

Divisions affected: *Shrivenham*

DELEGATED DECISIONS BY CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT

23 JANUARY 2025

EAST CHALLOW – 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 East Challow, as advertised.**

Executive Summary

1. The report presents responses to a statutory consultation on the proposals to introduce 20mph speed limits within East Challow 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. The consultation that has been undertaken complies with the consultation requirements for the various elements as required by law including under the Highways Act 1980, the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and any other related regulations.
4. The scheme has been promoted by Oxfordshire County Council as the Highway Authority under the Highways Act 1980.

Comments checked by:

Jennifer Crouch (Head of Law - Environmental)

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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 East Challow by making them safer and more attractive.

Formal Consultation

7. Formal consultation was carried out between 13 November and 13 December 2024. 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, the Vale of the White Horse District Council, the local District Cllrs, East Challow Parish Council, and the local County Councillor representing the Shrivenham division.
8. Relevant parish/town councils, and local Cllrs (including County, District, Parish, Town) were also encouraged to use the consultation documents provided to publicise the proposals amongst local residents as necessary.

Statutory Consultee Responses:

9. Thames Valley Police re-iterated their views concerning OCC's policy and practice regarding speed limits and wish their response to be listed as 'having concerns' rather than an objection. They also raised specific concerns regarding the proposals for the A417 Main Street, stating that the road already suffers from a degree of poor compliance
10. East Challow Parish Council were largely supportive; however, they requested that the length of the 20mph on the A417 Main Street should be extended southwards beyond the junction with the new residential estate (Crest Nicholson), and that the new estate roads on the 'Crest Nicholson' site and the 'Mactaggart & Mickel' site also be included.

Other Responses:

11. Ten responses were received via the online survey during the course of the formal consultation, comprising of three objections, two partially supporting, four in support, and one non-objection.
12. The responses are shown in **Annex 2**, and copies of the original responses are available for inspection by County Councillors. Any comments received that contain personal abuse and/or other personal information will be redacted as appropriate.

Officer Response to Objections/Concerns

13. The main purpose of the scheme is to encourage greater use of active travel by reducing speeds; this will also 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'.
14. The concerns of Thames Valley Police comprise observations applicable to the overall 20mph project and a specific observation that compliance on the A417 is currently poor with a 30mph speed limit in force.
15. The proposal is for a length of approximately 400m of the A417 to become 20mph. This is limited to the central portion of the village, and which includes several side road junctions, residential frontages and direct accesses. This stretch is considered to be suitable for 20mph, with a 30mph buffer at the northern end and an extended length of 30mph from where the character of the road changes near the Letcombe Hill junction.
16. Partial support is given by the Parish Council as they would like to see an extension of the coverage at the southern end of the A417, and within two new residential developments. As noted above, the road widens and becomes more open at the Letcombe Hill and Goodlake Avenue (Crest Nicholson estate) junctions, where speeds would naturally be expected to increase, so the proposed southern extent of the 20mph limit is considered appropriate.
17. Roads within the two residential developments have not been adopted as public highways, so a speed limit cannot be imposed. However, the road layouts will have been designed for 20mph, with short straight lengths of road, tight bends and traffic calming features preventing high speeds.
18. It is confirmed that the roads listed in the Parish Council response will be included in the 20mph area.
19. 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

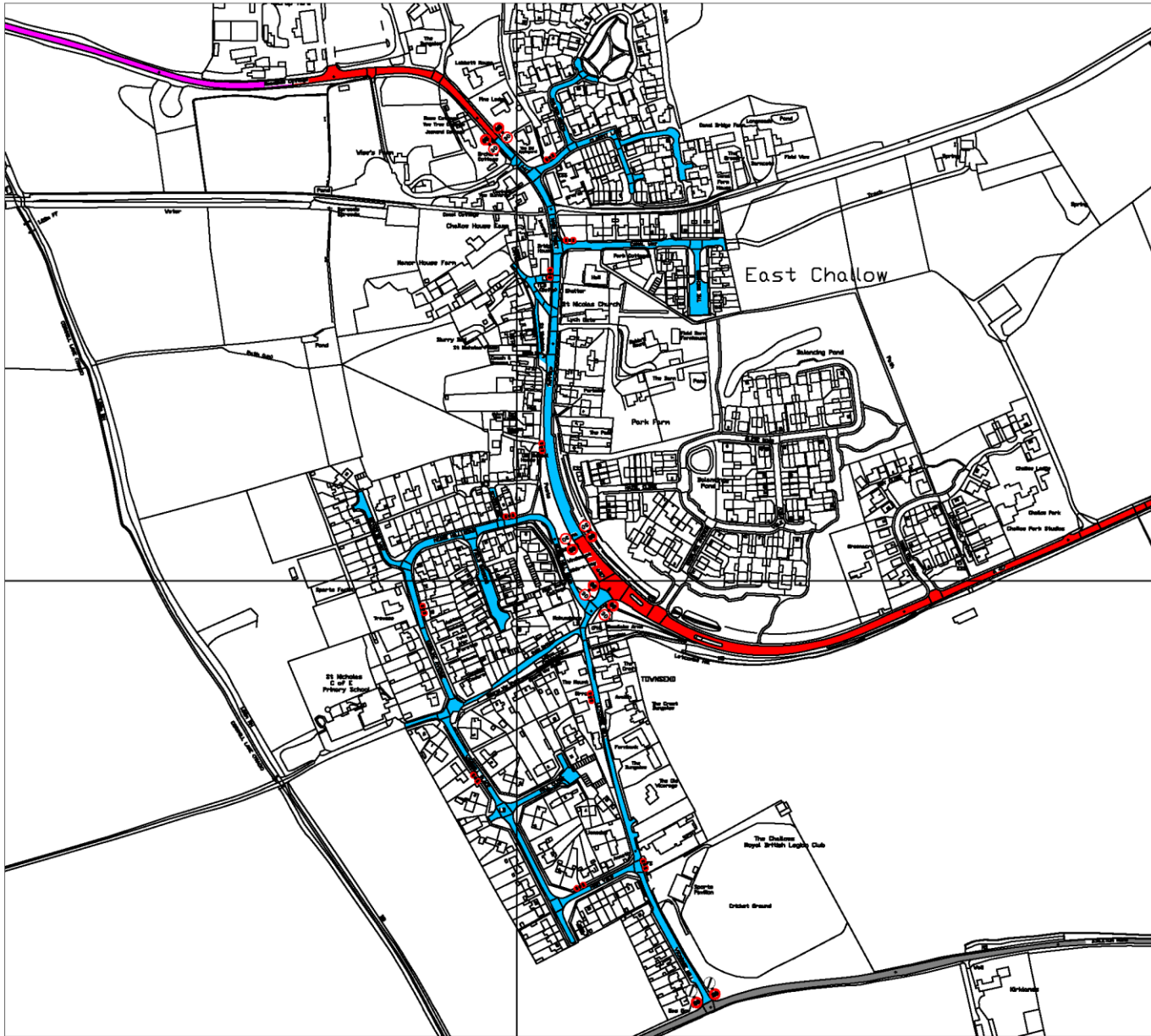
Annex 2: Consultation responses

Contact Officers:

Roger Plater (Senior Officer – Vision Zero)

Daron Mizen (Portfolio Manager - Programme Delivery)

January 2025



East Challow 20mph Revision 1.0

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

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Rev.	Date	Purpose of revision	Drawn	Checked	Approved

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

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Project title: East Challow 20mph Scheme

Drawing title:
East Challow 20mph Scheme Overview

Drawing Status

Scale @ A3	Drawn by: C.R./E.R.	Checked by: AK	Approved by: AK
	Date drawn: 22.10.24	Date checked: 22.10.24	Date approved: 22.10.24

Oxfordshire Project No. & File Ref

Drawing No. 1.0	Revision 1.0
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ANNEX 2

RESPONDENT	COMMENTS
<p>(1) Traffic Management Officer, (Thames Valley Police)</p>	<p>Concerns – especially the proposals for the A417. This road already suffers poor compliance.</p> <p>Thank you for the consultation documents, in relation to the proposed speed limit change.</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 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) • 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. 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) East Challow Parish Council	<p>Partially support – would like the following to be considered please, the length determined by yourselves of the 20mph on the A417 Main Street to be extended south of the junction with the new estate (Crest Nicholson) not just prior to the junction of Letcombe Hill and the A417 Main Street.</p> <p>Also clarification that all estate roads within the Village envelope become 20mph, these are listed below:- Letcombe Hill, Vicarage Hill, High View, Hill Close, Windmill Place, Sara Jac Avenue, Hedge Hill Road, Reynolds Way, Field Gardens, Main Street, Canal Way, The Orchard, Claypit Lane, Nalder Green</p> <p>Could we also ask that the new estate roads on the Crest Nicholson site and the Mactaggart & Mickel site also be included in the 20mph designation.</p>
(3) Local resident, (East Challow, Nalder Green)	<p>Object – A417 should remain 30 mph</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>

<p>(4) Local resident, (East Challow, Nalder Green)</p>	<p>Object – There are ample indicators of speed in the area for people to check themselves and a crossing.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
<p>(5) Member of public, (Faringdon, Walker Drive)</p>	<p>Object – I drive and also cycle along this road. I dont feel any safer cycling on any of the oxfordshire roads that have changed from 30 to 20 in the last 12 months, Motorists tend not to travel at the the new speed limit and if they do, they still overtake not leaving suffcient space, a 20mph limit does not change this behaviour, other than make motorists slightly more angry than they were before. This is espicially true of the gravel lorries that use this route constantly. This is a tricky section to cycle along as its a very steep hill, the road surface in terrible condition and covered in parked cars all along its length. it will be hard to maintain 20mph as a cyclist going down the hill too, Ill be having to brake going downhill with a queue of impatient drivers trying to get past me on a congested street scene. Currently I can ride downhill at 30 and people tend not to overtake me here. I would feel safer if the money is better spent on improving the road surface, stopping some of the cars parking, which gives everyone more space on the road and to avoid the chance of getting doored by drivers and making sure the existing road markings are maintained. If you are going to go and paint teeth markings at the speed limit change points and enormous 20mph signs all over the road that wont be maintained, can you also renew all the other road markings on this section, paticularly at the bottom of the hill. Also, the paint that is used for these enromous 20 mph markings I find gets very slippery when wet, again not making me feel any safer.</p> <p>Travel change: Other probably cycle less as I feel it will make drivers angrier.</p>
<p>(6) Local resident, (East Challow, Nalder Green)</p>	<p>Partially support – The cars drive well above the 30. A speed camera maybe better than a 20</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
<p>(7) Member of public, (Wantage, Adkin Way)</p>	<p>Partially support – Do not agree with the 20mph on the A417. To reduce the speed on an A Class road to 20mph defeats the reason that we have A Class roads (to move traffic at a reasonable rate from A to B)</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>

<p>(8) Local resident, (East Challow, Claypit Lane)</p>	<p>Support – Traffic speed is too high down the hill in the village.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
<p>(9) Local resident, (East Challow, Claypit Lane)</p>	<p>Support – Cars regularly speed through the village. Many of the new housing is on the other side of the village meaning many children have to cross the road at the pedestrian crossing. Cars that speed through the village struggle to stop and tend to drive through the red lights. Especially in the evening and morning. This is dangerous. Articulated Lorries tend to drive at 30mph through village. I therefore support the speed reduction.</p> <p>Travel change: Yes - cycle more</p>
<p>(10) Local resident, (East Challow, Nalder Green)</p>	<p>Support – Vehicles go far too fast through the village.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>
<p>(11) Local resident, (East Challow, Hedge Hill Road)</p>	<p>Support – As a resident of East Challow and from my property I have a view of the highway that will be impacted by the proposed speed limit, so I'm fully aware of the volume of vehicular traffic and the speed many vehicles drive at through the community, this is especially relevant to larger commercial vehicles, which create excessive noise and danger.</p> <p>Travel change: Yes – walk/wheel more</p>
<p>(12) Local resident, (East Challow, Nalder Green)</p>	<p>No objection – I have no objections to the proposal per se, but why not start the zone further south before the junction with Letcombe Hill? I am also concerned at how it will be enforced seeing most ignoring the 20mph limits recently introduced through Wantage.</p> <p>Travel change: No</p>