

EYNESHAM TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT: THE '20 MPH PROJECT'

'A 20mph zone is a big decision and won't be implemented unless there is clear support in the village.' – Councillor Richard Andrews, October 2015, Eynsham News and Eynsham Online

In the light of the Parish Council's proposals for a new Traffic Advisory Sub-Committee, with terms of reference to be considered in Finance & General Purposes Committee on 29 May, I feel compelled to trace the origins of 'the 20mph project' and to question its democratic mandate. In particular, I can find no grounds for prioritising it over congestion and parking issues.

I have been shocked by both the obfuscation surrounding this project and the very limited attempt at engagement with the wider community, as distinct from a vocal minority. However well-meaning its origins, the landscape has changed and the (anticipated) costs continue to escalate – at least £7160 has been spent alreadyⁱ. It is hard not to draw uncomfortable parallels with the recent 'ambitious' initiatives of our district and county councils.

CHOICES, CHOICES

In March 2018ⁱⁱ the Eynsham News Group asked readers which traffic-related issue should be tackled first with 'developer funds' from new housing around the village – parking / congestion OR traffic speeds – with one box open for further thoughts.

The two options are deliberate echoes of the 'public realm' projects to be funded by CIL payments, as recommended in the Eynsham Draft Neighbourhood Plan V3.0 Draft Submission to WODCⁱⁱⁱ, 13 Dec 2017 (page 48 – copy **attached**). As you will see, a 20mph limit was not even mentioned in the green 'recommendations' box but merely noted as a possibility within the text.

Eynsham News survey results are reported in the current issue^{iv}. Of the 32 slips returned by the end of April, 18 (56.25%) selected central parking / congestion, with 3 references to the village being used as a Park & Ride; while just 4 (12.5%) selected traffic speeds on entry / exit roads. These attitudes mirror the experiences reported by Eynsham Retail Group (below). Other choices were potholes (2), the toll bridge (2), cycle paths (1) and the A40 (1). Three people ticked both boxes and one slip was blank.

By way of comparison, the Neighbourhood Plan Consultation Statement^v (covering 2015-16) reports 26 mentions of congestion (with 17 references to an informal P&R site); and 19 'votes' for a 20mph zone. So parking / congestion was a greater concern than speeding even then – if any of these numbers are significant.

The wisdom of embarking on any £500k project on the basis of such low turnout must be open to question, at least. The total adult population of the parish is currently 4090^{vi}. I understand that the Parish Council will undertake more meaningful consultation with residents and businesses before the priorities are finally decided.

Joan Stonham, 21 May 2018

/ ORIGINS – overleaf >>

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ORIGINS

These notes are from the public record only. A general failure in transparency needs highlighting here. Background papers for Eynsham Parish Council meetings are not posted online, though this is a requirement of the Freedom of Information Act^{vii} and I have raised the issue 5 times over the last two years within the Communications Committee.

July 2013 Traffic Advisory Committee^{viii} T13/9: Roads and Signs in Eynsham (submitted by Green TEA) - *'Ian Clarke, Oxfordshire County Council advised that ... A full consultation followed by a traffic order would be needed before a 20MPH Speed Limit could be introduced.'*

January 2015 Traffic Advisory Committee^{ix} T15/08: The committee discussed the proposal for a Zebra Crossing on Witney Road. *'As a result of this discussion, Councillor Crowley asked if imposing a 20mph limit across the whole village might be achievable. She felt that making the village an undesirable place to use as a rat run might have many more advantages for residents.'*

February 2015 Full Council^x 15/122: The Council discussed the proposed zebra crossing on Witney Road. *'Councillor Crowley suggested that a 20mph speed limit across the whole village might give a better solution without the need for additional street clutter. Councillor Andrews and Councillor Emery supported this suggestion. Councillor Mathew agreed to research the possibility of introducing a 20mph speed limit.'*

April 2015 Response to Connecting Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan 2015-2031 consultation^{xi}: *'Eynsham Parish Council supports Policy 32 and a reduction of the speed limit to 20mph (para 189) in villages such as Eynsham.'* No public consultation had been undertaken in Eynsham at this stage.

In September 2015 the possibility of a making Eynsham a 20mph zone was first floated among residents as a whole, via Eynsham News^{xii} and Eynsham Online^{xiii}. The responses, as reported in November 2015, were 25 in favour and 7 against – so *'better than four to one.'*^{xiv} The total adult population of the parish is currently 4090.

October 2015 Full Council 15/240^{xv}: Correspondence – 20mph. *'A number of responses had been received with regards to the 20mph proposal. The vast majority were in favour of the reduced speed limit. Councillor Mathew informed the council that the full costs of this project would almost certainly have to be met by the Parish Council. The council discussed whether the limit should cover the whole village and agreed that this would present a clear and consistent message. Further investigations required to find out the process.'*

In January 2016 the Traffic Advisory Committee was informed that *'consultations with the community had been largely in favour ... David Tole explained that ... in order to proceed a full public consultation would need to take place and the council might find that the wider community does not support the initiative.'*^{xvi} In February the Parish Council *'RESOLVED to begin the process'*^{xvii} and commissioned traffic speed surveys from OCC at a cost of £1100^{xviii}. In July the Traffic Advisory meeting *'agreed that there is still public demand to introduce a 20mph limit across the village'*^{xix}. Consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan^{xx} in the course of 2016 elicited 19 'votes' for a 20mph zone (and 26 mentions of inconsiderate parking and congestion), as noted in my introduction. The total adult population of the parish is currently 4090.

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Following a recommendation at the Traffic Advisory meeting in **January 2017**^{xxi}, the Parish Council commissioned ‘*survey work in relation to traffic calming for the introduction of a 20mph zone*’ that March^{xxii}. There are no published notes of meetings / discussions with The Urbanists.

In June 2017 the Eynsham Retail Group, representing over 8 local businesses, raised their own concerns about parking (especially commuter parking) in the village centre via Eynsham News^{xxiii} and Eynsham Online^{xxiv}. Their call for feedback elicited several thoughtful conversations with residents, 14 (well-read) posts online, involvement from District Councillors Ed James and Peter Kelland (below) and coverage from Radio Oxford.

In July 2017 the Traffic Advisory Committee discussed ‘*the proposal for the introduction of a 20 mile per hour limit scheme in the village*’ with reference to an interim report by the consultants^{xxv}. They also discussed the Retail Group proposal for the introduction of a residents’ parking scheme, apparently noting ‘*it is anticipated that the Parish Council would pay for a Traffic Warden*’.

In September 2017 the Parish Council made its second approach to residents via Eynsham News^{xxvi} and Eynsham Online^{xxvii}, where it included the consultants’ report. Three points stand out here:

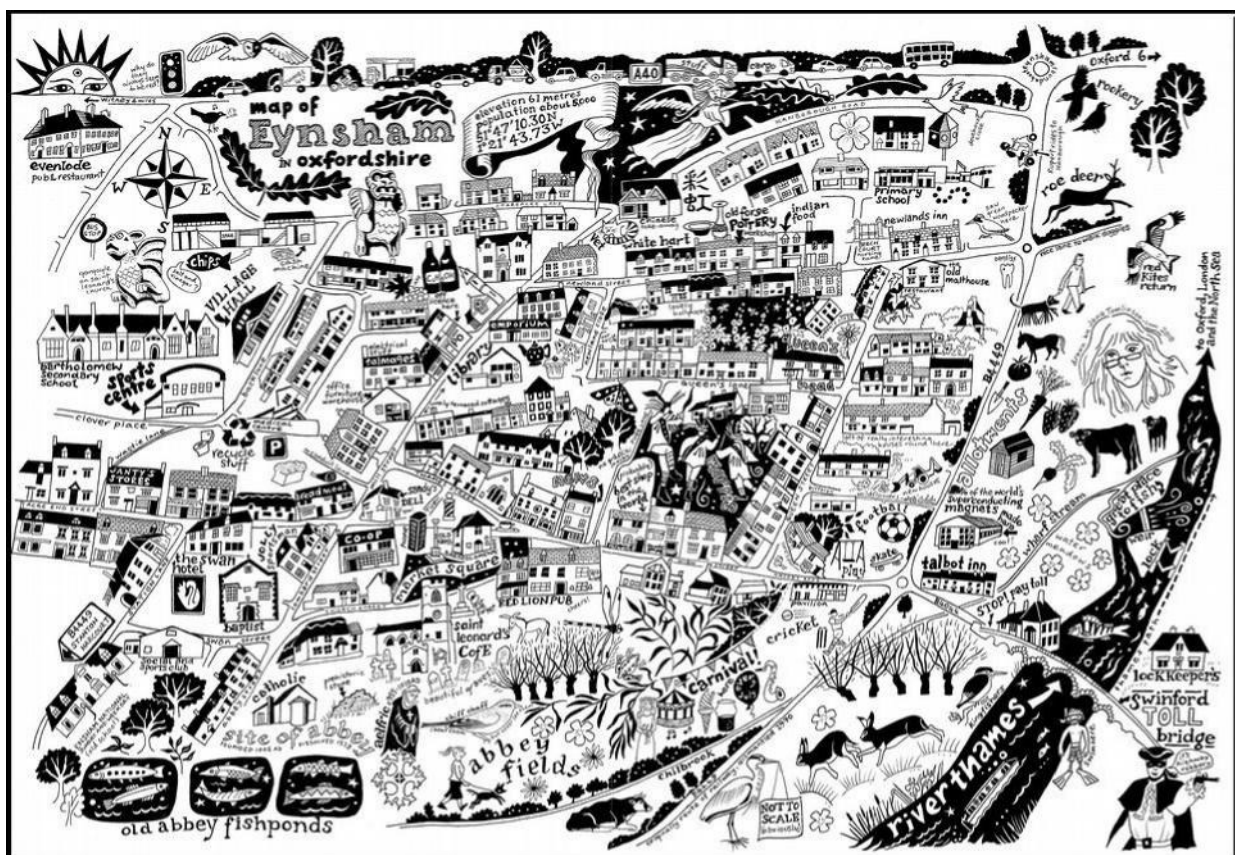
1. The statement that ‘*the idea came out of consultations on the Neighbourhood Plan*’. I **attach** a copy of the email thread from my enquiries about the evidence base, on behalf of Eynsham News, in February 2018. The eventual response that ‘*Suggestions for a 20mph zone pre-date the consultations on the ENP*’ has prompted my timeline above.
2. The impenetrability of the consultants’ report^{xxviii}: a 10 MB file provided as *a rotated image* is accessible to only diligent researchers. It was downloaded just 7 times before its conversion and re-publication by the Eynsham News Group in March 2018^{xxix}.
3. The renewed call for feedback: ‘*Are we addressing the right problems? What are your concerns about traffic and road safety within the village? Are there more important things we should spend parish funds on?*’ District Councillor Peter Kelland’s detailed report on the process and costs involved in setting up a residents’ parking scheme^{xxx} might seem worth considering here.

In January 2018 the Traffic Advisory Committee once again discussed ‘*the proposal for the introduction of a 20 mile per hour limit scheme in the village*’, along with a project plan circulated to them beforehand^{xxxi}. Only residents who saw the agenda or subsequent minutes would be aware of the proposal and its progress or its impact. The final report from The Urbanists is still unpublished; indeed, its existence is inferable only from the 2017-18 expenditure summary^{xxxii}.

The Committee also discussed ‘*a proposal for the introduction of a residents’ parking scheme*’ and a range of other parking options raised by Eynsham Retail Group. I understand that Councillor Gordon Beach and District Councillor Ed James – supported by evidence from Retail Group surveys in February – are exploring the potential for fuller use of Oxford Road car parks and timed parking bays outside a handful of shops. I earnestly hope the new Traffic Sub-Committee will give due weight to the full range of concerns with parking and congestion, rather than demoting these to subsidiary matters from the outset.

- i £1100 for OCC traffic speed surveys plus £6060 for reports from The Urbanists
- ii <http://eynsham-pc.gov.uk/variable/organisation/717/attachments/EynshamNewsIssue30.pdf>
- iii <https://www.dropbox.com/s/2qh9fih5plg1i17/ENP-policies-v3.01.pdf?dl=0>
- iv <http://eynsham-pc.gov.uk/variable/organisation/717/attachments/EynshamNewsIssue31.pdf>
- v <http://eynsham-pc.gov.uk/variable/organisation/173/attachments/ConsultationStatement-v2.pdf> pp23-24.
- vi <http://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/1804701/Local-Insight-Profile-for-Eynsham-Area.pdf>
- vii 'As a general rule, a public authority should publish the following on a routine basis ... any background documents which are referred to in the agenda or minutes, or were circulated in preparation for the meeting. These are considered part of the agenda.' <https://ico.org.uk/media/for-organisations/documents/1156/minutesandagendas.pdf>
- viii http://eynsham-pc.gov.uk/variable/organisation/175/attachments/traffic_2013-07-09.pdf
- ix http://eynsham-pc.gov.uk/variable/organisation/175/attachments/traffic_2015-01-20.pdf
- x http://eynsham-pc.gov.uk/variable/organisation/37/attachments/minutes_2015-02-03.pdf
- xi http://eynsham-pc.gov.uk/variable/organisation/37/attachments/local_transport_plan_response.pdf
- xii <https://issuu.com/eynsham1/docs/eynshamnewsissue15>
- xiii <http://eynsham-pc.gov.uk/org-news.aspx?nid=273>
- xiv <http://eynsham-pc.gov.uk/org-news.aspx?nid=272>
- xv http://eynsham-pc.gov.uk/variable/organisation/37/attachments/minutes_2015-10-06.pdf
- xvi http://eynsham-pc.gov.uk/variable/organisation/175/attachments/traffic_2016-01-12.pdf
- xvii http://eynsham-pc.gov.uk/variable/organisation/37/attachments/minutes_2016-02-02.pdf
- xviii http://eynsham-pc.gov.uk/variable/organisation/37/attachments/monthly_payments_2016-07-31.pdf
- xix http://eynsham-pc.gov.uk/variable/organisation/175/attachments/traffic_2016-07-12.pdf
- xx <http://eynsham-pc.gov.uk/variable/organisation/173/attachments/ConsultationStatement-v2.pdf> pp23-24.
- xxi http://eynsham-pc.gov.uk/variable/organisation/175/attachments/traffic%20advisory%20minutes_2017-01-10.pdf
- xxii http://eynsham-pc.gov.uk/variable/organisation/37/attachments/minutes_2017-03-07.pdf
- xxiii <http://eynsham-pc.gov.uk/variable/organisation/717/attachments/EynshamNewsIssue25.pdf>
- xxiv <http://eynsham-pc.gov.uk/org.aspx?n=Eynsham-Village&id=1025>
- xxv http://eynsham-pc.gov.uk/variable/organisation/175/attachments/Traffic%20Advisory%20Committee%20Minutes_2017-07-18.pdf
- xxvi <http://eynsham-pc.gov.uk/variable/organisation/717/attachments/EynshamNewsIssue27.pdf>
- xxvii <http://eynsham-pc.gov.uk/org-news.aspx?nid=683>
- xxviii http://eynsham-pc.gov.uk/variable/organisation/37/attachments/village_centre_interim_report.pdf
- xxix <http://eynsham-pc.gov.uk/org-news.aspx?nid=771>
- xxx See footnote xxv above.
- xxxi http://eynsham-pc.gov.uk/variable/organisation/175/attachments/Traffic%20Advisory%20Committee%20Minutes_2018-01-23.pdf
- xxxii http://eynsham-pc.gov.uk/variable/organisation/37/attachments/Local%20Government%20Transparency%20Code%20-%20EPC%20Expenditure%202017_18_Feb18.pdf

Eynsham Neighbourhood Plan 2017 - 2031



Draft of rewrite following examiner's report for checking by WODC and EPC.

07 APPENDIX B

Appendix B. Public Realm Projects.

Eynsham Parish Council are responsible for allocation of CIL funds, therefore the following recommendations are summarised here:

RECOMENDATIONS for public realm projects to be funded by CIL payments based on findings during consultations with residents:

- A Improved parking for residents and visitors in the historic village centre.
- B Implementation of traffic management and cycle path projects within the parish.
- C Creating an attractive feature of the village entrances and of the approach to the business area along Stanton Harcourt Road.
- D Consideration given to purchasing assets of community value where appropriate to protect them from development.
- E Improved Street Scene especially near Spar, Harris's Corner and Library.
- F Providing facilities at new allotment sites.
- G Creating a village museum.
- H The Parish Council should publish and maintain a list of projects with approximate costs so that residents can comment on the projects chosen and funds can be allocated to appropriate projects in a timely manner.

A10 On-street parking, particularly in the historic village centre, has been identified by residents as a major cause for concern which may be improved by adding parking restrictions for the existing village to the Traffic Orders that will be required to enable developments. Improvements to the physical layout of parking spaces will be a suitable project for CIL funding. See [ENP9](#).

A11 Amendments to Traffic Orders and CIL money may also contribute to

- Completion of the West Oxford Community Path/cycleway within the Parish of Eynsham
- Implementation of a 20 mph speed limit on existing village roads.
- Improvements to key street-scene locations such as the Library, Spar and Co-op.

A12 'Assets of Community Value' may be purchased by the Parish Council to protect them from unwanted development under particular circumstances. The Parish Council should consider if this is appropriate where Local Green Space designation is not granted.

A13 Although not specifically mentioned by residents it is recommended that well-placed public seating be installed to encourage and enable residents to walk further to shops, bus stops and the like.

Example project idea – an improved “Library Square”



- 1. New shared surface to link footpath and road.
- 2. New tactile kerbs.
- 3. Street Trees.
- 4. Paving bands.
- 5. Double-sided benches
- 6. Cycle stands.
- 7. Planting tubs.
- 8. Level entry to shops.
- 9. Delivery bay.
- 10. Improved library access.
- 11. New road surface.
- 12. Trees retained.
- 13. Ramp to normal road level.

Joan Stonham

From: Joan Stonham <online@eynsham-pc.gov.uk>
Sent: 26 February 2018 08:55
To: 'Richard Andrews'
Cc: 'gordon.beach@eynsham-pc.gov.uk'; 'patricia.crowley@eynsham-pc.gov.uk'; 'Katherine Doughty'
Subject: RE: 20mph Project - Agenda item 13

Thanks for the pointers and suggestions, Richard.

From: Richard Andrews [mailto:richard.andrews@eynsham-pc.gov.uk]
Sent: 24 February 2018 20:57
To: Joan Stonham <online@eynsham-pc.gov.uk>
Cc: gordon.beach@eynsham-pc.gov.uk; patricia.crowley@eynsham-pc.gov.uk; Katherine Doughty <epc.clerk@eynsham-pc.gov.uk>
Subject: Re: 20mph Project - Agenda item 13

Hello Joan,

here are some answers to your questions:

The nearest we have to a brief for the Urbanists is attached. Our first meeting was explore the options with them which resulted in a set of notes (which I can't find) and I wrote the attached to correct one or two misunderstandings but it ended up being effectively a brief they could work to.

We recorded at least 19 separate mentions of a 20mph zone or traffic calming (ENP consultation statement, p 23) over the various consultation events. Other 'transport' related comments are on p23 and 24. The ENP cannot introduce a 20mph zone which was why it became a separate issue raised at EPC meetings and in Eynsham News.

I don't know if the speed data in spreadsheet form was ever obtained from OCC - I have never seen a copy in that form myself.

This is how I would explain things:

Demand for making Eynsham a 20mph zone.

Suggestions for a 20mph zone pre-date the consultations on the ENP but we certainly had comments raised at all the sessions where speeding and parking were identified as issues which reduced the quality of life for residents. Neither of these matters can be directly resolved by a NP so we floated the idea separately in at least two articles in Eynsham News, asking for residents to comment.

The main concerns about speed come from parents concerned for their children and from older or less mobile residents who are intimidated by fast-moving traffic to the point where they will not venture out on foot. Reluctance to venture out on foot is well-recognised problem and it is now accepted that strong communities are built up when people can walk to where they want to go and in doing so meet and chat with others. The NP aims to encourage such mingling of residents by keeping distances as short as possible and the 20mph zone will also encourage this by making the road traffic less threatening.

Not everyone is so keen of course; one resident was outraged that his civil liberty would be curtailed in this way but most of those who have responded so far have been positive.

There will be a more formal opportunity for people to have their say as we firm up the design. Motorists find speedometer-watching very frustrating – which is why we need to make our 20mph limit the natural speed for the road – so we may get more objections if we put the idea to a secret vote although the 25:7 in favour of 20mph from the 'vote' conducted by Eynsham Cellars does match the generally positive responses so far.

Best regards
Richard

On 21/02/2018 14:01, Joan Stonham wrote:

Dear Richard,

A brief reminder about my request for the evidence from consultations, showing demand for a 20mph limit.

As you know the deadline for Eynsham News is 9 March; but I want to finish my traffic article the previous weekend, so I can concentrate on later items.

Thanks, Joan

From: Joan Stonham [<mailto:online@eynsham-pc.gov.uk>]
Sent: 16 February 2018 08:50
To: 'Katherine Doughty' <epc.clerk@eynsham-pc.gov.uk>; richard.andrews@eynsham-pc.gov.uk
Subject: RE: 20mph Project - Agenda item 13

Thanks again Katherine. Richard, can you fill in the gaps please?
I'm aiming for a storyline, to show the origins and 'drivers': the evidence that took the 20mph project to the top of the to-do list, in preference to other possibilities. There's nothing like good data to make it clear to all.

Best regards, Joan
PS speed data in a *spreadsheet* format would be helpful also.

From: Katherine Doughty [<mailto:epc.clerk@eynsham-pc.gov.uk>]
Sent: 13 February 2018 09:15
To: 'Joan Stonham' <online@eynsham-pc.gov.uk>
Cc: Richard Andrews <richard.andrews@eynsham-pc.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: 20mph Project - Agenda item 13

Joan – Please find attached the items ticked below. Richard should be able to help with the remaining items.

- NP responses on traffic in general
- NP responses on traffic speeds
- Notes of whatever meeting agreed to focus on a 20mph zone ✓ Although Richard may be able to provide more information.
- Brief for The Urbanists
- Cost of the speed surveys - £1100 charged by OCC.
- Data from the speed surveys ✓
- Current (draft) project plan. ✓

Regards

K

Mrs Katherine Doughty
Clerk, Eynsham Parish Council

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From: Joan Stonham [<mailto:online@eynsham-pc.gov.uk>]
Sent: 07 February 2018 14:53
To: 'Katherine Doughty' <epc.clerk@eynsham-pc.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: 20mph Project - Agenda item 13

Thanks Katherine, look forward to hearing more and I'm grateful for your help. BW, Joan

From: Katherine Doughty [<mailto:epc.clerk@eynsham-pc.gov.uk>]
Sent: 07 February 2018 14:33
To: 'Joan Stonham' <online@eynsham-pc.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: 20mph Project - Agenda item 13

Hi Joan – I will need some time to find the answers to your request. I shall try to sort this on Monday next week if that's OK.

Regards

K

Mrs Katherine Doughty
Clerk, Eynsham Parish Council
M:07956 901622 T:01993 709189
91 Brize Norton Road, Minster Lovell, Witney, Oxford OX29 0SG
www.eynsham-pc.gov.uk

From: Joan Stonham [<mailto:online@eynsham-pc.gov.uk>]
Sent: 07 February 2018 14:01
To: Katherine Doughty <epc.clerk@eynsham-pc.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: 20mph Project - Agenda item 13

Hi Katherine,

I need some data to help me understand this project – thinking ahead to the next Eynsham News and future publicity. Can you please supply the following, or point me in the right direction? Am I correct in thinking all this material is in the public domain?

With thanks in advance, Joan

- NP responses on traffic in general
- NP responses on traffic speeds
- Notes of whatever meeting agreed to focus on a 20mph zone
- Brief for The Urbanists
- Cost of the speed surveys
- Data from the speed surveys
- Current (draft) project plan.

From: Joan Stonham [<mailto:online@eynsham-pc.gov.uk>]
Sent: 04 February 2018 16:59
To: richard.andrews@eynsham-pc.gov.uk
Cc: gordon.beach@eynsham-pc.gov.uk; patricia.crowley@eynsham-pc.gov.uk; Katherine Doughty <epc.clerk@eynsham-pc.gov.uk>
Subject: 20mph Project - Agenda item 13

Hello Richard,

I'd be grateful for your help with a 'framework' to underpin the new section on the website, as discussed at Communications last week.

Am I right in thinking the two distinct issues – **congestion and speeding** – may be addressed within different timescales, using The Urbanists' report as a guide? I have masses of material on congestion (!) and should welcome more content to balance this, e.g. NP responses on traffic *and / or* speed reduction; data from the traffic surveys, freestanding images from The Urbanists for a gallery.

HEADING: a snappy label could help a lot with general acceptance. I've attached some *sample* images; titles might include ...

- Healthy Streets
- Liveable Streets
- Shared Streets / Sharing our Streets
- Streets for People

BACKGROUND / links could include ...

- 2002 Market Square redevelopment
- 2006-7 Eynsham Parish Plan household survey: *730 people responded to the section on Roads, Traffic & Transport. 417 people 'voted' for vehicle length / weight restriction; one-way traffic came second (232) and speed restriction third.*
- 2010 pavement condition survey – Chris Caudle
- 2011 WODC cycle parking audit and installation of new bike stands
- 2011 (and ongoing) TVP campaigns on pavement parking and parking safety around the schools
- 2014-2016 (?) Bartholomew School pedestrian crossing
- 2015-6 Neighbourhood Plan consultations
- 2016-7 Village Centre Interim Report – The Urbanists
- 2017 (and ongoing) parking concerns and surveys – Eynsham Retail Group
- ... and of course [the new image archive](#) – planning to go live this week.

All the best, Joan



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