

TRANSform Scotland

the campaign for sustainable transport

SPT Regional Transport Strategy Strategic Options – Consultation Report

Consultation response
16th November 2006

1. Introduction

- 1.1 TRANSform Scotland is the national sustainable transport alliance, campaigning for a more sustainable and more socially-just transport system. Our membership includes bus, rail and shipping operators, local authorities, national environment and conservation groups, consultancies and local transport campaigns.
- 1.2 We welcome the opportunity to comment on this paper, and intend to comment further as the Strategy is developed.

2. Demand management

- 2.1 We welcome the finding that a demand management-led approach, accompanied by public transport investment, can make the most impact in terms of employment generation, for example:

“Examination of the data shows that in terms of impact on jobs alone the greatest value appears to be through demand management measures, married to the following public transport improvements for bus, rail and Subway.” [§2.1.2]

- 2.2 We note that the emphasis placed on a demand management-led approach carries irrespective of which of the three ‘Options’ are pursued.
- 2.3 We do, however, find it strange that the paper can state that demand management is a very important intervention yet provides no clarity on what means of demand management are being considered about or how they would function. The paper presents no information regarding the specification of the underlying model (SITLUM) with regards to demand management.
- 2.4 The finalised Regional Transport Strategy should set out a timescale and action plan for delivering a demand management scheme aimed at reducing traffic levels and climate change emissions across the Glasgow conurbation.

3. ‘Regional Economic Development Strategy Option’

- 3.1 Having expressed the strong view that demand management would make the most impact in terms of employment generation (§2.1.2), we find it strange that this Option goes on to propose a long list of specific transport infrastructure interventions – yet makes no specific proposals regarding demand management.
- 3.2 It should be self-evident that building transport capacity, whilst sometimes welcome and/or necessary, is the specific antithesis of an approach founded in demand management.

- 3.3 If the strategy is to take on board demand management as its basis, then the strategy will have to consider the demand generation that would result from measures such as “increased road capacity into regional and sub-regional centres” and “increased parking provision (no tariffs)”. It would seem to us that it is interventions such as these that would defeat the objectives of a demand management-led approach.
- 3.4 Finally, we note that the paper indicates that the M74 is being used as part of the Reference Case for the study. We trust that, as part of an evidence-based approach, that the study work will take into account the findings of the M74 PLI Inquiry Report in terms of economic and other impacts.

4. ‘Carbon Emission Reduction Strategy Option’

- 4.1 We welcome the inclusion of an Option focussed on reduction of climate change emissions. In the context of recent political commitments, at all levels of government, towards tackling climate change, it is very welcome that SPT are addressing this matter.
- 4.2 We look forward to seeing, in the draft RTS, more detail on how the SPT RTS will in practice reduce climate change emission levels.
- 4.3 We note, however, that while this Option states that its focus is upon reducing carbon emissions, it also addresses economy and social justice benefits on the same level as environmental benefits. We welcome this approach. However, we find it unbalanced that the other two Options do not take the same approach, instead focussing solely on, respectively, economic and social justice benefits.

5. ‘Promotion of Social Inclusion Strategy Option’

- 5.1 We welcome the inclusion of social justice as a strategy Option. However, as with our comments above, while the carbon emissions strategy focuses on all three objectives (economy, environment, social), this Option takes a more narrow approach focusing only on justice issues. This extends to the point of specifying that sustainability issues could be sidelined by the introduction of the social inclusion strategy option (e.g. as at §4.1.12).
- 5.2 We welcome the “intention to develop targeted policies which address the needs of people who experience difficulties more than most” (§4.1.9).

6. Consultation Questions

- 6.1 As we have indicated above, it is imperative that the RTS includes strong demand management measures. The paper makes clear the benefits of demand management interventions for each of the three Options proposed – *this is the best ‘key intervention’ that the Strategy could bring forward.*
- 6.2 We consider that the carbon emissions option is the preferred Option in as much as it incorporates all three concerns (economy, environment, social). It is evident that the ‘Regional Economic Development Strategy Option’ is unbalanced, as it makes no reference to reducing carbon emissions, and proposes a range of transport infrastructure interventions that would destroy the chances of demand management measures being effective.

7. Concluding comments

- 7.1 We welcome the strong focus on demand management throughout the document. In order to tackle traffic growth and increasing climate change emissions, it is essential that Regional Transport Strategies put in place demand management measures, accompanied by investment in sustainable transport modes.

- 7.2 We would suggest that SPT carries out a review of the proposals being put forward for the Manchester and West Midlands conurbations, and use these to inform its strategy development.
- 7.3 We note that the UK Department for Transport has, through its Transport Innovation Fund, offered English conurbations significant sums for public transport investment for delivering city-region transport packages that include road pricing schemes. The West Midlands, in its 'Growth or Gridlock' package, called for £2 billion investment for public transport, while Manchester has called for £1 billion for public transport investment. We would encourage SPT in its Regional Transport Strategy to call upon the Scottish Executive to make available similar levels of sustainable transport investment for the Glasgow conurbation. These funds should of course be consequent upon the delivery of an appropriate demand management scheme for the conurbation, which forms the other key part of a sustainable transport strategy approach.

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