
Meeting: TfN Board
Subject: Major Roads Report
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Sponsor: Peter Molyneux, Major Roads Director
Meeting Date: 24 November 2021

1. Purpose of the Report:

1.1 The purpose of this report is for Members to consider and approve TfN's Major Roads Report, which aligns to TfN's Decarbonisation Strategy.

2. Recommendations:

2.1 Developed as a position statement to support TfN's statutory function, the Major Roads report focuses on the role of Major Roads in achieving TfN ambitions and objectives.

2.2 Board members are asked to:

- a) Consider how TfN should be influencing future policies and priorities for investment in our transport system, including on our Major Roads.
- b) Comment on the report
and
- c) Approve publication of the report

2.3 The Major Roads Report was discussed at TfN's Scrutiny Committee on 4th November, questions and comments raised by Members at Scrutiny are addressed in section 3 of this report and for transparency also noted in appendix 1.

3. Main Issues:

3.1 TfN's 2021/22 Business Plan includes a commitment to publish an updated Major Roads Report (MRR), following DfT publication of the national Transport Decarbonisation Plan and the TfN Decarbonisation Strategy. Both of these documents have now been published, with the final version of TfN's Decarbonisation Strategy on the agenda for this Board meeting on 24 November.

3.2 The MRR draws upon evidence and policy within TfN's Strategic Transport Plan and reflects TfN's more recent work on Future Travel Scenarios, the Transport Decarbonisation Strategy and emerging Freight Strategy.

3.3 Roads are used by pedestrians; cyclists; horse-riders; motorcyclists; drivers of cars and vans; and passengers in cars buses and coaches. In total, 97% of all personal journeys are made by these modes, amounting to 88% of distance travelled. 87% of freight movements are by road.

3.3 With almost nine out of ten passenger miles travelled by road and 87% of freight goods moved by road, roads are an integral part of our economy and wider transport system. Even with huge investment in other transport and ways of working, most journeys will still be made by road in 2050.

3.4 The MRN, which makes up 7% of the road network accommodates 69% of vehicle-km in the North. This is made up of around 32% of distance driven on the 2% of roads classed as Strategic Road Network, managed by National Highways, and 37% on Major Roads managed by local highway authorities.

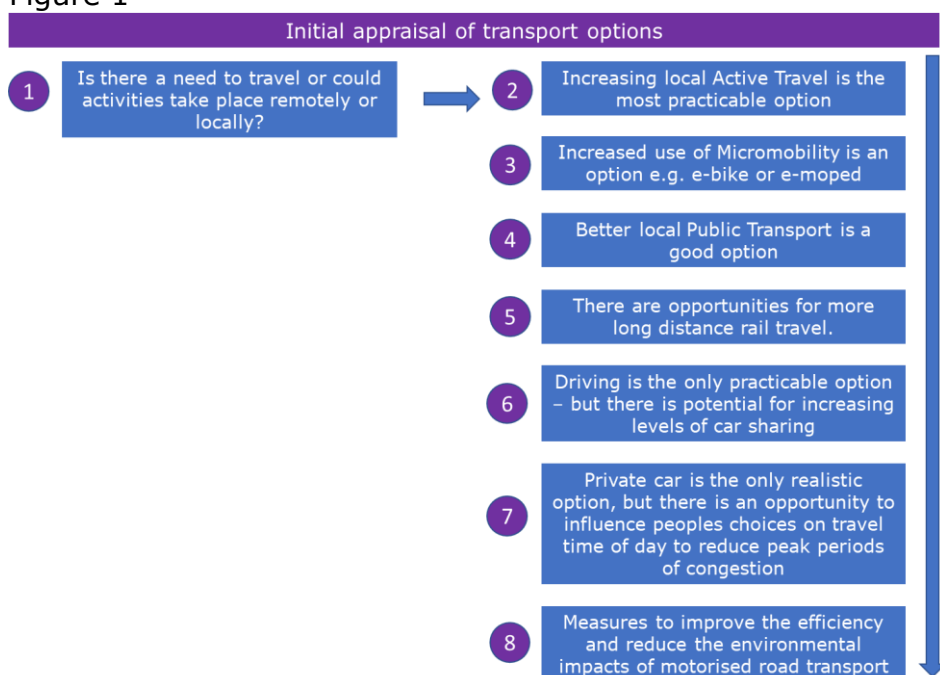
- 3.5 The Major Road Network (MRN) plays a critical role in connecting people, businesses and communities, and put simply, major roads are indispensable to supporting a functioning society and our overall quality of life.
- 3.6 While good transport connectivity is fundamental to achieving TfN's vision for a thriving North of England, that must be balanced against environmental goals, the most urgent being the need to deliver rapid and substantial reductions in carbon emissions.
- 3.7 Transport is the largest contributor to UK domestic GHG emissions, contributing 28% of UK domestic emissions in 2018, with UK emissions from road transport amounting to 109 MtCO₂e per annum, 88% of domestic transport carbon emissions. Policies to reduce emissions from road transport are therefore vital to achieving ambitions for net zero carbon by 2050 or earlier.
- 3.8 The MRR reflects draws upon evidence in TfN's Decarbonisation Strategy, setting out the scale and pace of change required to decarbonise our transport system. This will require a wide-ranging package of policy measures and both public and private investment targeted at:
- a) Promoting more sustainable transport behaviours, for example through better integration of the MRN with public transport and the provision of high-quality infrastructure for active travel modes.
 - b) Investment in improving access to/from intermodal rail freight depots and local freight hubs facilitating low and zero emission 'last mile' deliveries.
 - c) Rapid investment in infrastructure to underpin the need for a speedy transition to zero emission vehicles, including a comprehensive network of Electric Vehicle Charging Points and where evidence demonstrates the need, hydrogen re-fuelling.
 - d) A programme of measures and investment increasing the attractiveness of public transport in comparison with travel by car. These factors are modelled within TfN's Future Travel Scenario's and fall within the remit of national government and local transport authorities. For example, changes to public transport fare structures and how road users are taxed.
- 3.9 As highlighted in TfN's Decarbonisation Strategy, achieving the reduction in carbon emissions in line with the decarbonisation strategy will require significant scale of change in both the short and long-term. With changes in the vehicle fleet and in travel behaviour critical in the period up to 2030. This includes:
- a) The need for reductions in forecast growth in vehicle kilometres driven (between 1% - 4% by 2025 and a 3%-14% reduction by 2030)¹
 - b) over half of car sales, and 40% of van sales, to be zero-emissions in the next four years.
 - c) A reversal in trends favouring purchase of larger cars
 - d) Improved efficiency of existing cars, vans and HGV's
- 3.9 Investment decisions and policy choices impacting on the way we use, manage and maintain our roads are therefore critical to supporting our ambition for "A thriving North of England, where world class transport supports sustainable economic growth, excellent quality of life and improved opportunities for all."
- 3.10 The scale of change needed is indicative of the difficulty of the decarbonisation challenge faced across all areas of our society. As a major source of carbon emissions, transport has a vital role to play in meeting net zero goals and TfN will

¹ This would bring 2025 traffic demand to around a 4%-5% increase on total vehicle kilometres travelled in 2018 and 2030 traffic demand to anywhere between -5% and +1% of 2018 levels.

work to ensure that future proposals for transport investment, including in the MRN are compatible with commitments in our transport Decarbonisation Strategy.

- 3.11 Decarbonising will require actions at all levels of society, including by local, regional and national Government. For example, national policy on phasing out of all petrol and diesel vehicles means Government must consider new fiscal models for generating the lost tax revenues from fuel duty and Vehicle Excise Duty and on how revenue raised is used for investment in our transport networks. TfN is ready to work with Government on considering new approaches to taxation and how revenues can be used to fund improvements across all modes of an integrated transport system. Transparency and public trust in a fair system of charging and the allocation of tax revenues should be key measures of success for a new approach to taxing and funding transport. We believe this is an opportunity to ensure customers are better informed of the true cost of a journey via different modes, enabling people to make better choices on which forms of transport to take, resulting in more efficient and environmentally friendly journeys.
- 3.12 Proposals for future transport investment, including on new and improved roads should take a holistic and hierarchical account of all options for improving access for people and goods.
- 3.13 Figure 1 below outlines the conceptual process for considering an initial transport options appraisal, starting with a question on whether there is a need to facilitate more travel, and consideration of a range of options before deciding on whether there is a clear need for new road capacity.
- 3.14 The MRN's primary role is to facilitate inter-urban journeys, with a general presumption that MRN routes should not extend directly into the main urban centres (city and town centres). However, urban development over many decades has resulted in a network of major roads extending into urban areas. It is therefore important that TfN works with Local Highway Authorities to support plans for the MRN that are aligned with local place-based objectives, taking account of the role of the MRN in a particular location. For example, that could be facilitating movement of traffic but with a focus on creating sustainable, healthy and resilient places, focusing on people (everyone who uses the street) rather than primarily on vehicles.

Figure 1



- 3.15 The application of Future Travel Scenarios within Investment Programme Benefits Analysis (IPBA) using TfN's multi-modal analytical framework will provide evidence on the social, economic and environmental outcomes from investment in the North's road and rail networks.
- 3.16 Developed in collaboration with industry experts and TfN partners the Future Scenarios represent 4 plausible future states, 'driven' by exogenous factors (distinct from the Investment Programme) e.g., Land use changes, fare structures, cost of road travel, levels of digital substitution and automation; and are being used in our appraisal of the Investment Programme to help future proof our recommendations.
- 3.17 Outputs from that work, which assess the investment programme as a whole are scheduled for 2022 and will inform TfN's recommendations for further work on developing a pipeline of transport investment schemes.
- 3.18 As part of this assessment, we will be asking the question: 'what needs to be true, if the North is to effectively decarbonise its surface transport as well as enjoy the significant connectivity, economic and environmental benefits that our Investment programme P will deliver?'
- 3.19 It is also important to be clear that the IPBA work will inform TfN recommendations at a programme level and that specific schemes or packages of schemes will subsequently need to be developed in accordance with the treasury 'Green Book', and statutory processes including an environmental impact assessment.
- 3.20 In practice solutions are likely to include a package of measures, and in some circumstances major investment in new or improved roads may still be required, for example to accommodate new housing and jobs growth, access to international gateways and to take traffic away from core urban areas.
- 3.21 The MRR will support TfN in providing statutory advice to Government on future transport investment, including on the Major Road Network.
- 3.22 The MRR is a key TfN document we will share with National Highways (formerly Highways England) as supporting evidence for their work on SRN Route Strategies and the RIS3 Programme. Assisting TfN in meeting our Northern Transport Charter (NTC) ambition to 'Lead strategic transport delivery' in making recommendations for investment in the Major Road Network.

4. Corporate Considerations

Financial Implications

- 4.1 *There are no direct finance implications as a result of this report.*

Resource Implications

- 4.2 *There are no direct resource implications as a result of this report.*

Legal Implications

- 4.3 There are no apparent legal implications as a result of this report other than outlined in the report.

Risk Management and Key Issues

- 4.4 The risk management and key issues have been considered and addressed within the report.

Environmental Implications

- 4.5 This report does not constitute or influence a plan or programme which sets the framework for future development consents of projects listed in the EIA Directive and therefore does stimulate the need for SEA or EIA.
- 4.6 The Major Roads Report and the data that underpins it, will also form an important part of the evidence base for the upcoming Strategic Transport Plan update in 2024. As such, it will be a consideration within the Integrated Sustainability Appraisal which will accompany that plan making process.

Equality and Diversity

- 4.7 An equality and diversity impact assessment has not been undertaken. Transport investment and policy measures have the potential to lead to uneven distributional impacts and it will be important that the appropriate level of equalities impact assessment is undertaken where legislated. As part of TfN's Investment Programme Benefits Analysis - the programme level appraisal of options for future transport investment will include a high-level assessment of societal distributional impacts.

Consultations

- 4.8 The MRR has been developed in consultation with TfN's constituent partner authorities, National Highways and the DfT.

5. Background Papers

- 5.1 Major Roads Report and summary version of the report

6. Appendices

- 6.1 Issues raised at Scrutiny Committee
- 6.2 Major Roads Report – Summary version

Glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used (*if applicable*)

Please include any technical abbreviations and acronyms used in the report in this section. (Please see examples below.) This will provide an easy reference point for the reader for any abbreviations and acronyms that are used in the report.

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|-----------------------|---|
| a) MRR | Major Roads Report |
| b) MRN | Major Roads Network |
| c) RIS | Road Investment Strategy |
| d) GHG | Green House Gas |
| e) MtCO _{2e} | Metric tonne of carbon dioxide equivalent |