

Banbury Hill build out

Purpose

1. To authorise spending of £3,500 (estimated) to part fund construction of a 'buildout' physical traffic calming measure on Banbury Hill following consultation by Oxfordshire County Council, with clarification that the design is to include a route for cyclists to bypass the buildout.
2. To consider whether options for physical calming elsewhere within the town be further explored with OCC.

Background

The Town Council's Strategy framework document is clear that 'speed reduction will most effectively be achieved by physical calming measures and police enforcement'. A number of pieces of work are being done to make roads safer for all users.

Along with Woodstock Road and The Slade, Banbury Hill regularly records excessive speeds in both directions. The junction of Hundley Way sees a significant number of road users on foot and by bicycle joining the road at a junction with restricted visibility. Despite representations being made to Thames Valley Police, no enforcement of the speed limit has taken place in this location for some considerable time. Physical calming measures at these locations have been discussed for at least 15 years.

Recent Speedwatch data suggests that speeds of drivers at the Hundley Way junction are getting worse. SID measurements taken in July 2022 show 60% entering the town exceeding 20mph, with 6% in excess of 30mph (compared to 53% and 5% in March 2021) and just 11% of those leaving town record speeds of less than 25mph, with 18% exceeding 30mph (14% and 15% respectively in March 2021). These measurements have all been taken with SID placed in the same location facing drivers entering town; the data would be different were the device placed the other way.

In July 2021 the Council received a paper from Traffic Committee recommending that options for physical calming at Banbury Hill, Woodstock Road and The Slade be further explored with OCC, with a view to identifying and costing a scheme. As the latter two locations were part of future discussions relating to 20mph speed limits, only the Banbury Hill proposal was discussed further at that stage. County Council officers confirmed a preferred location to maximise visibility of the buildout given the topography. To satisfy County requirements, the proposal was consulted on alongside the TRO sponsored by the Council, and enjoyed clear support.

In December 2021 the Town Council approved £7,500 in the precept for physical calming measures. At the time, a much larger provisional cost had been indicated by Oxfordshire County Council. Since then, however, the County Council has confirmed a much lower total cost for the work of £6,500. Moreover, the County Council has confirmed it will match fund the work to the tune of 50%.

The proposal

Given the background, an appropriately designed buildout (including a cycle 'escape lane' to stop cyclists coming into conflict with traffic) was developed by County Council officers. Maintenance arrangements for this 'escape lane' will need clarification.

Alternative measures of speed reduction are thought less likely to prove effective and 'rumble strips', which have been discussed from time to time, would not be appropriate next to the residential bungalows at this location. [Department for Transport guidance](#) [p79] reports an average reduction of around 7mph [85th percentile] being achieved by buildout features, although figures vary considerably with additional measures being needed in some locations.

The Council will wish to consider how it might proceed with the remaining precepted allocation.

Recommendations

1. The Council resolves to proceed with the buildout at Banbury Hill at the quoted cost to the Council of £3,500 (estimated).
2. The Council considers any additional action it might take.

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