

# **Chapter 15**



## **Alternative Transport Priorities in the North**

**Prepared by Tim Bellamy**

## 15 ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORT PRIORITIES TO HS2 IN THE NORTH

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- 15.1 This chapter relates to the following questions listed by the Committee:
- 2.1 – HSR is designed to improve inter-urban connectivity. How does that objective compare in importance to other transport policy objectives and spending programmes, including those for the strategic road network
  - 5.1 – Evidence that HSR will promote economic regeneration and help bridge the north – south economic divide

### **NORTHERN WAY**

#### ***Introduction***

- 15.2 Led by the three Northern Regional Development Agencies, the Northern Way aimed at bridging the £30bn annual productivity gap between the North's economy and the English regional average. Working with stakeholders from across the North, the Northern Way's focus was firmly on adding value over and above what can be achieved by the North's City Regions and Regions working in isolation. To deliver productivity growth, the Northern Way has identified the North's transport connectivity as one of three key priorities, the other two being private sector investment and business innovation.
- 15.3 The role of transport in growing the North's economy was first highlighted in the *Northern Way Growth Strategy Moving Forward: The Northern Way*. This set out the importance of improving the links within and between the North's City Regions, and improving access to the North's sea ports and airport international gateways. To support the achievement of these overarching goals, the *Strategic Direction for Transport* was developed. Evidence-based and full-square with the conclusions of Sir Rod Eddington's Transport Study, the *Strategic Direction* sets out the interventions needed to maximise productivity growth, while at the same time seeking to minimise the impact of transport on our environment. The *Strategic Direction* was developed by the Northern Transport Compact to sit below

the broad transport goals established by the Growth Strategy and to inform the development of short, medium and long term priorities.

- 15.4 Developing an evidence-based approach to pan-northern issues was central to the role of the Northern Way, especially for the top priority issue of transport, where work was undertaken to understand what the barriers are to productivity growth and the most effective ways of overcoming them.

### **The Northern Way Growth Strategy**

- 15.5 Published in 2004, the *Northern Way Growth Strategy Moving Forward: The Northern Way* set out how the Northern Way sought to improve the economic performance of the North. The Growth Strategy highlighted transport as a priority area for transformational change. The Growth Strategy identified three transport investment priorities for the North:

- To improve surface access to the North's airports.
- To improve access to the North's sea ports.
- To improve links within and between the North's City Regions.

### **Strategic Direction for Transport**

- 15.6 To underpin the *Growth Strategy*, the Northern Way Transport Compact developed the *Strategic Direction for Transport*. The *Strategic Direction* assessed the most appropriate transport interventions that will promote productivity gain, while at the same time seeking to protect and enhance the North's natural and built environment and contributing to meeting the nation's commitments regarding climate change. Looking over a 20 to 30 year time horizon, this document sits below the high-level transport goals of the Growth Strategy and above the level of individual schemes and projects. The Strategic Direction set out the types of interventions which will have greatest productivity impact. While pre-dating the Eddington Transport Study, the *Strategic Direction* is fully consistent with the findings of that report.

- 15.7 The Strategic Direction outlines that “*the proximity of London is a major asset to the North. It provides access to world city functions and acts as a global gateway*”. This therefore demonstrates that at the time of writing those associated with the Northern Way felt that the connections to London were appropriate and provided significant economic benefits for the North at the present time, without High Speed 2. In addition, the *Strategic Direction* outlines that the focus of investment within the North should be

focused on links within the Northern Way itself as demonstrated by the document stating that *“the Northern Way’s work also shows that improving links between the North’s City Regions offers greater potential agglomeration benefits than that offered by improving transport within the City Regions. Improving transport between the City Regions also offers the potential for more balanced growth across the North”*.

### **The Northern Way's Short, Medium and Long Term Transport Priorities**

- 15.8 Building on the Strategic Direction, the Northern Way Transport Compact also established a set of Short, Medium and Long Term Transport Priorities for investment in the North's transport system (see below). The Transport Compact's prioritisation work showed that while the transport proposals being pursued by stakeholders across the North would make worthwhile contributions to productivity growth, taken together they did not allow the Strategic Direction to be met. Consequently, if the North's productivity growth was to be maximised these strategic delivery "gaps" needed to be addressed.

### **The Northern Way's Transport Work**

- 15.9 The central role of the Northern Way's transport work was to add to what could be achieved by the North's three regions and eight city regions acting alone. This resulted in a clear focus on the connectivity between the North's city regions and between the city regions and key business destinations elsewhere in the country, as well as international connectivity. We also worked with partners to add economies of scale to city-region led initiatives.
- 15.10 In particular, built on the foundation of the Northern Way Growth Strategy, the Strategic Direction for Transport and the Short, Medium and Long Term Transport Priorities, work focused on:
- Closing the strategic deliver gaps - on roads, keeping the strategic road network moving and north-wide behavioural change measures; on rail, the Northern Hub, rail gauge enhancements, rail rolling stock and Trans Pennine and North-South strategies including high speed rail; and on network integration pan-northern smart ticketing and strategic park and ride.
  - Building the evidential base on how transport influences productivity in the North and the size of the Northern economy.

- Influencing the programmes and policies of Government and the national delivery agencies, including through drawing on the Strategic Direction, the Priorities work and the evidential base to inform the policy and programme consultations and to inform the North's parliamentarians about the work of the Northern Way Transport Compact.

### **Transport Priorities - 2007**

- 15.11 This identified the priorities for investment in the North's transport networks for the short (to 2011), medium (to 2016) and long term (looking 20-30 years ahead) and is part of a wider statement of what the Northern Way sees as the transformational priorities that will contribute to closing the £30bn annual output gap between the North and the English regional average.
- 15.12 Priorities identified will bring substantial and worthwhile productivity growth to the North, but one of our most important findings is that taken together, current proposals for transport investment from stakeholders will not maximise productivity growth: more must be done. Critically we need to develop a pan-Northern approach for the North's rail network if we are to meet the needs of the North's commuters and the growing demand for business and other travel between the North's resurgent City Regions. A North-wide strategy is also needed to keep our motorway and trunk roads moving. Considered pan-northern transport proposals which sought to benefit:
- Movements between the North's City Regions and between Regions.
  - Movements to/from international gateways.