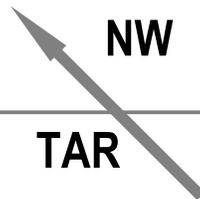


**Joint submission by
the North West Transport Roundtable**



**and
the Campaign to Protect Rural England**



Campaign to Protect
Rural England
NORTH WEST

on

**GREATER MANCHESTER'S RE-APPRAISAL
OF TRANSPORT SCHEMES –
POST THE DECISION NOT TO PURSUE
THE TRANSPORT INNOVATION FUND
AND POST THE 4NW LEADERS FORUM
ADVICE TO GOVERNMENT ON THE
REGIONAL FUNDING ALLOCATION**

March 2009

INTRODUCTION

Following on from their decision, on December 29th, 2008, not to pursue the Transport Innovation Fund (TIF), the **Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA)** are re-appraising major transport schemes in Greater Manchester. This position was originally agreed at the AGMA Board meeting on January 30th, 2009 and it was re-inforced by the Executive Committee of AGMA at their meeting on February 27th which also discussed the preparation of supplementary Regional Funding Allocation (RFA) advice.

Papers in the public domain give the impression that the re-appraisal might be focusing only on 'big' schemes, rather than also considering packages of smaller schemes (which can be rolled together to make up major schemes), that deliverability is key (almost regardless of sustainability) and that there is an over-emphasis on perceived economic benefits and increasing GVA without equal weighting being given to environmental and social considerations, some of which are now statutory. Several comments in the AGMA executive paper *'Prioritising Major Transport Infrastructure Expenditure in Greater Manchester'* give particular cause for concern, eg. *"Greater Manchester's stated intentions are therefore somewhat different from those of conventional transport appraisal which does not directly capture impacts on outputs and jobs in Greater Manchester, nor impacts on the city's competitive position"* (para. 1.5). And the paper goes on to discuss a *"new economic methodology"* which appears to favour the setting aside of standard procedures.

The re-appraisal is taking place in a very tight timescale by AGMA and GMITA - the Greater Manchester Integrated Transport Authority - without recourse to formal public consultation. It is happening at a time when draft guidance for Local Transport Plans, round 3, is out for consultation by the Department for Transport (DfT) and this is also uppermost in the minds of stakeholders such as the **North West Transport Roundtable (NW TAR)** and the **Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE)**. We would like to offer this submission which we hope will contribute positively to thinking in respect of both the current review and early planning for LTP 3. We trust it will be accepted and considered in the spirit in which it is offered.

AGMA's submission of supplementary RFA advice to government in April offers a real chance to engage with the new policy developments highlighted in this paper and to focus transport spending in the sub-region on those measures that will be of most cross-hatching benefit.

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RECENT LEGISLATION & CURRENT GOVERNMENT THINKING

The 'bar' relating to government sustainability requirements has raised in recent months. Since the TIF Bid was devised which, according to the environmental statement, would have resulted in a net increase in both traffic and CO2 emissions, the **Climate Change Act** has been enacted and the DfT has published and consulted upon its latest command papers, **Towards a Sustainable Transport System (TaSTS)** and **Delivering a Sustainable Transport System (DaSTS)** *. All emphasise the need to significantly reduce harmful emissions.

The Climate Change Act, which became law in November 2008, requires a reduction in greenhouse gas (GhG) emissions across the UK of 80% on 1990 levels by 2050. DaSTS, published in November 2008, calls for CO2 reductions to be core to all transport packages and the **Guidance on LTP 3**, published in December 2008, requires the development of sustainable transport systems and a significant contribution by transport to GhG emissions.

All follow on from the **Stern Report** *, which warned that the economy would suffer if due cognisance was not taken of environmental factors and climate change. The **Eddington Report*** endorsed Stern's findings, acknowledged the big contribution made by transport to GhG emissions, and their impact on economic growth, and warned that transport would need to rise to this challenge. It also concluded that another key challenge was to improve the performance of the existing transport network (Key Findings & Recommendations, p. 5).

And these legal frameworks, command documents, guidance and seminal reports all sit within the **UK's Guiding Principles of Sustainable Development** which are:

- Living within environmental limits
- Ensuring a strong, healthy and just society
- Achieving a sustainable economy
- Using sound science responsibly and
- Promoting good governance

In addition, as the region's RFA advice to government states: *"There is a clear regional steer against sacrificing sustainable transport and essential maintenance schemes in favour of funding increased costs of major road schemes"* and also *"Tackling climate change must be central to all the region's plans and strategies"*.

Any review and all emerging plans need to adhere to legal requirements, government guidelines and strategies and the adopted **North West Regional Spatial Strategy** as well as ideally following best practice. And, on the subject of best practice, the DfT has already accepted the cumulative value of small scale measures and 'smart' choices or 'soft measures'.

*The AGMA Executive report specifically acknowledges DaSTS, Stern and Eddington.

THE WAY FORWARD

Are big transport schemes necessarily the appropriate way forward? Certainly, ones which generate extra traffic and extra GhG emissions are not. They do not meet the government's or the region's statutory environmental criteria and do not fit with the environmentally sustainable thinking outlined on the previous page, nor with social and environmental goals which the AGMA executive paper flags up. Nor, in a mature economy such as that which exists in the UK, do big infrastructure projects automatically reap economic benefits *. Sustainable land-use and sustainable development are essential to reduce the need to travel.

Some 'big' schemes do offer tremendous potential. One which would be entirely on brown-field land, which would cut CO2 emissions and reap huge benefits not only for Greater Manchester but for the North of England would be the enhancement of rail network capacity in central Manchester – the 'Manchester Hub' scenario. This was identified six years ago by key stakeholders in the region, called together by the Transport Minister, Gus MacDonald, as their top priority and endorsed by 'The Northern Way'. Then, in October 2007, a subsequent Transport Minister, Rosie Winterton, announced she was instructing Network Rail to conduct a feasibility study into the Manchester Hub *"to help unlock the region's economic power"*. Sorting out the Hub and improving stations must be the key transport priority for Greater Manchester. It would unlock bottlenecks and help tackle over-capacity problems across the entire sub-region and beyond, whilst adhering to the sustainability agenda. For the same reason, there should also be an on-going programme of heavy rail related improvements. And for the same reason, NW TAR and CPRE support light rail. We want to see shelters at all Metrolink stops. However, we believe Metrolink routes not yet funded need re-appraising.

Also, given the high percentage of passenger journeys in Greater Manchester made by bus, GMITA must utilise its new powers to the full in ensuring high standards, especially in journey time reliability, across the board. The **Local Transport Act** that came into being in November 2008, opens up a variety of new ways of working in relation to bus services, taxi buses, mini-buses and community transport. Flexible, demand responsive services in particular should be explored to the full, particularly for both rural areas and deprived urban areas. We also believe it is essential to expand the Yellow School Bus services. One in five of vehicles on the roads in the peak traffic times are related to school traffic. This has to be reduced in order to meet government targets and to imbue the next generation with a public transport ethos. In addition, NW TAR and CPRE would like to see AGMA and GMITA re-visiting some of the excellent public transport ideas which sprang from the JETTS, SEMMMS and MIDMAN multi-modal studies and giving much greater priority to focused travel planning, to walking and to cycling. We would especially urge progress on developing networks of greenways and quiet lanes. Modal shift away from private motor vehicles is the only sustainable way forward.

*'Transport & the Economy', Standing Advisory Committee on Trunk Road Assessment (SACTRA).