

Consultation on 20mph in Central East Area Birmingham Friends of the Earth response

Introduction

This is Birmingham Friends of the Earth's Response to the Birmingham Central East Area 20mph consultation. We hope it is useful, please do not hesitate to get in touch if you have any questions.

Roads that will be 20mph that should remain at 30mph

We do not believe there are any roads that have been designated 20mph that should remain at 30mph. The roads that have been designated as 20mph appear to be all residential roads or parts of main roads through local centres, and therefore should all be 20mph in scheme which is introducing area wide 20mph limits.

Roads that remain at 30mph that should be 20mph

We believe that there are some roads which are proposed to remain at 20mph. Some of these are:

- Small industrial estate roads or cul-de-sacs – These should be 20mph for consistency, and although they may not be all residential having these roads makes them less attractive for people to walk and and cycle to work.
- All of Alum Rock Road – It goes through many local centres and therefore it makes more sense for a consistant approach to avoid excessive breaking and acceleration
- Burney Lane – If Alum Roack Road is 20 mph then this should also be reduced for consistency.
- Arden Road, from Adderley Road to Bordesley Green Road – As most of the surrounding roads are already 20mph.
- All of Belchers Lane – there is a parrellel route along Eastfield Road and Little Bromwich Road remaining at 30mph reducing this to 20mph would create a large space of 20mph more attractive for cyclists pedestrians and vulnerable road users
- Small Heath Bridge and Jenkins Way (inc. part of Camelot Way) These should be 20mph, to maintain consistency for the area below Coventry Road. Golden Hillock Road should be considered the main road across Small Heath Highway, not Small Heath Bridge.
- All of Coventry Road from Green Lane until Hey Barnes – The road goes through many local centres and runs parrellel to a 40mph route.
- Grange Road, and the roads off it – Especially as Muntz Street has been suggested as a 30mph road. We are concerned that keeping Grange Road at 30ph will encourage rat-running along this road, onto Jenkins Street.

Some of these roads are main roads which run through local centres. While we acknowledge that main roads are only to be reduced to 20mph through local centres, there are a lot of local centres on Coventry and Alum Rock Road meaning a lot of changes to speeds on these routes. This risks making these roads more dangerous as drivers accelerate between the 20mph areas. Changing speeds and greater breaking and acceleration will also worsen air quality in those areas.

With regards to many of the other roads which are to remain at 30mph, these all appear to be unclassified roads that we would regard as residential or they are industrial. If we are to have a general principle of area-wide 20 mph limits, then all the residential roads in a given area need to be 20mph for it to work. For roads in industrial estates, we also believe those travelling to and from work should also benefit from safer streets and therefore these should also be 20mph.

A patchwork of 20 and 30 mph limits and signs should be avoided, as it will be confusing and unenforceable. We are aware that some of these roads are remaining at 30mph due to concerns over buses being delayed. However, savings to journey time from speeding up will be very small over the short distances buses travel between stops. We would ask that bus operators show concrete evidence of their average speeds and the effect that 20mph would have on these.

More generally, savings to journey time from speeding up will be very small over the short distances of most urban car and bus journeys. More consistent implementation of 20mph will have minimal effect on journey times. Consistent implementation of 20mph will also mean vehicle engines will perform better if speed is constant, with less use of brake and accelerator, making a real contribution to noise, air quality and fuel efficiency.

A lot of the roads are near schools or places work near them. In addition to 20mph making it safer for children and employees around these locations, it will also help encourage people to choose to walk or cycle

to school or work. Congestion will be relieved if people use these modes because they are assured of a 20mph limit for the whole of their journey.

In Summary

A few more roads need to be designated as 20mph for it to be a consistent area-wide 20mph scheme, with all the benefits that this brings in terms of safer and more liveable streets. We do not believe that bus operators' concerns are justified to keep unclassified roads at 30mph, and call for 20mph to be implemented as consistently and widely as possible.