Speed Limit Review 2026 – Northern Ireland

Summary

- 20mph speed limits should be implemented where there is a clear safety case, particularly in residential areas and around schools, using targeted and flexible approaches rather than blanket implementation.
- Speed limit reductions on rural roads and selected dual carriageways should rely on collision data and risk assessments where a clear road safety benefit is demonstrated.
- Aligning HGV speed limits with those elsewhere in the UK would improve traffic flow, reduce unsafe overtaking, and support more efficient movement of goods across the network.

About Logistics UK

Logistics UK is one of the country's largest business groups, and the only trade association which represents all of logistics. Our mission is to support, shape and stand up for a safe, sustainable and efficient logistics sector. Our membership of more than 22,000 includes global, national and regional businesses and SMEs spanning road, rail, waterways, sea and air freight, in ports, airports and warehousing, as well as the customers of freight services such as retailers and manufacturers. We deliver services, representation and thought leadership, helping members and policymakers to seize new opportunities for the sector and the economy as a whole, right across the country.

The logistics sector

Nothing moves without logistics. The sector employs 8% of the UK workforce in good jobs with strong career progression, contributes £170 billion in GVA each year, and underpins the resilience of the everyday economy.

Logistics plans and coordinates the movement and storage of the goods that businesses, public services and households rely on – using ports, airports, roads, railways, waterways, warehouses and smart digital systems to tie it all together.

With the right policies, logistics can drive up UK growth by £8 billion a year.[1] However, rising costs, red tape and poor infrastructure are holding the sector back – putting firms out of business, fuelling inflation, and undermining productivity and supply chain resilience. As a result, the UK has fallen from 4th to 19th in the World Bank Logistics Performance Index over the decade to 2023.

Consultation response

1. Evidence would indicate that the introduction of further 20mph speed limits would improve road safety.

Logistics UK members report that speed limits of 20mph should be implemented where there is a safety case to do so, for example in residential or school areas. Members noted that most schools already operate selectable 20 mph zones that can be activated and deactivated by the school; these arrangements could remain in place and be extended where it is assessed to be safe and appropriate to do so.

[1] Logistics Delivering a solution to the UK's productivity puzzle, Oxford Economics, 2023

2. Evidence gathered shows a correlation between road deaths on rural roads and excessive speeds and would indicate that a reduction in speed limits on rural roads would improve road safety. This applies to a lesser extent on dual carriageways, but lower speeds can reduce the likelihood and severity of collisions.

   Logistics UK members feel that targeted reductions in speed limits on dual carriageways and rural roads should continue to be adopted where they are clearly supported by risk assessments and collision data. Members would support changes in specific locations where the evidence demonstrates a clear safety benefit.

3. Increasing HGV speed limits can lead to smoother traffic flow, reduced overtaking risks, and improved journey times for HGV drivers.

   Logistics UK members are in favour of bringing speed limits for HGVs into line with those applied elsewhere in the UK. Lower limits can restrict the efficient movement of goods across the road network and contribute to congestion, particularly where HGVs become moving bottlenecks. This is often compounded by a lack of awareness among other road users that commercial vehicles are subject to lower speed limits than cars, which can lead to frustration and unsafe driving behaviour.