

A CITY FOR ALL LONDONERS

Transport Workshop
9th November 2016, 9.30 – 13.00

Strategic Priorities for a Growing City Transport & Economy Table 1 Session 1

Facilitator comments in bold
Respondents in regular text

These notes are a summary of the conversation

Session 1, Table 1

Ian Birch, Facilitator

Hannah Godfrey, Gatwick Airport
Nick O'Donnell, Richmond/Wandsworth Councils
Sam Knight, Better Bankside
Lilli Matson, TFL
Tiffany Lynch, Bexley Council
David Lee, London First
Karen Tiley, CPT
Josie Drath, ICE
Denise Beedell, FSB

Let's summarise what's on these [two A3] sheets, on the agenda. On the top right of our agenda is the list of world cities. London is doing very well as a world city. The world city function is starting point for how we think about transport and the economy. London currently has a top rating as a world city. Our Achilles heel is liveability - we're doing well on environment, accessibility - but liveability is a real issue. I wonder if liveability and the economy are interlinking issues - I think they probably are.

Turning to the second sheet, this is a spatial picture of the employment growth. As you can see, it's concentrated in certain areas - like the Thames Gateway, New Cross, Croydon, where lots of the population growth is. But this growth is much more concentrated towards the centre. So this is a transport issue - people need to get from where they live to where they work. And as you can see on the first sheet, this is where we expect the congestion to be. There's lots of investment going into that system, but there's so much growth in population and employment that our current investment is going to be used up in the 2020s. We're thinking about the next wave of investment needed in the 2030s.

That was just a bit of background. It would be great to hear about people's views from their perspectives about what the challenges are regarding transport and the economy. Let's think about the future. We have a strong idea of business and transport in central London, but what about the emerging areas? Do we think other hubs are going to emerge? There are all sorts of questions.

Let's look at that, at the employment-centre-race. From a small business perspective, it's going the other way. Small businesses are being squeezed out of centre. There are raising rental prices; landlords don't want to respect levels of rent that have been there for the last 40 years. This squeezing them out of the centre is going to create all kinds of recruitment problems, if small businesses can't get a foothold on the centre, where all the transport links are focused. The delivery side of things is going to be a problem too.

So while the centre is important for certain activities, it only represents a certain proportion of jobs and businesses; lots of businesses don't want to live in centre?

Lots of small businesses do, but it's too hard and too expensive. The issue is how do you get your workers to your businesses if you've been squeezed out but all transport links are aimed at the centre?

It shouldn't just be focused on getting everyone to the centre. It will take a leap of faith, investing in areas that don't get as big returns, in order to use all of the space in London and ultimately develop new areas.

What sort of links are you thinking about?

It's the links around - the orbital link. Let's take Croydon; to get from Bromley where you might live into Croydon where you might work is actually really hard.

And always has been!

You have to take a really long journey, going into the centre and out again, increasing the load on transport system. That, or people just say, "Sod it, I'll take the car."

Can I just ask, when you look at the length of some of those journeys - three to five miles - some of those could be done by bike or orbital bus, are we thinking about a heavy rail investment or something else?

Well busses don't always do journeys round the outside. From a small business perspective, workers will often be using private vehicles anyway. Tools and bulky items necessary for their work often aren't allowed on public transport, assuming they'd even want to take public transport. It's about modifying our approach to the modal shift, getting people out of cars who don't need them but recognising the businesses that do.

Are you saying roads should be prioritised?

That's an exaggeration, but we have been demonised, often by cycle groups. But we do need to share the roads pace more fairly. A lot of policies that have been introduced - T-Charge and ULEZ - these are heavy charges compared to privately owned vehicles. When you add in resident discounts, there are hardly any incentives for them to change habits.

And there's no change in scale depending on size of business.

There's no difference between big and small companies as far as charges are concerned.

David, what would you say about broader business perspectives in this uncertain, post-Brexit world?

Where the growth is coming from is a real debate isn't it. Where sectors are strong and where we can be confident in future growth: it's services and tourism. A large amount of demand and activity is going to be in the CAZ - it's highly productive, the most productive area of Europe - Fin Tech, Property Tech, they're all happening in London.

Is there anyone round the table who thinks we shouldn't focus on CAZ?

I worry we neglect existing businesses we've already got, and only attract new ones. A fundamental rule in business is it costs more money to attract new customers than keep existing ones. Let's stop chasing new businesses that sweep away a lot of the community issues. As we continue to develop our infrastructure, let's protect small businesses.

One of the problems here is that we need the smaller businesses everywhere. In the same way that Spencer was showing - from the George and Dragon pub in Bromley all the way to Oxford Street - there are all sorts of different people doing all sorts of different things in this city. Those who are strategising very often don't see the big picture. We only hear those who are shouting loudest, we only see the big-ticket scheme. For example, the idea that everything is about Crossrail 2. It doesn't have to be. I'm being tongue in cheek here. But things do need to be nuanced very differently to how we've done things in the past if we're supposed to be a successful city with a population of 11 million. We need a strategy which deals with all those elements. We've got to have something holistic and comprehensive. Otherwise all we'll have is more of the same. What we have is a number of different growth areas around London (of which Bexley is one!) but each of those growth areas will have different characteristics, transport characteristics and so on. I'll take Bexley. We're looking at a lot of residential developments in the north of the borough which should have relatively easy access to central London - be it by extended rail networks or by Crossrail - not just for places for go to but places to work, to do your business. What we're trying to do is concentrate those people around the transport mode that will move people in the most efficient way. Segregated rapid transport corridor zones to make way for future methods. What we're got is a collection of different things we're growing with our transport network - but it's particular to this particular zone we're working in. And we're against the trend in terms of car ownership - it's growing.

Why is that?

We're very suburban, very low density. It makes running local transport services very difficult. North-south routes through the borough are a big problem.

It's an interesting question - thinking about making growth good and sustainable and support growing population - thinking about modal shift is difficult when you have a very established low-density borough.

Welcome to my world! There's been a fair amount of work on densifying suburbia. We're trying to up the level of activity in certain zones where we're saying this can happen, provided we get the necessary infrastructure (schools, transport) to make it happen.

Does that mean being bold about rebuilding bits of suburbia?

Yes. People will get a shock - it means a comprehensive rebuild of certain places, or actually ripping people out of their homes. Those places can then be built up in a denser way.

Is there an intention to rip people out of their businesses as well? Remember it is possible to move home to a different place and still have access to local services. But businesses have greater difficulty in moving - especially if it's a shop front.

We're very aware of small businesses, looking at businesses in Abbey Wood where, because of the construction of Crossrail, businesses are having next to no footfall. But if we're going to get the density to make growth work, then we have to move things about. We aren't doing it with our eyes closed.

There are successful examples out there.

And unsuccessful examples. I'm thinking of Brixton Arches, London Bridge.

One of the features we've got - it's a blue-colour borough in Bexley - partly because jobs are low tech. We've got lovely grammar schools, but the bright kids go to them, then they go to universities, then we never see them again. We'd love to keep the bright kids here. We'd welcome some of the businesses being squeezed out of zone 1!

One thing I would say: boroughs are looking at investment schemes on very small scales (in the £1000s), whereas TFL is looking at schemes in the many millions. We're missing out the schemes in the middle. Otherwise it ends up so piecemeal; we need to be thinking about schemes in £10,000s. There's an opportunity now - particularly from a Wandsworth Perspective - CIL now says we can pull together £50, £60, million, but there's no active directional guidance which is making boroughs think about it. You can't do it without the direction from above.

So there's a major-major scheme level needed?

I refer to my alter ego in Richmond. When there's less CIL, let's think of other ways of funding it.

And when you prioritise money in delivering and developing CAZ, there are lots of businesses that will gain, but can we generate more money from them and then redistribute it to areas that needed pump-priming?

So there's a problem with how we direct funding?

And with the rules, which keep changing all the time. Certain pots from GLA and TFL can only be sent in certain ways. Why can't you spend housing money on transport?

And when you're making new developments where you think about how you bring goods in. In lots of areas, that hasn't happened.

We're looking at Richmond town centre, there's lots of funding for it, a whole spectrum of funding, and the briefing includes everything, so we can holistically bring everything in.

Please don't exclude small businesses. They can't afford that sort of thing.

But nobody can - we need to persuade the housing geeks that sometimes, to build houses, you need to spend housing funding on different things, for example taking away waste.

If you want to attract small businesses, you absolutely need great broadband connections.

Let's not get too into broadband; it's very important but slightly off our topic.

It is and it isn't. As David Begg said of PPG13: when you're looking at development, you need to minimise the need to travel. Maximise your use of other modes.

What about making existing transport links more efficient? In East Croydon there's an average of a 1m30 delay on every train that goes through there.

It needs a lot of money, it needs a magic. I'm not being silly. We've got a lot of those hotspots in London.

I don't think there's a single rail interchange that doesn't have that problem.

You've got four or five key blockages; we're being given funding for them without having the solutions. We don't know what the solution is but we're being given money we're told we have to spend now.

We'll soon be out of time for this round table. Is it worth thinking about our top three priorities?

Orbital interconnections.

Widen it to local? It's not just about orbital.

'Local connections' is better than 'orbital'.

If you keep it local, you have less congestion in the centre.

But you get conglomeration benefits in the centre, which is what make us so competitive. We wouldn't want to use that.

But other modes are being squeezed out of London, for example the company coach. It's taking an extra hour, or hour and a half, to get from the South-East and from the Home Counties by coach. Small businesses are suffering and are deciding to take the train.

And the longer people are spending on coaches, the longer they're not spending money.

So is road congestion enough of a priority to make the top three?

Definitely.

Let's make it about unlocking key hotspots, identifying where they are and investing to unlock them.

One thing we haven't looked at is the centre; I'd want to see more of a focus on consolidation. Major consolidation centres.

And technology and data, using them better to plan and respond better to needs.

I'm not sure it's just hotspots on roads but hotspots everywhere.

So, congestions and constraints? Connections to local centres is our other priority. What's the third?

Funding. Diversifying funding. Council Tax, CIL, GLA Funding, other private funding but it's very disparate.

And there are institutional gaps in funding.

Who pays and who benefits?

We need schemes in the tens of millions to do this unlocking.

But let's not charge the people who haven't made the money in the first place. Or you'll just end up with a very beige London that's just full of Starbucks and Eat chains.

To summarise the main points: we've talked about the importance of the centre but without forgetting the role of diversity. The small and existing business as well as the big and new ones. There's an issue around penalising businesses; T-Charge and ULEZ we need to watch.

Their margins are so squeezed.

And we've spoken about different needs around London. Places like Bexley, and we need to have a whole series of transport interventions, encouraging people to live around transport hubs but also feeder links, making sure people have access to those hubs. Densifying suburbia. The tension between supporting existing business and the need to change. There have been problems in Brixton Arches and London Bridge, where change on a bigger scale has had unfortunate and unintended consequences at the individual business level. We need to watch that. We've spoken about missing links - we're good at big and little schemes - but there's a medium-level where there isn't enough leadership. There's quite a big need for schemes in the tens-of-millions-type level. Thinking about our big three topics: connections to local centres, unlocking key hotspots and the whole issue of funding. Having enough funding to achieve this full range of things. Does that sum it up?

Yes, very good!

Strategic Priorities Transport & Economy Table 2 Session 1

These notes are a summary of the conversation

Session 1, Table 2

Facilitator, Geoff Hobbs, GLA

Anna Goodship

Richard Dilks, London First

Chris Cole, London Borough of Ealing

Tim Long, City of Westminster

Sanan Nabi, Confederation of British Industry

James Trimmer, Port of London Authority

Jerry McLaughlin, Mineral Products Association

Handout – showing population growth in London and where jobs are likely to be created i.e. the opportunity areas.

At the bottom you see the number of trips and types in 2014 and 2041, and the growth of trip types over that period i.e. 46% growth in rail trips.

Handout – a crowding map.

The more red bits there are the more people are travelling in crowded conditions. It shows the underground. Grey areas are OK, but red and orange show high numbers of people standing at peak travel times.

It assumes committed schemes happen?

Yes. The bottom bits of the picture are explained as per the legend. You can also see the impact on traffic as London grows, with more traffic and more traffic delays. Spider charts for four world cities are in the top right corner and show comparisons against the competitiveness of the city.

The index isn't shown well.

Six criteria are shown. Given this evidence, what do you think the three priorities are? What should we focus on? What are the challenges and opportunities?

Can we start with the third item: why are people travelling? We see how crowded trains will be. We think we will travel to central London, but should we try to ensure people don't travel at all? Goods have to move but do people? Should we locate jobs and housing in the same place to reduce travel need? That is a basic problem you don't address. What can we do to encourage people not to travel, to avoid issues?

Good idea, but by vacating office space centrally others will come in to replace them, so it won't reduce employment in central London. I don't think it will work, but it will help.

Yes, business needs face-to-face interaction, but could encourage staff to come in during off-peak travel times. That could be a side element.

I see Friday is less busy than other days, and people work at home then, but not other days. We should encourage more jobs to regenerate other town centres.

The South London Partnership did lots of work saying fewer people are travelling to central London than expected. Fewer people are travelling to Ealing; you expected it to be over 50%. Orbital movements are interesting, like Bromley to Croydon or Kingston. You need to look at these, not the radial movements, if that is the way of progression. Many schemes focus on central London.

You are challenging the chart and growth of jobs centrally?

There is more space outside the centre. You have more opportunity outside too.

You are right about the orbital perspective. I don't think you will achieve some modal shift ambitions, especially outside London, without serious transport changes. You don't get much sense of that yet. Orbital areas are much forgotten.

London needs stuff. All I saw was consolidation centres near the river and little on freight, which is growing. Patterns are differing, so how will that be managed? The river is a great opportunity, but there is little shown from east to west. I think you should think outside the box. How can things be better used? How can containers get from Thurrock to west London? Supermarkets have more convenience stores and deliver in refrigerated containers.

It is the great unused resource. We used more than 10 million tonnes last year.

Us too. It's about protecting modal shift. Unintended consequences are making it hard to use facilities, like housing on riverside land. There are rail depots on industrial sites. Authorities are trying to close them and put on housing, but when there are residential developments up to the perimeter of an industrial site that deals with bulk 24/7, you end up with activity restrictions. Restraints are getting worse, maybe unintended. But anyway, for every train we cannot move into London there may be 75+ HGVs per dredger, with 250+ HGV journeys. For freight there is a market servicing existing developments, for retail or whatever, and we have movement of materials enabling the developments to take place i.e. to building sites. On the Lee Valley and Crossrail 2, the rail depot is there and the legacy authority is trying to close Bow, right in the middle of that corridor. It is indicative of our concerns. We feel there is little about freight in the document.

The number of complaints we have about parking, loading and impacting hugely on you. It leads into people's lives.

You can see where freight will have to go.

And the parking issues will be in the same place almost. It will cost the economy if freight is forced on to the road, creating major change for other road users, so should we travel less or get it closer to where it needs to go? The road is the least important part of the journey.

You always need the road for the last part of the trip.

But you will use more electric vehicles.

Freight can be done better. Supermarkets have a reputation for building mini shops that need HGV parking. Local authorities are not willing to help, and supermarkets won't provide the right vehicles for deliveries.

Neighbourhood stores are where growth will be, but we need space, and there may be consolidation with other businesses coming in.

Why does job growth have to be where it is expected? The response is, it is hard to buck the market and jobs go to high-productivity areas, so there is a cluster driving trips growth centrally. In summary, this omits the role of freight, depots for loading and river opportunities.

Addressing priorities ...

Opportunities. Will the autonomous AV help if it takes out a lot of ... accidents are caused by human error usually, so if we use the other cars is safety improved? It is a possible opportunity.

You still have deliveries.

What of the infrastructure for electric vehicles? You can put in a charging point, but it is in a cabinet at the moment. If you have street parking you don't want cables there: wheelchairs can trip over cables. How many do you need? Will they be like parking meters used to be?

Will the government create legislation to control AVs? It enables more driving and then congestion.

Like the Ubers that jam up London.

It depends on the scale. AVs could be big scale. You don't get cars chaining together in the same way, but trips may increase. If we work out a good response it may be okay. My priority could be preparing for this, and looking at frameworks for it. Being reactive would not be good.

It needs to be policy driven. It could be mitigated. It could be trimmed down.

Croydon is the only part of London where there is a loss of jobs from the suburban town centre as companies have moved away. The jobs are mostly retail and there are 10,000 fewer than a year ago. The jobs were outsourced abroad or to central London. If you are an employer in an accessible spot, you get the best labour market.

You need less space for cars and more for public transport.

AVs give cheaper journeys for all; costs are 80% less with no drivers. I think growth will overwhelm any marginal improvements.

With a taxi model, journeys could be shared. There is no citywide network.

Impact of AVs: what role can transport play in addressing that? What schemes and policies would you see helping meet the economic needs?

All types of travel modes should be fewer and more sustainable.

If the Central line goes down, the town comes to a standstill. If the Piccadilly line goes down, we need an alternative built into a plan showing alternative routes. So we need an orbital route.

You generate more funds from private developers to pay for transport links.

You need real road pricing. It includes consolidation, use of river and timing of travel.

Protecting river and rail sites and maybe increasing capacity rather than reducing it. We need opportunities for London retail deliveries. We still use trucks and it is unsustainable.

So you would protect routes and stations for mass transport movement.

More depots for freight and think ahead. Look for viability and look ahead. The first step is to protect, not diminish.

You won't get big transport schemes; we need more houses. We can see the opportunity areas, so you have to see how to join up the plans.

How do we improve liveability? People won't come here and we won't get the talent needed.

Define liveability. Is it too pricey?

It is pricey, because there isn't enough housing.

Business tells us people are leaving because they cannot afford the transport.

It has gone full circle.

See Crossrail on the map? That is the area. It is called Thames Gateway or Estuary.

It comes down to local links too – DLR, the Thames – and the delays in delivery of routes. How long has it been so far? It is political and there are long-term investment issues.

There is a timetable for 2018.

For the economy, the legislation issues – things will happen, but it takes forever.

Question time, which the lead facilitator wanted recorded. Questions and comments only, as no answers given:

- 1 Whatever the mayor decides on, how does a strategy come into effect at borough level? There are the CLOCKS, developed by the industry and TfL, which is supported by about 400 freight operators and two boroughs: Camden and the City of London are signed up. Why, if it pushed for so many years, is it not welcomed by the boroughs when it has a reasonable price tag linked?

- 2 JM – Mineral Products Association.
I think one issue is it gives lip service to freight with major demands linked to developments for population growth. We have modal issues, threats to movements by

water and train, and freight doesn't seem to have any priority in the plan. It needs more recognition.

- 3 How important is it in the opportunity areas to keep local identity and diversity, which are often and increasingly lost? Should we value them and keep an eye on them?
- 4 On freight, it is possible that more construction freight will be brought in by rail, as about 40% of aggregate comes in by rail. TfL and the GLA could help with land use planning and direction in the plan to get local authorities to understand the road-to-rail sites that help other non-transferable freight. Land use planning policy doesn't cost a lot of money.
- 5 We focused on health, and one issue not picked up on much is inactivity. We need to get people more active, reduce vehicle dominance. We will have to think how to use streets more smartly. We need to get people to improve physical activity and we need to go down the healthy streets approach.
- 6 Simon Burke – Clean Air London
Consider externalities. On your timescales, the climate effects will overwhelm us, the heat island effects. Summer heat waves cause deaths, and there is the inevitability of obesity growing and its impact on access. Then there is flooding and tidal surges. So I think the strategy should be wider and not too internally focused.
- 7 Peter Everson
London is lucky to have a canal with no locks out through Park Royal. It is not used for freight or construction, and the transfer stations from land to water are being built out. Is there something we could save there?