

# **TransportPlanning** *Society*

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## **2015 General Election TPS MANIFESTO**

**Presentation by  
Keith Buchan  
Policy Director**

## **What is TPS doing?**

- Professors', TPS and RTPI letter
- Policy initiatives & responses, Member Survey
- Manifesto for a new Government

## **What are our objectives?**

- Set out the vision for transport
- Restore the cross cutting approach with land use planning and other disciplines
- Implement the best methods for achieving our objectives, especially managing and maintaining the network
- Develop new solutions
- Help to grow the skills base needed

## What is Government doing?

DfT trying to hold on to social cost benefit appraisal but sketchy “growth” claims seem to be replacing evidence based analysis



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31 October - 13 November 2014

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# 'Get tough on Wild West appraisals'

**APPRAISAL**

THE GOVERNMENT has been urged to clamp down on the 'Wild West' practices being used to predict the GDP or Gross Value Added (GVA) benefits of transport infrastructure investment.

Peter Mackie, emeritus professor at the Institute for Transport Studies, University of Leeds, made the call for Government intervention in comments to the House of Lords economic affairs committee inquiry into HS2.

"At the moment the [Treasury] Green Book is being revised and I really think it's important that the Treasury starts to provide some coherent advice on how to do these GVA or GDP-type calculations because at the moment this is the Wild West and there needs to be controls and guidance on precisely what macroeconomic assumptions are made when doing calculations of that kind," he said.

Mackie was asked by Lord McFall if he found KPMG's controversial study into the wider economic benefits of HS2 persuasive (*LTT* 15 Nov 13).

"Not very," he replied, citing the methodological concerns raised by Professor Henry Overman and broader concerns about the "macroeconomic assumptions, which underline the Gross Value Added approach".

## PRESENTATION BY KEITH BUCHAN, TPS

Is the Silo mentality making a come back – separate mode budgets and demand management squeezed?

# Multi-modal transport planning hasn't delivered benefits – DfT

## TRANSPORT PLANNING

by Andrew Forster

MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORT planning takes too long, produces huge amounts of data that is often of limited value, and has a poor track record of delivering change on the ground, according to the Department for Transport.

"We need to be realistic about the best way of integrating transport planning and decision-making on investment and delivery," says the DfT in its response to the House of Commons transport committee's recent report on roads (*LTT* 16 May).

"Previous top-down attempts at integrated, multi-modal transport planning have been big on rhetoric but in practice have failed to improve or speed up the planning and delivery of real improvements for transport users.

"Bottom-up approaches have often descended into huge multi-modal studies, consuming large amounts of time and resources, producing vast quantities of analysis but rarely delivering commensurate or timely improvements in infrastructure or transport outcomes."

In its report, the committee criticised the Department for the current programme of route-based road strategies and road-based studies. The MPs said the Department should instead develop multi-modal plans for major corridors in partnership with stakeholders such as local authorities and local enterprise partnerships.

The DfT's response to the committee continues: "The Government supports a holistic and multi-modal approach to transport problems and planning improvements. We believe, though, that a pragmatic approach is needed that allows transport investment planning and decision-making to be joined up at the right time and at the right level."

The DfT questions whether investment in one mode can have a big impact on demand for another. "We need to be realistic about



The multi-modal studies of the late 1990s/early 2000s produced "vast quantities of analysis" but didn't deliver much on the ground, says the DfT

the extent to which different modes can provide genuine, sensible and proportionate alternatives to solving specific transport problems..."

Transport planners this week criticised the DfT's message.

Transport Planning Society policy director Keith Buchan told *LTT* the DfT was partly to blame for the failure of the Government's programme of multi-modal studies 15 years ago to deliver outcomes on the ground.

"The DfT argues that both top down and bottom up approaches have failed to deliver. They seem to have forgotten that one of the key reasons for this was the lack of adequate governance arrangements [for the multi-modal studies], and the failure to

provide sufficient and properly integrated funding, particularly in our major urban areas outside London."

Buchan, who runs the consultancy MTRU, added: "Of more concern for the future is the apparent drawing back in their response from the heart of an integrated approach – which is not only multi-modal but works hand-in-hand with land-use planning."

To suggest that individual modes can be pursued in isolation is to undermine the key part of Webtag [the DfT's transport appraisal guidance] on option development and consequently the many opportunities to manage demand as well as to provide any additional capacity required."

Buchan said that on a crowded island such as Britain it was "quite difficult to think of places where there isn't modal shift possibilities".

TPS director and former MVA Group chairman Martin Richards was also critical. "While there have undoubtedly been weaknesses in some of the planning studies undertaken by the Department over the years, their characterisation of 'top-down attempts' and 'bottom up approaches' fails to recognise the benefits of good strategic planning, well-designed and properly executed."

"It is unfortunate that the Department now seems set against the principle of having a transport strategy for England to provide a framework within which government, both central and local, as well as private sector investors can make mutually consistent, synergistic decisions."

"The London mayor's London Plan demonstrates what can be achieved without the complexity of some of the approaches adopted by the Department over the years."

Better roads: Improving England's strategic road network: Government response to the committee's 15th report of session 2013/14 is available at <http://tinyurl.com/pb7oo9k>

**DfT approach far from perfect:**

- National Traffic Model a jumble and inaccessible, London and rail forecasts not usable
- nature of benefits – distant future too dominant and weak evidence base for values of time
- Weak framework for local modelling and forecasting and TEMPRO, no overview of job forecasts
- In the TPS Survey 1% thought existing methods satisfactory, 36% wanted major reform

**Problems are occurring at both ends of the spectrum:**

- HS2 performs badly using conventional methods (value of train time savings for business users?)
- So called “soft measures” still hard to fit within the system (see the confused Webtag Unit)

## **Recent Example: Peak Car and land values versus time savings**

### **What is the evidence base for valuing time?**

#### **Two key inputs currently:**

- Value of time fixed – no account of size or context
- Increase in value over time in line with GDP.

#### **Three key problems:**

- Evidence shows variation in value by size and direction (and of course region)
- No evidence that value of time grows in line with GDP, but this undermines discounting to a large extent
- Time savings “spent” within a short space of time on goods we don’t measure (but probably could) in particular rise in land values **(In the TPS Survey 63% listed this as area for reform)**

## What could be in the TPS Manifesto?

What is the vision for the future?

We have a national networks policy statement but apparently not a national transport policy – is the former possible without the latter?

(TPS survey – 93% said No)

Are the Government's traffic forecasts for our urban areas remotely plausible? (67% No) If not, how should we amend them?

In view of the predicted increase in traffic & congestion, do we need to put demand management back on the Agenda? (90% Yes)

If the forecasts are correct, are the Government's predicted carbon reductions from transport plausible? (85% No)

Has HS2 failed Webtag or has Webtag failed HS2? Do we need a new way of assessing the value of transport interventions?

What skills does the transport planning profession need going forward – how should we adapt to change?

**Closest we have to a transport policy? Draft National Policy Statement for the National Road and Rail Networks**

***Almost a counsel of despair and the opposite of much that TPS has supported***

Land use planning left to the market and not mentioned

Demand management won't work

New technology won't have an impact

Road pricing is off the Agenda for the National Network (but OK for Local Authorities if they dare)

Even the larger road building programme won't keep up with demand

***But don't worry about carbon – new technology will solve all the problems in the next 15 years!***



## **NPS Quotes**

**Maintenance and asset management** *“will do nothing to enhance capacity to cater for traffic growth, tackle existing pressures on the network or unlock economic development and housing”* (para 2.17)

**Demand management** *“can only make a relatively small impact in alleviating the damaging effects of congestion”* (para 2.18)

**For mode shift** *“it is not realistic for public transport, walking or cycling to represent a viable alternative to the private car for all journeys, particularly in rural areas and for some longer or multi-leg journeys”* (para 2.20)

### **On the impact of technology:**

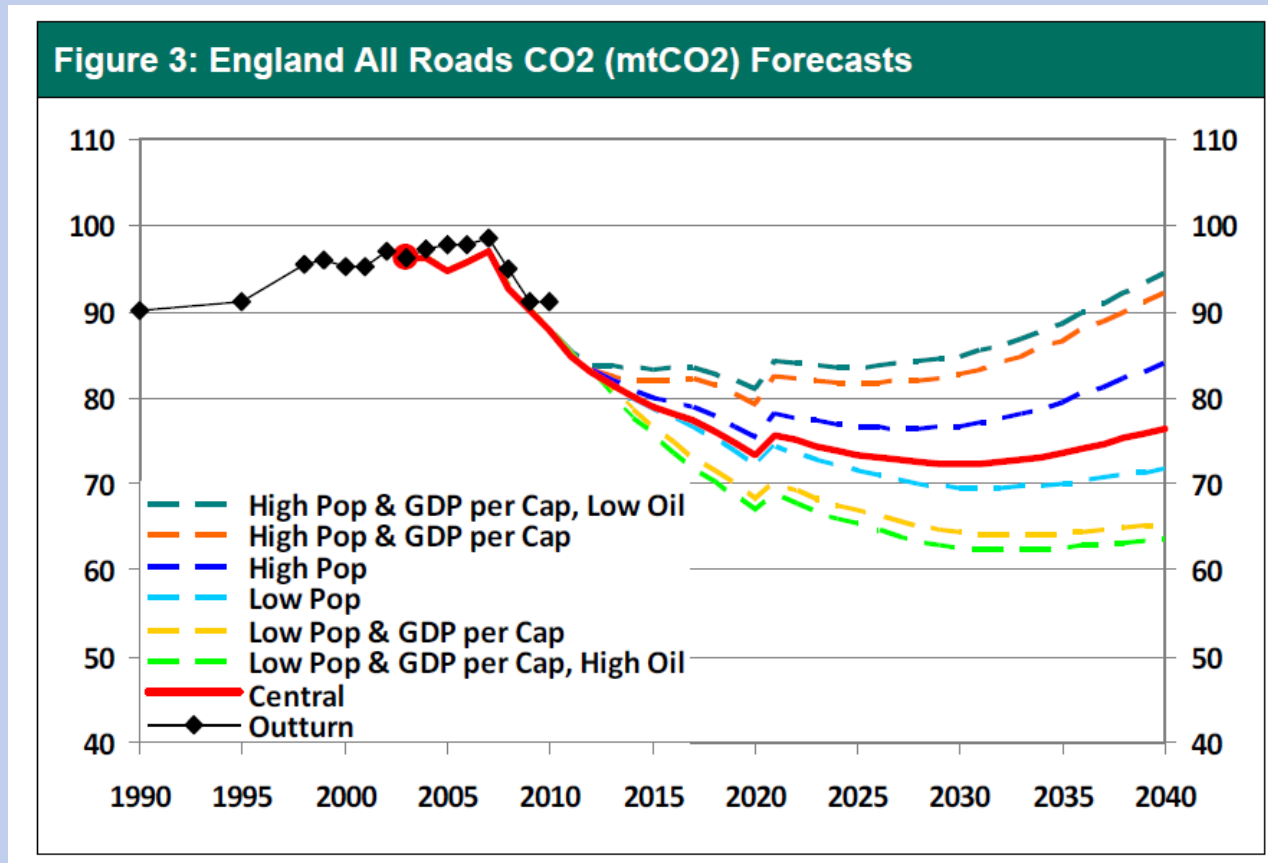
*“Whilst advances in mobile technology are important and will influence travel demand, they are not expected to have a significant impact.”*

**Not only are problems of congestion ignored, there is the small matter of CO2. This will be dealt with entirely by national policy.**

*“While, considered in isolation, individual schemes may result in an increase in CO2 emissions, the Government’s overarching plan for reducing carbon emissions will ensure that any such increases do not compromise its overall CO2 reduction commitments. Increases in carbon emissions from a development should not therefore need to be considered by the Examining Authority and the Secretary of State.” (para 3.4)*

**NPS concludes:** *“These alternatives will not be sufficient to address the damaging effects of congestion on the economy, quality of life and job opportunities” (para 2.21)*

This is from the 2013 Road Traffic Forecasts – so what's the problem?  
(DfT have not published the most recent outcomes 2011-13!)



## **What could be included in the Manifesto?**

- 1 Set out a clear vision for what transport can and can't do to support people's primary objectives:**
  - Access to facilities and each other**
  - Support for new and existing jobs and access to them**
  - Contributing to improving health (not just lower pollution but active lifestyles)**
  - Ensuring safety and security on the transport networks**
  - Contributing to the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions**
  - Being sustainable in terms of the natural and built environment**

## **What could be included in the Manifesto?**

- 2. Set out pathways to achieving the high level objectives**
- 3. Call for a Review of methods, not just a defensive “Refresh” – health disbenefits of modes must be addressed as well as benefits**
- 4. Start talking openly about specific solutions:**
  - 1) Reviving land use planning links with transport (enforcing a tougher limit on maximum numbers of parking spaces?)**
  - 2) Lorry Road User Charging (cars seem to be off the agenda)**
  - 3) Parking charges on all spaces, including retail, roll out WPL**
  - 4) Catering for cycling demand in a long term programme**
  - 5) Bring LSTF and Smarter Choices into the mainstream, not subject to perpetual competitive bidding**
  - 6) Get aviation taxes right**

PRESENTATION BY KEITH BUCHAN, TPS

**What do you think?**