

DELEGATED DECISIONS BY CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT

26 FEBRUARY 2026

ASTHALL & MINSTER LOVELL: B4047 BURFORD ROAD – PROPOSED SPEED LIMITS

Report by Director of Environment and Highways

RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet Member is RECOMMENDED to:

- (a) Approve the introduction of the following 30mph speed limits, as advertised:
 - (i) B4047 Burford Road – from its junction with the A40 Asthall roundabout, for 325 metres,
 - (ii) The unnamed road (running north towards Asthall) – from its junction with the B4047 Burford Road, for 140 metres.
- (b) Approve the introduction of the 40mph speed limit on the B4047 Burford Road for 300 metres, as advertised.
- (c) Approve the introduction of the following 50mph speed limits on the B4047 Burford Road, as advertised:
 - (i) between the proposed 40mph 'buffer' limit at Asthall & the existing 30mph speed limit at Minster Lovell,
 - (ii) between the existing 30mph speed limit at Minster Lovell & the existing 40mph speed limit at Witney.

Executive Summary

2. This report presents responses received to a statutory consultation on proposals to make further amendments to speed limits in the vicinity of the Asthall roundabout, specifically on the B4047 and the unnamed road to Asthall, as well as new 50mph speed limits either side of Minster Lovell village on the B4047 – as shown in **Annex 1**.
3. The proposals are being put forward following investigations by Officers in order to help improve road safety generally, and additionally to address potential safety issues due to the intensification of use of adjacent retail/commercial premises – including the construction of a new access to a car park on the south side of the B4047 at Asthall.

4. Whilst also forming part of the Councils 'Vision Zero' strategy to work on a safe system approach to reducing fatal and severe injuries to road casualties, the Council proposes to reduce vehicle speeds to safer levels for all road users, including pedestrians, cyclists, equestrians, motorcyclists, and motorists.
5. 'Vision Zero' focuses on a whole safe system approach that starts with a simple premise - no one should be killed or seriously injured due to a road collision, whichever mode of transport you are using, and the whole system approach encompasses the following five aspects: safer roads and roadside, safer vehicles, safer speeds, safer users, and a holistic post-collision response.

Corporate Policies and Priorities

6. Of the three priorities identified within the newly adopted 'Oxfordshire Strategic Plan 2025-2028' which are listed below, these proposals actively support priority nos.1 & 3:

(1) Greener Oxfordshire – *“We want our communities to enjoy clean air, access to green space, and safe and sustainable ways to move around. This means reducing traffic congestion and investing in public transport, cycling and walking; protecting our natural environment; and helping Oxfordshire respond and adapt to a changing climate.”*

(2) Fairer Oxfordshire – *“We want all our residents to benefit from the advantages our county has to offer. This means supporting a local economy that benefits everyone; assisting people who face challenges in finding work; making our services as easy to access as possible; and helping communities in need.”*

(3) Healthier Oxfordshire – *“We want all our residents to be happy, healthy and safe. This means helping children get the best start in life; creating opportunities for young people to reach their full potential; supporting older people to age well and stay independent for as long as possible; and encouraging everyone to make healthy choices.”*

Financial Implications

7. Funding for consultation on the proposals (and implementation if approved) has been provided by the County Council's Vision Zero programme.

Comments checked by:

Matt Kocak – Finance Business Partnering Manager

Matthew.Kocak@Oxfordshire.gov.uk

Legal Implications

8. 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 relevant legislation.
9. The scheme has been promoted by Oxfordshire County Council as the Highway Authority and Traffic Authority under the Highways Act 1980, and the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

Comments checked by:
Nicole Olavesen – Solicitor (Regulatory)
Nicole.Olavesen@Oxfordshire.gov.uk

Staff Implications

10. There are no negative staff implications, with the appraisal of the proposals, as well as the consultation process having been undertaken by Officers from the 'Vision Zero' and 'TRO & Schemes' teams as part of their regular day-to-day duties, with no additional/negative impact on capacity expected.

Equality & Inclusion Implications

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

Sustainability Implications

12. The proposals aim to reduce vehicle speeds to safer levels for all motorists and road users, specifically those considered to be more vulnerable, including pedestrians, cyclists, equestrians, and motorcyclists.

Risk Management

13. No potential significant health and safety or service provision risks, or potentially significant financial impacts have been identified.

Formal Consultation

14. Formal consultation was carried out between 17 December 2025 and 16 January 2026. A notice was published in the Witney Gazette newspaper, and an email was 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, relevant local District Councillors, Asthall, Minster Lovell, and Curbridge & Lew Parish Councils, and the local County Councillors representing the Burford & Carterton West, and the Witney West & Ducklington divisions.

15. The parish council, and local Councillors (including County & District) were also encouraged to use the consultation documents provided to publicise the proposals amongst local residents as necessary.
16. During the course of the formal consultation, eight responses were received via the online survey, and these are summarised in the table below:

Proposal	Object	Support
30mph on B4047 Burford Road & unnamed road to Asthall	4	4
40mph on the B4047 Burford Road	4	4
50mph on B4047 Burford Road either side of Minster Lovell	3	5

17. Additionally, two emails were received directly – with Thames Valley Police raising concerns regarding compliance and what arrangements might need to be considered in terms of future enforcement, and a member of the public objecting on the basis of lower speed limits in the area not being needed, and that reducing limits without clear engineering justification possibly having unintended negative effects.
18. The full responses are shown in **Annex 2**, and copies of the original responses are available for inspection by County Councillors. Any comments received that Officers identify as containing personal abuse and/or other personal information will be redacted as appropriate.

Officer response to objections/concerns

19. Thames Valley Police (TVP) have expressed concerns, particularly on compliance and arrangements of future enforcement. The response lists six key factors that should be taken into account in any decisions on local speed limits – two of these are “composition of road users” and “road environment”. The recent opening of ‘The Farmer’s Dog’ public house has generated a significant number of patrons, most of whom arrive by car and park in the field opposite. They, therefore, have to cross the B4047 to and from the public house without the use of a controlled crossing.
20. A reduced speed limit for vehicles coming off the A40 roundabout will help to raise awareness of potential risks, which will potentially include pedestrians in the road. Even a small decrease in mean vehicle speeds will tend to reduce the likelihood and severity of any collisions that may occur.

21. At the informal consultation stage, TVP agreed the justification for lowering the speed limit on the east side of Minster Lovell but saw no evidence for the reduction on the west side. Officers consider that the road environment is appropriate, like other similar roads in Oxfordshire, for a 50mph speed limit. The two stretches are relatively short, approximately 1.4 and 1.0km, so a lower limit will help to reduce acceleration and deceleration into and out of Witney and Minster Lovell.
22. One respondent has objected on the basis of a lack of data and missing evidence. Officers confirm that these lower speed limit proposals are intended to pre-empt the safety risks that are likely to continue in the vicinity of 'The Farmer's Dog' public house due to its increased popularity and the resulting increase in the amount of traffic.
23. With regards to concerns over the proposed 50mph limits, Officers have considered these to be appropriate, especially when taking into account the existing mean speeds along both stretches of the B4047.
24. One respondent suggested that a Zebra crossing could be installed, however this is both outside the scope of this consultation, whilst also considered to be unsuitable in such a rural environment.

Paul Fermer
Director of Environment and Highways

Annex(es): Annex 1: Consultation plan
 Annex 2: Consultation responses

Contact Officer(s): Roger Plater (Senior Officer – Vision Zero)
 Anthony Kirkwood (Team Leader – Vision Zero)

February 2026

Drawing No. _____ U

Key

- Proposed 30 mph speed limit in place of existing 40mph speed limit
- Proposed 30 mph speed limit in place of existing national speed limit
- Proposed 40 mph speed limit in place of existing national speed limit
- Proposed 50 mph speed limit in place of existing national speed limit
- 30 mph speed limit - approved yet to be made/finalised
- Existing 40mph speed limit to remain as is

SAFETY, HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION

IN ADDITION TO THE HAZARD/RISKS NORMALLY ASSOCIATED WITH THE TYPES OF WORK DETAILED ON THIS DRAWING, NOTE THE FOLLOWING SIGNIFICANT RESIDUAL RISKS:

CONSTRUCTION
(ENTER 'NONE' IF APPLICABLE)

MAINTENANCE/CLEANING
(ENTER 'NONE' IF APPLICABLE)

USE
(ENTER 'NONE' IF APPLICABLE)

DECOMMISSIONING/DEMOLITION
(ENTER 'NONE' IF APPLICABLE)

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Rev.	Date	Purpose of revision	Drawn	Checked	Approved



OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Paul Farmer
Director for
Environment and Highways
Oxfordshire County Council
County Hall
New Road
Oxford
OX1 1ND
Tel: 0345 310 11 11

Project title

B4047
ASTHALL to WITNEY

Drawing title

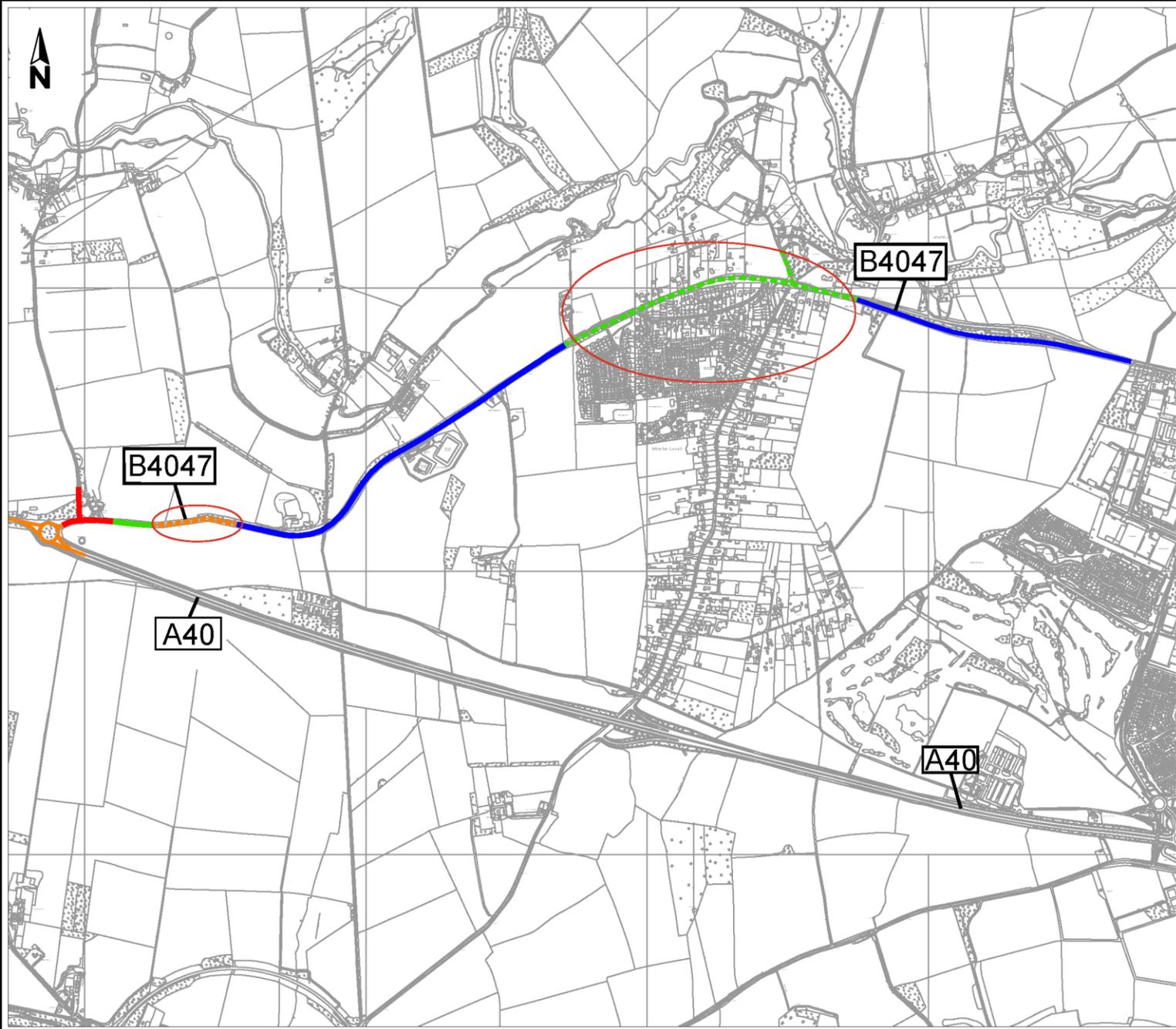
PROPOSED SPEED LIMITS

Drawing Status

Scale @ A3	Drawn by	Checked by	Approved by
NTS	JaC		
	Date drawn	Date checked	Date approved
	11/25		

Oxfordshire Project No. & File Ref

Drawing No. _____ Revision 0



RESPONDENT	COMMENTS
(e1) Traffic Management Officer, (Thames Valley Police)	<p>Concerns – I was previously aware of the these proposals during informal consultation by Vision Zero . As always are greatest concerns focuses on compliance and what arrangements you may consider in terms of future enforcement .Special reference has to go to the new 30 section adjacent to the Farmers Dog . How will it improve road safety if compliance with the new speed limit is not respected.</p> <p>Thames Valley Police welcome the opportunity to engage on plans for road safety improvement</p> <p>Compliance with new speed 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.</p> <p>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.</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)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • existing traffic speeds • road environment <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>(e2) Member of public, (Bampton, Church Street)</p>	<p>Object – it’s an objection to the new limits on the B4047.</p> <p><u>Lack of data</u></p> <p>The Statement of Reasons cites Vision Zero and general safety goals but does not provide specific local collision history or patterns. Without specific collision counts, severity breakdowns (fatal/serious/slight over a meaningful period such as 5–10 years), and collision causation factors (e.g., speed versus loss of control versus junction issues), the assessment lacks an empirical basis for speed limit changes.</p> <p>At a minimum, one would expect data on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • collision frequency by location segment • collision severity trends • evidence of a speed-related causal factor <p><u>The absence of this in the consultation reduces transparency.</u></p> <p>The crash information we do have does not implicate exceeding speed limits as a factor Local news reports confirm serious collisions on or near the B4047 and associated junctions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A serious crash involving multiple injuries on the A40 at Asthall Barrow Roundabout in January 2026 temporarily closed the road. • Another report documented three serious crashes in under 24 hours in the Oxfordshire area, including the A40/B4047 junction. <p>However, these incidents are on the A40 intersection and roundabout, not along the rural stretches of the B4047 where the new limits are proposed.</p>

	<p>Lowering the limit is unlikely to have any effect on crashes like these. In fact, as the road west from the A40 roundabout opens up (but is still 40mph), it's likely that drivers frustrated by the low limits previously will attempt overtakes.</p> <p><u>Problems with limits lowered without specific reasons</u></p> <p>Lowering speed limits without clear engineering justification can have unintended effects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-compliance: Drivers familiar with rural B roads may not respect limits perceived as unjustified, which can actually harm compliance where it's needed. • Enforcement resource diversion: Enforcing speed limits where there is no demonstrable safety need can divert police/community support from real high-risk locations. • Traffic displacement: Drivers may divert to other rural roads not designed for higher loads, increasing risk elsewhere. <p>Ssfe systems policies like VZ emphasise evidence-led interventions, not blanket limits alone.</p> <p><u>Missing evidence</u></p> <p>Before adopting speed limit changes, the evidence base should include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Report showing total collisions over last ≥5 years with a severity breakdown including contributory factors 2 Traffic volume and speed surveys - including existing 85th percentile and mean speeds <p>In its current form, the Statement of Reasons for the Speed Limit Orders does not provide sufficient local collision or traffic data to justify the proposed changes on evidence rather than principle alone.</p>
<p>(o1) County Cllr, (Bartlemas division)</p>	<p>30mph on B4047 Burford Road & unnamed road to Asthall – Support 40mph on the B4047 Burford Road – Support 50mph on B4047 Burford Road either side of Minster Lovell – Support</p> <p>Lowering speed limits is one of the most effective ways of reducing road danger, as speed is the biggest of the "fatal four". As the Active Travel Champion, I support measures to make our roads safer, reduce the significant burden on our state of the high costs of RTCs, and prevent the huge social costs of traffic collisions.</p>

<p>(o2) Local resident, (Witney, Quarry Road)</p>	<p>30mph on B4047 Burford Road & unnamed road to Asthall – Object 40mph on the B4047 Burford Road – Object 50mph on B4047 Burford Road either side of Minster Lovell – Object</p> <p>Instead of reducing speed limits we need to be teaching people road sense. With low speed limits pedestrians become complacent and are likely to cause more accidents. Lower limits also cause more congestion and more pollution. A car travelling at 50mph is just as lethal as one travelling at 60mph so why change a limit that has been in force and acceptable for many years ?</p>
<p>(o3) Local resident, (Windrush, Windrush)</p>	<p>30mph on B4047 Burford Road & unnamed road to Asthall – Object 40mph on the B4047 Burford Road – Object 50mph on B4047 Burford Road either side of Minster Lovell – Object</p> <p>Vision Zero is a ridiculous policy that neither oxford, nor any other council should blindly follow. Zero road deaths is not a policy that should be pursued without any consideration to both inconvenience and longer journey times to all road users, traffic flow changes (and slowing) caused by less traffic capacity with a lower speed limit and statical probability of accidents. Already the a40 has been seriously affected by the 50mph replacement between the roundabout and Burford, often with traffic travelling at 38mph as they are fearful to break the speed limit, rather than travelling at potentially 51mph, they would rather leave a large margin below, which has resulted in a huge increase in journey times using that road in the last 3 years. With regard to the area in question surrounding the farmers dog, there is plenty of visibility for drivers to see whether 40mph is a safe speed with no or few pedestrians and can then continue with their journey, or if there is a heavier pedestrian presence and thus whether it might be a good idea to slow down to 30 or 20 or maybe even stop if necessary. Catering to the lowest possible denominator is a race to the bottom.</p>
<p>(o4) Member of public, (Minster Lovell, Ripley avenue)</p>	<p>30mph on B4047 Burford Road & unnamed road to Asthall – Object 40mph on the B4047 Burford Road – Object 50mph on B4047 Burford Road either side of Minster Lovell – Object</p> <p>Please stop waiting public money</p>

<p>(o5) Local resident, (Charlbury, Church street)</p>	<p>30mph on B4047 Burford Road & unnamed road to Asthall – Object 40mph on the B4047 Burford Road – Object 50mph on B4047 Burford Road either side of Minster Lovell – Support</p> <p>There have been no accidents. The footfall automatically keeps speed down. Absolutely no reason to spend more money changing what works. You may want to consider a zebra crossing? And Minster Lovell has already been reduced to 30mph which is “slow” for a fairly major commuter road.</p>
<p>(o6) Local District Cllr, (Hailey, Minster Lovell & Leafield ward)</p>	<p>30mph on B4047 Burford Road & unnamed road to Asthall – Support 40mph on the B4047 Burford Road – Support 50mph on B4047 Burford Road either side of Minster Lovell – Support</p> <p>Road Safety is critically important in this area and it is known that speed kills. Therefore any proposal to reduce speed limits is to be supported.</p>
<p>(o7) Local group/organisation, (Oxfordshire Cycling Network)</p>	<p>30mph on B4047 Burford Road & unnamed road to Asthall – Support 40mph on the B4047 Burford Road – Support 50mph on B4047 Burford Road either side of Minster Lovell – Support</p> <p>The Asthall Barrow roundabout, A40 to the west and B4047 to the east have a high casualty rate. A further serious injury crash happened on the roundabout on 1 January 2026 at 4:40pm.</p> <p>Increases to traffic and parking in the area raise the level of danger for motorists and other road users. Lowering speeds can offset this, reducing danger and this can be achieved by reducing speed limits as per this proposal.</p> <p>In addition we would like to see:</p> <p>a) reduced speed limits on the A40 on the approach to the roundabout from the west. Reducing speeds would improve reaction time, which could have avoided any of 5 of the casualty collisions on the west approach or north sides of the roundabout in the last 10 years (including one fatality and one with serious injuries).</p> <p>b) more police enforcement, providing action to implement their Road Safety Strategy which states that TVP should 'Enforce safe speeds especially those on high harm routes and hotspot locations.'</p>

<p>(o8) Local resident, (Witney, Chestnut Close)</p>	<p>30mph on B4047 Burford Road & unnamed road to Asthall – Support 40mph on the B4047 Burford Road – Support 50mph on B4047 Burford Road either side of Minster Lovell – Support</p> <p>I don't consider that the topography, current surface, and usage of the roads supports higher speed limits. I have to pass through the route 4 times every week and would welcome a controlled pedestrian crossing as visitors to the commercial premises regularly walk in front of vehicles on the road, apparently not appreciating they are in a rural location.</p>
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