

ITS UK Position Paper

Noise Cameras: Where next?

01 Executive Summary

Noise cameras offer significant benefits for reducing noise disturbances from vehicles. The technology is already well-developed, with transport authorities both in the UK and across the world implementing noise camera schemes.

Over the past few years, the Department for Transport has developed trials for the technology to better understand its capabilities. Atkins Jacobs Joint Venture (AJJV) has provided an overview of compatibility with UK roads and the testing of selected noise cameras in real-world conditions.

Simultaneously, noise cameras have been implemented successfully in London boroughs, initially in 2020, with the programme growing in the following years. This implementation includes issuing tickets to offenders, resulting in a reduction in excessive noise from vehicles.

To further cultivate the market, the Government should encourage local authorities to utilise existing noise camera technologies and enforcement legislation, as well as to set out a clear path for the wider commercialisation and uptake of the technology. This may include the implementation of a Government endorsed standard at a future point. However, as the technology is well-

developed, and may be implemented immediately, it is important that the UK takes advantage today of the opportunity noise cameras provide in protecting communities from excessive vehicle noise.

In this Paper, Intelligent Transport Systems UK (ITS UK), sets out three recommendations to support the noise camera market:

Recommendation 1:

Establish a Government-led Noise Group comprised of key industry stakeholders, from the Department for Transport, Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, Local Authorities, and the enforcement and acoustic industries. The Group would work together to promote deployment of noise camera technology. A key outcome would be to establish a national standard for noise cameras, whether through statutory instruments or primary legislation.

Recommendation 2:

The Government should publish

guidance for local authorities on rolling out noise cameras using Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPOs).

Recommendation 3:

As noise cameras are rolled out, there will be greater public interest in the technology. The Government should work with industry to support public awareness campaigns that promote the positive role noise cameras can play in reducing noise pollution.

This Paper gives a short explanation of what a noise camera is, a brief background on the noise camera policy environment, and the case for the three recommendations above.

ITS UK looks forward to working with all stakeholders and decision makers to support the roll out of noise cameras, with the aim of protecting communities from excessive vehicle noise and supporting a home-grown industry.



About Intelligent Transport Systems UK

ITS UK is the national association representing the transport technology industry. ITS UK provides a national platform to support the roll out of technology for a cleaner, safer and more effective transport network, both at home and abroad. We support our 175+ members - from both

the private and public sector, and covering all sizes and disciplines - through advocacy to policy makers, connecting people and organisations, promoting the industry overseas and supporting innovation across the intelligent transport ecosystem.



www.its-uk.org

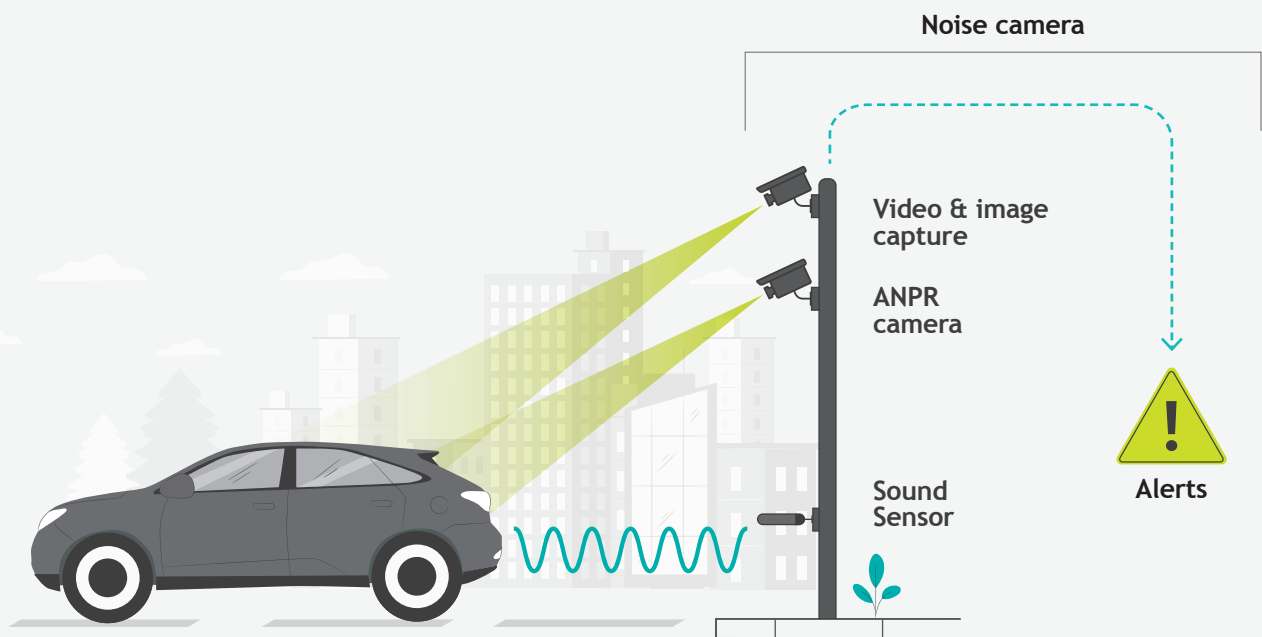
02

What is a Noise Camera?

A noise camera is a device used to identify excessively noisy vehicles and where necessary, issue a fine to deter drivers from driving in an anti-social manner.

The technology is based on sensors composed of either microphones or radar, that pinpoint a noisy vehicle as it passes. The camera will then take a recording, with automated number plate recognition (ANPR), to identify the vehicle and to create a package of evidence for use by the relevant authority. Software using algorithms and AI

can help automatically identify a noise and ensure that a detected event is from a vehicle exhaust, ensuring that the noise cameras aren't identifying surrounding noise and limiting false positives. Noise cameras effectively operate in a similar way to speed detection cameras or other road safety and enforcement devices on the road network.



03 Why do we need Noise Cameras?

Noise can be a great disturbance, particularly for those living close to roads.

Noise health impacts: The health effects of excess exposure to noise are well documented. Non-auditory effects are known to include increased stress, cardiovascular function (hypertension, changes to blood pressure and/or heart rate), annoyance and sleep disturbance. Many congenital conditions are noise-sensitive, including autism, Down's syndrome, cerebral palsy, schizophrenia, and PTSD.

Noisy vehicles can impact many people at once: Research by Bruitparif found that a single unmuffled scooter crossing Paris at night can wake as many as 10,000 people.¹

The public and drivers support tackling noise: A study conducted by the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea has found that 93% of respondents strongly supported measures to tackle anti-social driving.² Independent polling by Opinium shows that 69% of public say they support making it easier to enforce against excessively noisy vehicles. Similarly, polling of drivers by the RAC highlights that six-in-10

drivers (58%) would support the roll out of noise camera technology.³

Noise is often deliberate: Almost all noise offences are wholly intended by the offender, whether by modifying their vehicle or driving in an anti-social manner. Vehicles do not need to be modified to create disturbance; unmodified vehicles have been observed to create significant noise levels when driven in a particular manner. Similarly, many owners go to great expense to acquire aftermarket exhaust systems designed to enhance noise from the vehicle.

A pioneering UK noise camera industry can support a global issue: Whilst there are no readily available figures on the size of the noise camera market nationally or internationally, the UK has already set itself apart as a leader in the market. Supporting the UK noise camera industry is an opportunity to place Britain as the global leader in exports for the noise camera industry, building upon our already internationally-regarded expertise in the enforcement technology sector.

¹ <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/features/2022-04-27/how-paris-is-waging-a-war-on-noise-pollution?embedded-checkout=true>

² [Expanded enforcement to tackle nuisance drivers | Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea \(rbkc.gov.uk\)](https://www.rac.co.uk/drive/news/motoring-news/six-in-10-want-noise-cameras-rolled-out/#:~:text=Six%2Din%2D10%20drivers%20(%2Csimilar%20proportion%20(20%25)%20unsure)

³ [https://www.rac.co.uk/drive/news/motoring-news/six-in-10-want-noise-cameras-rolled-out/#:~:text=Six%2Din%2D10%20drivers%20\(%2Csimilar%20proportion%20\(20%25\)%20unsure](https://www.rac.co.uk/drive/news/motoring-news/six-in-10-want-noise-cameras-rolled-out/#:~:text=Six%2Din%2D10%20drivers%20(%2Csimilar%20proportion%20(20%25)%20unsure)



04

Background to Noise Camera Implementation in the UK

The UK Government has shown a strong interest in noise camera technology, alongside local authorities who have the responsibility to roll out the devices.

1

June 2019

UK Government announces noise cameras could be a potential solution to noise pollution from vehicles.

2

September 2020

Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea conducts first trial of noise camera systems.

4

August 2021

Noise camera systems installed in the City of Westminster.

3

June 2021

Additional cameras are installed in Kensington and Chelsea following a positive response from residents.

5

April 2022

The Department for Transport launches national trials on the use of noise cameras in England and Wales. The Government provides £315,000 for the trials, which AJJV lead as technical consultants, and which take place from October 2022 to February 2023 in Keighley, Bristol, Great Yarmouth and Rubery, Birmingham.

6

October 2023

In the Plan for Drivers, the then-Government sets out the commitment to quieter neighbourhoods, by “allowing local councils to roll out noise cameras to target unacceptable vehicle modifications.”⁴ The Plan for Drivers says the Government will “issue guidance to local authorities setting out minimum requirements and best practice for the use of noise cameras”.

8

March 2024

Great Yarmouth installs noise camera systems.

7

March 2024

DfT and AJJV publish the results of their report, in three phases.⁵ The report covers:

- **Part A:** The implications of single versus multiple noise thresholds and vehicle modifications on noise levels, offering enforcement recommendations.
- **Part B:** An evaluation of the current noise camera technologies for compatibility with UK roads, including test track trials.
- **Part C:** The results of testing the selected noise camera in real-world conditions (public roads) to verify threshold efficacy and performance.

9

January 2025

New independent polling by Opinium, on behalf of ITS UK, shows strong support for noise cameras, with 69% of public saying they support making it easier to enforce against excessively noisy vehicles.

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/plan-for-drivers/the-plan-for-drivers#inconsiderate-driving-1>

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/noise-camera-technology-roadside-trial>

05

How to support expansion in the UK

This report seeks to set out the position of the ITS sector as to how to build up a successful noise camera industry.

It sets out three recommendations by which the Government can support the roll out of noise cameras, protecting communities, as well as supporting a growing UK sector.

Recommendation 1:

Establish a Government-led Noise Group comprised of key industry stakeholders, from the Department for Transport, Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, Local Authorities, and the enforcement and acoustic industries. The Group would work together to promote deployment of noise camera technology and a key outcome would be to establish a national standard for noise cameras, whether through statutory instruments or primary legislation.

It is important that industry and Government work collaboratively to accelerate the roll out of noise cameras in the UK. Government will need to work both with the sector with other Departments, as well as Local Authorities and police forces, if the noise camera industry is to grow and succeed.

The Group's remit should be determined by Government and industry, but some of the indicative areas it could explore include:

- **Local Authority approaches:** As noise cameras become more common, there will inevitably be different approaches to enforcement taken by different local authorities. A forum for local authorities to meet and discuss implementation of noise camera schemes would be valuable.
- **Joining up Government policy:** Noise camera policy sits between multiple Government departments. The Noise Group could help support

cross-Government policy cohesion.

- **Discussion over standards and regulations:** There will likely be a need for regular dialogue between key stakeholders in the sector to ensure guidance is effective and appropriate.
- **Best practice and innovation:** The Group could provide a means by which to share best practice amongst local authorities, as well as to keep up-to-date of technology and innovation.
- **Supporting industry growth both domestically and overseas:** The Group could ensure the health and growth of the sector, looking at industry-wide challenges to noise camera uptake, and explore how UK-developed technologies can be exported abroad.

On behalf of the transport technology industry, ITS UK offers its support in the development and creation of a Noise Group.

Recommendation 2:

The Government should the publish guidance for local authorities on rolling out noise cameras using Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPOs).



Currently, Local Authorities in the UK are using Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPOs) to enforce noise incidents. PSPOs are flexible to different offences and can be established quickly.

In time, there may be scope to set a national standard, that provides a specific range for the scope of noise detection, with a corresponding vehicle to prosecute offenders. Where possible, national standards should fall in line with European and wider international standards; allowing firms to manufacture products on a larger scale for both national and international markets simultaneously.

In the immediate future, the Government setting out the guidance for Local Authorities will be critical as some may be hesitant to use PSPOs without this. This guidance should include key information on how to operate the devices and what the punitive procedures are for those caught exceeding noise rules.

The Government stipulating a national standard for noise cameras, alongside providing guidance for local authorities to deploy and enforce this technology, would provide much more secure investment conditions for enforcement technology firms, who can then be confident in their paths to national and international applications.

What are PSPOs?

PSPOs were introduced in the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Police Act 2014. They are wide-ranging and flexible in allowing local authorities to identify and enforce measures to tackle anti-social behaviour.

A single PSPO can be used to target a range of different issues, allowing Local Authorities the ability to introduce reasonable prohibitions and/or requirements regarding certain behaviours within the specified public area.⁶

Polling commissioned by ITS UK, with support from Intelligent Instruments, shows that noise cameras are popular with the public, but that they would like further information on the devices.

The polling, conducted by Opinium in January 2025, of 2,000 adults across the UK, shows that:

- There is strong support for measures to make it easier to enforce against excessively noisy vehicles, with 69% in support, and 16% opposing.
- Two fifths say they're impacted by excessively noisy vehicles at least sometimes (43%)
- Awareness of noise cameras is low, with two thirds of the public (67%) having never heard of them; 17% have heard but don't know any details, and a tenth know at least a bit about noise cameras (10%).

- Half think public awareness of laws around excessively noisy vehicles and their enforcement is too low (50%) with only a fifth thinking it's 'about right' (20%).
- Support is also high for the further roll out of noise cameras, 62% in support, and 20% opposing.

These findings show a clear need for greater information for motorists and the general public, but that there is broad support for noise cameras from across the UK.

Government should build on these findings and take steps to increase public awareness of the technology, as it is rolled out.

Find out more about the Opinium Polling. Go to: www.its-uk.org/noise-camera-polling

Recommendation 3:

As noise cameras are rolled out, there will be greater public interest in the technology. The Government should work with industry to support public awareness campaigns that promote the positive role noise cameras can play in reducing noise pollution.

ITS UK would like to thank those who have contributed to this report:

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⁶ https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/10.21%20PSPO%20guidance_06_1.pdf



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