

Divisions affected: *Carterton South & West*

DELEGATED DECISIONS BY CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT

14 NOVEMBER 2024

GRAFTON – 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 Grafton, as advertised.**

Executive Summary

1. The report presents responses to a statutory consultation on the proposed introduction of 20mph speed limits in Grafton, 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 Grafton by making them safer and more attractive.

Formal Consultation

6. Formal consultation was carried out between 03 October and 25 October 2024. A notice was published in the Oxford Times 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, West Oxfordshire District Council, local District Cllrs, Grafton and Radcot Parish Meeting, Clanfield Parish Council, and the local County Councillors representing the Carterton South & West, and Witney West & Bampton divisions.

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, confirming that the proposals so not affect local bus operations.
9. Grafton and Radcot Meeting unanimously agreed to apply for a speed limit that reflected the need for the local area, noting that similar hamlets in the area now had sensible speed limits.

Other Responses:

10. 18 further responses were received via the online survey during the course of the formal consultation, comprising of one objection (6%), and 17 in support (94%).
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 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 concerns of Thames Valley Police comprise observations applicable to the overall 20mph project but no site-specific comments relating to the proposals for Grafton.

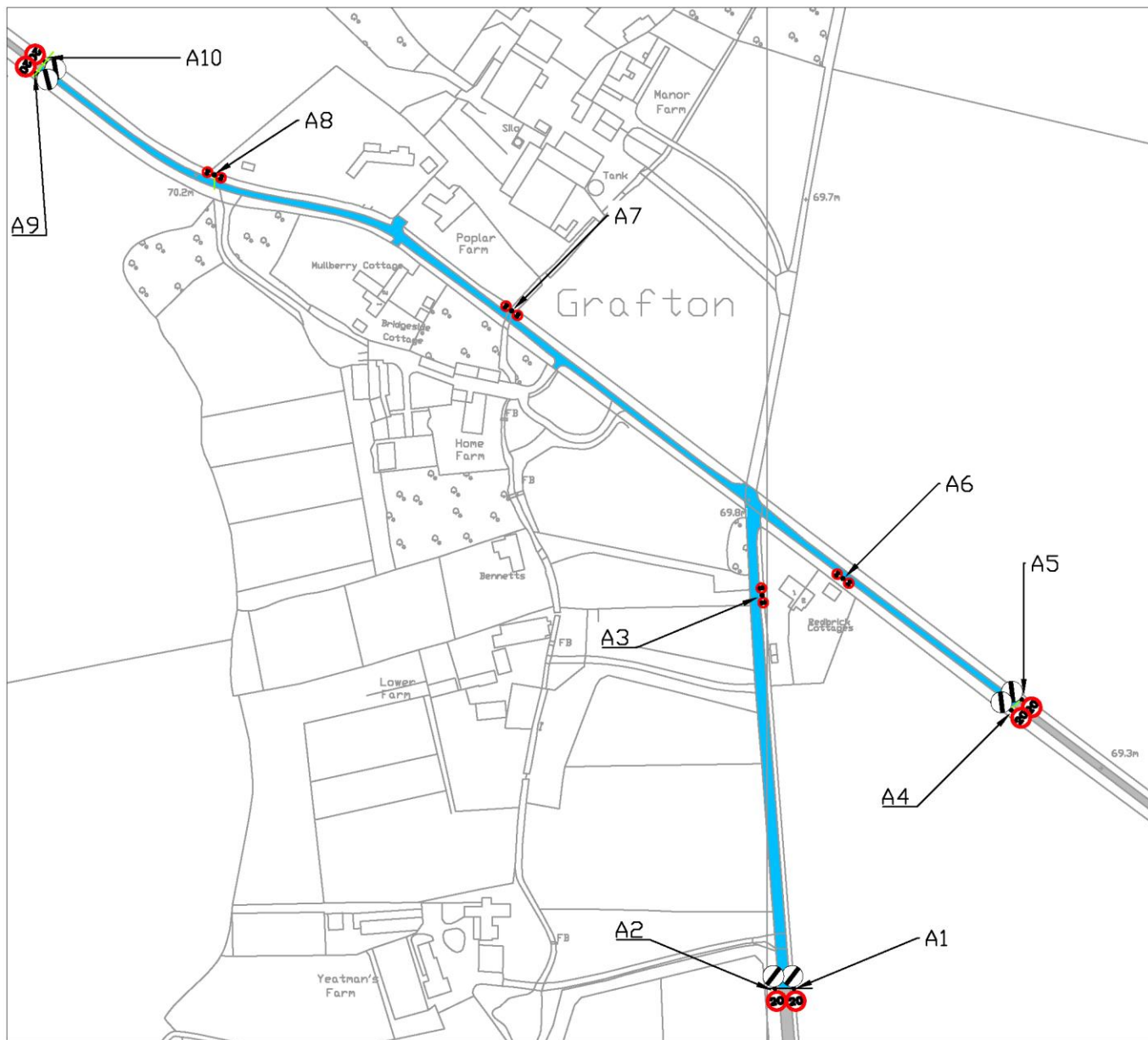
14. The authority considers objections along the lines of it being unjustified, anti-car, a waste of money, not enforceable or pointless to not warrant amendments to a proposal. As such the authority has not addressed any specific comments made of this nature in this report.

Paul Fermer
Director of Environment and Highways

Annexes Annex 1: Consultation plan
 Annex 2: Consultation responses

Contact Officers: Anthony Kirkwood (Team Leader - Vision Zero)
 Matt Archer (Portfolio Manager – Programme Delivery)

November 2024



Grafton 20mph Revision 1.0

Legend	
Proposed 20	
Existing NSL	
Not Public Highway	

© Crown Copyright and Database rights 10023343 2017

Rev.	Date	Purpose of revision	Drawn	Checked	Approved
1.0	12.07.24	First draft	C.W		

Owen Jenkins
 Director for Infrastructure Delivery
OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
 Communities, Customer Services
 County Hall
 New Road
 Oxford
 OX1 1HD
 Tel: 0845 310 1111

Project title: Grafton 20mph Scheme

Drawing title:
 Grafton 20mph Scheme Overview

Drawing Status			
Scale @ A3	Drawn by: C.W	Checked by:	Approved by:
	Date drawn: 12.07.24	Date checked:	Date approved:

Oxfordshire Project No. & File Ref

Drawing No. 1.0	Revision 1.0
-----------------	--------------

RESPONDENT	COMMENTS
<p>(1) Traffic Management Officer, (Thames Valley Police)</p>	<p>Concerns – a 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 (No data provided) • 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 a substantial number of motorists.</p>
(2) Head of Built Environment and Infrastructure, (Oxford Bus Company)	<p>No objection – We have reviewed the published proposals on which you have kindly consulted with us. We can confirm that this does not affect bus operations and thus we raise no objection.</p>
(3) Grafton & Radcot Parish Meeting	<p>Support – Following on from our last 2 meetings, in which numerous close encounters with fast traffic were highlighted, the meeting unanimously agreed to apply for a speed limit that reflected the need for the local area, noting similar hamlets in the area now have sensible speed limits. The meeting didn't think we needed to have casualties prior to an application.</p>
(4) Member of public, (Woodcote, Reading Road)	<p>Object – While the decision-makers are obviously obsessed with setting blanket speed limits without listening, I am against the 20mph proposal for the following reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Road conditions: While I understand that there should be a speed limit for local residents, this road section deserve a speed limit of 30mph. What people need is a proper footpath along the road. The village is in a rural area where most residents rely on bus and car, and the proposed speed limit is too low for everyone. The area has a very low number of residential properties and most of them are far away from the highway. 2. The blanket 20mph approach is not scientific as claimed. The decision-makers simply took the news headline '20mph reduces collisions by xx%', while ignoring the fact that the speed restrictions in those trials were deployed in high-risk areas. In Oxfordshire, many of these low speed zones are being deployed in low-risk areas with no accident history, few residents, and good roads.

	<p>3. According to statistics data, only 3 out of 1000 people in Oxfordshire might die from traffic accidents over 80 years. The blanket 20mph approach means that the remaining 99.7% will need to slow down for them in the rest of their lives.</p> <p>4. The proposal does not conform to the Department of Transport guidance in setting local speed limits 'only introduce 20mph limits and zones, in the right places, over time and with local support in urban areas and built-up village streets that are primarily residential, using the criteria in Urban speed limits' and '20mph schemes should be considered on a road-by-road basis based on the safety case to ensure local support, not as blanket measures. Particular consideration should be given to maintaining through routes for motorists.'</p> <p>5. It is very likely that the claimed improvement of 20mph reflect the fact that a small number of high-risk road sections were covered, while the blanket approach without proper risk assessment simply impacts everywhere, including many low risk areas, which is inefficient. 6. Air pollution and noise, if these issues really exist, should be addressed by technology such as the adoption of Electric Vehicles instead of blocking the roads.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
<p>(5) As part of a group/organisation, (Oxfordshire Cycling Network)</p>	<p>Support – We support this speed limit reduction based on growing evidence from Wales, London and other UK cities that 20mph limits result in a 20-30% reduction in road casualties across all users: pedestrians, cyclists, motorcyclists, motorists and their passengers. This happens even with current low levels of enforcement, although we consider that better enforcement should also be applied. The scheme is aligned to 'where the people are' - where they live and are likely to be walking.</p> <p>We support Oxfordshire's policy of 20mph limits with community support and schemes designed to be where the people are. Lower speeds also create a more friendly street environment for people to walk, wheel and cycle, encouraging healthy forms of transport that reduce road danger further, reduce traffic, reduce damage to the environment, and lead to healthier and happier lives.</p> <p>Travel change: Yes - cycle more</p>
<p>(6) Local resident, (Grafton)</p>	<p>Support – Supporting 20mph speed limit as currently vehicles drive too fast through the village</p>

	Travel change: No
(7) Local resident, (Grafton, Langford Road)	<p>Support – I live in Grafton, i am father to 3 young children, we ride bikes and walk dogs down the main road in Grafton, so the speed limit is a big issue for us. The speed at which people drive down this road currently is dangerous and risk to local residents, their children and animals. 20mph speed limit is long overdue to be enforced.</p> <p>Travel change: Yes - cycle more</p>
(8) Local resident, (Grafton, Langford Road)	<p>Support – I fully support this proposal. Cars frequently travel through Grafton at excessive, dangerous speeds and I personally, whilst walking my dogs, have had several scary near misses. This will represent a huge improvement to the residents of Grafton</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
(9) Local resident, (Grafton, Langley Lane)	<p>Support – We are a community of dog walkers, horse riders and pet owners and one day there is going to be a terrible accident which will most likely involve a child because cars come through so fast.</p> <p>Travel change: Yes - cycle more</p>
(10) Local resident, (Grafton, Langley Lane)	<p>Support – The current speed limit is highly dangerous with both blind corners and single track road with no pavement When coupled with poor light due to tree cover and the existence of residents including children walking and animals it is a miracle there has not been a serious accident already a 20mph limit is far more suitable for the conditions</p> <p>Travel change: Yes – walk/wheel more</p>
(11) Local resident, (Grafton, Langley Lane)	<p>Support – The road through Grafton from Clanfield is narrow and straight until a very sharp bend leading towards Langford. Motorists routinely travel in excess of 50 mph no doubt encouraged by the configuration of the highway.</p>

	<p>The hamlet is home to parents with children. Many occupants walk dogs and need to use the road to access established footpaths which are located directly from/to the road. There are very real dangers arising from the absence of a speed limit.</p> <p>Travel change: Yes – walk/wheel more</p>
<p>(12) Local resident, (Grafton, Langley Lane)</p>	<p>Support – There has been several animals run over and with small children in the village it is only a matter of time before another accident happens and it would be tragic if a child got hurt or worse. People go so fast down the road and there are walkers, riders and cyclist that use this road. It really does need to have a slower speed limit and ideally 20 mph.</p> <p>Travel change: Yes – walk/wheel more</p>
<p>(13) Local resident, (Grafton, Langley Lane)</p>	<p>Support – We live on the main road through Grafton and are always amazed that the legal speed limit is still 60 mph through the village, despite the campaign to reduce speed limits through settlements across Oxfordshire. At particular risk are regular walkers crossing the road to reach the local public footpath network. This includes my elderly father in law who lives with us and walks daily. Traffic speed and the risk of him not being able to cross the road quickly enough is a constant source of worry for us. We walk our dogs each day and have to walk alongside the road before crossing to the footpath and it can be very unsettling experience walking close to drivers doing 60mph - perfectly lawfully. On the many wet days, this does not give them chance to slow down through the vast puddles that form in the road, sending spray everywhere with some very wet results! The biggest risk is to the young children in the village.</p> <p>Travel change: Yes – walk/wheel more</p>
<p>(14) Local resident, (Grafton, Radcot Road)</p>	<p>Support – To keep Grafton safe for walkers.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
<p>(15) Local resident, (Grafton, Radcot Road)</p>	<p>Support – To try and slow the traffic down</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>

<p>(16) Local resident, (Grafton, Radcot Road)</p>	<p>Support – Having been a resident in Grafton for 19 years, I have noticed how much busier the road has become and how much faster vehicles travel through the village. It is a staggering fact that vehicles can legally travel through Grafton at (60mph) just 10mph less than the national motorway speed limit (70mph). Increasingly this is a regularly occurrence on a single lane road with a bridge, blind corners, no official passing places and without any of the preventative infrastructure being in place from an A-road let alone a motorway.</p> <p>Travel change: Yes – walk/wheel more</p>
<p>(17) Local resident, (Grafton, Radcot Road)</p>	<p>Support – In support as I am a resident and have young children. The current speed limit is dangerous and people come flying through the village and it's only a matter of time before there is a fatality. We really need to reduce the limit in our hamlet.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
<p>(18) Local resident, (Grafton, Radcot Road)</p>	<p>Support – I am supporting the 20mph in Grafton in order to prevent a serious accident .</p> <p>The road is very straight when entering the village from the Langley Lane end which encourages drivers to speed through the village and it's only a matter of time before someone gets seriously hurt .</p> <p>Travel change: Yes – walk/wheel more</p>
<p>(19) Local resident, (Grafton)</p>	<p>Support – We've got a very young family who now walk and bike and play on this road through Grafton and 60 mph is far too dangerous for children or adults for that matter.</p> <p>Travel change: Yes - cycle more</p>
<p>(20) Local resident, (Grafton)</p>	<p>Support – Cars speed through our hamlet up to 60 miles an hour on a single track road with no space for on coming cars or pedestrian we have children who live in the village, cyclists and walkers using this road and it's getting more dangerous every day.</p>

	Travel change: Yes – walk/wheel more
(21) As a business, (Grafton, Radcot Road)	Support – With so many horse riders, children and walkers, the traffic through Grafton is travelling much too fast. Travel change: Yes – walk/wheel more