

**FOI: 26243470 Security cameras on Prestons Road between Yabsley Street and Raleana Road**

There are security cameras on Prestons Road between Yabsley Street and Raleana Road where the traffic is split into two lanes.

They were installed in 1996 after the bomb in South Quay.

The Docklands ANPR security system is 25 years old now and was originally installed by the LDDC and not the council. I will answer the FOI as best possible from information I have been given since 2006 when I joined the council as the CCTV Manager. I can not confirm that the exact dates and information is 100% accurate. – Peter Allnut

Is Tower Hamlets responsible for maintaining them; or if not who is?

A= The LDDC funded and installed the Ring of Steel back in 1996. LBTH Highways and Risk Management section funded the running of the system at a total cost of 180k per annum. This cost was made up of a fibre rental cost of 140k to Colt Fibre and 40k to the Met Police for maintenance. I understand from a Senior Manager at Highways that the agreement was to only fund this for ten years.

After the global financial crisis of 2008 councils were running under austerity measures and had to review all expenditure, Although the system did not sit under Community Safety I was asked to review the system and technology to see if there was a way to keep the system running as the funding for running the system has come to an end.

When they were originally installed what form of technology was being employed, CCTV and or ANPR.

A= The technology at the time was basic black and white cameras with white flood lights shining at the number plates. The pinch points helped to slow vehicles down enough to enable a picture of the registration to be sent to a computer at Limehouse Police Station where it was read and forwarded to the MET Police servers. This was not very effective but special pulsed infrared cameras had not been invented at this stage.

The main cost of the system was a rented analogue fibre optic ring which connected all the ANPR points and Limehouse Police station. The fibre ring was extensive and cost 140k per annum to rent from Colt Telecom. Each ANPR Point did have a CCTV Overview camera attached to it but this just went to a recorder at Limehouse Police station.

On reviewing the equipment at Limehouse I discovered that the system was not a monitored ANPR system and was just collecting registration numbers and storing them. There was no live monitoring of alarms or problem vehicles. Also the CCTV recording system was not operational.

Late 2009/ early 2010 and after a review a decision was made to bring the system up to date but also cancel the rented fibre as this was a huge cost that could not be supported anymore. We had one more year of the finance from Highways and Risk Management and upgraded each site by installing the reading technology at the road side in secure cabinets. This meant that full framerate video no longer needed to be sent back to the service. The roadside readers would capture the registration and just send that snapshot of data back to a new server at Mulberry Place. This allowed us to change the transmission system from fibre to radio. The system was operational using the roadside readers and radio transmission up to 2015 but the computers sat in cabinets roadside were now six years old and had been running 24/7. Failures and issues with them meant that they were often stopping and having to be reset .

In 2015 we started to see transmission errors and then eventually complete loss of radio signal from the ANPR site. This was gradual and because of the Blackwall Reach development, the taller blocks had blocked our line of site radio transmitter .

With the equipment life expired and the radio route blocked the ANPR point was not working and although the cameras were left in place no reads were being taken. As the funding stream from Highways and Risk Management had now ceased there were no funds to keep Prestons Road ANPR up and running.

I am aware that the camera(s) is currently not working. When did they cease to function? What plans does Tower Hamlets have to update these cameras with regard to preventing crime on the Isle of Dogs?

A= The system completely failed in 2015 . The original installation purpose was for Counter Terrorism Protection. Whilst the CT threat has reduce significantly we know from results that the ANPR cameras when used live help us deal with other crime. Whilst we intend to get the system back up and running we will need to completely replace everything with new technology . Highways are working on a new road layout at the ANPR point and the plans will shortly go out to consultation. New HD ANPR cameras which cover two lanes, do the analytics on board and transmit the information via 4g are now available. Funding for both on and off the Isle of dogs have been built into this project. We have also allowed for replacement of all ANPR cameras in our digital upgrade project and which ever one is done first will see the cameras back up and running again. Unfortunately I can not give a date for this happening but hope it to be within the next 18 months.