

**REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR TRANSPORT AND  
CONNECTIVITY IN CONSULTATION WITH THE CABINET  
MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT  
UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY**

**Title:**

**BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL  
(CITY WIDE) (SPEED LIMIT) (VARIATION AND REVOCATION) ORDER 202\***

**Background:**

Under Function 24 of the Scheme of Delegations: Strategic Director of Place, Prosperity and Sustainability (Part E, Constitution, February 2023), there is a further sub-delegation to the Assistant Director, Transport and Connectivity (ADTC) that allows the ADTC:

*‘To consider Traffic Regulation Order applications and to consider any objections thereto and, following consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member, to determine the Traffic Regulation Order applications in light of such objection.’*

The 40mph Speed Limit Review scheme is contained within the ‘Neighbourhoods’ section of the Transportation and Highways Delivery Programme 2024/25 to 2029/30 – Annual Programme Update report approved at Cabinet on 25<sup>th</sup> June 2024, the Cabinet report contains the following delegation which applies to this approval:

*‘delegates approval of all OBCs, FBCs and related reports including revised financial appraisals for named projects and programmes detailed in Appendix A of this report to the Strategic Director of Place, Prosperity and Sustainability in consultation with the Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer) or their delegate, up to a maximum value of £5.000m’*

The Full Business Case (FBC) for the 40mph Speed Limit Review scheme was approved under delegated authority and signed off by the Strategic Director of Place, Prosperity and sustainability on 1<sup>st</sup> August 2024.

Both of the above reports also include the delegation:

*‘authorises the City Solicitor and Monitoring Officer to negotiate, execute and complete any necessary legal documentation to give effect to the above recommendations.’*

Part of the ‘...necessary documentation to give effect to the above recommendations...’ is the Speed Limit Order process for all of the roads that are being considered for a reduced speed limit.

## Consultation:

Between the **5<sup>th</sup> October 2023 and the 19 November 2023**, the City Council ran an informal consultation on the proposals to reduce the speed limit on Birmingham's roads that have an existing speed limit of 40 miles per hour (mph) to a new lowered speed limit of 30 mph.

During the consultation a total of 1,674 responses were received:

Support 30 mph speed limit - 635 (37.93%)

Neutral (support & oppose) - 90 (5.38%)

Oppose 30 mph speed limit - 949 (56.69%)

Of the 1,674 responses to the consultation, 1,323 provided further comments. These comments were reviewed.

The results of the consultation were shared with the then Cabinet Member for Transport together with a technical review assessment on all of the listed roads. Although noting that over 55% of the responses did not support the scheme, a significant percentage of those (approximately 25%) were not necessarily against the scheme proposals but were concerned with there being inadequate levels of enforcement, and as a result, the scheme would not deliver its objectives. Following this review, the then Cabinet Member for Transport decided to proceed with the scheme proposals for all roads, taking this forward to formal consultation.

The Statutory Speed Limit Order process was undertaken between the **19<sup>th</sup> November and the 10<sup>th</sup> December 2024**. The City Council posted Public Notices at prominent locations along all of the roads. In total over 500 site notices were erected and maintained during the statutory process. The scheme was also published on the City Council's Be Heard consultation website, with opportunities for citizens and stakeholders to provide comments and/or object to the proposals.

In total, the Council received 912 comments on the scheme. Of these, 412 (45%) were objections, while the remaining comments were either supportive or neutral. See Appendix A for the detailed objection comments made against the scheme.

Comments were received by key stakeholders; these are summarised as below:

### **Councillors:**

No specific comments were received from Ward Councillors. However, there was a request from one Councillor for more information on funding and how the previous consultation for the scheme was considered. This information was provided and was made available in the Q&A section on the Be Heard website.

### **MPs:**

There were no comments received from MPs.

### **National Express (Bus operator):**

NEx raised various concerns regarding the proposed speed limit reduction to 30mph across Birmingham:

- **Operational Impact:** Lower speeds may require more drivers and vehicles, especially during early mornings and evenings, potentially making services financially unsustainable and leading to reduced service frequency.
- **Customer Perception:** Slower bus speeds, even on quiet roads, may deter passengers due to increased journey times.
- **Key Routes Affected:** Specific roads (e.g., A34, A38, A45, A47) are critical for express services and have seen investments to improve bus speeds. Reducing speeds on these routes could reverse the benefits and decrease public transport usage.
- **Passenger Impact:** An estimated 29 million journeys annually on these routes could see up to a 3% drop in passengers for each minute of increased journey time, requiring more vehicles and drivers to maintain service levels.
- **Financial Risks:** The financial burden of the change may fall on public funds, lead to service reductions, or increase fares.
- **Enforcement and Consistency:** Ensuring compliance with the new speed limits and addressing inconsistencies across local authority boundaries is crucial. Enforcement of bus lane and parking rules is also necessary to mitigate costs and improve journey speeds.

#### **Transport for West Midlands (TfWM):**

TfWM raised various points/concerns regarding the proposed speed limit reduction to 30mph across Birmingham:

- **Support for Proposal:** TfWM supports the speed limit reduction due to its positive impact on road safety and alignment with the West Midlands Local Transport Plan 5.
- **Concerns Raised:**
  - Consistency:** Issues with consistency in speed limits across local authority boundaries.
  - Bus Journey Times:** Potential negative impact on bus journey times and on-street parking regulations.
  - Effectiveness:** Simply changing speed limits may not reduce killed and serious injuries (KSIs); a systematic approach with additional measures is needed.
- **Additional Measures Suggested:**
  - Infrastructure Changes:** Improvements to road design and condition, including traffic calming measures.
  - Enforcement:** Clear enforcement by West Midlands Police, ensuring adequate capacity.
  - Behaviour Change Initiatives:** Campaigns to promote positive road safety behaviours and modal shift to sustainable transport.
  - Community Engagement:** Collaboration with various stakeholders to implement focused road safety initiatives.
  - Continued Monitoring:** Ongoing assessment to identify further enforcement or road network changes needed.

- **Specific Locations:** Concerns about certain roads were made:

**A38 Rubery By-pass:** TfWM supports the 30mph proposal but suggests discussing with Worcestershire the possibility of a 40mph buffer section to avoid rapid deceleration from the national speed limit.

**Key Routes (A45, A34, A47):** Concerns about potential negative impacts on bus journey times. TfWM recommends working with bus operators to address these issues.

**Roads with On-Street Parking (A452, A38, B4148, etc.):** A thorough assessment and rationalisation of on-street parking are needed to improve road safety, especially on critical emergency service routes in areas like Sutton Coldfield, Erdington, Pye Hayes, and Castle Vale.

- **Additional Information Requested:** More details on changes since the last consultation, implementation and enforcement plans, and partnerships with other local authorities.

Overall, TfWM supports the speed limit reductions but emphasises the need for a comprehensive approach to road safety.

#### **West Midlands Police (WMP):**

WMP support the project. They have requested monitoring of speeds and recommended that, if compliance with the new speed limit is consistently poor, that BCC consider further design changes to the road(s).

#### **West Midlands Police and Crimes Commissioner (WMPCC):**

The WMPCC raised various points/concerns regarding the proposed speed limit reduction to 30mph across Birmingham:

- **Support for Road Safety:** The Police and Crime Plan prioritises road safety, supporting initiatives to reduce KSIs (killed and seriously injured), crime, and anti-social behaviour.
- **Concerns About Fast-Tracking:** The fast-tracking of speed limit changes has not been discussed in strategic meetings, limiting partner involvement.
- **Police Involvement:** Concerns about the lack of police involvement in planning and the need for discussions on enforcement capacity and funding.
- **Highway Changes:** The proposal mainly involves signage changes. There are concerns that without road layout changes, drivers may not reduce speed, especially on wide, straight roads.
- **Consistency Across Boundaries:** Inconsistencies in speed limits where roads cross into other local authorities (e.g., Sandwell) could be dangerous.
- **Effective Implementation:** Emphasis on the need for physical measures to limit vehicle speeds and self-enforcing road layouts to ensure compliance and achieve safety goals.

#### **Speed survey data:**

For all the roads that are proposed for a reduced speed limit, speed and traffic volumes were undertaken late 2024/early 2025. Speed data/traffic counts were collated by using a combination of Automatic Traffic Counts and speed radars. In the main speed radars were

used as this allows speed surveys to be undertaken in a discrete manner to avoid influencing driver behaviour which could lead to biased survey data.

Speed and traffic volumes were recorded in both directions of travel. The figures below represent the averaged two-way traffic data and were recorded over a 7 day period. Although in some cases the survey equipment failed to provide the full data over this period. For any sites that have provided less than 5 days of data, these sites will have additional counts undertaken. Although this is unlikely to have any impact to the speed data. No speed/traffic counts surveys were undertaken on the A4540 Ring Road.

The results of the speed survey are capture below in table 1.0 with **mean speed** (the average speed of all motorists on a specific stretch of road). This is calculated by adding up the speeds of all the vehicles and then dividing by the number of vehicles. The **85th Percentile Speed**, this is the speed at or below which 85% of the motorists drive on a particular road. It's a measure often used to set speed limits, as it reflects the speed that most drivers consider safe and comfortable. This is the speed at or below which 85% of all vehicles are observed traveling under free-flowing conditions. This also means 15% of vehicles are traveling faster than this speed.

Speed limits that align with the 85th percentile speed can make enforcement 'more straightforward', as they target the small percentage of drivers who are traveling at excessively high speeds. Therefore, setting the speed limit based on the 85th percentile speed helps in creating a balance between safe driving practices and realistic speed expectations for drivers.

Table 1.0

Ref	Road Name	Traffic volume (all vehicles)	Survey period	Mean speed (mph)	85 <sup>th</sup> percentile speed (mph)	Significant non-compliance with existing speed limit
1	A34 Walsall RD	160,576	Full survey 7 days	34.4	39.3	No
2	A4041 Queslett Rd	253,753	EB 7 days & WB 6 days	33.9	40.0	No
3	A452 Chester Rd North	157,805	Full survey 7 days	34.4	38.4	No
4	A5127 Lichfield Rd	50,346	Full survey 7 days	35.0	40.1	No
5	Webster Way/Thimble End Rd	73,188	5 days (both directions)	39.8	44.8	Yes
6	Ox Leys Rd	30,918	Full survey 7 days	39.6	44.5	Yes
7	A38/B4148 Tyburn Rd	115,776	NB 7 days & SB 6.5 days	30.8	35.7	No
8	B4148 Eachlehurst Rd	120,293	Full survey 7 days	32.5	39.7	No
9	A38 Kingsbury Road	158,523	NB 3 days SB & 5 days	33.1	40.5	No

10	A4047 Kingsbury Road	93,862	Full survey 7 days	37.6	43.8	Yes
11	A452 Chester Road	430094	Full survey 7 days	27.1	34.4	No
12	B4147 Newport Road	241,849	EB 6 days & WB 7 days	33.0	39.4	No
13	A47 Heartlands/Fort Parkway	215,318	Full survey 7 days	38.5	44.4	Yes
14	A47 Nechells Parkway	100,371	EB 7 days & WB 6 days	35.6	40.9	No
15	A45 Small Heath Highway	283,992	NB 6.5 days data & SB 7 days	34.9	42.1	No
16	A45 Coventry Road/A45 New Coventry Road	217,531	Full survey 7 days	28.3	34.9	No
17	Monmouth Drive	121,538	Full survey 7 days	33.4	38.9	No
18	Weeford Road	288,836	Full survey 7 days	32.8	38.9	No
19	A441 Redditch Road	205,522	Full survey 7 days	37.6	42.8	No
20	A38 Bristol Road South	175,625	Full survey 7 days	33.0	39.4	No
21	B4123 Wolverhampton Road South, B4121 West Boulevard, B4121 Barnes Hill, B4121 Shenley Lane	155,215	NB 7 days & SB just over 6 days	38.3	43.1	Yes
22	A456 Hagley Road West	253,886	Full survey 7 days	32.5	38.2	No
23	A41 Hockley Flyover	720,019	NB 6.5 days data & SB 7 days	37.3	43.3	Yes

Owing to the design and situation of locations **5, 6, 10, 13, 21** and **23** as highlighted in orange above. These are locations (in the main) that have no residential frontage and dual traffic lanes it is possible that without further layout changes other than removal of 40 mph signage and temporary new speed limit signage, that compliance with the new speed limit could be poor. All routes will be subject to ongoing speed monitoring, working collaboratively with West Midlands Police on enforcement, and other measures considered in due course.

## Decision(s):

I (being the Assistant Director, Transport & Connectivity), following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport (at the 03/02/2025 Cabinet Member Briefing meeting), authorise the Speed Limit Orders to proceed notwithstanding the

objections/comments received in accordance with the FBC approval decision of 1<sup>st</sup> August 2024.

## Reason(s) for decision:

To facilitate improvements that delivers a consistent speed limit across Birmingham's road network, providing much-needed clarity to support enhanced speed enforcement, reduce overall vehicular speeds and the risk of harm, whilst encouraging greater use of active travel and public transport modes.

## Alternative option(s)

**1). To take forward a targeted list of roads that focus on only roads with residential frontages for a reduced speed limit of 30 mph.** All other roads to remain at 40 mph.

**2). To take forward a selected list of roads based on the speed traffic data.** Only take forward roads that are considered suitable for the reduced speed limit using the DfT Speed Limit Appraisal Tool and other DfT guidance information

**3). To not proceed with the Speed Limit Orders as advertised.**

The alternative options are not recommended because these do not align with the core principles of the Birmingham Transport Plan in reducing the speed, volume and dominance of vehicular traffic. The proposed speed limit reductions are in line with aspirations in delivering Road Harm Reduction Strategy/Vision Zero and the Birmingham Transport Plan.

## Legal Implications

The Speed Limit Order statutory process was carried out in accordance with The Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996. Official orders are made by an Authority under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

Legal Services seal the approved TROs on completion of the process in accordance with the FBC approval decision of 1<sup>st</sup> August 2024, where the Strategic Director for Place, Prosperity and Sustainability:

*'authorises the City Solicitor and Monitoring Officer to negotiate, execute and complete any necessary legal documentation to give effect to the above recommendations.'*

## Compliance with Public Sector Equality Duty

The decision to carry out procedures in relation to this scheme are not considered to result in any identified adverse impacts on persons with protected characteristics pursuant to the Council's public sector equality duty under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

## Financial Implications

The total cost of the scheme is estimated to be £0.656m, which will be covered by net surplus revenues arising from the operation of the Clean Air Zone (CAZ). The request to

allocate CAZ resources (CAZ ref: CAZ011) for this purpose was included in a report to Cabinet in March 2022. These costs include £0.050m for development approved for a Programme Entry Proposal (PEP) by the Assistant Director Transport and Connectivity on 4th August 2023. The remaining £0.606m for delivery was approved as part of the FBC on 1<sup>st</sup> August 2024. It was approved by the Strategic Director Place, Prosperity and Sustainability in consultation with the Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer). As the funding for this scheme is from CAZ net surplus revenues there will be no call on the City Council's General Fund for delivery of the scheme.

Spend Control approval for the £0.606m was obtained from the S151 Board on 11th April 2024 (Ref 6356). The initial £0.050m approval pre-dates the Spend Control process.

To place the Speed Limit Order Press Notice in a local paper will cost approximately £2,200 for the overall scheme. This cost can be accommodated from within the above approvals.

## Procurement Implications

The Press Notices for the Speed Limit Orders are placed by a company already procured by the Council – TMP Worldwide. There are no other procurement implications.

## Confidential or Exempt Information?

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?

☐ Yes ☒ No

## Appendices: (attach if required)

1. Appendix A – Consultation objections in full

## Declarations of interest:

There are no interests to declare.

### Decision taken by:

Signature:



Date: 18.2.25

Post held: Philip Edwards, Assistant Director Transport and Connectivity

Contact Officer : Timothy Gibbons, Transport Planning  
timothy.gibbons@birmingham.gov.uk

**Note:** Once completed this form will be published online via the Officer Decision portal.

**Appendix A** - Consultation objections in full – 40 mph speed limit review Birmingham



