

# Proposed speed limit reduction to 30mph: Birmingham area-wide scheme

RoSPA's response to Birmingham City Council's consultation

November 2023



Response to Birmingham City Council's consultation: Proposed speed limit reduction to 30mph: Birmingham area-wide scheme

## Introduction

This is the response of The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) to Birmingham City Council's consultation on a proposed speed limit to 30mph area-wide scheme in Birmingham. It has been produced following consultation with RoSPA's National Road Safety Committee. We have no objection to our response being reproduced or attributed.

The consultation seeks views on a proposed speed limit reduction to 30mph in Birmingham. Birmingham City Council is to review all existing 40mph speed limits across the city, with the intention that almost all will be revoked, with these becoming 30mph. The proposed scheme aims to reduce speeds, improve road safety, and encourage walking and cycling. The need for the proposal has been driven by an increase in concerns about anti-social and dangerous driver behaviour, and due to the number of casualties amongst vulnerable road users.



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**Are you responding to this consultation as an individual or on behalf of a business/organisation?**

**RoSPA response**

On behalf of a business/organisation.

**What is the name of your business/organisation?**

**RoSPA response**

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA).

**What is the postcode of your business/organisation?**

**RoSPA response**

B15 1RP.



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## Proposed speed limit reduction to 30mph: Birmingham area-wide scheme

Birmingham City Council is to review all existing 40mph speed limits across the city, with the intention that almost all will be revoked, with these becoming 30mph. The scheme aims to reduce speeds, improve road safety, and encourage walking and cycling.

The scheme costs will be funded from the Clean Air Zone's (CAZ) surplus income. This funding is ringfenced for use on transport schemes only and cannot be used for other purposes.

The roads proposed for a reduction in speed limit from the existing 40 mph to 30 mph are listed in the table and plans below.

An initial review has recommended that the Quinton Expressway and A38 (M) Aston Expressway are not included in the scheme as these two roads are designed as urban motorways and intended for large volumes of traffic for arterial routing, and a reduction in speed would be difficult to achieve.

LOCATION	WARD(S)	EXTENTS (Approx.)
A34 Walsall Road	Perry Barr	Old Walsall Road to Old Park Walk (near Bartons Arms)
A4041 Queslett Road/ Queslett Road East	Perry Barr/Oscott/Sutton Vesey	Chester Road North to Hamble Road (approaching Scott Arms)
A452 Chester Road	Sutton Coldfield/Erdington/Pype Hayes/Castle Vale	Greenway Drive to city boundary
A5127 Lichfield Road	Sutton Mere Green	Bishops Way to Blake Street (city boundary)
Webster Way	Sutton Walmley & Minworth	Walmley Ash Road to Thimble End Road
Ox Leys Road	Sutton Walmley & Minworth	Springfield Road to Fox Hollies Road
Walmley Ash Lane/ Cottage Lane	Sutton Walmley & Minworth	Walmley Ash Road to Lindridge Drive
A38/B4148 Tyburn Road	Gravelly Hill	Salford Circus to Chester Road
B4148 Eachelhurst Road	Sutton Walmley & Minworth/Pype Hayes	Chester Road to railway bridge
A38 Kingsbury Road	Erdington/Pype Hayes	Tyburn Road to Minworth Island (also short section of A4097 Kingsbury Road)
A4097 Kingsbury Road	Castle Vale/Pype Hayes/Sutton Coldfield	Wiggins Hill Road to city boundary
A452 Chester Road	Castle Vale/Pype Hayes/Sutton Vesey	From the new Aldi just before the Tyburn House pub down to Newport Road.
B4147 Newport Road	Castle Vale/Pype Hayes/Sutton Vesey	Chester Road to Coleshill Road
A47 Heartlands / Fort Parkway	Erdington/Castle Vale	Saltley Viaduct to Chester Road (Spitfire Island)
A47 Nechells Parkway	Nechells	Ring Road to Goodrick Way inc end of Jennens Road
A4540 Ring Road	Multiple wards	Full length except where already



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		30mph
A45 Small Heath Highway	Bordesley Green/Small Heath	Just east of rail bridge to Heybarnes Circus
A45 Coventry Road	Tysley & Hay Mills/South Yardley	Heybarnes Circus to city boundary at Hatchford Brook
Monmouth Drive	Sutton Vesey	Somerville Road through to Chester Road
Weeford Road	Sutton Roughley	Tamworth Road to just before Camp Road
A441 Redditch Road	Kings Norton/Longbridge & West Heath	Burford Park Road to city boundary at Longbridge Lane
A38 Bristol Road South	Rubery/Rednal	Great Park to city boundary at Leach Green Lane
B4121 Wolverhampton Road South, West Boulevard, Barnes Hill, Shenley Lane	Allens Cross/Bartley Green/ Weoley & Selly Oak/Quinton/Harborne	Hagley Road West to near Burdock Road
A456 Hagley Road West	Quinton	Lordswood Road to Quinton Road
A41 Hockley Flyover	Newtown/Soho & Jewellery Quarter/Lozells	Key Hill to Soho Hill

**What do you think of the proposed changes in this consultation?**

	5- I really like them	4	3	2	1	0- I really dislike them	Don't know/no opinion
Rating	X						

**Do you have any comments on the proposals overall or at particular locations?**

**RoSPA response**

RoSPA strongly agrees with the proposals to reduce the speed limit to 30mph at the suggested locations given the number of collisions resulting in death and serious injury to vulnerable road users in recent months in Birmingham.

We support the reduction to 30mph as current higher speeds mean that drivers have less time to identify and react to what is happening around them, and it takes longer for the vehicle to stop. It removes the driver's safety



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margin and turns near misses into collisions. Reducing the speed limit will give motorists more time to identify and react to what is happening around them.

The risk of injury in any collision is influenced by many factors, including the vehicle's speed, its design, strength and occupant protection systems, whether the occupants were wearing seatbelts, the nature of the other vehicle(s) or object(s) struck, and the medical care received by the victims<sup>1</sup>.

Car drivers are much more likely to be injured in collisions at higher speeds. On average, in frontal impacts, belted drivers have a 17 per cent risk of being fatally injured in impacts at 40mph and a 60 per cent risk at 50mph. Although, half of drivers who were fatally injured were in an impact of 34mph or less.

When cars are hit from the side, drivers are at a much greater risk: in a collision at 40mph, the risk of a belted driver being killed is 85 per cent. Current speed limits put occupants at higher risk of being injured in a collision.

Multiple studies (see Table 1 below) have shown that pedestrians are more likely to be seriously or fatally injured when hit by car drivers at higher speeds, and particularly when the driver is travelling more than 30mph.

An analysis of vehicle speed in pedestrian fatalities in Great Britain, found that 85 per cent of pedestrians killed when struck by cars or car-derived vans, died in collision that occurred at impact speeds below 40mph, 45 per cent at less than 30mph and five per cent at speeds below 20mph.

Table 1: Pedestrian Fatality Risk <sup>1</sup>

Country	Date	Number of injuries examined	Risk of fatal injury at 30mph	Increased risk of fatal injury between 30mph and 40mph
UK	1970s	358	~9 per cent	5.5 times more likely
Germany	1999-2007	490 (excludes children under 15)	7 per cent	3.5 times more likely
UK	2000-2009	197	7 per cent	4.5 times more likely

The risk of a pedestrian who is hit by a car driver being killed increases slowly until impact speeds of around 30 mph. Above this speed, the risk increases rapidly, so that a pedestrian who is hit by a car driver travelling at between 30mph and 40mph is between three-and-a-half and five-and-a-half times more likely to be killed than if hit by a car driver travelling at below 30mph. However, about half of pedestrian fatalities occur at impact speeds of 30mph or below. Elderly pedestrians have a much greater risk of suffering fatal injuries than other age groups.

<sup>1</sup> Richards, D. C. (2010) 'Road Safety Web Publication No. 16: Relationship between Speed and Risk of Fatal Injury: Pedestrians and Car Occupants'  
[http://nacto.org/docs/usdg/relationship\\_between\\_speed\\_risk\\_fatal\\_injury\\_pedestrians\\_and\\_car\\_occupants\\_richards.pdf](http://nacto.org/docs/usdg/relationship_between_speed_risk_fatal_injury_pedestrians_and_car_occupants_richards.pdf)



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Cyclists are also vulnerable, with more than half of cyclist deaths and serious injuries occurring in built up areas. A reduction in the speed limit would bring down average speeds and could contribute to a reduction in the number of people killed and seriously injured on Birmingham's roads.

If these proposals go ahead, to achieve better compliance with the speed limit, enforcement will be required. We are therefore pleased to hear that all existing speed enforcement cameras would be recalibrated to reflect the reduced speed limit. An independent review<sup>2</sup> of more than 4,000 safety cameras over a four-year period showed conclusively that cameras significantly reduce speeding and collisions and cut deaths and serious injuries at camera sites. Proposals also state that in the future, it is expected that many of the routes will benefit from enhanced enforcement. Visible enforcement will encourage better compliance.

There are other benefits aside from improved road safety, such as encouraging more walking and cycling. This aligns with the Government's ambition for cycling and walking to become the natural choice for shorter journeys. Walking and cycling have numerous health benefits and reduce pollution and congestion on our roads, making our cities better places to live and travel in.

RoSPA has no further comments to make on the consultation process, other than to thank Birmingham City Council for the opportunity to comment. We have no objection to our response being reproduced or attributed.

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<sup>2</sup> University College London and PA Consulting (2005) 'The National Safety Camera Programme: Four-year Evaluation Report'

