



POLICY FOR THE INTRODUCTION OF 20 MPH SPEED LIMITS AND ZONES

Executive summary

Rotherham Council has developed an updated policy for the implementation of 20mph zones and limits, so they can be introduced thoughtfully and appropriately, and in a coherent manner.

Controlling vehicle speeds to 20mph or less is an important tool for reducing collisions and casualties while improving conditions for both pedestrians, particularly for vulnerable road users. Used carefully along with broader speed and traffic management tools, it is also an important tool for managing traffic flows in the Borough, to discourage people from using less suitable routes such as residential areas and instead encourage them to use more suitable ones such as main routes. Managing traffic in this way may help the public make sustainable and healthy travel choices so that walking, cycling and public transport are a normal part of daily travel.

The new policy creates consistency and transparency about the Council's approach. The key criteria are-

- Except in the immediate vicinity of schools, 20mph limits can be provided only on minor roads;
- Main roads, including main buses routes, should not be included – to ensure bus services remain attractive, and it remains relatively attractive for motorists to stick to main roads and not 'rat run';
- Signed only speed limits result in only small reductions in speed. Traffic calming measures will be introduced where required to bring traffic speeds down to ~20mph; and,
- All schemes will be subject to public consultation, which will provide opportunity for residents and road users to express their concerns or support, opinions and suggestions. Local schemes will require ward member support and evidence of local consent before they can be implemented. There will be some 20mph proposals that fall within specific Department for Transport Programmes and outside the scope of this Council policy, and their decision making that will be subject to National Government criteria for adoption rather than that of the Council.

Regarding other impacts of 20mph zones and limits, air quality impacts are reported to be negligible or slightly beneficial. Noise from road traffic may be reduced by as much as 5dB, when not offset by increased noise caused by larger vehicles navigating traffic-calming measures. Evidence suggests there is generally little impact on congestion or journey times, although traffic calming may result in traffic reduction of around 20% on treated streets.

By updating its policy for 20mph limits and zones, the Council can competently improve safety while meeting important strategic objectives, as well as ensuring ease of movement around the Borough is not hindered for bus passengers, pedestrians, cyclists and motorists alike.