

30 August 2023

Dear

ATISN 18794 – Request for Information

Information requested

Thank you for your request which I received on 2 August 2023. You asked for:

1. The rationale behind excluding traffic speeds as a factor when determining exceptions to the default 20 mph limit, especially in cases where there are significant non-compliance issues and road design/engineering considerations.
2. A comprehensive analysis or evidence that supports the inclusion of higher-standard and arterial roads without changes in road design in the implementation of 20 mph limits.
3. Any available data or studies that specifically address the impact of 20 mph limits on the speeds of the fastest drivers, as well as their potential implications for road safety.

Our response

The rationale behind excluding traffic speeds as a factor when determining exceptions to the default 20 mph limit, especially in cases where there are significant non-compliance issues and road design/engineering considerations.

In line with transport hierarchy in [Wales Transport Strategy](#), Welsh Government is prioritising the needs and safety of people on foot and cycle particularly in urban areas. The application of 20mph speed limits in areas where pedestrians and cyclists are mixing with motor vehicles, is in line with Article 11 of the UN Stockholm Declaration. If highway authorities did not apply 20mph speed limits in such areas, and where speeds were currently high, this would fail to improve conditions for pedestrians and cyclists.

The guidance for exceptions to the default 20mph limit was published in November 2022, and is available here:

[Setting exceptions to the 20mph default speed limit for restricted roads \[HTML\] | GOV.WALES](#)

Compliance with the existing speed limits is a matter for the relevant highway authority and GoSafe.

A comprehensive analysis or evidence that supports the inclusion of higher-standard and arterial roads without changes in road design in the implementation of 20 mph limits.

Highway authorities are responsible for road design and they can apply relevant local factors when interpreting the guidance provided by Welsh Government (above).

Any available data or studies that specifically address the impact of 20 mph limits on the speeds of the fastest drivers, as well as their potential implications for road safety.

An [interim monitoring report](#) on the eight 20mph trial settlements areas was published in March. Further data will be published when it becomes available.

Next steps

If you are dissatisfied with the Welsh Government's handling of your request, you can ask for an internal review within 40 working days of the date of this response. Requests for an internal review should be addressed to the Welsh Government's Freedom of Information Officer at:

Information Rights Unit,
Welsh Government,
Cathays Park,
Cardiff,
CF10 3NQ

or Email: Freedom.ofinformation@gov.wales

Please remember to quote the ATISN reference number above.

You also have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.

However, please note that the Commissioner will not normally investigate a complaint until it has been through our own internal review process.

Yours sincerely