

Division(s) affected: *Burford & Carterton West*

DELEGATED DECISIONS BY CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT

18 JUNE 2026

FORDWELLS & ASTHALL LEIGH – PROPOSED 20MPH SPEED LIMIT

Report by Director of Environment and Highways

RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet Member is **RECOMMENDED** to

Approve the following, as advertised:

- (a) Introduce a new 20mph speed limit within Fordwells on the unnamed roads:**
 - i) running through Fordwells,**
 - ii) to Leafield, and**
 - iii) to Swinbrook,**

- (b) Extend the existing 20mph speed limit on the unnamed road running through Asthall Leigh northwards.**

Executive Summary

2. This report presents comments received to a statutory consultation – and the subsequent response to objections from County Council Officers – on proposals to a) introduce a 20mph speed limit within Fordwells, replacing lengths of 60mph National speed limit in the process, and b) extend the existing 20mph speed limit on the unnamed road running through Asthall Leigh by a further approx. 435 metres northwards, replacing that length of 60mph National speed limit in the process, leaving a 300m stretch of 60mph between Asthall Leigh and Fordwells – as shown in **Annex 1**.
3. The proposals have been put forward for road safety reasons, following a request from the Parish Council.
4. Oxfordshire County Council wants to make our built environments safer and more attractive places to walk and cycle. To enable this, 20mph speed restrictions are being used to help promote alternative modes of transport for local travel.

5. Streets are central to everyday life in Oxfordshire. They play a role in all transport journeys and are places where people shop, work and spend time. Improving the experience of being on Oxfordshire's streets will therefore improve people's local areas and their everyday lives. Improving streets to encourage active travel will also help to deliver further benefits for people in Oxfordshire. A wide range of people choosing to walk, and cycle will help to improve public health, reduce road noise, improve air quality and make local areas more relaxing. Furthermore, 20mph speed limits will help reduce casualty rates and improve road safety

Corporate Policies and Priorities

6. The proposals form part of the County Council's 20mph transformation programme, as approved at Cabinet.
7. 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

8. Funding for consultation on the proposals (and implementation if approved) has been provided by the County Council's Vision Zero programme.
9. Finance has completed a high-level review of this report. As no financial figures or costings were included, this sign off is limited to confirming that the narrative is reasonable based on the information provided. Service area officers therefore take responsibility for confirming the funding arrangements, validating the financial position & underlying data independently from Finance.

Comments checked by:
Andrew Price – Interim Business Partnering Accountant
Andrew.Price@Oxfordshire.gov.uk

Legal Implications

10. 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.
11. 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:
Jennifer Crouch – Principal Solicitor (Regulatory)
Jennifer.Crouch@Oxfordshire.gov.uk

Staff Implications

8. 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 or negative impact on capacity expected.

Equality & Inclusion Implications

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

Sustainability Implications

13. The proposals have been put forward for road safety reasons, and aim to reduce vehicle speeds to safer levels for all motorists & road users, specifically those considered to be more vulnerable, including pedestrians, cyclists, equestrians, and motorcyclists.

Risk Management

14. No potential significant health and safety or service provision risks, or potentially significant financial impacts have been identified in these proposals.

Formal Consultation

15. Formal consultation was carried out between 01 April and 01 May 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, and Leafield Parish Councils, and the local County Councillor representing the Burford & Carterton West division.
16. During the course of the formal consultation, Seven responses were received via the online survey, comprising of one partially supporting/raising concerns, and six in support.
17. Additionally, a further two emails were received directly – with Thames Valley Police not objecting, and Unlimited Oxfordshire partially supporting/raising concerns about the need to extend extents of the proposal on the road leading towards Field Assarts.
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. The response of Unlimited Oxfordshire is noted, and it is accepted that the gap between the proposed two 20mph speed limits (i.e. the new limit at Fordwells and the extended limit at Asthall Leigh) is short. Precedents in other locations where there is a similarly short gap between village speed limits typically have been to keep maintain a higher limit in the gap, in part to help emphasise – given the terminal signs provided at the start of the village speed limit – the transition into the village.
20. Additionally, the approved criteria for the 20mph limit project state that proposals should apply ‘within the extent of the built-up environment of the town or village where vulnerable road users and vehicles mix in a frequent and planned manner and be in an environment that explains and justifies a lower speed limit to the driver’.
21. Taking the above into account and also that the proposals as advertised reflect the wishes of Asthal Parish Council, it is recommended that no change to the proposals – which would also require a further statutory consultation – are progressed at present, without though precluding a future review.

Paul Fermer
Director of Environment and Highways

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

Background papers: n/a
Other Documents: n/a

Contact Officer(s): Anthony Kirkwood (Team Leader – Vision Zero)
Daron Mizen (Operational Manager – Highway Schemes)

June 2026

Drawing No. 0

- █ Proposed new 20MPH at Fordwells (replacing NSL)
- █ Proposed extension of Asthall Leigh 20MPH (replacing NSL)
- █ Existing 20MPH at Asthall Leigh

SAFETY, HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION

IN ADDITION TO THE HAZARDS/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
 Oxfordshire County Council
 County Hall
 New Road
 Oxford
 OX1 1ND
 Tel: 0845 310 1111

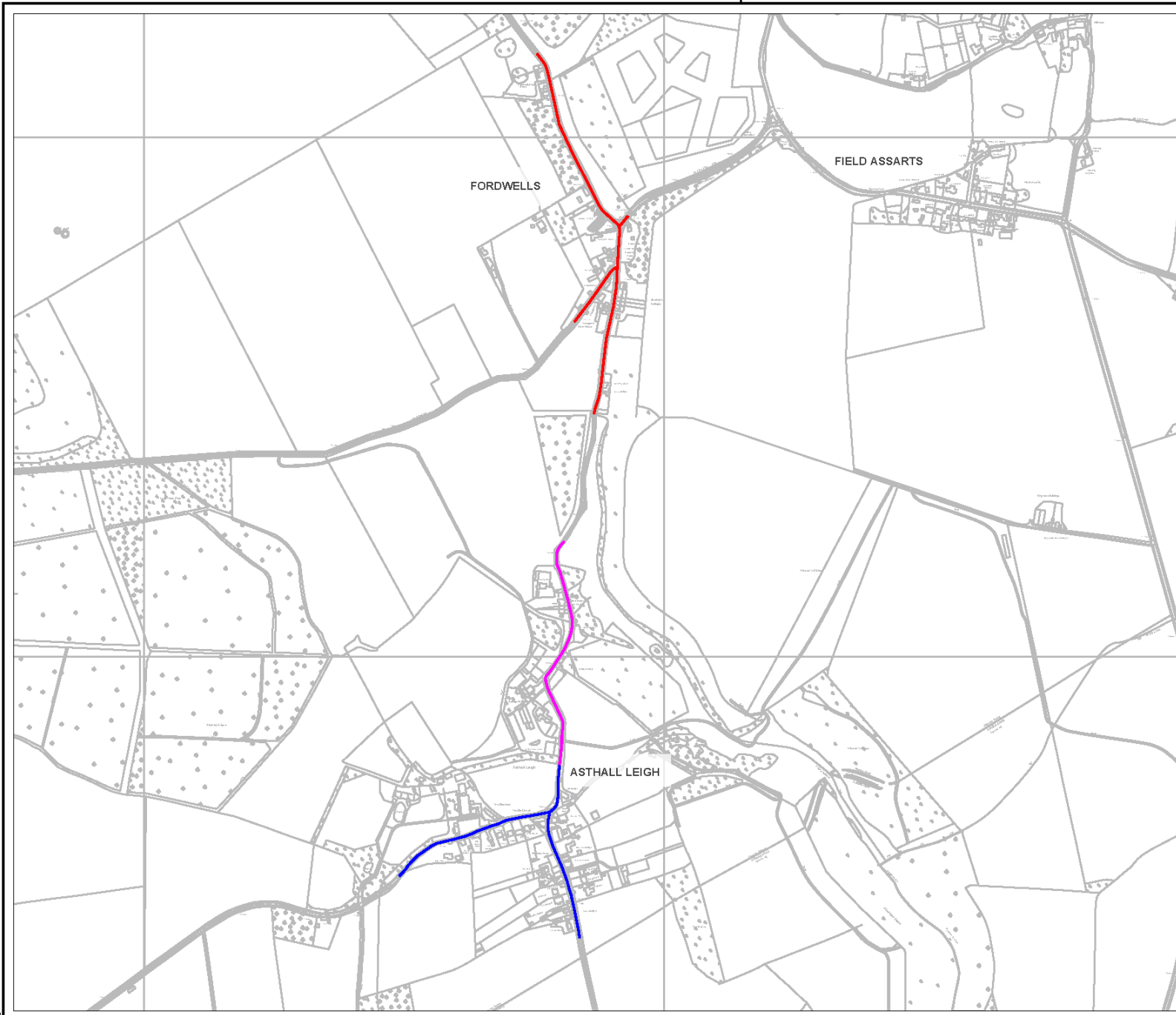
Project title
 Fordwells & Asthall Leigh (P0394)

Drawing title
 Proposed 20mph Speed Limit

Drawing Status

Scale @ A4	Drawn by AC	Checked by CM	Approved by
	Date drawn 18/03/2026	Date checked 18/03/2026	Date approved

Oxfordshire Project No. & File Ref. Revision 0



ANNEX 2

A. Email responses:

RESPONDENT	COMMENTS
(e1) Traffic Management Officer, (Thames Valley Police)	No objection
(e2) Local group/organisation, (Unlimited Oxfordshire)	Partially support/Concerns – The proposal for the 20mph speed limit at Asthall Leigh to be extended continuously to include Fordwells is very sensible. However, I suggest that the whole length of the road that leads towards Field Assarts (length about 300 metres) should be included.

B. Online responses:

RESPONDENT	COMMENTS
(o1) County Cllr, (Oxford, New Road)	<p>Fordwells – Support Asthall Leigh – Support</p> <p>We know 20mph makes roads safer for all users, and that the most dangerous roads are our rural 60mph roads. This change therefore supports vision zero and the Council's aims to eliminate death and serious injury.</p>
(o2) Member of public, (Oxford, Sunderland Avenue)	<p>Fordwells – Partially support/concerns Asthall Leigh – Partially support/concerns</p> <p>I have concerns about the ca. 260m gap between the northern end of the "Proposed extension of Asthall Leigh 20MPH (replacing NSL)" and the southern end of the "Proposed new 20MPH at Fordwells (replacing NSL)". Why the gap? Why not make the whole section a contiguous 20 mph limit, which will discourage any increase in speed of motor vehicles in the gap? This is a section of very narrow rural road which is well used by cyclists:</p>

	<p>Strava Metro recorded a total of 2,440 trips by cyclists along this section of road in 2025, with the majority being at weekends:, with 1,475 trips during the months May to August; 97% for leisure and 98% on normal, non ebikes.</p> <p>The average speed of the cyclists was 13.2 mph, so a 20 mph limit along the whole stretch is appropriate., not NSL! Vision Zero!</p>
(o3) Local resident, (Fordwells, Main Road)	<p>Fordwells – Support Asthall Leigh – Support</p> <p>Fordwells is being used increasingly as a rat run, with an ever larger volume of passing traffic. Traffic regularly transits the hamlet at more than 40 MPH. There has historically been one serious accident in the village with a child suffering two broken femurs and a broken arm. Fordwells is an outlier locally in that it does not have any speed restrictions; vehicles are in theory (and sometimes in practice) able to pass at up to 60 MPH; simply not appropriate for a small rural village. I therefore fully support the implementation of a 20 MPH speed limit.</p>
(o4) Local resident, (Fordwells, Road to Asthall Leigh)	<p>Fordwells – Support Asthall Leigh – Support</p> <p>Fordwells is unusual in not having a speed limit lower than the national limit. Traffic has increased massively since the advent of sat navs and the development of local businesses. Our cars have been involved in two rtas due to vehicles being driven too fast. I fully support a 20 mph limit in Fordwells and the extension of the limit in Asthall Leigh. I consider this to be long overdue.</p>
(o5) Local resident, (Fordwells, Main Street)	<p>Fordwells – Support Asthall Leigh – Support</p> <p>In the last few years the volume, size and significantly the speed of the vehicles passing through has increased enormously. On many occasions the speed of some vehicles would cause serious injury or death if they were to strike a resident walking along. There is no footpath at all in the village. In addition many of the residents in Fordwells are elderly.</p>

<p>(o6) Local resident, (Fordwells, Road through Fordwells)</p>	<p>Fordwells – Support Asthall Leigh – Support</p> <p>Cars are driving through our little village at high speeds . It's a tiny little road and people have no consideration. I wholly support this speed restriction</p>
<p>(o7) Local resident, (Charlbury, Quarry Lane)</p>	<p>Fordwells – Support Asthall Leigh – Support</p> <p>20mph is more than fast enough on these narrow local roads, important on both safety and environmental grounds.</p>