

Proposed Restricted Roads (20mph Limit) (Scotland) Bill

Page 2: About you

Are you responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation?

an individual

Which of the following best describes you? (If you are a professional or academic, but not in a subject relevant to the consultation, please choose "Member of the public".)

Member of the public

Please select the category which best describes your organisation

No Response

Please choose one of the following; if you choose the first option, please provide your name or the name of your organisation as you wish it to be published.

I would like this response to be anonymous (the response may be published, but no name)

Please insert your name or the name of your organisation. If you choose the first option above, this should be the name as you wish it to be published. If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

Please provide details of a way in which we can contact you if there are queries regarding your response. Email is preferred but you can also provide a postal address or phone number. We will not publish these details.

Page 7: Your views on the proposal

Q1. Which of the following best expresses your view of the proposal to replace the current 30mph default speed limit on restricted roads with a 20mph limit.

Fully opposed

Q1. Which of the following best expresses your view of the proposal to replace the current 30mph default speed limit on restricted roads with a 20mph limit.

Please explain the reasons for your response

On the busiest streets in city centres, speeds are rarely above walking pace anyway so reducing the limit will have no real impact. Many daily commutes involve journeys of several miles or more in 30mph zones. Reducing the speed limit will in my opinion cause frustration for drivers, increasing their journey times but also increasing noise and emissions as cars are forced to drive along in a lower gear than they normally would. When a speed limit on a section of road is artificially low for the perceived risks (i.e. good visibility, well maintained, few parked cars, not near a school or play fields etc.) , only a small percentage of drivers will strictly adhere to that limit (e.g. indicated 18mph in a 20mph zone). This in turn causes congestion and frustration for many other drivers who may want to drive at an indicated 21-22mph on their speedo (probably a real 20mph) and the following drivers tend to drive too closely whilst looking for an opportunity to overtake, thereby increasing the risk of an accident. Many Scottish city centres already have problems with emission levels, and the answer to these problems is not to slow down traffic even further, but to look at ways of safely improving traffic flow so that drivers can quickly leave the city centre as quickly and efficiently as possible. Things like looking at the sequencing of traffic lights so that once a driver has joined an "exit corridor", if they stick to the speed limits they should not get held up by getting stopped at every other set of lights on their route home. Another thing that could be considered for some sets of traffic lights, is to switch them off outside peak hours (e.g. between 7pm and 5:30am). I'm not meaning busy crossroads or high traffic junctions that would need the traffic lights on 24/7, but maybe some T junctions (e.g. into new housing estate) where there is maybe only a vehicle coming from one direction every few minutes, and traffic is light enough to allow this car to join the main road using it as a give-way junction.

Q2. Could the aims of this proposal be better delivered in another way (without a Bill in the Scottish Parliament)?

Yes (if so, please explain below)

Please explain the reasons for your response

The reasons many drivers exceed the speed limit in 30mph zones is that they feel they have been held up by endless sets of traffic lights at stop, roadworks, speed humps etc., and when presented with a stretch of road with few perceived risks (e.g. parked cars, children playing at the side of the street etc.), they will drive a bit faster to "make up" the time they have lost.

By improving the sequencing of traffic lights to keep the majority of traffic flowing freely (or switching some sets off outside peak hours), there would be less frustration and drivers would adhere to the speed limit more readily. In an ideal world, an intelligent integrated traffic light system could be introduced in every Scottish city. Through the use of new existing road sensors and CCTV cameras, this would track the numbers of cars going through each junction and which direction they turned off, to build up patterns of use. Through use of traffic flow simulation, overall traffic flow through a city could be optimised in real time for the majority of road users, resulting in hugely reduced journey times, with the added benefit of reduced emissions and traffic noise. The centrally controlled system would react in real time to increased traffic say from a football match finishing, and adjust the timing of all other sets of lights to clear the backlog as quickly as possible. The system could also recognise when buses were likely to be held up at lights, and keep them on green for a few seconds longer to help reduce journey times for public transport users, and encourage more people to use public transport where it was suitable.

Another idea could be to have large comfortable truck parks located at the main entry points of cities. Quite often, large lorries are used to deliver single boxes to customers in the city centre, which is very inefficient and contributes massively to congestion and air pollution. Force large trucks to use the truck stops where their goods for the city would be off-loaded onto a fleet of city controlled vans or small delivery trucks that are electrically powered or use hydrogen. By gathering information from the transport companies of their deliveries in terms of package size, weight, size, delivery address, estimated time of arrival etc. the whole process could be optimised. This would reduce the number of large lorries going through city centres, and free up the drivers to continue their journeys much more quickly and reducing delivery times for customers with their goods still on the lorry.

Many cities also have existing park and ride schemes. Whilst these work for some people, they aren't ideal for drivers with small children (buggies), or those needing a lot of shopping. It's no fun trying to juggle lots of bags, screaming kids etc on a rainy day whilst waiting for the next bus. Why not introduce a scheme of

Q2. Could the aims of this proposal be better delivered in another way (without a Bill in the Scottish Parliament)?

electric cars that can be collected at the park and ride scheme, that are then used to travel to specified car parks in the city centre. Drivers would need to subscribe to the "electric car club" via an app on their smart phone. They would choose their destination car park, and the system would tell them which electric car to use, which would be unlocked via their phone. To encourage car sharing, the fees would be reduced for each person sharing the car to the destination. (e.g. single use = £5 including all day parking at the car park, with two occupants it's just £2.50 each, and for 4 just £1.25 each). Drivers wishing to share would record their preferences (e.g. females may wish to be in an all-female car), and for security their details would be shared with the other occupants chosen by the system for their car based on destination so they can see what their fellow occupants are called and what they look like in advance. This has the possibility to significantly reduce pressure on the congested city centre road network, car parks as well as reducing emissions. The fees charged should be sufficient to cover the running costs (including insurance), but low enough to encourage car users to give up their private journey in their own cars.

Q3. What do you think would be the main advantages, if any, of the proposal?

None, expect outside schools.

Q4. What do you think would be the main disadvantages, if any, of the proposal?

Increased journey times, increased air pollution and traffic noise, increased driver frustration leading to more aggressive driving and higher risk of accidents.

Q5. What other measures do you think would be needed to maximise compliance with the new national 20mph speed limit on restricted roads, for example in relation to advertising signage and police enforcement.

There are already too many road signs to distract drivers. Use an app on drivers smart phones that track their speeds in built up areas (similar to those by some insurance companies). Record speed limit compliance and give drivers a score out of 100% per week/month etc. Drivers with 95-100% compliance qualify for cheaper car insurance or a discount on their road fund duty.

Page 12: Financial implications

Q6. Taking account of both costs and potential savings, what financial impact would you expect the proposed Bill to have?

	Significant increase in cost	Some increase in cost	Broadly cost-neutral	Some reduction in cost	Significant reduction in cost	Unsure
Scottish Government	X					
Local Authorities	X					
Motorists	X					
Other	X					

Q6. Taking account of both costs and potential savings, what financial impact would you expect the proposed Bill to have?

Police Scotland						
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Please explain the reasons for your response

It will cost many millions to replace all the road signs in cities across the country, as well as introduce the legislation. It will cost businesses millions annually in lost revenue/time through increased travel times between offices/clients. It will lead to increased stress and frustration for drivers, with potential health impacts. Forcing drivers to sit in a more stressful environment for longer periods of time when what many need is to have shorter less stressful journeys, and be on their feet again can only have a negative impact on the countries health overall.

Q7. Do you believe there will be any other benefits to reducing the speed limit from 30mph to 20mph?

I would support 20mph limits near schools, play fields etc., but don't see any benefits in a country wide reduced limit.

Page 14: Equalities

Q8. What overall impact is the proposed Bill likely to have on the following protected groups (under the Equality Act 2010): race, disability, sex, gender re-assignment, age, religion and belief, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity?

Neutral (neither positive nor negative)

Q9. Could any negative impact of the proposed Bill on any of these protected groups be minimised or avoided?

No Response

Page 16: Sustainability of the proposal

Q10. Do you consider that the proposed Bill can be delivered sustainably i.e. without having likely future disproportionate economic, social and/or environmental impact?

No

Please explain the reasons for your response:

The cost to implement and enforce would run into tens of millions annually, cause loss of business for many local companies through increased journey times, increase roadside emissions from traffic. There is also the possibility that delivery companies may charge increased rates for customers in Scotland as due to longer journey times, their drivers can make less deliveries in a day. Increased postal charges are already a major concern for some rural/highland communities.

Page 17: General

Q11. Do you have any other comments or suggestions on the proposal to establish a 20mph default speed limit on restricted roads?

Overall it's a very bad idea, and would likely be a vote loser for any government that voted it in.