

## **Written evidence submitted by the Historic and Classic Vehicles Alliance (SDV0029)**

The HCVA wishes to make two broad points about self-driving cars. Firstly, that we wish to avoid compulsion in any way so that existing vehicles will be able to fully use the network in perpetuity. Secondly, that cars with self-driving systems should be 'built to last' and that new technology is not used to add a layer of planned obsolescence to cars.

### **Self-Driving Cars and Existing Road Users**

The HVCA represents the industry that maintains, supports and trades in all types of historic and classic vehicles. We seek to preserve the country's mobile heritage in our fleet of older vehicles and as such we want to ensure that current and future generations of classics remain fully available to their owners to use as they see fit.

Our concerns for self-driving cars in the short term relate to the interactions between new self-driving cars and the existing road users.

Firstly, we wish to ensure that any legislation does not exclude manually driven cars from the roads. Anyone who currently drives a car with 'self-driving technology' will attest that we are a very long way from having it work autonomously on UK roads, so we want to ensure that the desire for some to move towards a 'fully autonomous future' does not exclude others.

Secondly, we wish to ensure that new self-driving cars must be required to recognise all types of road users and to make allowances as required. For example, a human driver will naturally understand that a steam engine is very slow and requires extra care to pass. We wish to avoid a situation where historic vehicles are threatened by self-driving cars that expect vehicles to behave in a particular way.

Finally, we are concerned that new infrastructure might be constructed that would require partially or fully autonomous vehicles. There are some circumstances where certain vehicles may be excluded from some roads, for instance slow-moving vehicles from motorways. The distinction between autonomous and manual cars will not be that extensive and we do not see that new infrastructure should be exclusive of older users.

## **Preserving Aging Self-driving Cars**

A large part of our membership is involved with the serving and maintenance of vehicles and many members are concerned for the long-term future as new cars are becoming harder to work with. This isn't just a question of the level of technology involved as our members can always train and add skills, but rather restricting access to the tools required to perform the maintenance.

As we have argued in other circumstances, it will be important for the long-term future of the sector for independent garages and service centres to be able to always acquire the skills and tools to maintain vehicles. However, there is a strong business imperative for car manufacturers to force buyers to use their service centres and to bring their products to an end of life, forcing customers to buy again. An obvious parallel exists with the mobile phone sector.

We would like to see any legislation for self-driving vehicles to include provisions for allowing the technology behind the systems to be made available to third parties in perpetuity in order to preserve historic and classic vehicles.

## **About HCVA**

The Historic and Classic Vehicle Association is the trade body for businesses in the Historic and Classic Vehicle sector. HCVA was founded in 2021 to provide a voice to promote, support and maintain the long-term health and success of the sector. Our Values are respect for authenticity and provenance; a belief in excellence, craftsmanship and exemplary standards; a passion for preservation; and a commitment to transparency and accountability.

HCVA is working to secure a sustainable future for the 113,000 jobs in the Historic and Classic vehicle sector, and protect the businesses, craftsmen and enthusiasts who depend on it. To achieve this, we engage with regulatory authorities, Government, Parliament, the media and the wider public in a to inform about the sector and correct myths and misconceptions.

This membership includes a diverse range of firms including dealers, engineers, restorers, suppliers, auctioneers and racing venues. The Classic car sector is worth £18.3bn to the UK economy and is thriving. We have created a strong voice for everyone who has an interest in protecting the future of Classic and Historic vehicles. We continue to engage and grow relationships with the key decision makers to ensure that there is a viable future for us all.

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