

Full Council

Title:	20mph Speed Limits
Meeting Date:	26 April 2022
Contact Officer:	Cassie Pinnells, Community Services Manager

Purpose of the Report

1. Oxfordshire County Council are considering making 20mph the new 30mph for Oxfordshire communities. The proposal is aimed at:
 - a) making streets safer
 - b) encouraging residents to walk or cycle
 - c) reducing noise and pollution.
2. The initiative will not be compulsory and will need to be supported by the Town Council and by the Local County Councillors.
3. Thame Town Council has received various requests for 20mph for roads in Thame and the Village of Moreton to put forward for consideration for the Oxfordshire County Council initiative.

Action

4. To **consider** the various requests for 20mph and **agree** which area(s) to put forward to Oxfordshire County Council for consideration for 20mph speed limits.

Background

Which areas are eligible:

5. The area of the proposed restriction should not have a current speed limit that is greater than 40mph. It can be a whole village or town or just one street within the area. It should be in an area with features that justify a lower speed limit to drivers, for example, an area which has:
 - evidence of traffic incidents or potential dangers
 - visible homes, shops and businesses
 - a school or a school route
 - a cycling route
 - a quiet lane designation.

It could also be an area which would benefit from more active travel such as cycling and walking, or better air quality.

Oxfordshire County Council Criteria

6. In assessing proposals the following factors will be considered in order of importance:
 - Numbers of people killed or seriously injured
 - Minor accidents
 - Near-misses
 - Includes a school walking route
 - Number of pedestrians crossing the road

- Includes homes and business
- Includes a financial contribution
- Help to deliver other highways aims or policies.

How to apply

7. Residents can apply through their local parish or town council, or parish or town councils can apply directly. In either case applications will need the support of your local elected county council member. OCC will meet the parish or town council after assessing an area.

Requests received by Thame Town Council

8. Below are the written requests received in order of receipt.
9. Appendix 1 attached to this report a location map highlights the roads requested at the time of writing this report.
10. It should be noted that Moreton Residents Association requested support for 20 mph for their village early in the process. Following discussions with Highways Officers it is suggested that this application should be separated from the Town requirements as Moreton is classed as a Village/Hamlet with no street lighting or footpaths and accessed through one main road.

Location	Eligibility
Lea Park:- Roundhead Drive Cromwell Avenue Vane Road	Evidence of potential dangers via a traffic survey undertaken by Highways. School route to Barley Hill.
Towersey Drive Queens Road Kings Road Chiltern Vale Estate	School route Evidence of traffic incidents
Park Street	School route
Wellington Street	School route
Rooks Lane	Narrow road
Churchill Crescent	School route Narrow road used with the road parallel to the Kingsey Road to avoid the speed camera. Road safety
Windmill Road Corbetts Way	Road safety

Upper High Street	Road Safety Traffic Omissions
Wenman Road	Road safety, speeding noise and vibrations
Moreton Lane	Road safety, a cycling route for active travel
Coombe Hill Crescent	Road safety, speeding

Location	Eligibility
Moreton Village	Narrow roads no official footpaths. No street lighting. A walking and cycling route.

11. The TVP accident statistic [website](#) shows data concerning Thame’s serious incidents and minor incidents which highlight the central areas such as, High Street, Bell Lane, Oxford Road, Nelson Street, Upper High Street, Wellington Street, Park Street and past Chinnor Road.
12. Oxfordshire County Council have set up a dedicated team to investigate each application, as they have the expertise in this field. It may be prudent for Thame to apply for the whole town to be covered by 20mph to enable a full assessment.
13. An alternative proposal could be to approve the whole of Thame as a 20 mph zone to Oxfordshire County Council subject to exact start and stop points within the area to enable a further discussion with the Town Council.

Enforcement

14. Thames Valley Police will have responsibility for enforcement, and Town and parish councils are encouraged to set up community speed watch programmes. All vehicles answering emergency calls will be exempt from the speed limit.
15. Thame Town Council has purchased the equipment to enable community speed watch programmes to assist with enforcement. With partnership working with the Resident Associations, C21 Thame and Thame Green Living, it is hoped that a group of volunteers will be found to undertake the required training provided by the Police and form a Thame community speed watch group.

Signage

16. The design will rely primarily on signs and road markings. Larger signs will mark the entrance and exit of a 20mph area where the speed limit changes. These signs will be supplemented by smaller repeat signs or road markings. Care will be taken in conservation areas and around historic buildings. As Thame has street lighting in place, this legally means the area is 30mph, repeater signage will be required in areas denoted to the lower limit.

Monitoring

17. Oxfordshire County Councils are carrying out pilots in five areas to find out the impact of a simple change of road sign from 30mph to 20mph and the impact of different types of traffic management measures. Monitoring will be carried out through a variety of 'before and after' surveys, and the impact will be assessed a year after the completion of phase 1 – around November 2022. If a scheme does not work, the speed regulation can be revoked.

The Evidence

- **Safer roads:** Research by the UK Transport Research Laboratory has shown that every 1mph reduction in average urban speeds can result in a 6 per cent fall in the number of casualties. It's also been shown that you are seven times more likely to survive if you are hit by a car driving at 20mph, than if you are hit at 30mph. If a child suddenly steps in front of a car, you are much less likely to seriously injure or kill them if you keep to a 20mph limit.
- **Congestion:** Research shows that slower speeds encourage a smoother driving style with less stopping and starting which helps traffic to flow. Evidence from other areas shows that slower speeds encourage more people to walk and cycle.
- **Air pollution:** Driving at 20mph causes some emissions to rise slightly and some to fall. Reduced acceleration and braking may help to reduce fuel consumption and associated emissions. Some environmental benefit from the change is expected, from helping to encourage walking or cycling short distances instead of driving.
- **Journey times:** Research in other cities, suggests that journey times will not significantly increase.

Environmental:

18. The adopted Thame Green Living Plan supports healthier living, improving the quality of our air and working with local authorities to support improving roads.
19. On the [20's Plenty For Us](#) website's frequently answered questions:
 Q: "Do emissions and fuel used increase with 20mph limits?"
 A: "That the mechanics and physics are quite clear. Smoother driving to a lower limit will always require less energy, less fuel and produce fewer emissions than repeatedly accelerating to a higher limit."

Resource Appraisal

20. If Thame and Moreton Village are accepted onto the Oxfordshire Pilot Schemes, the cost for the change in the Traffic Regulation Order, consultation, main signage, repeater signage and any road markings will be paid for by Oxfordshire County Council. However, costs would be incurred by the Town Council if further measures are needed to maintain lower vehicle speeds, for example, build-outs, variable speed messaging signs, speed humps and cameras.

Risk Assessment

21. The opportunity for Thame and Moreton Village to be included in the Oxfordshire County Council 20mph initiative may be lost with the speed limits remaining 30mph. A lower speed limit will assist with safer roads.

Legal Powers

- Localism Act 2011 s8
- Local Government and Rating Act 1997, s30

Recommendation:

- i) To **consider** the various requests for 20mph in Thame and **agree** which area(s) to put forward to Oxfordshire County Council for consideration for 20mph speed limits.
- ii) To **consider** the Moreton Village request for 20mph and **agree** this to be put forward to Oxfordshire County Council for consideration for 20mph speed limits.