

Divisions affected: *Wheatley*

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

**23 JANUARY 2025**

### **BECKLEY & STOWOOD – 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 Beckley and Stowood, as advertised.**

#### **Executive Summary**

1. The report presents responses to a statutory consultation on the proposals to introduce 20mph speed limits within Beckley & Stowood 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)*

[Jennifer.Crouch@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Jennifer.Crouch@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

## **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 Beckley and Stowood by making them safer and more attractive.

## **Formal Consultation**

7. Formal consultation was carried out between 14 November and 06 December 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, South Oxfordshire District Council, the local District Cllrs, Beckley & Stowood Parish Council, and the local County Councillor representing the Wheatley 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.

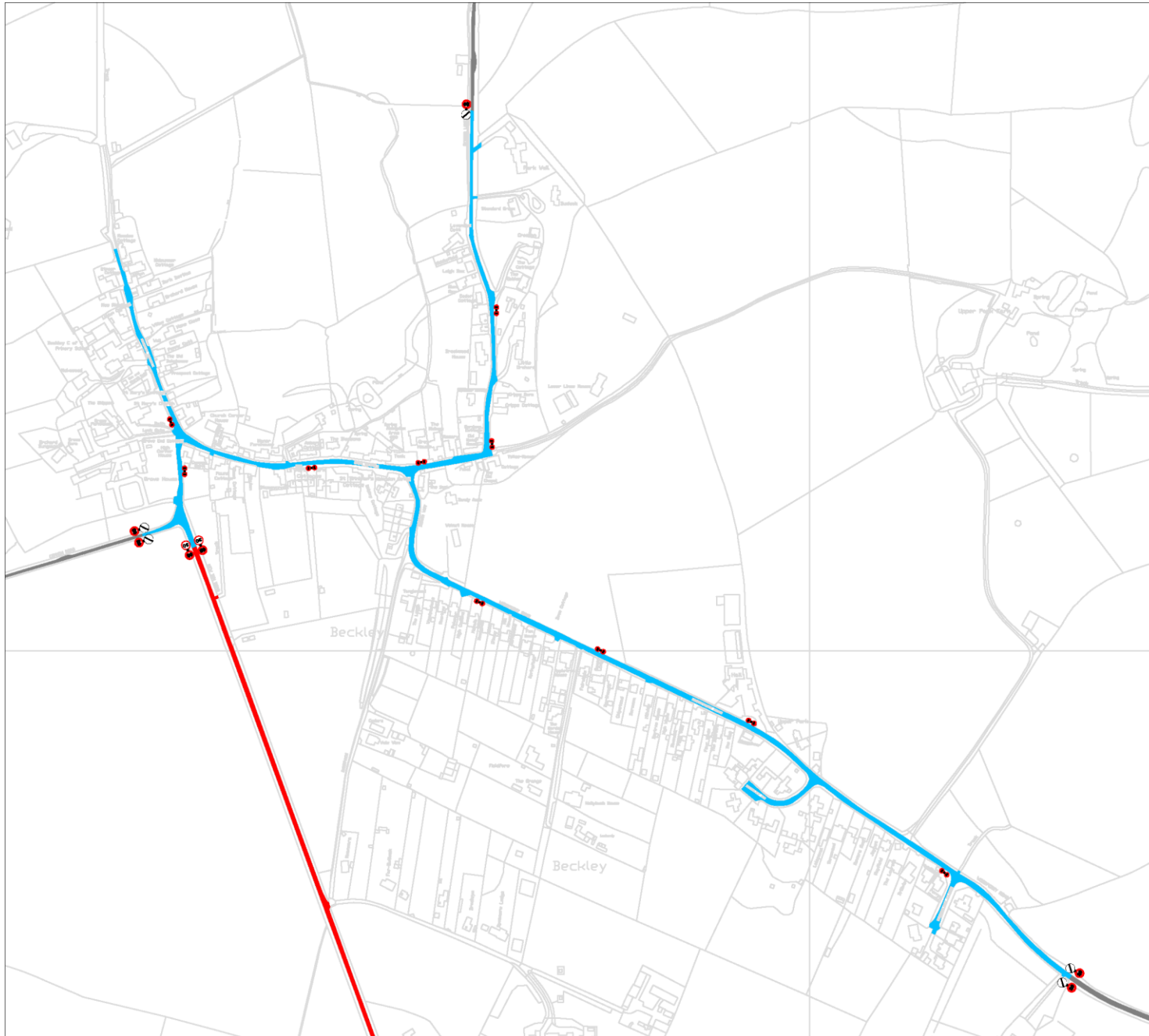
### **Statutory consultee responses:**

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.
10. Oxford bus company submitted a non-objection, confirming that the proposals would not affect local bus operations.
11. Beckley Parish Council responded that there was a good level of support for the current 20mph proposals, but that additionally there was support - including from the local member - to extend the 20mph speed limit to include the full length of both Common Road and Otmoor Lane, or should the county council not judge this to be appropriate, to introduced a 30mph limit on these roads.

### **Other Responses:**

12. 20 further responses were received during the course of the formal consultation, comprising of five objections (25%), two partially supporting (10%), and 13 in support (65%).
13. 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.





Beckley 20mph Scheme

PROPOSAL 1.0

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

© Crown Copyright and Database rights 10023943 2017

Rev.	Date	Purpose of revision	Drawn	Checked	Approved
1.0	05.06.24	Proposal 1	C.R		



Owen Jenkins  
 Director for  
 Infrastructure Delivery  
 Communities  
 Oxfordshire County Council  
 County Hall  
 New Road  
 Oxford  
 OX1 1MD  
 Tel: 0845 310 1111

Project title: Beckley 20mph Scheme

Drawing title:  
 Beckley 20mph Scheme Overview

Drawing Status

Scale @ A3	Drawn by: C.R	Checked by: Ak	Approved by: Ak
	Date drawn: 05.06.24	Date checked: 07.06.24	Date approved: 07.06.24

Oxfordshire Project No. & File Ref

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

RESPONDENT	COMMENTS
<p>(1) Traffic Management Officer, (Thames Valley Police)</p>	<p><b>Concerns</b></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 (<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> <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> – We can confirm that this does not affect bus operations and thus we raise no objection.</p>
(23) Beckley & Stowood Parish Council	<p><b>Support</b> – Beckley and Stowood Parish Council look forward to seeing the results of the 20mph survey and discussing and agreeing the next steps with you. There seems to be a lot of support for it amongst our parishioners in Beckley village.</p> <p>The survey has provoked quite a few comments to us and directly to you, about the anomalies in our local speed limits and the need to extend two roads that currently have no speed limit into the scheme.</p> <p>The roads in question are the northern end of Otmoor Lane and from the western end and along the length of Common Road to the B4027. Please see the map attached. Both currently have no speed limit, and the Parish Council supports proposals to ideally extend the 20mph speed limit to the full extent of these roads. If this is not possible then the next option would be to impose a 30mph limit there.</p>

	<p>Otmoor Lane is very narrow in the unlimited section to the north and has ditches along it. There is a lot of traffic as there is the RSPB reserve and car park at the north end, and particularly at starling murmuration times the lane can become gridlocked with traffic overflowing to and from the reserve. There is also an MoD rifle range to the east and a lot of large vehicles taking users to and from the range. Despite the sometimes very heavy traffic cars have been speeding to 60mph and above along here. This is a serious hazard to any children, horse riders, pedestrians and other vehicles. Many walkers and equestrians use the many footpaths and bridleways along the route.</p> <p>Common Road has a number of houses and a farm in the unlimited part and the road is again narrow and hazardous. It is used by those living in Beckley village when going into Oxford via Elsfield or towards Islip/A34 etc. Again, cars have been seen to gain excessive speed towards and away from B4027, which is dangerous for those living there and using the road.</p> <p>We have discussed this with our County Councillor Tim Bearder, who is copied and gained his support. Both the 20mph speed limit and extension to the length of Otmoor Land and Common Road would contribute to the County Council's priority to reduce road traffic accidents.</p> <p>We look forward to discussing the survey results with you and progressing both the 20mph scheme and its extension in the near future.</p>
(3) Local resident, (Beckley, New Inn Road)	<p><b>Object</b> – On the high street you can't do any faster than 20mph the only place it could be put into place is otmoor Lane as that's a 50.</p>
(4) Local resident, (Beckley, Woodperry Road)	<p><b>Object</b> – There is no excessive speeding. There have no incidents or accidents attributed to speeding. If there is a change it should only be on the High St near Abingdon Arms.</p>
(5) Member of public, (Oxford, Elms Drive)	<p><b>Object</b> – Unnecessary, waste of valuable moneys</p>
(6) Local resident, (Beckley)	<p><b>Object</b> – I live in Beckley and a 20 mph speed limit is completely unnecessary. There is no problem with the speed of the cars today and no danger posed to any other road users. Please leave the roads alone.</p>

<p>(7) Local resident, (Beckley)</p>	<p><b>Object</b> – I live in Beckley and a 20 mph speed limit is completely unnecessary. There is no problem with the speed of the cars today and no danger posed to any other road users. Please leave the roads alone.</p> <p>I have two children and they feel very safe and Woodperry Road is nice and wide.</p>
<p>(8) Local resident, (Beckley, Woodperry Road)</p>	<p><b>Partially support</b> – Should be extended to cover all of the roads down to otmoor</p>
<p>(9) Email response, (unknown)</p>	<p><b>Partially support</b> – I welcome the proposal but think the 20mph limit on Otmoor Lane should be imposed over its whole length. It is a very narrow road and the RSPB and the Army Range both generate significant traffic which often shows little regard for other quite significant users eg walkers, cyclists, horse riders and daily movements of large farm vehicles.</p> <p>Conflict is common. At the time of the starling murmurings ( which are widely publicised and attract large numbers of visitors by all modes) traffic is very high ( a local resident did a count a few years ago which showed the scale) with many people trying to walk down and up during that twilight hour as well. In places where there is conflict there is nowhere for walkers, cyclists to go in order to avoid traffic as the road is narrow and the verges are in such poor codition.The PC has had many discussions with the RSPB to try to reduce the problem. The road surface on the part of Otmoor Lane not covered by the proposal is really bad which exacerbates the problem and could be a danger to drivers travelling too fast anyway.</p> <p>I think ending the 20mph limit by Park Wall suggests to drivers that they can drive as fast as they like below there which is the wrong message to give as this stretch of road is arguably that which experiences the most conflict between all types of road user. IF the regulations do not cover a situation like this it doesn't seem to make any sense. I would welcome any advice you can give in solving problems in locations like this</p>
<p>(10) Local resident, (Beckley, Beckley Court)</p>	<p><b>Support</b> – I strongly support the proposal to reduce the speed limit in Beckley to 20mph. Every day, I walk my four-year-old son to school along Woodperry Road, which has no pavements and no safe space to step aside in many areas due to high hedges. It is particularly nerve-wracking as the road is not only narrow but also frequented by tourist buses heading to Otmoor and delivery vans that often travel at excessive speeds, making it feel highly unsafe for pedestrians. Lowering the speed limit would make a significant difference, reducing the risk of accidents and ensuring</p>



	<p>that children and families can walk to school safely. This change is vital for the safety of our community and for those who rely on this road daily.</p>
<p>(11) Local resident, (Beckley, High Street)</p>	<p><b>Support</b> – As Beckley resident for over 14 years and parent of two children at Beckley Primary School, I am writing to express my full support for the proposal to reduce the speed limit in Beckley in accordance with the map attached to the consultation documentation referenced above. I would however like to suggest the following minor amendments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That the transition to 20mph limit on Common Road be extended further west at least as far as (Lat:Long) 51.79546139185098, -1.193787 (see <a href="https://maps.app.goo.gl/CG2AJbK4UR4cbde66">https://maps.app.goo.gl/CG2AJbK4UR4cbde66</a>) to include the corner at (Lat:Long) 51.795602746175454, -1.1931507576720095 (see <a href="https://maps.app.goo.gl/1trx3oDGRvEVxRMtA">https://maps.app.goo.gl/1trx3oDGRvEVxRMtA</a>). This blind corner has been the site of numerous speed-related accidents over the years, as residents of the adjacent cottages will tell you (one near fatal accident suffered by my wife on a bicycle). Furthermore, the stretch of Common Road that would be included if this proposed amendment were to be accepted, is often used by children for cycling, including for the school cycling proficiency course in year 6. It is also heavily used by pedestrians between Hewel Barn, Whistler’s Cottage, Squirrel and Woodpie Cottages, and by footpath walkers and runners between Beckley Common and the village centre.</li> <li>2. In addition to the proposed speed limit reduction, I would also like to recommend that convex traffic mirrors be considered at this corner, as well as at the corner of High Street and New Inn Road, as these corners are both blind and extremely dangerous.</li> </ol>
<p>(12) Local resident, (Beckley, High Street)</p>	<p><b>Support</b> – I would like to express my wholehearted support for the proposed 20mph limit for Beckley, in the parish of Beckley and Stowood. The roads in the village are narrow, with only the High Street having a proper pedestrian sidewalk/pavement. I am glad that the current 30 mph limit will still be in force for most of New Inn Road as this is a straight road with good visibility and easily wide enough for cars to pass each other safely at that speed.</p> <p>I would urge you though to consider extending the 20mph limit to the bottom of Otmoor Lane. Many villagers fear that, according to the proposals, once the last house is passed, car drivers may be encouraged to speed up at the 'clearway' sign (officially the NSL of 60 mph!!) when the road continues to be narrow, with pedestrians of necessity waking in the road. I also urge, for the same reason, that the 20 mph limit be extended in Common Road well beyond the 50 metres from the junction with New Inn Road as stated in the proposals, to at least past the houses at the narrowest part of the road. There is justification in fact for extending it all the way to the junction with the B4027, as the road continues to be narrow and with bends, with a downhill slope towards the B-road.</p>

(13) Local resident, (Beckley, Otmoor Lane)	<b>Support</b> – I support the proposals because I would like Beckley to be a safer place for my family and neighbours to walk. We do not have pavement in most areas of the village, meaning that my children walk on the road for more than half of their journey to school. With cars coming around blind corners at 30mph, this is quite terrifying. The area that parents park for school collection (New Inn Road leading to High Street) also has no pavement and is on a blind corner.
(14) Local resident, (Beckley, Otmoor Lane)	<b>Support</b> – Traffic speed in Otmoor lane is awful and walking the lane is a real danger. The 20 mph should be for the whole of the lane from top to bottom
(15) Local resident, (Beckley, Sandpath)	<b>Support</b> – Beckley is a small village that is only visited by residents and their friends, people visiting the Abingdon Arms, Otmoor Bird Reserve or an event at the village hall. It is not enough route to anywhere. The road conditions anyway dictate driving at 20mph or less. There is a primary school in the village and many people go for regular walks or walk dogs. The noise and danger from vehicles travelling more than 20mph impacts the environment disproportionately. 20mph limit should not cause any inconvenience as no one should be driving through the village faster than this anyway.
(16) Local resident, (Beckley, Woodperry Rd)	<b>Support</b> – Traffic in Beckley is dangerous Especially on the 75 yard stretch with two steep, blind corners, where High Street meets Roman Way and then Roman Way meets Woodperry Road. Children use this all the time, walking to and from school, in the light AND in the dark. It's narrow, dangerous and cars speed down that hill. Please take action on the speed limit now.
(17) Local resident, (Beckley, Woodperry road)	<b>Support</b> – Safety
(18) Local resident, (Beckley, New Inn Road)	<b>Support</b> – I hope it will reduce the risk to people and wildlife.

<p>(19) Local resident, (Beckley, Otmoor Lane)</p>	<p><b>Support</b> – Making it safer for children attending school as well as others in the village.</p>
<p>(20) Local resident, (Beckley)</p>	<p><b>Support</b> – would very much like to support the proposed 20 mph speed limit order (CM12.6.123) in Beckley village.</p> <p>I think folk drive too fast and I village and I am in favour of anything that would slow them down.</p> <p>It is sometimes hazardous walking along local streets especially at night. Not only people, but beloved domestic pets are put at risk.</p>
<p>(21) Local resident, (Oxford, Bulan Road)</p>	<p><b>Support</b> – I walk my two young children to school along the roads in Beckley. There are no pavements along most roads and there is a blind bend up a hill on either side of the village. It is very scary walking along those roads, and a slower speed limit would make it safer.</p>
<p>(22) Member of public, (Oxford, Marston Street)</p>	<p><b>Support</b> – Enjoy cycling and walking here. Fantastic views. Would be great to have cars a little slower.</p>