



The Rt Hon Mark Harper MP  
Secretary of State for Transport  
Department for Transport  
Great Minister House  
33 Horseferry Road  
London  
SW1P 4DR  
(by email)

Cabinet Office  
Perceval House  
14/16 Uxbridge Road  
London W5 2HL

cc: Rt Hon Michael Gove MP, Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and Minister for Intergovernmental Relations

7 June 2023

Dear Secretary of State,

### **Enforcement of 20mph speed limits in Ealing**

On 16 December 2021, along with local campaign group Better Ealing Streets, I wrote to your predecessor Rt Hon Grant Shapps MP requesting that you devolve the power for 20mph speed enforcement to local authorities in London so that we can address the problem of speeding drivers. I am today asking again that you devolve this power to boroughs, in light of recent events in Ealing.

Less than a fortnight ago a dangerous, speeding driver crashed into and destroyed a parked car in Hanwell. This caused significant concern from local people and has highlighted once again the untenable situation in London where local councils' hands are tied when it comes to enforcing our own speed limits.

In Ealing we have reduced the speed limit on all borough-controlled roads to 20mph but there are still drivers who deliberately break the speed limit in these streets. Our residents are therefore rightly concerned for their safety.

As you know the council does not have any legal powers to enforce speeding laws as this power is confined to the Metropolitan Police. However, as I explained to your predecessor, the Met simply don't have the resources to prioritise speeding offences. With the force already failing to attend almost half of burglaries in the capital last year, reports of speeding offences go to the very bottom of the pile. As a result, some drivers feel they can get away with speeding, which can lead to serious injury and even death.

Ealing Council is doing everything we can to ensure the safety of our residents and visitors to the borough. As part of the Mayor's Vision Zero approach, we are working to 'design out' dangerous driving through changes to road layouts, and we are



upgrading junctions to improve pedestrian safety. On the road in Hanwell where the most recent incident took place, we are re-painting the 20mph road markings but we know rogue drivers ignore signs. We need real powers to take action to protect our residents.

We have the expertise and technology needed to enforce speeding offences, as we already have a network of camera-controlled bus lanes, restricted turns and one-way systems. However, as the law currently stands, we are not allowed to use any of this skill and technology to enforce speeding offences.

Transport Minister Baroness Vere replied to my letter to your predecessor where she refused to devolve the necessary powers to local councils on the grounds that this would “decriminalise” speeding. Could I respectfully point out that this is a flawed argument. As the police do not have the resources to enforce speeding then there is no benefit to anyone in refusing to make this a council power. Our residents expect more than warm words. In the absence of additional ear-marked funding for the police, they expect their local authority to be given the powers we need to keep them safe.

By devolving powers for speeding enforcement in London to local authorities you can show that you are committed to listening to the concerns of residents and preventing deaths and serious injuries due to dangerous driving. I am calling on you to take action on this issue now, before there are further injuries and deaths on our roads.

Yours sincerely,

Cllr Deirdre Costigan

Deputy Leader of Ealing Council and Cabinet Member for Climate Action