

APPENDIX 2

20MPH SPEED LIMIT—FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)

Doesn't traffic in the City only go about 8mph anyway? In which case, what's the point?

The average speed of traffic in the City of London during the peak periods of the working day was recorded at 8.2mph in the City's April 2013 traffic-speed survey. However, this survey measures speeds during the most congested periods of the day. This is to demonstrate likely impacts upon journey times during the working day. Surveys are conducted starting at 7 a.m., 12 noon and 4 p.m. from Monday to Friday. The survey output is average speeds of vehicles over the course of the day, including the considerable times spent stationary at traffic lights, pedestrian crossings, in traffic queues etc. This averaging means that the speeds at the top and bottom of the speed range are incorporated to the average. Hence, whilst the average speed may be only 8mph during the working day speeds in the evening and at weekends can be considerably more.

Surely speed is the cause of only a tiny number of collisions? In which case, why target speeding?

Speed is usually only recorded as a contributory factor to a collision when one or more vehicles were likely to have been exceeding the speed limit. As the existing speed limit throughout most of the City is 30mph, road traffic collision reports that identify speed as a primary causal factor do not provide a useful indicator of the reduction in casualties that may result from a 20mph speed limit.

Analysis of the existing average spot speeds in the City estimates that a 20mph speed limit would reduce City road traffic casualties by 35 casualties per annum. Also, reduced speed is important in reducing injury severity.

Wouldn't people just ignore a 20mph limit as the police won't enforce it?

The City of London Police actively enforce speed limits in the City. In 2012 they dealt with 2145 drivers committing speeding offences. The City of London Police support the proposed speed reduction because of its potential for reducing casualty occurrence and severity, and will enforce the 20mph limit.

Wouldn't a 20mph speed limit result in a forest of signs across the City, distracting drivers and detracting from the City's high quality streetscape?

The main determinant of the number of traffic signs that would be required to implement a 20mph speed limit across the City is whether or not the streets for which Transport for London is the local traffic authority (the red routes) are also 20mph. If those streets remained at 30mph there would need to be signs indicating the change in speed limit at every junction between a City street and a Transport for London street.

Transport for London have, however, stated that they support the introduction of a City-wide 20mph speed limit because of its potential for reducing casualty occurrence and casualty severity and would, in principle, be prepared to change the speed limit on all of their streets within the City to 20mph. As a result, relatively few speed limit signs would be required to implement a 20mph speed limit across the City. We expect that across the whole City there will only need to be around 50 signs and a further 50 road markings.

Why should the limit apply 24 hours a day? Surely most collisions occur when people are here during the day?

During the last three years approximately one third of accidents have happened between 6pm and 7am. Therefore we believe retaining the speed limit day and night is important.

Variable speed limits are legally possible. However, they require electrically illuminated signage. Around the country these signs have only been used for single locations such as on motorways and for small areas of temporarily altered speeds such as outside schools. Use of such complicated signs across a whole local authority area would be very expensive to install, run and maintain.