

Farnham 20mph Speed Limit Proposal: Statement of Reasons

A document explaining the Farnham 20mph Speed limit Proposal by Surrey County Council, Waverley Borough Council and Farnham Town Council



SURREY
COUNTY COUNCIL

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Introduction

An Optimised Infrastructure Plan (OIP) has been produced for Farnham by Surrey County Council (SCC), Waverley Borough Council (WBC) and Farnham Town Council (FTC) with the support of Jeremy Hunt MP. The OIP is based on a collective assessment of the issues facing the town and how they can be addressed, with the goal of delivering an attractive, well-integrated future-focused and high-quality infrastructure solution for Farnham that enables a connected and vibrant town, where people to choose to live, work, study and spend their leisure time in sustainable ways.

Understanding the issues and developing effective solutions for Farnham is a critical part of the OIP. Key stakeholders have emphasised the need to understand the current problems, their causes, and potential solutions. There is a need for both short and long-term solutions to the problems faced in the town.

In response to problems raised by Councillors and members of the public, a study was undertaken in December 2020 to understand issues caused by speeding vehicles in Farnham and surrounding areas and identify how they might be addressed. The study comprised:

- 1) a review of National and Local policies and guidance relating to the management of vehicle speeds;
- 2) a review of existing and newly commissioned traffic data including average speed data and collision data, as well as anecdotal evidence;
- 3) identification of critical speed and safety issues and, where possible, the root causes of these issues; and
- 4) identification of a range of potential intervention measures, opportunities, constraints, and recommendations.

Speed limit assessments have been carried out on a number of roads, following the process set out in Surrey County Council's Setting Local Speed Limits policy . As a result of these assessments, it is proposed that the existing 30 mph speed limit, be reduced to a 20mph speed limit in and around Farnham Town Centre and on Weydon Lane and Upper Hale Road. The extents of the proposed changes to the speed limit can be found in Figures 2-4 ([Annex A](#)).

The full report is available on [here](#).

Context and issues

[Surrey County Council's Setting Local Speed Limit Policy](#) explains that the national guidance "Setting local speed limits" from the Department for Transport¹ advises that research into signed-only 20 mph speed limits shows that they generally lead to only small reductions in traffic speeds. Signed-only 20 mph speed limits are therefore most appropriate for areas where vehicle speeds are already low. If the mean speed is already at or below 24 mph on a road, introducing a 20 mph speed limit through signing alone is likely to lead to general compliance with the new speed limit. Where the existing mean speeds are above 24 mph then additional measures will be required to complement the signage.

¹ Department for Transport Circular 01/2013, Setting local speed limits (January 2013)

The county council's policy therefore requires an assessment of the existing vehicle speeds to ascertain whether a new lower speed limit of 20 mph would be viable with, or without, additional measures (i.e. whether the existing mean average speeds are 24 mph or less, or not).

Collision data assessment

A review was undertaken of collision resulting in injuries between 01/10/2017 and 30/09/2020 to inform the initial study. A total of 104 collisions were observed throughout the study area, with the majority resulting in slight or severe injuries. [Figure 1](#) provides an overview of the locations and severity of collisions reported within the assessed three-year period, with the existing speed limits provided for reference.

The data was analysed to identify collisions with speed listed as a causation factor. Whilst no prominent link was identified of speed as a causation factor, it is widely acknowledged that reduced vehicle speeds contribute to a reduction in both the likelihood of a collision occurring and the potential severity of injuries injuries².

Figure 1: Collision map for the study area



Speed data assessment

The plans found within [Annex A](#) provide an overview of the spatial extent of the 20mph proposals and context for the speed data assessment. Further details on the proposed measures can be found within the subsequent section of this document titled '*Proposals*'.

² Road Safety Factsheet: 20mph Zones and Speed Limits Factsheet, The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (November 2020)

Mean speed and 85th percentile³ speed data was collected using Automatic Traffic Count surveys (ATCs) completed during November/December 2020 and June/July 2021, inclusive of both weekdays and weekends.

The roads identified for surveys were discussed with Surrey County Council's Road Safety team and Surrey Police, with a view to surveying key roads where the highest speeds are likely to be observed within each of the areas of interest (Farnham Town Centre; Weydon Lane; and Upper Hale Road) so that they can be appropriately considered and reviewed. Other roads within the proposed speed limit changes have not been surveyed as it was not considered necessary due to their more minor nature.

The results from the speed surveys for locations within or near the boundary of each of the proposed areas can be found within [Table 1](#). The speed data results can also be viewed on maps included within [Annex B](#) – including additional survey locations outside of the proposed extents of the speed limit changes which were collected to help inform the location of the boundaries.

³ 85th percentile: the speed above which the fastest 15 per cent of vehicles travel

Table 1: Speed survey data

Area	Location – survey reference	Direction	Mean average speed (mph)	85 th percentile speed (mph)
Farnham Town Centre	East Street – 2020 ATC #5	Eastbound	26.06	31.08
		Westbound	22.80	26.50
	East Street – 2020 ATC #9	Westbound (one-way street)	21.64	25.58
	Castle Street – 2020 ATC #4	Northbound	27.61	31.43
		Southbound	24.43	28.30
	South Street – 2021 ATC #11	Northbound	24.01	27.92
		Southbound	21.41	27.74
	Union Road – 2020 ATC #8	Westbound (one-way street)	23.86	27.84
	Firgrove Hill – 2020 ATC #11	Northbound	21.20	25.63
		Southbound	21.07	25.86
	Downing Street – 2020 ATC #7	Westbound (one-way street)	14.66	18.15
	West Street – 2021 ATC #15	Eastbound	31.50	35.48
	Westbound	32.87	37.42	
West Street – 2020 ATC #6	Eastbound	23.19	27.19	
	Westbound	23.13	27.35	
Cron dall Lane – 2021 ATC #16	Northbound	31.05	36.08	
	Southbound	32.84	37.54	
Weydon Lane	Weydon Lane, nr Bardsley Drive – 2021 ATC #14	Eastbound	21.12	26.27
		Westbound	20.87	26.58
	Weydon Lane, east of Farnham Business Park – 2021 ATC #13	Eastbound	31.54	35.88
		Westbound	28.21	33.05
Upper Hale Road	Upper Hale Road, nr Spring Lane – 2021 ATC #2	Eastbound	27.77	33.71
		Westbound	29.25	35.78
	Upper Hale Road, nr Alma Lane – 2020 ATC #1	Eastbound	20.48	27.47
	Westbound	25.96	29.86	
	Upper Hale Road, nr Queens Road – 2021 ATC #4	Eastbound	29.08	32.60
		Westbound	21.91	29.15

It can be seen from [Table 1](#) that 27 data points have been considered within or near the proposed speed limit changes, when considering different directions of travel separately. This represents 15 survey locations, with 12 two-way roads and 3 one-way roads.

Proposals

The plans found within [Annex A](#) provide an overview of the spatial extent of the 20mph proposals. The results of the speed surveys in [Table 2](#) show that 13 of the data points are below the mean speed threshold of 24 mph. As such, the existing traffic speeds in these locations support the introduction of a signed-only 20 mph speed limit.

The exceptions to this, where a mean speed above 24 mph has been recorded, are noted in [Table 2](#) with details of the additional measures proposed to reduce the mean speed to below 24 mph accordingly.

Table 2: Measures proposed for locations exceeding 24 mph mean speeds

Location	Direction(s) exceeding 24 mph	Proposed measures / traffic calming
East Street – 2020 ATC #5	Eastbound	A gateway is proposed to be created via signage and road markings. Regular repeater signage and markings will be provided throughout the town centre to remind users of the reduced speed limit.
Castle Street – 2020 ATC #4	Two-way	Footway buildout to provide carriageway reallocation and provide appropriate space for the siting of the 20 mph gateway signage.
South Street – 2021 ATC #11	Northbound	Mean speed recorded at marginally above 24 mph (24.01 mph). Proposed gateway signage and markings are anticipated to be appropriate.
West Street – 2021 ATC #15	Two-way	The extent of the proposed speed limit has been revised to align with the Crosby Way roundabout, which provides existing traffic calming. An additional speed survey location to the east of the roundabout noted mean speeds of approx. 23 mph.
Cron dall Lane – 2021 ATC #16	Two-way	The proposed extent of the speed limit change has been identified based on an existing change of character of the road, near Cascade Way, where a gateway is proposed to be created via signage and road markings. The change of character is supported by the presence of footways on both sides of the carriageway, the Abbey View development, and on-street parking bays further south on Cron dall Lane.
Weydon Lane, east of Farnham Business Park – 2021 ATC #13	Two-way	The extent of the proposed speed limit has been revised to the west of the surveyed location, where there is existing shuttle working signals over the railway line and existing traffic cushions are present on Weydon Lane west of the overbridge.
Upper Hale Road, nr Spring Lane – 2021 ATC #2	Two-way	At the western extent of the proposed speed limit change, a new pedestrian refuge is proposed to provide traffic calming. This proposal aligns well with S106 funding that has been allocated for a crossing facility in the vicinity of Spring Lane. Towards the eastern extent, traffic calming is proposed to be provided by traffic cushions*. Throughout the central area of the 20 mph area, regular repeater signs and markings will be provided, as well as school warning signs.
Upper Hale Road, nr Queens Road – 2021 ATC #4	Eastbound	
Upper Hale Road, nr Alma Lane – 2020 ATC #1	Westbound	

*Note: As these proposals are part of the Farnham Infrastructure Programme - Short-Term Interventions Project, the traffic cushions are proposed to be surface-mounted/bolted down to prevent precluding future proposals that may come forward in a future phase of works and minimise potential rework.

A permanent Speed Limit Order (SLO), in accordance with the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, is proposed to legally change the speed limit on the affected roads to 20 mph.

It is noted that in accordance with Surrey County Council’s Setting Local Speed Limits policy, that post-implementation monitoring will be commissioned after at least three months. Surveys will obtain up-to-date speed data for the areas to enable a review of the success of the proposed measures in reducing speeds to an appropriate level, as defined within the policy. If the scheme has not been successful, then additional measures may be required to encourage greater compliance

with the new speed limit. Alternatively, reverting to the previously posted speed limit may be identified as the most appropriate action.

Benefits

The proposed extent of 20 mph speed limit on these roads has been identified to provide consistency of speed limit and align the proposals with best practice to contribute to an effective positive change of character and improved accessibility throughout the respective areas.

The reduced vehicle speeds within the respective areas will contribute to:

- improved road safety for all users
- an improved environment for active travel within the area, encouraging more short trips to be made by modes such as walking and cycling, generating an improvement in the health of residents and visitors
- net zero carbon objectives through modal transfer by improving local accessibility via active travel modes
- a reduction in noise pollution on sensitive receptors such as residential properties and schools
- improved public perception of safety on footways and carriageways

Annex A: Indicative extents of proposed new 20 mph speed limits:

Figure 1: Proposed extent of 20 mph speed limit – Farnham Town Centre



Figure 2: Proposed extent of 20 mph speed limit – Weydon Lane

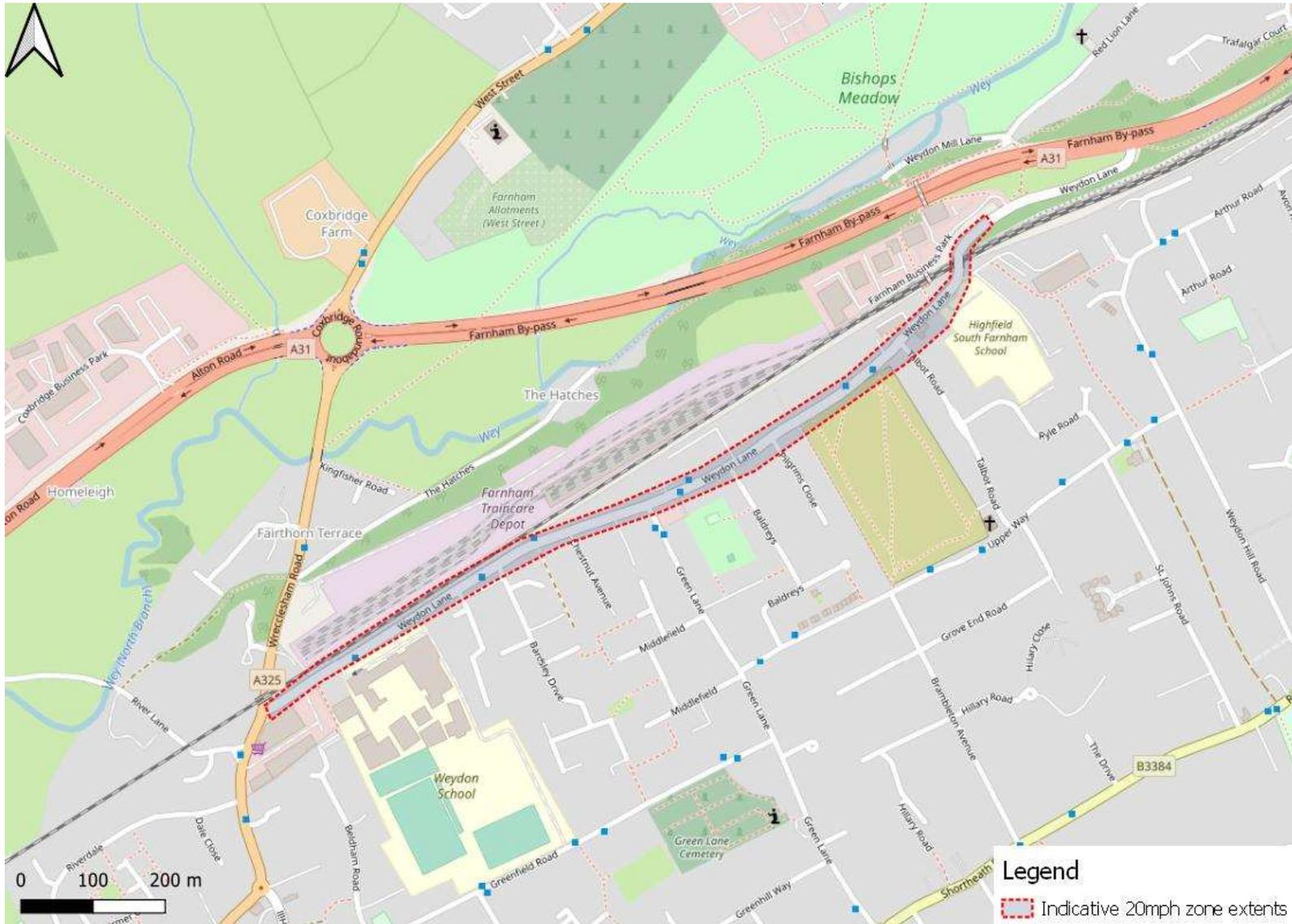
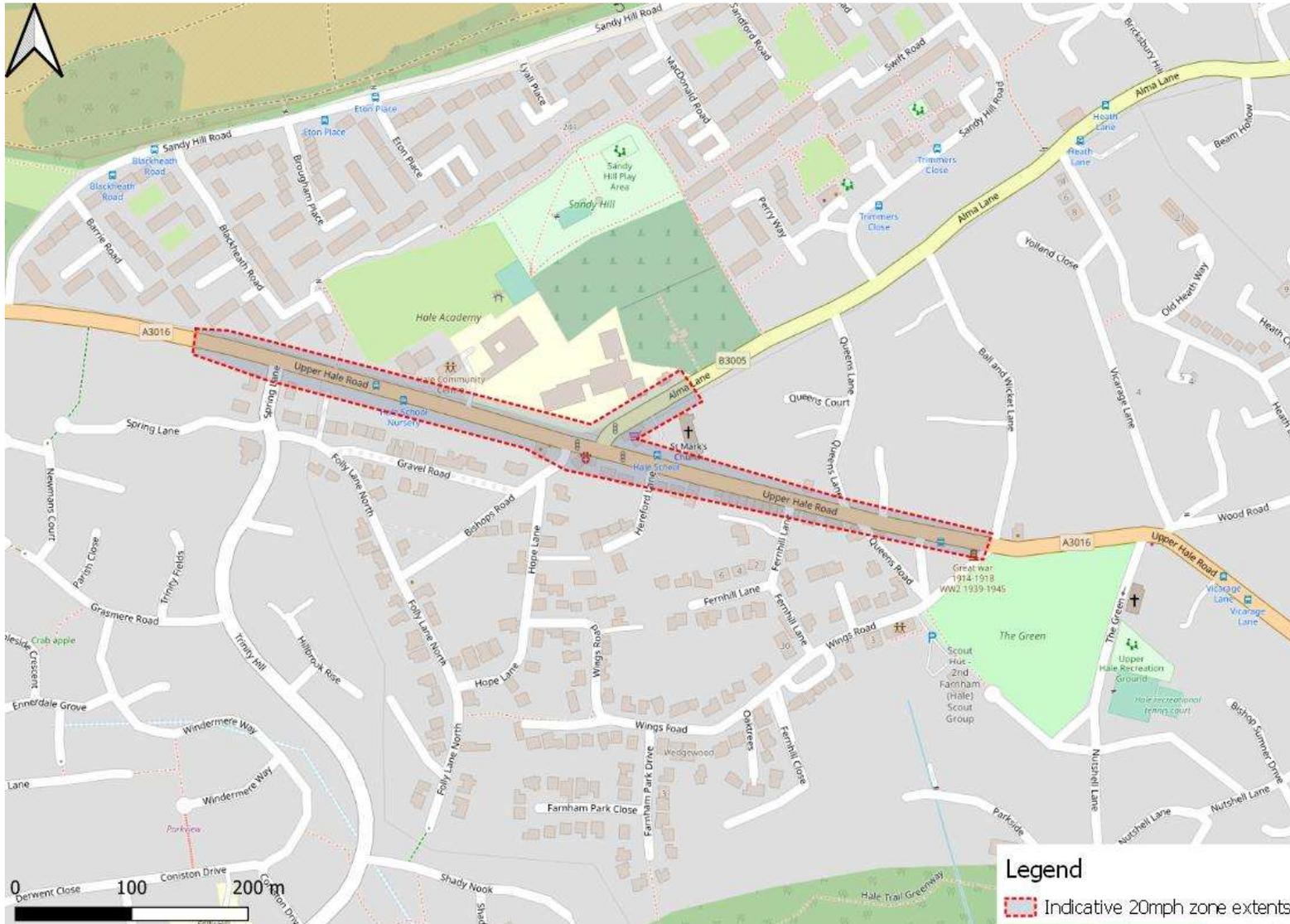


Figure 3: Proposed extent of 20 mph speed limit – Upper Hale Road



Annex B: Speed survey data maps

Figure 4: Speed survey map (1 of 4)

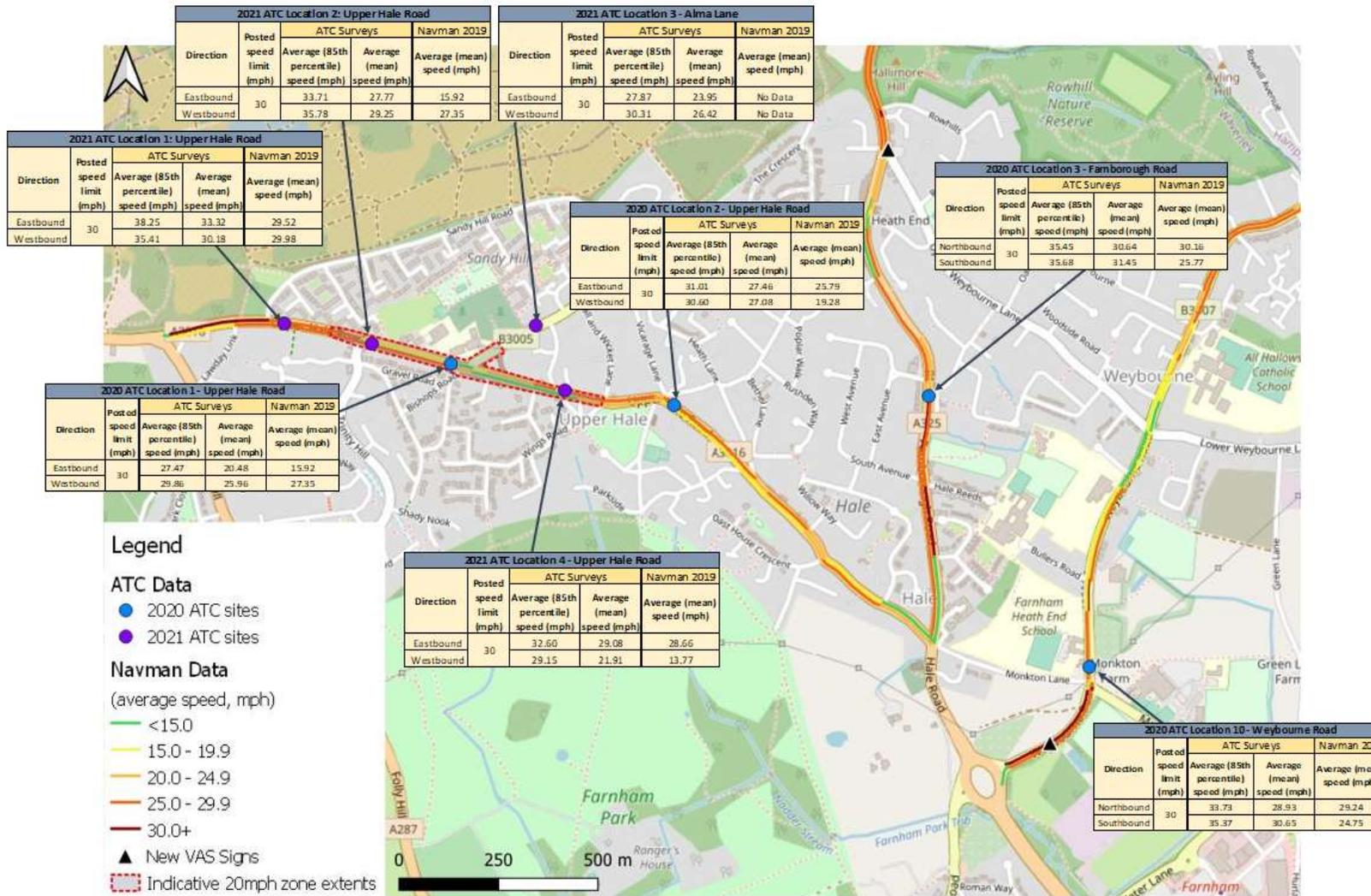


Figure 5: Speed survey map (2 of 4)

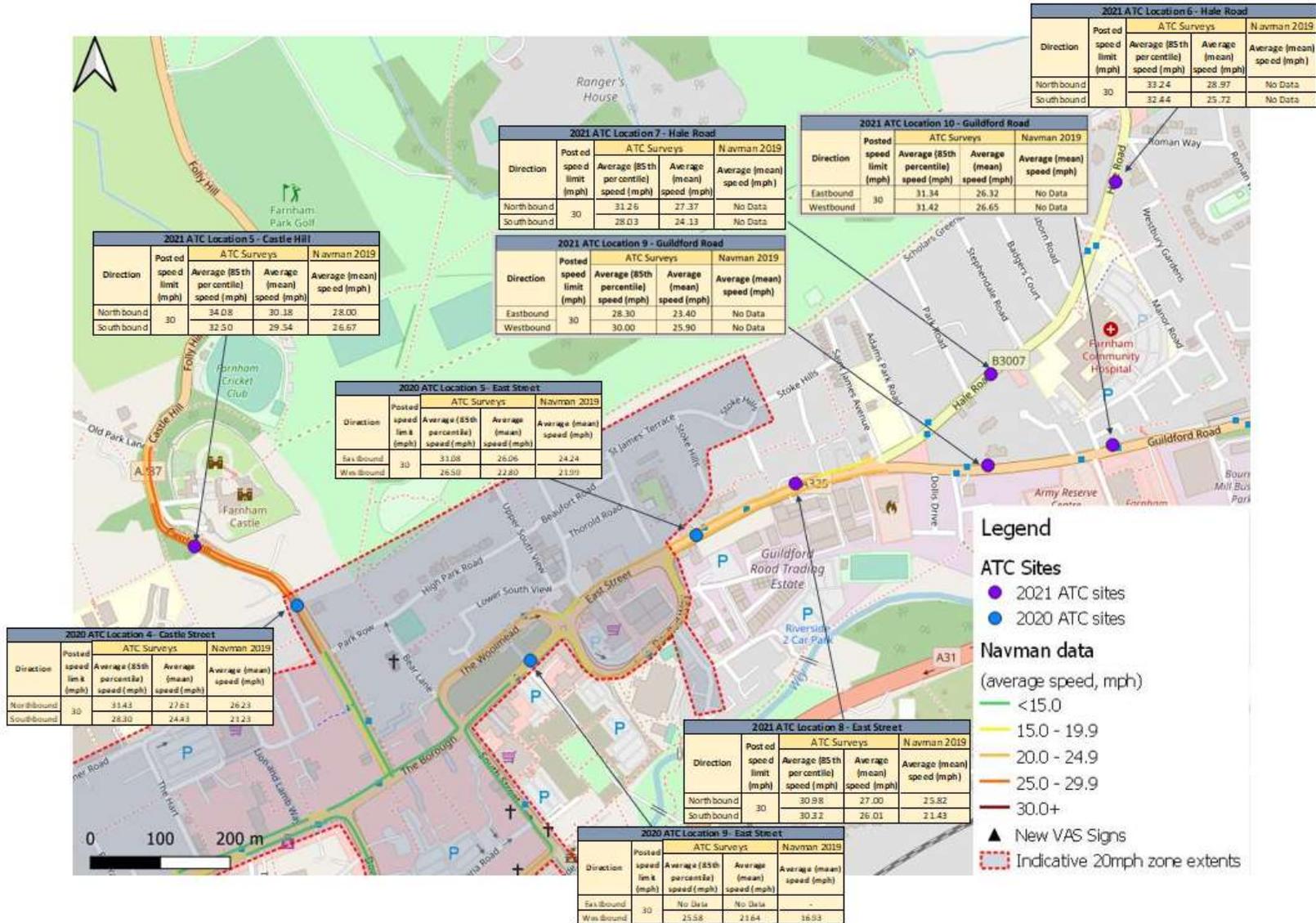


Figure 6: Speed survey map (3 of 4)

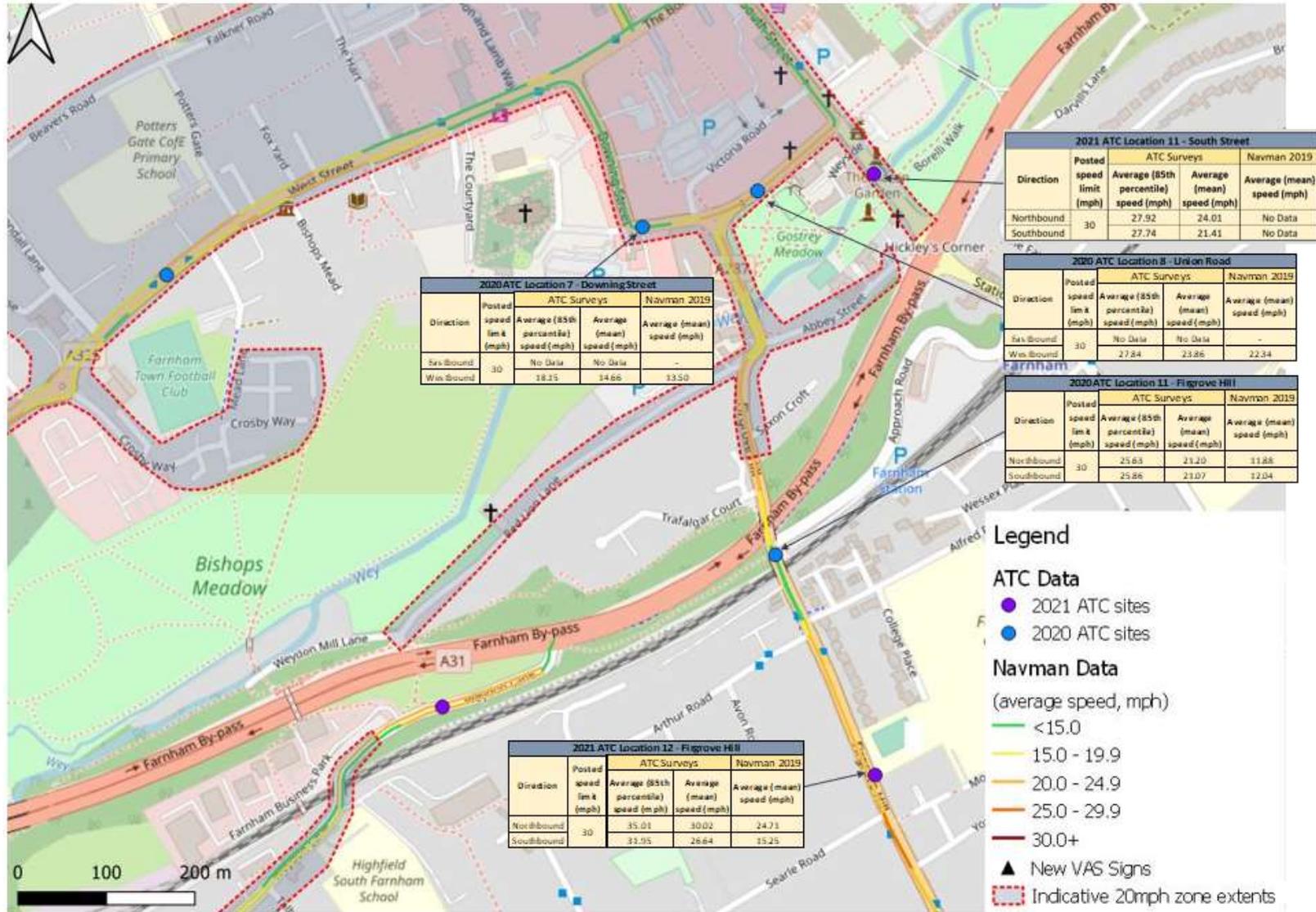


Figure 7: Speed survey map (4 of 4)

