



05 September 2024

Aberdeen City Council

By email: TOfowoleru@aberdeencity.gov.uk transportstrategy@aberdeencity.gov.uk

Dear sirs,

20mph consultation

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to this stage of the consultation.

ACF is an established cycle campaign and advocacy group formed in 2003. Although we cannot claim to represent all cyclists, we have approximately 600 members. Our aims, as set out in our constitution, are noted at the foot of this letter.^[1]

We are pleased to see these proposals being brought forward and support their implementation.

We believe the case for lower (that is, lower than the current default limit of 30mph) limits is justified on safety grounds alone, that there is ample evidence from elsewhere in support of that, and we do not need to repeat it here.

There are a few general comments we would like to make:

1. Our constituency, along with pedestrians, are the most vulnerable of road users and therefore have most to gain from improvements in road safety. Although we hope that in due course Aberdeen will develop a network of segregated cycle routes, especially on radial and similar distributor roads, that goal still seems several years away and in the interim there is a need to encourage more active travel by making shared road space more attractive and lessening the dangers – real and perceived – faced by pedestrians and cyclists.
2. Furthermore, it seems unlikely that fully segregated cycle tracks will ever be provided on all minor and residential roads therefore there is a strong case for reduced speed limits on these streets.
3. Our perception is that, over a period of years, vehicular traffic has increased in volume, speed, size and weight. All of these factors increase the danger to cyclists and make the case for change more urgent. For example, there has been a dramatic increase in ownership of large (and heavy) SUVs and pick-up trucks. Electric vehicles are often

heavier than conventional cars. Their high-torque motors and automatic gearboxes make it very easy to accelerate quickly and we suspect that many drivers of these vehicles don't realise how quickly they are travelling. Electric vehicles are also much quieter and can pose additional hazards to cyclists who may be unaware of their approach. All of this underscores the need for reduced speed limits.

4. We note the intention to use TTROs in a limited number of cases (King St, Great Northern Road and Cairncry Road). We don't fully understand the explanation given for this and don't agree with the rationale. We note for example the relevant section of Great Northern Road passes Kittybrewster primary school where there is a strong case for a 20mph limit and where a part-time 20mph limit already exists, aligned to school in/out hours. Much of Cairncry Road also has a similar part-time 20mph limit. Therefore we don't think it is correct to say that a 20mph limit on these roads is "unrealistic". It is clearly realistic because it already exists.

We also don't understand why Carincry Road should be treated differently from roads of a similar character in the same locale – for example, Rosehill Drive, Hilton Drive or Clifton Road.

5. We note that the proposals put forward currently only cover part of the city and that other areas (mostly southern Wards) are expected to follow at a later date, possibly in early 2025. We expect there could be a strong case for city-wide implementation at the same time, in order to avoid creating confusion. However that should not be used as a reason to delay implementation.
6. Noting the recent back-lash from motorists in relation to ACC's development of the Regional Transport Strategy, the city centre bus gates, and the Westhill-city centre active travel proposals, we would suggest that ACC needs to do a much more thorough job in terms of communicating and explaining the changes to citizens, in order to gain more widespread support and acceptance.
7. We are aware that Police resources are already stretched and therefore any enforcement of reduced speed limits is likely to be a challenge for them. However, we still believe the reduced limits should be introduced and that even without regular strict enforcement, vehicle speeds will moderate to some extent, so that even if 20mph is still exceeded, speeds will tend to be lower than the 30mph *and above* which is common at present.

We hope you find these comments useful and look forward to hearing more about the proposals in due course.

Yours sincerely,

Gavin Clark

Chair - Aberdeen Cycle Forum

[1] A) To encourage cycling and to promote the benefits of cycling to the individual and the wider community B) To advocate for a safer cycling environment and improved cycle facilities in Aberdeen. C) To campaign for cycling to be an integral part of planning and transport strategies and practice, in order to provide the widest possible access to cycling as a healthy and efficient means of travel for work and leisure.