



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Ms Emma Alexander
Managing Director
Derbyshire County Council
County Hall
Matlock
Derbyshire
DE4 3AG

9 June 2023

Our Ref: MT28459/IG

Re: *Green Towns 20mph Public Consultation*

Dear Ms Alexander,

Please accept this letter as my formal submission to my “*Greener Towns 20mph*” Public Consultation. Specifically, I wish to address the proposal for a 20mph zone in Long Eaton, which is located within my Constituency.

To provide some context, although Long Eaton has good connectivity to both the M1 and A52, essentially the town’s road infrastructure, especially in and around the town centre, has remained largely unchanged since the turn of the 20th century.

This is despite the population increasing by around 278 percent since 1900, due, in part, to a number of major housing developments that have been built over the past 30 years.

Combined with increase in car ownership over the past three decades, the exponential growth in population is now putting the town’s roads under immense strain.

This is often exacerbated by the frequency of road works that tend to reappear on the same stretches of road, which is not only a major cause of congestion, but also adds to air pollution due to effects from idling engines.

Whilst research in this area is limited, results from a 3-year study into the effects of 20mph zones published in the *Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health* in November 2022 suggests that this type of intervention has little impact on short- or long-term outcomes for road traffic collisions, casualties, and speed.

What the study did identify was a significant reduction in the volume of traffic attracted to the areas operating 20mph zones.

If this situation were to be replicated in Long Eaton, given the fact that work on the £26 million Towns Fund Deal is now at an advanced stage, I am concerned that proposals for a 20mph zone would impede the project’s main aim of attracting more people into the town.

In a similar vein, a reduction in traffic would also impact negatively on the main local businesses located away from the main high street that are reliant on passing trade.

Specifically with regards to air quality, again there is, as yet, little academic evidence which definitively proves the benefits of 20mph zones.

In note that no supporting evidence has been provided alongside the consultation document, I would question on what basis Long Eaton has been identified for this trial as opposed to another similar sized town in Derbyshire such as Swadlincote, Ilkeston, Belper and Dronfield?

If it is genuinely the case that the Long Eaton suffers from disproportionately high levels of air pollution, where is the data that this decision is based upon?

In addition, the consultation makes no reference to the assessment that would have need to have been carried out by the County Council in determining the locations of the trials, nor does it give details of the roads that were assessed.

Without this context, it is extremely difficult to make a full and balanced judgement of what is being proposed.

In the similar way, if the proposals are to proceed, what measurables will be used by the County Council to monitor and evaluate the success or failure of the trial?

Regarding the consultation document itself, I do have concerns as to the way it has been conducted, with very little done to advertise the proposed trial to the public.

I am also concerned to note that consultation form contains a number of "*leading*" questions, which, in my view, are designed to skew the results in favour of the County Council's desired outcome rather than produce a genuinely fair, open, and transparent result.

The consultation also fails to detail what the cost of this trial would be to the taxpayer and address whether, as a result of lowering the overall speed limit, the County Council would look to remove existing traffic calming measures, such as speed humps, which would be rendered obsolete.

Having carefully considered the proposals at length, I believe that the County Council should not proceed with the 20mph zone trial, and instead look at how, for example, it can improve the scheduling of roadworks in order to reduce congestion and cut length of time motorists are made to queue in traffic with their engines idling.

I would also urge the County Council to invest in more publicly accessible electric vehicle charging points, to encourage residents to make the permanent switch from petrol and diesel.

I trust that you will give due consideration to the points I have raised and look forward to reading the results of the public consultation in the near future.

Yours sincerely,



Maggie Throup MP
Member of Parliament for Erewash