

Using technology to tackle serious crime

Consultation on change of use for Clean Air Zone ANPR (Automatic Number Plate Recognition) cameras in Greater Manchester

Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras originally installed across Greater Manchester for a proposed charging-Clean Air Zone that is now not going ahead could be used to help tackle serious crime and keep communities safe.

We want your views on proposals for Greater Manchester Police (GMP) to include these cameras in its existing ANPR network for law enforcement.

We are now asking for views on:

- a proposal to transfer ownership of the former, proposed Clean Air Zone cameras from Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) to GMP to include them in its existing ANPR network
 - changing the ANPR cameras' primary use from clean air purposes to detecting, preventing and tackling serious crime, to improve community safety
 - allowing TfGM to continue to access anonymised camera data for transport planning and Clean Air Plan monitoring
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This proposal would allow GMP to make better use of and get good value out of this existing infrastructure to help keep people and communities safe.

GMP already has a network of ANPR cameras and is committed to following the National ANPR Standards for Policing and Law Enforcement, using ANPR in an ethical way that keeps public trust and confidence, while improving public safety.

Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) wants to understand and consider your views to help shape a final proposal for the ANPR cameras, with the aim of keeping Greater Manchester as safe a place as possible to live, work and drive in.

Background: Clean Air Zone ANPR cameras

Like many areas across the country, Greater Manchester local authorities are under a government direction to meet legal limits for nitrogen dioxide on local roads.

Government-funded Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras were originally installed to support a proposed Greater Manchester charging-Clean Air Zone that is not going ahead.

The government has now approved an investment-led Clean Air Plan for Greater Manchester that does not include charging drivers, so the cameras are no longer needed to monitor vehicle compliance with a charging-Clean Air Zone.

However, we do need to keep the cameras as some data from the ANPR cameras still needs to be used to understand the types of vehicles

on local roads and how they are contributing to air pollution.

This will help Greater Manchester monitor the effectiveness of the Clean Air Plan and progress toward meeting legal air quality limits for nitrogen dioxide on local roads.

More at cleanairgm.com

ANPR can help police detect and disrupt criminal activity at a local, force, regional and national level.



Benefits of ANPR use for law enforcement

ANPR technology is already used by GMP and other forces across the UK.

It plays an important role to give police lines of enquiry and evidence in criminal investigations.

ANPR can help police detect and disrupt criminal activity at a local, force, regional and national level.

That includes tackling traveling criminals (using the road network to avoid being caught), Organised Crime Groups and terrorists.

ANPR and crime prevention in Greater Manchester

From January 2023 to April 2025, data supplied to GMP from the former Clean Air Zone ANPR cameras has contributed to investigations including:

- 27 major crimes (including murder and fatal road collisions)
- 36 serious crimes (including sexual offences, robbery, aggravated burglary and firearms offences)
- 30 other crime investigations
- 4 high-risk missing persons cases

GMP does not currently store or have real-time access to Clean Air Zone ANPR data. It can request data for law

enforcement purposes. But this can take time, and the delay can limit the effectiveness and usefulness of the data.

Through this proposal GMP would gain real-time access to ANPR data on its own systems, allowing it to better respond to incidents in a timelier way, and improve the outcomes of police investigations.

It would also improve coverage and effectiveness by bringing the size of GMP's ANPR network in line with that of comparable metropolitan forces.

How ANPR camera systems works:

- The cameras are pointed at a fixed location on the road and read vehicle registration plates on the back of vehicles that pass through that location.
- The registrations are automatically read and immediately checked against a national database of vehicles of interest.
- If a match is identified, GMP officers are alerted and can conduct further analysis and allocate resource to respond to the intelligence.
- GMP can also access vehicle registration data when undertaking investigations.
- Where necessary, police can make arrests and/or safeguard vulnerable people.



What ANPR cameras are NOT:

- ANPR cameras do not monitor or enforce speed limits and are not used to directly issue Fixed Penalty Notices.
- Cameras cannot be remotely moved or used to track individual vehicles in motion.
- They do not have any biometric or facial recognition capabilities.

Data privacy and security: How ANPR data is stored by Greater Manchester Police

GMP follows strict national standards for ANPR data storage in its current network:

- [National ANPR Standards for Policing and Law Enforcement \(NASPLE\)](#)
- [National Compliance and Audit Standards for Law Enforcement ANPR \(Audit Standards\)](#)

There are clear rules:

- Access is limited to GMP staff with a valid reason relevant to their role.
- Most data is only accessible to people with permission for up to 90 days from the date it was collected.
- Serious, major or counter-terrorism investigations may allow some staff data access for up to one year, with senior approval.

In line with national policy, local ANPR camera locations are not disclosed to protect their effectiveness. This information could be of benefit to offenders.

GMP is committed to:

- regularly reviewing camera location to ensure their use continues to be justified
- using ANPR within guidelines to help residents be and feel safe while having their privacy respected

Give your views

We are seeking views on the proposal from **Friday 26 September (12am)** to **Thursday 6 November (11.59pm)**.

Feedback will help shape the final proposals for the ANPR cameras, with the aim of keeping Greater Manchester as safe a place as possible to live, work and drive in.



Fill out the survey:
gmconsult.org/ANPR