

STRATEGIC TRANSPORT PLAN CONSULTATION SUMMARY

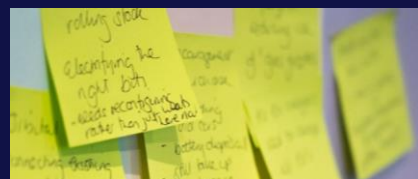
March 2024



TRANSPORT FOR THE
NORTH

Strategic Transport Plan

Draft for consultation
May 2023



Introduction

Established in 2018, our statutory role (as set out by Government) requires us to develop a Strategic Transport Plan (STP) that communicates pan-Northern priorities to the Secretary of State for Transport and explains how we will act as a statutory partner in delivery of infrastructure and services on behalf of the North's 21 local transport authorities (LTAs).

This is our second region-wide STP which sets out the transport priorities for our region up to 2050. Our work explicitly recognises that it is the whole 'door-to-door' journey that matters for people and goods. For our transport system to work efficiently and effectively, it is crucial that pan-Northern road and rail networks are well integrated with local roads and public transport, as well as walking and cycling networks.

In developing this plan, we have worked closely with local transport partners to help create a vision for a more integrated, healthy, and resilient overall transport system. We also work nationally with Government, other Sub-national Transport Bodies (STBs) and the devolved administrations to ensure that investment in pan-Northern transport enhances connectivity across the UK.

Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA) & Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA)

Alongside developing our plan, we commissioned independent consultants, Arup, to prepare an ISA and HRA. These documents form a core part of the development of this STP and were intended to provide a thorough assessment of the proposed objectives and policies for strategic transport in the region, as well as identifying any potential areas for improvement in sustainability performance.

The STP has been developed with these recommendations in mind and a full re-assessment was conducted on our final plan.



Consultation Process

To maximise engagement with as many people as possible, we used a multi-channel approach including:

- Posts on Transport for the North's social media channels – Facebook, Twitter & LinkedIn.
- Digital advertising through Google and Facebook.
- Media activity including press releases and radio interviews.
- Information and an online survey were made readily available via transportforthenorth.com.
- Virtual consultation room was set up (an equivalent of local meetings in town and village halls).
- Emails to key stakeholders.
- Written letters to all statutory consultees.
- Three face to face TfN workshops in Manchester, Leeds and Newcastle.
- A virtual workshop.
- An All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) briefing for MPs in Whitehall.



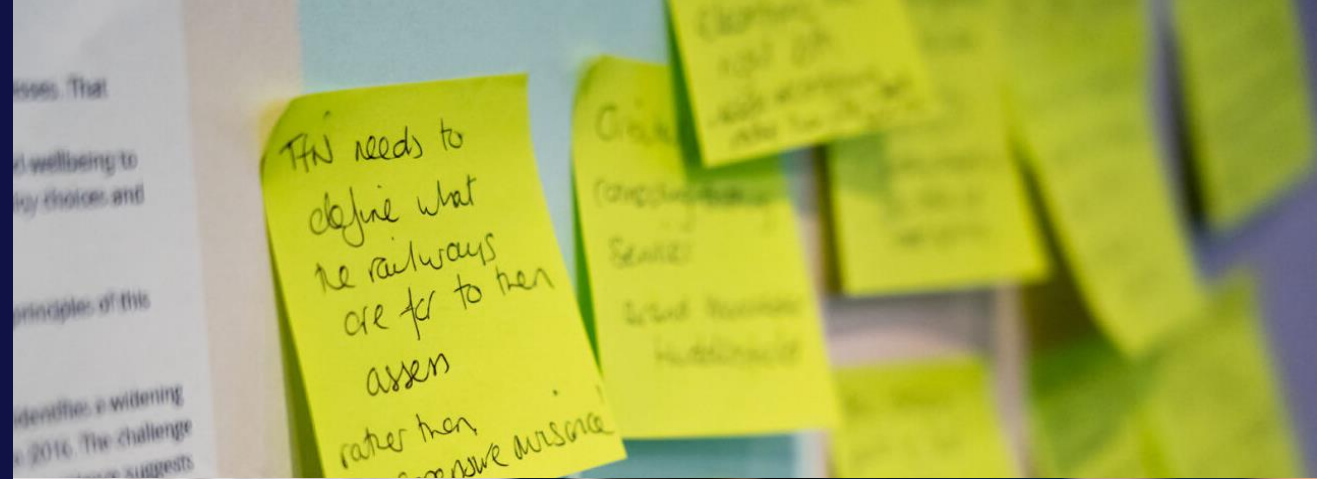
Consultation Process

We also worked with local authorities and a range of partners to ensure that messaging around the Plan and consultation were shared extensively. We wanted to ensure as far as possible that everyone's needs were considered by making both the STP and questionnaire available in various formats. This included providing large print and word versions of the consultation questions.

Recognising our aspiration to engage with members of the public we utilised TfN's own Northern Transport Voices platform, which is a panel of 550 citizens from across the North who engage with transport-related research via an online research platform.

TfN Officers attended 22 additional partner forums or meetings including:

- Business community meetings via chambers of commerce and local enterprise partnerships.
- Professional bodies such as Logistics UK, Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (CILT) & Chartered Institute of Highways and Transportation (CIHT).
- Bespoke roundtables with environmental and public health stakeholders.
- Various local transport authority committees and member briefings.



Consultation Response

In total we received **648** responses to the consultation. The volume and diversity of responses can be further broken down to:

- **99** members of the public responding to our online virtual consultation room, with **350** people viewing the room (only those providing a response have been counted towards the total).
- **144** attendees at the TfN led workshops, taking place in Manchester, Leeds, Newcastle and on-line.
- **220** individual responses to our Northern Transport Voices activities.
- **91** other written responses from members of the public, for example emails and letters.
- **9** MPs from the region attending an All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) session in Whitehall, and we wrote to more than **150** MPs across the North.
- **31** responses from statutory consultees.
- **54** responses from other groups such as charities and user groups.

We're grateful for all feedback received. All responses have been considered as we have updated our Strategic Transport Plan for the North, representing a shared vision of what we collectively as the North want for our transport system and the outcomes we want to achieve.



You said, we did: Strategic Transport Plan Vision

A more ambitious vision: timeframe of delivery of the strategy is "too long into the future" & requires more explicit reference to affordability and mode shift

A long-term plan up to 2050 is important to ensure we are clearly articulating strategic transport priorities across government funding cycles. Our plan includes several key 2030 interim milestones which articulate where the North would need to be in the short – medium term, to be considered on track to delivering the vision. The vision wording has been strengthened to include reference to affordability and mode shift.

Greater clarity needed: more information needed on how the vision would be realised & relationship between the vision and the interventions was "tenuous"

Through this STP we adopt a decide and provide approach, with the vision and strategic ambitions articulating the collective ambition for the North of England and subsequent chapters of the plan setting out what will be needed as a minimum in terms of transport infrastructure to deliver on this. Further work to test this through analytical modelling will be completed over the next year as part of our work to revisit our Future Travel Scenarios and update our Decarbonisation Strategy, and we expect to develop advice on implementation of the STP, in line with the details provided in Chapter Six of the Plan.



You said, we did: Strategic Ambitions & The Case for Change

Consider three strategic ambitions together and not in conflict

Our plan will present all three strategic ambitions as equal priorities.

Greater focus on environment, sustainability and biodiversity and recognise economy should be in service to society and the environment

We have added more specific references to cover these points, which we also expected to be captured within our Monitoring & Evaluation framework.

Ensure equal distribution of benefits within and between sub-regions of the north's geography

We have added more specific reference to the importance of this point.

Concern the STP's modelled Future Travel Scenarios fail to meet TfN's Decarbonisation Targets

None of TfN's Future Travel Scenarios are intended to represent, or achieve, the visions and objectives set out within TfN's Decarbonisation Strategy or the STP. They instead allow us to consider future uncertainty as they represent four plausible but quite different futures, enabling us to test the resilience and effectiveness of the policies that can help achieve our vision and ambitions. Text has been added to the Executive Summary and within the Plan to further clarify the role of TfN's Future Travel Scenarios.

Personas are useful within the case for change but simplify people's actual experience

We have removed the personas from the STP, instead including these (and the detail behind them) within the People and Place framework which will be published alongside the STP.



You said, we did: Our Road Network

Discourage car usage and support cohesive spatial planning vs importance of roads such as in rural areas

We recognise the need to support sustainable economic growth and promote efficient journeys across transport modes. We are adopting an outcome focused, evidenced based approach to the development of recommendations on where transport investment is needed. This will be detailed in the STP implementation work, which will follow, after the Plan is adopted.

Maintenance & resilience of existing assets

The STP text already stresses the importance of maintaining and renewing existing highway assets.

Support road investment and include further detail on the benefits of roads

This STP and TfN's Decarbonisation Strategy already highlight the essential need for a complementary package of measures to achieve close to zero carbon emissions from surface transport by 2045. In addition, the Major Roads Report (2021) sets out need for investment in the Strategic and Major Road Networks and identifies schemes in development within the Road Investment Strategy pipeline. TfN has provided recommendations to DfT and National Highways on where there is a need for interventions on the strategic and major road networks.

Over-reliance on electric vehicles

We have added further text on alternative fuels and new technologies including hydrogen to Chapter Five to make this more balanced.

Active travel investment and road reallocation to support that should be a priority above new capacity

New text on the affordability of transport has been included, in addition to a further action within our framework in Chapter Six. We have also strengthened the text on active travel as part of local connectivity, as well as including a specific point in Chapter Five on integrated travel facilities, including park & ride and intermodal freight.



You said, we did: Strategic Rail & Freight

Advocacy of specific rail interventions or priorities and consider smaller scale schemes alongside strategic priorities

As agreed with TfN Board the rail elements of this plan need to focus on the agreed pan-northern strategic priorities. Some schemes are included in the STP as examples, but it is not designed to include an exhaustive list of specific projects. Further detail on specific schemes sits within TfN's Strategic Rail Report and will be captured, as appropriate, in the STP implementation work to follow.

Greater focus on passenger experience and utilisation of existing rail services is needed (reliability, affordability, accessibility, route coverage)

These themes are all captured within our requirements for rail. Further text has also been added to better articulate the need for affordable rail travel.

Integration of modes and ticketing, as well as the absence of light rail and metro systems

We have added additional text within the case for change and within our chapter on local connectivity to address these comments.

Stronger case for freight is needed

Additional text has been added across the Plan to address these comments and better embed our position on freight across all modes.

Greater use of rail freight

We have increased our ambition for mode shift to rail freight for the North; treble rail's share of freight carried to 25.5% by 2050 (as tonne km).

Decarbonisation of freight vehicles and routes needed

In collaboration with gas distribution network operators, TfN is progressing work to understand potential hydrogen refuelling demand in the North from heavy duty transport e.g. HGVs. Our Electric Vehicle Charging Framework also includes freight flows within the generated demand, contributing to the siting of on-route charging locations. For both workstreams, we continue to look at how further development of these tools can help both freight operating companies and refuelling/recharging infrastructure providers and is now referenced within our chapter on freight.

Strengthen the case for greater use of waterways and multi modal freight hubs

We have revised text throughout the Plan to reflect this feedback, including strengthening our desire for more Strategic Rail Freight Interchanges (SRFI).

You said, we did: International Connectivity

We should not recommend catering for growth at Northern airports, as this will inevitably result in increased carbon emissions and conflicts recent evidence published which shows only London has a net Gross Value Added (GVA) benefit from international connectivity. In opposition to the above view, other respondents felt we needed to strengthen our focus on the economic opportunities of airports and ports.

We have carefully reviewed the text around aviation within the STP and amended it to reflect a balance between these differing opinions between a range of stakeholders and recently published evidence.

TfN's Board has been clear that they want us to promote the opportunities of airports and ports as key northern economic assets. However, this promotion and any enhancement of the North's airport infrastructure needs to be accommodated within TfN's recommendations in relation to aviation decarbonisation, found within our agreed policy position on International Connectivity. These recommendations go further than current national policy and align TfN with the Committee for Climate Change's (CCC) 6th carbon budget, namely promoting a net national cap on aviation demand growth fixed at 25% by 2050, and a moratorium on runway expansion until the risk associated with not achieving all the carbon reductions apportioned by UK Government to technology focused measures is significantly reduced.

Further text has been added to our international connectivity chapter to recognise the need for the rapid development of a national capacity-management framework which further aligns the STP with the recommendations made within the CCC's 2023 Progress Report to Parliament. We also recognise that the evidence base around aviation is evolving, and as new research emerges, we will work with our partners to consider the implications of that on our position as required.



You said, we did: Local Connectivity

Improvements to public transport and deliver integrated transport networks including frequency, reliability, affordability, accessibility

We have strengthened text across the Plan to address these comments and reaffirm the importance of delivering integrated transport networks for the North.

Community transport, demand responsive transport and taxis recognised as key components for enabling wider connectivity were overlooked, particularly supporting rural areas and transport deprived communities

We have added further text within the local connectivity chapter and within the People & Place framework.

The importance of buses and coaches

Additional text on this has been added, as well as an action for further work by TfN in our Action Plan. Consequently, we are currently working with our partners to develop an evidence base and statutory advice on buses and coaches.

More emphasis needed on multi modal hubs within transport planning

Additional text has been added within the local connectivity chapter.

Transport integration across the transport system, including modes, fares and timetables

We have added text on our connected mobility strategy, and we have added a further action to our Action Plan.

Considering active travel at a Northern level would enable TfN to advocate funding for active travel infrastructure in rural areas as well as urban areas, also recognising that uptake will be place based

Additional text on our role on active travel has been added, including a commitment to examine the potential for strategic active travel corridors, including those enabled by e-bikes and micro-mobility technologies. Our role also includes advocating and evidencing the level of investment required across the North.

Consider affordability of public transport

Additional text has been added across the Plan and we have added a further action to our Action Plan.

Importance of mode shift and behavioural change

This was already implicit within the STP, but we have strengthened this point further throughout the document.



You said, we did: A place-based approach

To ensure we effectively engage communities within our consultation, we utilised TfN's Northern Transport Voices; made up of 550 residents of the North. The panel identified our place-based approach missed detail on "how" our policy narratives will be delivered, showed a lack of consideration for vulnerable groups and some respondents did not fully identify with the place policy. Respondents also felt the oversimplified framework should be strengthened to be more north-specific, with further consideration given to understand the unique challenges of rural areas.

The People & Place framework has been developed to convey that the North has a diverse geography made up of different types of places each of which face their own transport challenges. These are evidence based, derived by combining place types from an EU framework and ONS OAC classification. However, it remains vital to TfN partners that the framework still provided enough flexibility to enable decisions at a local level and therefore do not reference Northern specific examples. As such it is not appropriate for TfN to state exactly how interventions will be delivered, this will be considered by local transport authorities and their local transport plans.

We have included some additional text within the People & Place framework, taking evidence from our Transport Related Social Exclusion work to draw out the potential implications on vulnerable user groups. We are also exploring how we can better engage with community groups in our work moving forward and have initiated discussions with the community transport association.

Within our People & Place framework we have included three rural typologies. In addition to this we have also revised text in the STP to further reflect rural mobility.



You said, we did: Action & Impact Framework

Show greater ambition and bring target dates sooner within the Action & Impact framework

TfN Board agreed to amend several of the headline metrics for the plan to raise the level of ambition. These include representing the right share metrics as 51% sustainable vs 49% private car mode, trebling the share of rail freight by 2050 to 25.5% as tonne km and accelerating our aspirations for vision zero road safety from 2050 to 2040

Questioning how TfN's metrics and ambitions will be delivered based on their influence and ability to invest, and the need to provide a detailed action and implementation plan with reference to prioritisation and delivery

The STP is a strategic transport plan for the North, as such it will require action from a range of partners to deliver our collective vision, strategic ambition and outcomes – including TfN. Further detail on the metrics and data sets are included in our Monitoring & Evaluation Strategy. We are also planning to undertake work on implementation which will set out more detail on prioritisation of the required investments needed in the short – medium term to deliver the plan.

Respondents wanted to see more control of funding and longer, more sustainable pots of funding to support the delivery of outcomes

The STP advocates strongly for this and once adopted, we plan to develop further advice to government, working with our partners.



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