

Divisions affected: *Sonning Common*

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

**23 JANUARY 2025**

### **EYE & DUNSDEN – 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 Eye & Dunsden, as advertised.**

#### **Executive Summary**

1. The report presents responses to a statutory consultation on the proposals to introduce 20mph speed limits within Eye & Dunsden as shown in **Annexes 1 & 2**.

#### **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 Eye & Dunsden by making them safer and more attractive.

## Formal Consultation

7. Formal consultation was carried out between 21 November and 13 December 2024. A notice was published in the Henley Standard & Reading Chronicle newspapers, 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, South Oxfordshire District Council, the local District Cllrs, Eye & Dunsden & Sonning Parish Councils, and the local County Councillor representing the Sonning Common division.
8. Officers at Wokingham Unitary Authority were also provided with the consultation material, owing to the fact that a small section of the proposed limit over the Thames river bridge would sit within their jurisdiction.
9. 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:

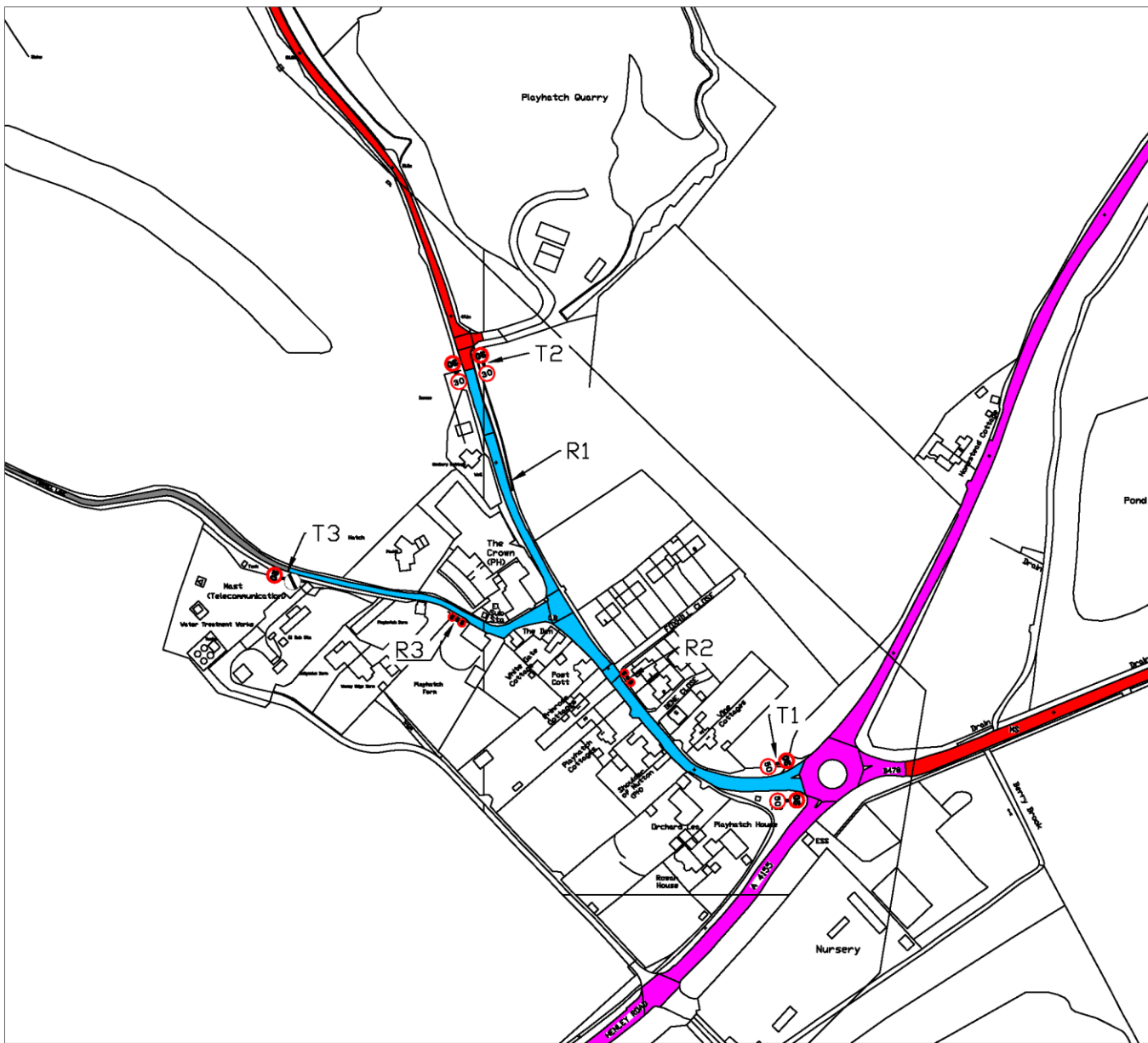
10. Thames Valley Police re-iterated their views concerning OCC's policy and practice regarding speed limits and wish their response to be listed as 'having concerns' rather than an objection.
11. Oxford Bus Company submitted a non-objection, confirming that the proposals would not affect local bus operations.
12. A South Oxfordshire District Cllr (Sonning) submitted their support, suggesting however that other calming measures may be necessary on the stretch between the Playhatch roundabout & Sonning bridge.

## Other Responses:

13. 35 responses were received via the online consultation survey during the course of the formal consultation, and these are summarised in the table below:

Proposal	Object	Partially support	Support	No objection	Total
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Eye & Dunsden Sheet A1 Revision 1.0

Legend	
Proposed 20	<span style="color: blue;">█</span>
Existing 30	<span style="color: red;">█</span>
Existing 50	<span style="color: magenta;">█</span>
Not Public Highway	<span style="color: black;">█</span>

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Rev.	Date	Purpose of revision	Drawn	Checked	Approved

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Project title: Eye & Dunsden 20mph Scheme

Drawing title:  
 Eye & Dunsden 20mph Scheme A1

Drawing Status

Scale @ A3	Drawn by: C.R./E.R.	Checked by: AK	Approved by: AK
	Date drawn: 17.10.24	Date checked: 17.10.24	Date approved: 17.10.24

Oxfordshire Project No. & File Ref

Drawing No. 1.0	Revision 1.0
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<b>Eye &amp; Dunsden 20mph B1</b>						Revision 1.0						
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<p><b>OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL</b>  <small>Owen Jenkins          Director for          Infrastructure Delivery          Communities          County Hall          New Road          Oxford          OX1 1ND          Tel 0845 310 1111</small></p>												
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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> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• existing traffic speeds (No data provided)</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 a substantial number of motorists.</p>
(2) Head of Built Environment and Infrastructure, (Oxford Bus Company)	<p><b>No objection</b> – This proposal has no impact on either our own bus services, or others’ – in this case Reading Transport Ltd. on the A4155 Henley Road. Accordingly, we offer no objection.</p>
(3) Local District Cllr, (Sonning Common)	<p><b>Support</b> – I strongly support this proposal. In the interests of safety these proposed areas need traffic calming. The 20mph initiative will assist in this.</p> <p>In my view other calming measures may be necessary – particularly on the stretch going from the Playhatch roundabout to the Sonning bridge, where there have been a lot of incidents.</p>
(4) Local resident, (Sonning Eye, Sonning Eye)	<p>Playhatch area 20mph – <b>Object</b>  Sonning Eye area 20mph – <b>Object</b></p> <p>I personally find the 20 mph speed limits that have already been introduced around the area, are unrealistic and a total waste of time and money . Especially when even some of the residents that are at the forefront of these proposals fail to adhere to the existing 30 mph limit ! As a driver that covers hundreds of miles a week I can assure you very few people take any notice of the 20 mph limits for various reasons, one being the roads selected are totally unsuitable for these speed reductions. A/ B roads , no Schools , minimal houses , not high crash sites . To stay below these 20mph</p>

	<p>limits in these mentioned conditions in modern vehicles you spend more time looking at the speedo rather than the road ! Which I personally find far more dangerous. At present in Sonning eye ,the road from the bridge to playhatch roundabout is in such a shocking state of repair this should be the priority not faffing around with such a pointless waste of time and money ! We have kerb stones displaced , that are leaning into the road , the road surface is a total disgrace, cars get damaged regularly and when the crater like potholes get repaired, the job done is so appallingly it lasts a matter of weeks ! Vehicles literally have to drive over the centre line (if there was one , because this has also been neglected for years ) to avoid the damaged road surface, causing larger vehicles to swerve to avoid each other ! Please stop wasting tax payers money on these pointless schemes and fix the priorities properly rather than just bodging it up time and time again! Thank you rant over .</p> <p>Travel change: <b>No</b></p>
<p>(5) Local resident, (Sonning Eye, Sonning Eye)</p>	<p>Playhatch area 20mph – <b>Object</b> Sonning Eye area 20mph – <b>Support</b></p> <p>The level of traffic through Sonning warrants a speed reduction, Playhatch does not</p> <p>Travel change: <b>No</b></p>
<p>(6) As part of a group/organisation, (Oxfordshire Cycling Network)</p>	<p>Playhatch area 20mph – <b>Support</b> Sonning Eye area 20mph – <b>Object</b></p> <p>We support these two 20mph speed limits because:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) They are demonstrated to reduce road casualties, with strong evidence from Wales and other sites across UK and Europe.</li> <li>2) They reduce air pollution and noise pollution, and its harmful effects on the physical and mental health on others.</li> <li>3) They make walking and cycling more attractive options, helping to enable these healthier options, which will make the roads safer and less polluted for others.</li> </ol> <p>Travel change: <b>Yes - cycle more</b></p>



<p>(7) Local resident, (Playhatch, Foxhill Lane)</p>	<p>Playhatch area 20mph – <b>Support</b> Sonning Eye area 20mph – <b>Object</b></p> <p>Houses are right on the road in Playhatch and there is no pavement. Drivers coming down the hill especially do more than 30mph as it is. Reducing the speed limit without any enforcement like a camera is unlikely to help. It would be even better if there was a speed bump up hill from The Crown pub to physically slow the traffic.</p> <p>Travel change: <b>No</b></p>
<p>(8) As a business, (Playhatch, Henley Road)</p>	<p>Playhatch area 20mph – <b>Partially support</b> Sonning Eye area 20mph – <b>Partially support</b></p> <p>The roads that have been excluded from the proposals are those that actually need reviewing, not those proposed for 20mph</p> <p>Travel change: <b>No</b></p>
<p>(9) Local resident, (Sonning Eye, Sonning Eye)</p>	<p>Playhatch area 20mph – <b>Partially support</b> Sonning Eye area 20mph – <b>Partially support</b></p> <p>Action needs to be taken about the speeding from Sonning Bridge but given there is no enforcement of the current 30mph, I fail to see what spending money on a 20mph zone which also won't be enforced. Can the money not be spent on cameras or reactive signs which might make a difference?</p> <p>Travel change: <b>No</b></p>
<p>(10) Local resident, (Sonning Eye, Sonning Eye Old Road)</p>	<p>Playhatch area 20mph – <b>Partially support</b> Sonning Eye area 20mph – <b>Support</b></p> <p>The road between Sonning Bridge and the mini roundabout is narrow and is dangerous for cyclists and pedestrians</p>

	<p>Travel change: <b>No</b></p>
<p>(11) Local resident, (Sonning Eye, Spring Lane)</p>	<p>Playhatch area 20mph – <b>Partially support</b> Sonning Eye area 20mph – <b>Support</b></p> <p>The road from Sonning bridge to the Sonning eye roundabout is particularly dangerous narrow and very close to the walls of houses</p> <p>There is nowhere for a pedestrian to walk or cross safely. Playhatch has much less danger and much less traffic</p> <p>Travel change: <b>No</b></p>
<p>(12) Local resident, (Playhatch, Foxhill Lane)</p>	<p>Playhatch area 20mph – <b>Support</b> Sonning Eye area 20mph – <b>Partially support</b></p> <p>The current 30mph in Playhatch is abused by most drivers 20mph should have the effect to bring drivers down to a sensible speed particularly if it can be supported by other traffic calming measures - bumps or similar .</p> <p>Travel change: <b>Yes – walk/wheel more</b></p>
<p>(13) Local resident, (Sonning Eye, B478)</p>	<p>Playhatch area 20mph – <b>Support</b> Sonning Eye area 20mph – <b>Partially support</b></p> <p>Our home, the Bull Barn, in Sonning Eye, is immediately adjacent to the B478. Our home is a converted cow shed built on a single level, ie a bungalow. Our bedrooms are situated less than 2m from the roadside. While I support the introduction of a 20mph speed limit it is conditional that it DOES NOT include speed humps. As things are now, a car going over a minor pot at any point along the road within 50m of our bedroom makes a loud noise, enough to wake us. The addition of speed humps will result our home being uninhabitable. Therefore, if the plan includes speed humps, WE OBJECT, if it does not include speed humps WE SUPPORT.</p>

	Travel change: <b>No</b>
(14) Local resident, (Playhatch, Foxhill Lane)	<p>Playhatch area 20mph – <b>Support</b>  Sonning Eye area 20mph – <b>Support</b></p> <p>For safety of residents</p> <p>Travel change: <b>Yes – walk/wheel more</b></p>
(15) Local resident, (Playhatch, Playhatch)	<p>Playhatch area 20mph – <b>Support</b>  Sonning Eye area 20mph – <b>Support</b></p> <p>Support 20mph as children and adults have to walk on the road whilst cars speed over 30mph. The reduced limit would make pedestrians safer.</p> <p>Travel change: <b>No</b></p>
(16) Local resident, (Playhatch, Road running through Playhatch)	<p>Playhatch area 20mph – <b>Support</b>  Sonning Eye area 20mph – <b>Support</b></p> <p>I support the proposed 20mph speed limit to reduce the speed of vehicles going through these hamlets. My only comment would be to extend the proposed 20mph speed limit in Playhatch to extend a little bit further from Newbury Cottage up to the entrance to the quarry.</p> <p>Travel change: <b>No</b></p>
(17) Local resident, (Playhatch, Road running through Playhatch)	<p>Playhatch area 20mph – <b>Support</b>  Sonning Eye area 20mph – <b>Support</b></p>

	<p>As a mother of 3 children in Playhatch it is extremely worrying when cars (and quarry lorries) are travelling faster than they should be when trying to cross the road or walk through the village (which has no safe pavements for pedestrians). I believe that a lower speed limit will slow vehicles down to a much safer speed. Thank you</p> <p>Travel change: <b>Yes – walk/wheel more</b></p>
<p>(18) Local resident, (Playhatch, Road running through Playhatch)</p>	<p>Playhatch area 20mph – <b>Support</b> Sonning Eye area 20mph – <b>Support</b></p> <p>We live in Playhatch by the roundabout and our driveway is partially concealed. It's currently quite scary to pull out into traffic as people pick up speed coming down the hill past the pub. We also have a young son and sports cars speeding through the village at night sometimes wake him up.</p> <p>Travel change: <b>Yes – walk/wheel more</b></p>
<p>(19) Local resident, (Playhatch, Road running through Playhatch)</p>	<p>Playhatch area 20mph – <b>Support</b> Sonning Eye area 20mph – <b>Support</b></p> <p>Motor cars and cyclist speed through the village of Playhatch in both directions hence I am supporting the proposed 20mph zone for Playhatch and Sonning Eye to encourage slower speeds in the area. Please can the zone be extended to beyond the entrance to Playhatch Quarry</p> <p>Travel change: <b>No</b></p>
<p>(20) Local resident, (Playhatch, Dene Close)</p>	<p>Playhatch area 20mph – <b>Support</b> Sonning Eye area 20mph – <b>Support</b></p> <p>I live in Playhatch and have a 7 year old. Whenever we walk out of the house to go to the bus stop or the pub or just to go for a walk, cars are clearly speeding and it's very dangerous. Due to flooding, the speeding is even worse</p> <p>Travel change: <b>Yes – walk/wheel more</b></p>

<p>(21) Local resident, (Playhatch, Road between shoulder of Mutton and Crown pub)</p>	<p>Playhatch area 20mph – <b>Support</b> Sonning Eye area 20mph – <b>Support</b></p> <p>Dangerous coming out of my drive near the Crown pub as cars wiz past up the hill at over 30mph</p> <p>Travel change: <b>No</b></p>
<p>(22) Local resident, (Sonning, Play Hatch Road)</p>	<p>Playhatch area 20mph – <b>Support</b> Sonning Eye area 20mph – <b>Support</b></p> <p>As a child I could cycle safely through the village. The road is no longer safe.</p> <p>Travel change: <b>Yes - cycle more</b></p>
<p>(23) As part of a group/organisation, (Sonning &amp; Sonning Eye Society)</p>	<p>Playhatch area 20mph – <b>Support</b> Sonning Eye area 20mph – <b>Support</b></p> <p>The road is narrow with bends. There are also no kerbs in parts. There is also no footpath in most of the proposed areas. The Sonning &amp; Sonning Eye Society strongly support the proposal.</p> <p>Travel change: <b>Yes – walk/wheel more</b></p>
<p>(24) Local resident, (Sonning Eye, Waterside)</p>	<p>Playhatch area 20mph – <b>Support</b> Sonning Eye area 20mph – <b>Support</b></p> <p>A consistent 20mph speed limit in a local area seems to reduce speeding. Drivers don't seem to notice the changes from a 30 to a 20mph zone. The pavements in Sonning Eye are very narrow. I walk along these to take my daughter to school, and would feel much safer if drivers were slowed down, forcing them to take more care. 20mph would also make the Sonning Eye Roundabout less dangerous: 30mph and a blind corner, where drivers don't slow for a Roundabout is a dangerous combination.</p>

	<p>Travel change: <b>Yes – walk/wheel more</b></p>
<p>(25) Local resident, (Sonning Eye, B478)</p>	<p>Playhatch area 20mph – <b>Support</b> Sonning Eye area 20mph – <b>Support</b></p> <p>My overall priority as a resident is safety for walking, pulling out of our drive and cycling. I believe strongly that a reduced speed limit will keep local residents safer when out and about in Sonning Eye. Traffic users on the B478 don't seem to appreciate that there is a local community who live here as they see it as a rat run to bypass Reading. ☐☐</p> <p>Travel change: <b>Yes – walk/wheel more</b></p>
<p>(26) Local Cllr, (Sonning Eye, B478)</p>	<p>Playhatch area 20mph – <b>Support</b> Sonning Eye area 20mph – <b>Support</b></p> <p>Good day. My household is in full support of this 20mph restriction. At the Sonning Eye roundabout, traffic will blast off the junction toward Playhatch and often exceeding 30mph, 40mph...</p> <p>There are pedestrians often walking along this stretch of the as the footpath is under water 3-5mths a year. Exiting driveways can be a perilous task for residents whose properties sit flush to the B road that travels through Playhath and Sonning Eye. This restriction, we feel, would be a safety gain to the local community.</p> <p>Travel change: <b>No</b></p>
<p>(27) As a business, (Sonning Eye, B478)</p>	<p>Playhatch area 20mph – <b>Support</b> Sonning Eye area 20mph – <b>Support</b></p> <p>Cars drive too fast. Accelerating to and from the Sonning Bridge. Clients have been seriously injured as well as myself!</p> <p>Travel change: <b>No</b></p>

(28) Local resident, (Sonning Eye, Frizers Farm Lane)	<p>Playhatch area 20mph – <b>Support</b> Sonning Eye area 20mph – <b>Support</b></p> <p>Very difficult to pull out of driveways, the roundabout and lanes with vehicles travelling quickly. Animals and children are at risk because of the absence of pavements and paths which necessitates walking across and along the road.</p> <p>Travel change: <b>Yes – walk/wheel more</b></p>
(29) Local Cllr, (Sonning Eye, Frizer's Lane/South Road aka un-named)	<p>Playhatch area 20mph – <b>Support</b> Sonning Eye area 20mph – <b>Support</b></p> <p>These areas are dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists. Their safety will be improved.</p> <p>Travel change: <b>Other</b> It will depend on the impact on traffic speed</p>
(30) Local resident, (Sonning Eye, Lane leading to Mill Farm)	<p>Playhatch area 20mph – <b>Support</b> Sonning Eye area 20mph – <b>Support</b></p> <p>Traffic leaving the Sonning bridge often accelerate away at high speed probably in frustration at queueing to get over the bridge. It is extremely dangerous situation for pedestrians walking along the narrow footpath beside the B478. There is little room for pedestrians to pass each other and the proximity of vehicles poses a danger. Vehicle wing mirrors come very close to pedestrians.</p> <p>Travel change: <b>No</b></p>
(31) Local resident, (Sonning Eye, Playhatch Road)	<p>Playhatch area 20mph – <b>Support</b> Sonning Eye area 20mph – <b>Support</b></p>

	<p>Because cars drive so fast, sometimes over 50mph. Hence need to slow traffic.</p> <p>Travel change: <b>No</b></p>
<p>(32) Local resident, (Sonning Eye, Playhatch Road)</p>	<p>Playhatch area 20mph – <b>Support</b> Sonning Eye area 20mph – <b>Support</b></p> <p>I support because many motorists are driving too fast which makes it dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists.</p> <p>Travel change: <b>Yes - cycle more</b></p>
<p>(33) Local resident, (Sonning Eye, Sonning Eye)</p>	<p>Playhatch area 20mph – <b>Support</b> Sonning Eye area 20mph – <b>Support</b></p> <p>This road is very dangerous with no pathways and access to and from the village is treacherous. Reducing the speed would make things slightly better. With the amount of traffic that needs to go over Sonning Bridge something must be done to improve this route and it's safety.</p> <p>Travel change: <b>Yes - cycle more</b></p>
<p>(34) Local resident, (Sonning Eye, B478)</p>	<p>Playhatch area 20mph – <b>Support</b> Sonning Eye area 20mph – <b>Support</b></p> <p>The current 30mph isn't abided by. There are no foot paths on either side of the road so often has pedestrians on. The road quality is not acceptable for speeds higher than 20mph</p> <p>Travel change: <b>Yes – walk/wheel more</b></p>
<p>(35) Member of public, (Twyford, Glevondon Road)</p>	<p>Playhatch area 20mph – <b>Support</b> Sonning Eye area 20mph – <b>Support</b></p>



	<p>These roads are congested and the lower speed limit will not impact the participants in traffic. The roads are not in great shape so lower speed limit might reduce the need for cars to swerve on the road avoiding potholes but causing dangerous situations.</p> <p>Travel change: <b>No</b></p>
<p>(36) Local resident, (Sonning Eye, Playhatch Road)</p>	<p>Playhatch area 20mph – <b>No objection</b> Sonning Eye area 20mph – <b>Support</b></p> <p>Live on Playhatch Road near Spring Lane and cars frequently drive past at 50mph. Dangerous for us leaving our driveway. Nearer the bridges traffic calming is needed due to narrow road</p> <p>Travel change: <b>No</b></p>
<p>(37) Local resident, (Sonning Eye, Unnamed Road)</p>	<p>Playhatch area 20mph – <b>No objection</b> Sonning Eye area 20mph – <b>Support</b></p> <p>As a local resident I have witnessed too many near misses, whether cyclists (because the road is too narrow to allow overtaking if there is a car oncoming), pedestrians (there is no pavement) or cars (particularly at the Sonning Eye roundabout where traffic coming north often does not always slow down/have regard to cars entering the roundabout from Sonning Eye).</p> <p>Aside from 20mph signage, I would encourage chevrons to be painted on the road surfaces, particularly on the approach to the Sonning Eye roundabout.</p> <p>Travel change: <b>No</b></p>
<p>(38) Local resident, (Sonning Eye, Waterside)</p>	<p>Playhatch area 20mph – <b>No objection</b> Sonning Eye area 20mph – <b>Support</b></p>

	<p>Traffic speeds up as it comes out of the current 20mph limit at the Sonning Eye roundabout. Keeping the limit consistent would help keep speeds down.</p>
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Travel change: **Yes – walk/wheel more**