

TRANSPORT: A VISION FOR THE FUTURE

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Abstract

Many cities have made substantial progress in developing transport strategies to reconcile environmental pressures with the increasing demand for travel; however the key ingredients of a successful strategy remain unclear and progress in implementing such changes has been slow. Research is needed to reach an improved understanding of what constitutes a balanced transport policy and the nature of the constraints on implementation. The work described in this paper reports on the outcomes of a project which aims to identify the elements necessary for a successful transport policy in the UK into the 21st Century and seeks to develop a vision for the transport system of the future.

INTRODUCTION

This paper reports on the initial findings of a project which seeks to examine visions and ideas for the possible future form of transport in the UK. A range of visions will be examined to identify any common elements or themes and the prospects for achieving a consensus viewpoint. The project is being undertaken in three stages: firstly through a review of existing information on transport policy successes and failures and published visions; secondly an extensive series of interviews with people who are currently actively involved in transport at both the national and local level to determine their visions for the future and the measures by which such visions could be achieved; and finally a modelling exercise to review how effective the suggested measures may be in achieving the visions.

This paper will focus on the first of these pieces of work. It begins by considering the state of transport in the UK along with a review of existing transport concerns. An outline is given of existing instruments of change along with an assessment of their effectiveness. Finally a review is made of published visions of the future for both the nation as a whole and at a more local level.

BACKGROUND

Since the 1950s the UK has seen a dramatic rise in personal mobility and traffic levels. It is clear that this change is almost entirely due to an increase in the use of cars and vans (over the period 1951 to 1994, the proportion of households owning cars increased from 14% to 68% (DoT, 1996a)). The main driver of increases in passenger kilometres is increasing journey length, rather than an increase in the number of journeys. Since the early 1970s, the number of journeys that people have made has increased by only 10%, but the average journey length by more than 30% (Potter, 1997). A similar trend is evident in freight transport trends where a large proportion of the growth in tonne kilometres of goods moved is due to goods travelling further.

With the large increase in car-based mobility has come public concern about the effects on the economy and the environment of the current transport situation and alarm at the implications of predictions for the future (the Government sponsored 'great transport debate' (DoT, 1996b) was prompted by such concerns). These concerns were discussed in the Rees Jeffreys Road Fund report 'Transport: The New Realism' (Goodwin et al, 1991), which uncovered a high level of consensus that traffic levels could not be allowed to grow indefinitely and that a change in policy was required.

The most recent National Road Traffic Forecast (NRTF) predicts traffic growth of between 36% and 84% by the year 2031 (DETR, 1997). The document observes that traffic is forecast to increase in the future for the same reasons that have led to traffic growth in the past, that is:

“...because people are expected to become richer, and enjoy longer lives, because economic activity increases, and because households are forecast to become more numerous. The main single factor leading to traffic growth is increasing car ownership”.

In 1998 a new White Paper on the future of transport was issued by the Government which took as its theme 'Integrated transport' (DETR, 1998). This aims to identify ways of extending the range of choice of transport available, whilst securing mobility for all, and to do this in a way which is consistent with ideas of sustainability.

CURRENT TRANSPORT POLICY CONCERNS

In 'Transport: The New Realism' (Goodwin et al, 1991), four main concerns about rising levels of traffic were identified:

- Economic costs of congestion
- Costs of traffic accidents
- Local and global environmental problems
- Social problems with changes in mobility

While these represent the concerns of large numbers of people it is by no means clear whether effective action to address some or all of these problems would command widespread public support. While most would concede that something needs to be done, policies which restrain personal mobility could be construed as attacking what many would see as rights and also run the risk of damaging economic competitiveness.

Congestion and space

Congestion arises when traffic levels exceed capacity. In most urban areas it is simply not feasible to increase road space to allow for free flowing traffic at all times of day. Congestion is therefore apparent in many places and seems (in urban areas at least) to be constraining trip making behaviour (e.g. the timing of journeys). In a situation where large scale road building has effectively been ruled out for environmental, financial and social reasons and without effective policies which reduce demand for travel (or at least modify it), this situation is likely to continue and congestion will become an increasingly important factor in restraining traffic and a chronic feature of urban areas. Unfortunately, congestion is also an inefficient way of restraining traffic. The environmental effects of congestion are obvious, but perhaps the largest economic cost is the time wasted by travellers. As traffic approaches the capacity of a system, extra vehicles cause delays to other travellers and these extra delays (caused to others) are not necessarily taken into account by users in their trip making decisions. Because of this, various forms of rationing road space have been proposed and road pricing (rationing by price) can be shown, in theory at least, to increase the economic efficiency of the road system (Goodwin et al, 1991). National estimates for the cost of congestion vary widely, from £7bn to £19bn (LTT, 1997).

Traffic accidents

The loss of life and suffering from traffic accidents is substantial. However, this is only a part of the costs caused by traffic danger in its wider sense. These wider impacts include those of people modifying their behaviour, altering their route, changing mode or deciding not to make a journey at all because of the dangers they face. Qualitative surveys indicate that fear of the danger posed by traffic conditions are the main reasons given by people for not cycling and not letting their children walk to school (Mathew, 1995, Hillman et al, 1991).

The number of fatal and serious casualties has been declining over recent years, but slight casualties have been rising and it seems likely that the national road casualty target of a one third reduction in total casualties over the average figure for 1981-85 by the year 2000 will not be met.

Local environmental problems

There is increasing public concern about the effects of traffic on the local environment, in particular air pollution. The recent UK National Air Quality Strategy (DoE, 1997) specifies standards for most

of the major air pollutants and road transport is a major source of many of these (especially in urban areas). Local authorities are being asked to take over responsibility for monitoring air quality and ensuring the standards are not exceeded. It is unclear what effect this air quality management regime will have on transport policy, but it is likely to be a significant consideration for transport policy makers in some urban areas at least.

Global and regional environmental problems

Transport is an important source of the emissions that cause acid rain, ozone depletion and global warming. Road transport is presently responsible for about one fifth of total UK emissions of carbon dioxide (CO₂) and is presently the fastest growing source of this gas, with the contribution of road transport predicted to rise to about one quarter of total UK emissions by 2000 (DoE, 1995). The vast majority of transport related CO₂ emissions are from cars and the fuel consumption of Britain's car fleet has shown little improvement in recent years (RCEP, 1994).

Social problems

While it is clear that there have been substantial increases in personal mobility since the 1950s, it is also clear that these increases have not been equally spread around society. Indeed, social problems have been exacerbated as public transport costs have increased because of decreasing patronage and car users have looked further afield for shopping and leisure facilities. There appears to be a growing 'accessibility dichotomy' as increasing car use encourages development which is most convenient for car users (but difficult for non car users to get to), which in turn undermines neighbourhood facilities which are more conveniently situated for non car users.

AVAILABLE MEASURES

Individual measures

The most recent and comprehensive review of transport policy measures is given by the Institution of Highways and Transportation (1996), which lists a comprehensive range which might form part of a local transport strategy and indicates their possible effect against suggested objectives.

The areas covered in the IHT (1996) are:

- Land use and employment measures: While not strictly transport related policies, it is increasingly recognised that the co-ordination of land use and transport strategies is essential for the development of sustainable cities. Types of measures include - flexible working hours, development densities, developments within transport corridors, development mix, developer contributions to transport infrastructure, commuted payments, travel reduction ordinances, telecommuting, green commuter plans and parking standards.
- Infrastructure measures: These include - road construction, car parks, provision of conventional rail services, light rail, guided bus, park and ride, terminals and interchanges, cycle routes, pedestrian areas, lorry parks, transshipment facilities, encouragement of other freight modes,
- Management measures: These include - traffic management, Urban Traffic Control, Advanced Transport Telematics, accident remedial measures, traffic calming measures, physical restrictions on car use, regulatory restrictions on car use, parking controls, car sharing, bus priorities, high occupancy lanes, bus and rail service levels, bus service management measures, cycle lanes and priorities, cycle parking, pedestrian facilities, and lorry routes and bans.
- Information provision: This includes - direction signing, variable message signs, real-time driver information systems and route guidance, parking information systems, telecommunications,

public awareness campaigns, timetable and other service information, real time passenger information, operation information systems, and freight fleet management systems.

- Pricing measures: These include - vehicle ownership taxes, fuel taxes, company car taxation, parking charges, congestion charging, public transport fare levels, public transport fares structures, and public transport concessionary fares.

Integrated Transport Strategies

It is clear that the effects of implementing a selection of different measures should be more effective than the use of one measure (or even the selection of one set of measures with a common theme) on its own (May, 1991). The effects of the integration of measures, therefore, should be an important consideration in the development of transport strategies and this is also covered in IHT (1996). This idea of integration is implicit within the development of the Package Approach (DoT, 1997).

VISIONS FOR THE FUTURE

This section focuses upon a selection of visions which seek to aid the development of the transport system as a whole rather than single modes. This does not represent a comprehensive selection of published 'visions' for the future of transport, rather it is a selection of the most relevant available reports. These have been shown to take a national or a local perspective. The visions which have been reviewed are difficult to analyse consistently due to their varied nature, reporting style and most particularly their objectives and the audience for whom they were designed. However, there are some consistent features and it has been possible to say why they were developed, what they were intended for, who they were intended for and to give some brief description of their main features. The technique chosen for analysis has been to assess each vision in terms of the answers to three questions: Why was it written?; What does it say?; and What is the nature of the vision and how could it be developed?

Traffic in Towns - The Buchanan Report

Why was the report written?

Increasing public concern about the effects of traffic in urban areas led the Minister of Transport to appoint a group to study the long term problems of traffic in towns. The report of the working group (Buchanan Committee, 1963) was extremely influential in the redevelopment of UK towns and cities that occurred in the 1960s and 70s. The report has been widely discussed and much has been written about it (e.g. Goodwin et al (1991) and Sherlock (1991)).

What the report says

After presenting a picture of the importance of the motor vehicle to national life, the report considers the 'present difficulties' which include parking problems and congestion, accidents and deterioration of the environment. In order to deal with the conflicts between access and other aspects of life in urban areas the report advocated a new, scientific, approach to the design of urban areas in order to cope with future traffic in an efficient way and to allow preservation of the environment. These techniques were then applied to four case study areas: a small town (Newbury in Berkshire), a large city (Leeds), a historic town (Norwich) and a central metropolitan block (part of central London). These studies are pursued in detail and give an impression of the scale of redevelopment needed to cope with anticipated growth in traffic.

What is the nature of the 'vision' and how would it be developed?

The 'visions' presented by the case studies were derived from a consideration of the amount of traffic that was likely to want to use the road and the need to reduce the adverse effects of traffic on human life and surroundings. The visions were exciting images of redevelopment on a large scale and were very much in tune with the mood of the time. Care was taken over preserving environmental areas for pedestrians and residents, from which through traffic would be removed. The parallel objective of improving traffic access meant that new roads and car parks were necessary to provide for visiting and through traffic.

After considering a theoretical network for full car ownership and use for Leeds, the report concludes that:

“there is no possibility whatsoever, in a town of this size and nature, of planning for the level of traffic induced by the unrestricted use of the motor car for the journey to work in conditions of full car ownership”.

Even the plans for an 'intermediate' network in Leeds seem on an extraordinary scale (far in excess of any urban redevelopment that would be thought financially or socially feasible today) and yet this network was calculated to meet only about 40% of the potential demand for travelling to work by car in the central zone, with the remaining journeys by public transport. Thus it was felt that there was a “need to consider to what extent and by what means the full potential [build-up of traffic] is to be curtailed” but this is not investigated in any detail. As Goodwin et al (1991) observes, the text of the report consistently refers to a choice between two alternatives: to invest or restrict vehicle use.

“The great danger for the future would seem to lie in the temptation to seek a middle course by trying to cope with a steadily increasing volume of traffic by means of minor alterations, resulting in the end in the worst of both worlds - poor traffic access and a grievously eroded environment”.

The report received all party support when it was published, but when it became clear that redevelopment on the scale suggested was not likely to be financially or socially feasible, the corollary (that traffic restraint would be necessary) was overlooked and, the middle course is precisely the one which has been adopted.

The Report of the Technology Foresight Panel on Transport

Why was the report written?

The technology foresight programme (Technology Foresight Panel on Transport, 1995) brought together scientists and industrialists to identify opportunities in markets and technologies likely to emerge during the next 10-20 years and the investments and actions needed to exploit them. The motivation for the work was therefore primarily aimed at wealth creation by spotting emerging opportunities for transport based technological development.

What the report says

The report looks at the technological opportunities arising from present and future problems associated with transport (congestion delays, pollution, noise and accidents). The report identified three areas where it was felt that there was a gap between research and development and the marketplace which needs to be filled. These are presented as a series of images of possible travel experiences in the future:

- The informed traveller - integrated travel information, ticketing, booking and payment.
- The foresight vehicle - an environmentally friendly vehicle which nevertheless meets expectations on safety, performance and cost.
- Clear zones - a vision of an urban centre as a liveable, attractive location with high quality (but restricted) access and effective air quality management.

What is the nature of the 'vision' and how would it be developed?

The most 'visionary' elements of the report are the three pieces which give a vivid impression of how the use of various elements of technology could affect travel in the future. These are used to illustrate the three 'Transport Foresight Projects' described above. They, presumably, represent what the Panel thought was realistic, should technology be developed in a certain direction.

The Panel did consider transport trends and likely transport scenarios, but did not consider what the objectives of transport policy might be. Some consideration of emerging social and policy trends was included and these were used to guide the development of key issues in the study. In essence, the Panel was most interested in what was likely to happen, what the technological and research priorities were and how market opportunities might be exploited.

As part of the work involved there were extensive consultations with a wide range of experts and other stakeholders, to derive the list of key technologies. However, there is an understandable bias in the final 'visions' towards a sense of excitement in the technology itself. While the 'visions' presented are attractive, little detailed analysis seems to have been carried out as to wider implications, how they might contribute to the objectives of a transport policy and what might be the wider effects on different elements of society. There also seems to be little thought given to how the technologies will gain widespread acceptance.

Leeds Integrated Transport Strategy and the Leeds Vision

Why were the reports written?

The original Leeds Transport strategy (LCC and WYPTA, 1991) was developed during the late 1980s in response to concerns about worsening transport problems and growing environmental awareness. The transport strategy has been developed in successive Transport Policies and Programme (TPP) documents published by Leeds City Council and more recently by the West Yorkshire local authorities and West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Authority (WYPTA) (see for example West Yorkshire Joint Package Steering Group, 1996).

The Leeds Vision (Leeds Initiative, 1997), was developed more recently with the aim of deciding where the city should be going and how it can be improved. The impetus for the development of the document came from the desire for continued prosperity, the need for a comprehensive regeneration strategy, development of a Local Agenda 21 plan and the development of a joint health strategy. The Leeds Vision covers a much wider range of areas than just transport, but does have sections on sustainable development which include transport issues.

What the reports say

The Leeds Transport Strategy was developed from a high level 'vision' which had nothing directly to do with transport:

“To become, and to be recognised as, one of the principal progressive cities in Europe; a city with a diverse and successful economy, adapting to change, a city which provides a growing standard and quality of life for all its citizens, with a variety of facilities accessible to all and fairness and opportunity for all” (LCC and WYPTA, 1991).

This statement was used to derive a series of objectives for the transport strategy. These are summarised in a recent Transport Policies and Programme document (West Yorkshire Joint Package Steering Group, 1996) as:

- Economic: To provide opportunities for regeneration and economic growth; to improve the operational efficiency of the transport system.
- Environmental: To improve environmental quality and reduce transport pollution; to encourage use of alternative modes to the private car.
- Social: To improve safety and security for all transport users; to promote equal opportunities for access to transport.

A number of different themes were tested as part of the development of the strategy, these included a highway investment programme, an advanced guided transit system, road pricing and improved traffic management. A mixture of themes was found to give the best combination of benefits and a range of initiatives to improve orbital highway capacity, public transport (including a ‘supertram’ system) and the city centre were decided upon.

The Leeds Vision is a consultation document written to elicit public comments on where Leeds should be going. The impetus for the development of the ‘vision’ came from a desire for continued prosperity, the need for a comprehensive regeneration strategy, the development of a Local Agenda 21 plan and the development of a joint health strategy. The main transport related content is concerned with “ensuring sustainable development” and takes as its aim:

“...ensure Leeds has a transport network which meets the needs of people and business, yet is environmentally friendly - by achieving a balanced approach between public and private transport provision”.

The main measures envisaged are providing quality alternatives to the car, managing demand for car use by restricting long stay parking and reallocating road space to buses and cycles and ensuring access for all, including the disabled and those without cars.

What is the nature of the ‘vision’ and how would it be developed?

The Leeds Vision document includes a particular transport related “aspiration” which is to ensure:

“Ease and safety of travel for all those who live and work in Leeds, and where walking, cycling and public transport are increasingly used in preference to the private car”.

This is supported by a wide range of transport related objectives and indicators which mean that progress towards the aspiration can be measured. The direction of the change anticipated is clear, but it is not clear how far this is to be pursued and what should be done if the policies outlined do not push transport use in the correct direction (or don’t push it quickly enough).

Roads for Prosperity

Why was the report written?

With the publication of the 1989 national road traffic forecasts (NRTF), the Government felt that a large increase in the rate of building new road capacity was required to avert increased congestion (DoT, 1989). The report was written to announce a greatly expanded trunk road and motorway construction programme involving the widening of existing roads along with many new schemes.

What the report says

The report takes the major issue of congestion on the interurban road network and argues that a greatly enhanced construction programme is necessary to cope with traffic growth anticipated by the NRTF figures. There are brief references to the economic, environmental and safety benefits of the improvements to the road network announced.

What is the nature of the 'vision' and how would it be developed?

The report gives an overview of a future in which congestion on the inter-urban road network will not be allowed to get worse and how the construction programme will enhance economic development and deliver environmental and safety benefits. However, while the congestion argument is spelled out in some detail, the environmental benefits are seen mainly in terms of the removal of through traffic from sensitive areas, while the justification of the safety benefits rests almost solely on the assertion that "new roads are safer roads".

There also has to be some argument over whether the construction programme announced would actually cope with the anticipated growth in traffic, as Adams (1990) observes, the road building programme would only add about 2 per cent to the capacity of the country's road network. While a targeted approach may have a greater congestion reduction effect than the low percentage might imply, it does seem to be short of the kind of provision necessary to cater for 83 to 142% extra traffic (as predicted by NRTF in 1989) by 2025.

The document also does not consider the wider implications of the massive increase in traffic and car ownership implicit in the NRTF figures, these include serious land use and environmental impacts. In a way the wider 'vision' is missing and the impression given is that the White Paper concentrates on just one aspect of future traffic growth (congestion) without considering what the future might look like if the traffic forecasts came true.

Transport, the Way Forward

Why was the report written?

Transport, the Way Forward (DoT, 1996b) was written as the Conservative Government's response to the Transport Debate that they had initiated in 1995. It was intended to highlight areas of concern and to suggest how the issues should be taken forward.

What the report says

'Transport, the Way Forward' introduces a number of key themes:

- Better planning of transport infrastructure
- Making more efficient use of existing infrastructure

- Reducing dependence on the car
- Switching the emphasis in spending from roads to public transport
- Reducing the impacts of road freight

It also recognises that more account should be taken of environmental impacts, including tougher measures against congestion and pollution, but that these must not damage competitiveness. There are also observations about the role of the private sector and the importance of local authorities as well as a discussion of how decisions are taken and policies implemented.

What is the nature of the 'vision' and how would it be developed?

While "Transport, the Way Forward" has a lot to say about current trends, policies and public concerns, no compelling image of what is required or anticipated emerges. The conclusions are that a change in emphasis is required, because of public concern about the long term consequences of traffic growth, but with caveats about freedom of choice and competitiveness. The tone of the paper is evolutionary rather than revolutionary, drawing attention to present policy directions rather than proposing radical change.

Consensus for Change

Why was the report written?

Consensus for Change (Labour Party, 1996) came out around the same time as "Transport, the Way Forward" but was written as a part of a policy making exercise and not just a response to the Conservative Government paper. It represented a statement of what a Labour Government might do were it in power.

What the report says

The document identifies six 'crucial principles' against which transport strategies could be judged. These are:

- Accessibility
- Economic development
- Efficiency
- Environmental sustainability
- Equity
- Health and safety.

It investigates the 'new consensus' about improving public transport and reducing car use and then outlines a national transport strategy involving an integrated approach, fair and transparent assessment of road and public transport schemes, greater local responsibility and more consideration of social and environmental considerations. To deliver the strategy a number of policies are outlined including adjustments to transport costs to bring about less car use, road building limited to schemes with a real impact on safety and quality of life, management of road space, increase in the rail service regulation, controlling bus competition and moving more freight by rail.

What is the nature of the 'vision' and how would it be developed?

Consensus for Change seems more radical in its approach than Transport, the Way Forward and identifies the need for a national transport strategy, but still does not give a compelling impression of substantial change. Its vision (such as it is) is based on responses to current trends and problems,

rather than an identification of overall aims. The main differences between the two documents lie in the range of measures that are deployed to achieve change, with 'Transport, the Way Forward' less willing to regulate public transport and more concerned about competitiveness and choice. Consensus for Change is more concerned about equity issues, targets for strategy elements and the effects of privatisation.

2020 Vision - Transport

Why was the report written?

The report (Engineering Council, 1997) was written as one of a series on major issues of public concern to develop a view of the United Kingdom's future needs.

What the report says

The vision in the document is derived from two very simple desires of a 'transport user' - access (which is affordable, safe, secure, comfortable and convenient) and that the access of others should not adversely affect their safety, health or environment. This feeds through to two central challenges - access for all and transport without external costs. From the two central challenges a range of approaches are recommended which fall into three separate categories: sustainable development and lifestyles, sustainable technology and sustainable transport systems. In each of these areas a number of recommendations are made and in the latter two detailed technological and other initiatives are mentioned, supported by 'subvisions' in a wide variety of different areas. The document concludes with a section on what needs to be done to realise the vision.

What is the nature of the 'vision' and how would it be developed?

The central vision is extremely simple and comes straight from consideration of the main reasons for transport, but considers access quality and the adverse side effects of access. Technological, lifestyle, development and transport system recommendations are derived from the two challenges - to provide access for all and to reduce the costs associated with transport. There is no real consideration of the relative importance of the different recommendations, apart from the (fairly detailed) plan of action. There is extensive consideration of the present problems of transport, but this is not tied directly to the three categories of approach or the recommendations that are detailed under these categories. The vision would be developed through a timetable for action including definition of responsibilities and an understanding of possible constraints on actions.

The Royal Commission reports on Transport and the Environment

Why were the reports written?

The original Royal Commission report on Transport and the Environment (RCEP, 1994) was written "to advise on matters, both national and international, concerning the pollution of the environment; on the adequacy of research in this field; and the future possibilities of danger to the environment". The aim of the report was to record measures which will reduce the environmental effects of all aspects of transport in the decade following publication and well into the next century - to help produce a genuinely sustainable transport system and to help determine the transport policy response to the Rio summit of 1992. The later report (RCEP, 1997) was a follow up which reviewed developments which had (or had not) taken place in the light of the publication of the first report.

What the reports say

Both reports review a very wide range of sources on the environmental impacts of transport and on the possible effectiveness of various policy instruments. Several key themes were explored: transport policy; economic aspects of transport; road vehicle technology and performance; and transport and land use planning. Future policies towards transport were considered for: freight transport; local journeys; long distance transport; and the institutional dimension of transport.

What is the nature of the 'vision' and how would it be developed?

The vision developed in the first report (and reinforced by the second report) very much focused around the development of a (more) sustainable transport system. A number of key objectives were proposed:

- to ensure that an effective transport policy is integrated with land use policy and gives priority to minimising the need for transport
- to reach standards of air quality that will prevent damage to human health and the environment
- to reduce carbon dioxide emissions from transport
- to reduce noise nuisance from transport
- to improve the quality of life by reducing the dominance of cars and lorries
- to increase the proportions of transport by environmentally less damaging modes
- to halt any loss of land to transport in areas of conservation, cultural, scenic or amenity value
- to reduce the demands placed on non-renewable materials.

110 separate recommendations were given in the first report on how to achieve these objectives. The second report develops these and focuses specifically on the development of an integrated transport system. There is a recognition that government at all levels has a vital strategic and enabling role and that some intervention may be essential, in particular through: promoting the development and introduction of improved technology; identifying and providing the right incentives and; ensuring that effective institutions exist for providing regulation and planning.

CONCLUSIONS

The principal common feature of the visions is that they all have something to say about the future of transport (locally or nationally) and most of them are clear that the future they depict is what *should* happen. Some proceed from a consideration of what is 'likely' (based upon current trends) and therefore how policy can be used to alter the situation so that the best can be made of this likely outcome. Examples of this approach are the Buchanan report (Buchanan Committee, 1963) or the Transport Foresight Panel Report (Technology Foresight Panel on Transport, 1995). Other reports take a more fundamental line and consider what transport is actually 'for' or start from even higher level aspirations (though all the documents had something to say about current transport trends). Examples include the "2020 Vision" produced by the Engineering Council (Engineering Council, 1997) and the Leeds Integrated Transport Strategy and Vision (LCC and WYPTA, 1991 and Leeds Initiative, 1997). Few envisage major changes in current conditions or trends, perhaps reflecting the difficulty of conceptualising something completely new or maybe a recognition that major changes would be hard to bring about given existing investments in elements of the transport system such as infrastructure and vehicles.

The visions reviewed provide some evidence of consensus, particularly with regard to the overall objectives of a transport system of the future and with regard to the nature of the existing transport problems (though there are differences in the emphasis placed on certain impacts). There is rather

less consensus in terms of the specific means which are proposed to meet the objectives and a wide range of possible instruments of change are proposed by the different reports. Although all of the visions provide a view of what the future will or should hold there is little attempt made to evaluate how likely they are to happen, how acceptable they would be, the implications they would have for lifestyles, and whether or not the proposed measures would bring about the desired changes.

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