much speeding in our village - even along the roads with existing 20 m.p.h. restriction.</p> <p>40mph – <b>No objection</b> Drivers are exceeding the national speed limit on this section</p> <p>Travel change: <b>Other</b> No as no hard surface footpaths out of the village</p>
<p>(11) Local resident, (Chesterton, Penrose Gardens)</p>	<p>20mph – <b>Support</b> By reducing the speed limit on The Hale I hope that rat runners will be discouraged from using a narrow village road without pavement (along part of its length) and either use the A4095 or, preferably, the unpopulated Middleton Stoney road.</p> <p>40mph – <b>Support</b> Reducing the speed limits into Chesterton to 40mph will, hopefully, not only slow traffic entering the village but also provide consistency with adjoining speed limits on Vendée Drive avoiding confusing and repeatedly changing speed limits</p> <p>Travel change: <b>Yes – walk/wheel more</b></p>
<p>(12) Local resident, (Chesterton, Penrose Gardens)</p>	<p>20mph – <b>No objection</b> Long time coming, utterly crazy the speeds of people through Chesterton the only time they aren't speeding is when the speedwatch team are there!</p> <p>40mph – <b>Support</b> 60mph is too fast on the approach roads into Chesterton. Slowing that down should also slow vehicles down to be able to go through at 20mph</p> <p>Travel change: <b>Other</b></p>

	<p>No as there is no footpaths to anywhere or any form of public transport! 20 mph allows everyone to safely travel through the village and therefore keep pedestrians safe!</p>
<p>(13) Local resident, (Kirtlington Road, Chesterton)</p>	<p><b>Support</b> – I am the owner of a Farm/Barns on Kirtlington Road, Chesterton. We note the consultation that is ongoing regarding changes the speed limits and make the following comment (in addition to the survey). I own and frequently use 3 no. accesses on the A4095 Kirtlington Road. The main access being the entrance to Bignell Park Barns – the most used for traffic – but my farming business uses the other 2 less frequently. We note that there is a proposal to introduce a 40mph limit half-way along my boundary with the A4095.</p> <p>Would it not be best, bearing in mind the amount of traffic that we have using the entrance to Bignell Park Barns (also used by my farming machinery and visiting contractors etc), to introduce the 40 mph limit at the motorway bridge? It seems like the natural place to introduce it as we do have an increasing amount of traffic turning into and out of the Bignell Park Barns entrance, with some of this traffic being slow moving (agricultural). We also have an increasing numbers of employees and tenants who are travelling to Bignell Park on bicycles.....this would make their journey safer for all.</p> <p>In summary I propose that this good idea of speed limit reduction is extended to 40 mph from the M40 motorway bridge on the Kirtlington Road.</p>