



Department
for Transport

Government Response to the Transport Select Committee Report on the Draft National Networks National Policy Statement

Presented to Parliament pursuant to Section 9(5) of the
Planning Act 2008

December 2014



Government Response to the Transport Select Committee Report on the Draft National Networks National Policy Statement

Presented to Parliament
by the Secretary of State for Transport
by Command of Her Majesty

December 2014



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Introduction

The Department for Transport is pleased to have the opportunity to respond to the conclusions and recommendations of the Transport Select Committee's report into the National Policy Statement on National Networks. The Department welcomes this report and the Committee's continuing contribution to the development of our transport networks.

National Policy Statements

- 1.** National Policy Statements (NPSs) were established under the Planning Act 2008. By setting out a clear statement of national policy in one place they are intended to provide greater clarity and certainty on Government policy for scheme promoters, the planning inspectorate (PINS), decision makers and other interested parties.
- 2.** NPSs have a special status under the Planning Act and go through an extensive process of consultation and parliamentary scrutiny which means that after designation, the overarching national policies and approach to need should not be reopened for debate at public inquiries held in relation to individual developments. This means that NPSs have the potential to speed up the process for receiving development consent for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects; and reduce the risk of legal challenge through the development consent process.
- 3.** To ensure increased democratic accountability, the Government decided that draft NPSs should be laid before Parliament for scrutiny before they can be formally designated. Designation of a proposed NPS can only take place after it is laid before Parliament, and the statement is either formally approved by resolution of the House of Commons within 21 sitting days, or a period of 21 sitting days expires without the House of Commons resolving against it.

National Networks National Policy Statement

- 4.** The Department for Transport published the draft National Networks National Policy Statement (NN NPS) and supporting Appraisal of Sustainability and Habitats Assessment for consultation on 4 December 2013.
- 5.** The NN NPS is a technical planning policy statement setting out the need for development of the national networks and the policy against which the Secretary of State for Transport will make decisions on applications for nationally significant infrastructure projects on the road and rail networks in England.

6. The thresholds for nationally significant road, rail and strategic rail freight projects are defined in the Planning Act 2008 as amended by The Highway and Railway (Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project) Order 2013. These developments are referred to as national road, rail and strategic rail freight interchange (SRFI) developments in this document.
7. The NN NPS does not cover High Speed Two (HS2) as this will obtain the necessary legal powers through a Hybrid Bill process. The NN NPS sets out the Government's policy for development of the road and rail networks and strategic rail freight interchanges, taking into account the capacity and connectivity that will be delivered through HS2.
8. Once designated, the NN NPS will remain in force unless withdrawn or suspended in whole or in part by the Secretary of State for Transport.

Purpose of this document

9. As part of the parliamentary scrutiny of the NN NPS, the Transport Select Committee held an inquiry into the NN NPS which called for written evidence, held a series of oral evidence sessions and published a report with recommendations. The House of Lords held a debate on the NN NPS and no resolutions against the NPS were made. This document details how the Government has taken into account the recommendations made by the Transport Select Committee and how the Department has responded to the key points raised in the House of Lords debate.

Public consultation

10. On 4 December 2013 the Department for Transport published the draft NN NPS for consultation. The consultation closed on 26 February 2014. The Department received 5,800 responses to the consultation. Of those, 5,500 were sent via campaigns run by two environmental groups. Of the remaining 300 responses, 140 were received from organisations and 160 from individuals. The Government has published a response to the public consultation alongside this document.

Transport Select Committee Inquiry

11. As part of the parliamentary scrutiny process of the NN NPS the Transport Select Committee asked for written evidence to be submitted by 26 February 2014. They received 41 submissions from 38 organisations and 3 individuals, including the Department for Transport, planning consultants, environmental and transport NGOs. The written submissions mirrored the consultation responses. The Transport Select Committee held an oral evidence session on 31 March 2014¹ where evidence was taken from a range of organisations including the

¹ <http://data.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/committeeevidence.svc/evidencedocument/transport-committee/draft-national-policy-statement-on-national-networks/oral/8288.html>

Department for Transport, rail industry groups, planning consultants and environmental NGOs.

12. The Transport Select Committee report was published on 7 May 2014². The Committee was broadly supportive of the NN NPS, and did not consider that it needed substantial revision, but made 11 recommendations which are addressed in this document.
13. On the same day, the Committee also published a report into the reform of the Highways Agency: *Better roads: Improving England's Strategic Road Network*³. The Government has already responded to that report.

House of Lords and House of Commons scrutiny

14. As part of the scrutiny into the draft NN NPS, a debate took place in the House of Lords on 8 May 2014. The debate was wide-ranging and the consensus reached was that the NPS was an important document and was to be welcomed. Key points raised during the debate were calls for:
 - More granularity in Strategic Rail Freight Interchanges needs case, highlighting the regional need in policy guidance.
 - Linking the NN NPS more closely to Network Rail's Freight Market Study and successor documents.
 - Consideration to be given to the robustness of traffic forecasts;
 - Better integration across transport modes;
 - Roads policy – concern that there appears to be a return to "predict and provide" and that alternatives to road schemes such as trains and buses should be evaluated as well as the use of demand management; and
 - Protections for National Parks to be considered.
15. In addition to these points, there were a number of issues that were outside the scope of the NN NPS, including consultation issues around the proposed Sizewell C nuclear plant and public transport fare concessions. There were a number of technical points which the Minister of State, Baroness Kramer, addressed in follow-up letters to those concerned.
16. The Transport Select Committee recommended that the House of Commons hold a debate on the NN NPS.

² <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmselect/cmtran/1135/113502.htm>

³ <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmselect/cmtran/850/850.pdf>

Government Response to Transport Select Committee's recommendations

Recommendation 1: Identify, more specifically, the types of schemes Government thinks are needed

Transport Select Committee recommendation

We recommend that the NPS specify other types of schemes [other than strategic rail freight interchanges] which the Government thinks are needed, such as enhancements to the rail network to promote east-west connectivity and better road and rail connections to ports and airports and to parts of the country which are currently not well served by those networks. In particular, schemes to promote regional economic development should be specified.

Government response

- 1.1** The Government understands the desire for spatial specificity in the NN NPS. In revising the NN NPS we have considered how best to provide additional spatial clarity.
- 1.2** The overall statement of need in the NPS identifies the key drivers for development across the national road and rail networks. There is a need to relieve congestion and crowding on the networks, to improve journey times and reliability and improve the quality of end-to-end journeys.
- 1.3** Transport can be a constraint on sustainable economic growth and quality of life if links are congested or unreliable; for example if people, goods and freight cannot readily reach destinations and markets, or if the cost of transport is too high. It is also vital that the national networks are integrated with international networks so that they provide connectivity to international destinations.
- 1.4** In light of the consultation responses, and the Transport Select Committee's recommendations, these drivers of need have been clarified to better identify the integration between national road and rail networks and airports and ports. We have also highlighted how the development of national networks supports local economic growth.
- 1.5** In addition, we have included general principles on what will drive the location of road and rail developments; for example, population and economic activity and existing networks. We have included some additional explanation on where there are likely to be congestion

pressures on the Strategic Road Network and explained the stress maps annexed in the NPS. On the rail side, the draft NPS already contained information on pressures across different sectors, including the policy priorities for addressing these.

- 1.6** With regard to strategic rail freight interchanges, we have provided additional policy context around regional pressures in line with the existing strategic rail freight interchange 2011 guidance (which will be cancelled on designation of the NPS).
- 1.7** Finally, it should be noted that the NN NPS is not intended to set out an overarching transport strategy. Instead it needs to be seen alongside other policy documents that together set out the Government's transport strategy. Consideration of location and mode needs to happen through the investment planning process after analysis of transport problems and options. The Rail Investment Strategy and the Road Investment Strategy provide more detail around the Government's investment plans.

Recommendation 2: Explicitly address criticisms of forecasts

Transport Select Committee recommendation

The NPS should more explicitly address criticisms [of its road and rail demand forecasts], in order to minimise opportunities for planning inquiries to become fora for fresh debate about the forecasts.

Government response

- 2.1** The Government is aware of the criticisms of its traffic forecasts. However, we consider they provide a sound basis for informing decisions alongside local traffic models.
- 2.2** That said, inherent uncertainty in forecasting remains, which is why the Department uses a range of scenarios when making decisions. In its latest forecasts, outlined in the NPS, the Department presents the impact of a range of scenarios of the key drivers on the forecasts, such as income, fuel prices and the number of trips people make. Even our lowest forecast for traffic growth suggests a substantial increase in traffic levels on the Strategic Road Network over the next 25 years.

Traffic forecasts

- 2.3** In light of consultation responses we have clarified the role of national traffic forecasts in the context of planning inquiries for individual schemes. The driver of the need for development is to deal with specific and real transport problems, for example, congestion, rather than meeting unconstrained traffic growth. We have restructured the NPS to make the point more clearly. We have also clarified that local models will be used for individual schemes and that appropriate sensitivity testing needs to happen to consider the impact of uncertainties. We have also clarified the role of national modelling and forecasting in contributing to these local models. The NPS is now very clear that national traffic forecasts are not a policy goal and will be updated as circumstances change and understanding improves.
- 2.4** The revised NPS includes updated forecasts for 2014. This shows traffic growth on the Strategic Road Network in a range of 27% to 57% on the Strategic Road Network and 17% to 55% on all roads in England.
- 2.5** Even under our lowest forecasts, growth on the Strategic Road Network (and therefore pressure on the networks) is significant. We recognise that forecasts of traffic levels may go up or down over time.
- 2.6** The Department is continuously looking to improve its forecasts. We are listening to the arguments and assessing latest trends in trip rates and traffic, and considering what developments to make to our forecasts, including further improving our understanding of the impact of uncertainty.

- 2.7** In finalising the NPS we have clarified that the forecasts can go up or down and change as our understanding improves and circumstances change. We have also clarified our expectations around the use of local traffic models to understand local impacts.

Rail forecasts

- 2.8** For rail we have clarified the expectation that local models will be used for individual schemes, the need for appropriate sensitivity testing on those models and the role of national forecasts in the planning process.
- 2.9** Whilst the rail industry's forecasts for rail passenger growth were broadly within the range set out in the draft NPS, the rail industry had much higher forecasts for the regions. Following discussions with Network Rail, HS2 Ltd and the Rail Delivery Group we have updated the rail forecasts and these are included in the final NPS.
- 2.10** As with all forecasts, they will tend to change from the current best estimate as and when new assumptions or methodologies are used. The revised figures still differ as the Department's forecasts do not reflect some of the specific regional pressures; they are only intended to be a broad aggregation at the relevant rail sector level. The forecasts are strategic and will mask differences that we see on the network at specific locations or specific times of day. Individual schemes will have local (and therefore, more detailed) models and will use geographically more specific (or accurate) forecasts.

Continuous review

- 2.11** The Department has been working with the wider rail industry to jointly pursue research to improve forecasting methodology and quality assurance. Separately the Department has also been undertaking work on understanding model uncertainty and behavioural responses to changes in demand drivers (summarised by rail demand elasticities) and has an ongoing programme of model updating and review.
- 2.12** In terms of roads, the Department has made detailed model outputs available to certain academics and research institutes (such as Imperial College, the Independent Transport Commission and the RAC Foundation) and we intend to continue to engage positively with stakeholders as part of our effort to develop and improve our analysis.
- 2.13** However, as the various models that comprise the National Transport Model are subject to a range of licensing restrictions, it has not been possible for us to share the model more widely. Moreover, given the significant size and complexity of the series of interlocking models that make up the National Transport Model it would represent a serious challenge to other users to enable them to understand and utilise the model effectively. However, the Department is considering a new version of the model which will not have the same restrictions or challenges.

2.14 The Department intends to continue engaging with external stakeholders to provide clarity on how the National Transport Model works and ensure it reflects latest evidence. In September the Department held an event involving stakeholders in a discussion of the National Transport Model, the current issues with forecasting traffic demand and priorities for future research and evidence gathering. The Department is in the process of forming a panel of experts to provide advice on modelling and appraisal issues. This will be used to offer wider scrutiny on the National Transport Model, to ensure it remains fit for purpose as a high-level strategic model.

Recommendation 3: Estimate of carbon emissions of increase in road traffic

Transport Select Committee recommendation

We recommend that the NPS include an estimate of the impact on UK carbon emissions of meeting projected demand for growth in road traffic by building more road infrastructure.

The Government Response

- 3.1** The Government is committed to lowering carbon emissions. Transport will play an important part in meeting the Government's legally binding carbon targets. As part of this there is a need to shift to greener technologies and fuels, and to promote lower carbon transport choices. Over the next decade, the biggest reduction in emissions from domestic transport is likely to come from efficiency improvements in conventional vehicles, specifically cars and vans, driven primarily by EU targets for new vehicle CO₂ performance. Electrification of the railway will also support reductions in carbon.
- 3.2** As explained in the draft NPS, the impact of road development on aggregate levels of carbon emissions is likely to be small. Analysis undertaken of the Road Investment Strategy indicates that the annual CO₂ impacts from delivering the programme of investment on the Strategic Road Network over the next 5 years would amount to a rise of 0.1% in annual carbon emissions during the fourth carbon budget.
- 3.3** Previous modelling of a road infrastructure investment scenario of the scale envisaged in the NPS over a longer 10 to 15 year period suggests that the increase in carbon emissions from road traffic might be 0.4% higher in 2040, under the central scenario, compared to if there was no new investment.
- 3.4** Investment in roads is not an outdated approach of predicting and providing for all future traffic growth, irrespective of cost and environmental and social impacts. The NPS very clearly rules this out. It is about sensible and sustainable development, where there is a strong justification, based on a rigorous consideration of all the costs and all the benefits.

Recommendation 4: Assess how road and rail demand forecasts could be affected by new technologies

Transport Select Committee recommendation

We recommend that the NPS include an assessment of how road and rail demand forecasts could be affected by new technologies and require scheme promoters to show how they will use new technologies to maximise the capacity of the infrastructure they wish to build.

The Government Response

- 4.1** The Government recognises that technology and innovation can play an important role in improving transport networks whether by delivering increases in capacity, improving reliability or providing better services to customers. Examples of new technologies being used in our transport system include variable messaging signs on roads, smart motorways and lighter, more energy-efficient train designs. In recent years advances in mobile IT, teleconferencing, email, the internet and social media have occurred alongside growth in travel demand and on the road and rail networks. That said, there is no current evidence to suggest that technology will substantially alter the needs case set out in the NPS. However, if over the coming years, technological advances materially affect our underlying assumptions on transport growth, then the NPS could be revisited and revised if considered necessary.
- 4.2** In bringing forward schemes, promoters are expected to undertake appropriate sensitivity testing to reflect inherent uncertainties. The objective of this is to ensure that the case for the scheme is robust for a range of eventualities.
- 4.3** The NPS now provides an expectation that scheme promoters should consider the use of new technology in design of infrastructure.

Recommendation 5: Describe the adverse impacts of major transport schemes on localities

Transport Select Committee recommendation

The NPS should be more candid about the adverse impacts of major transport schemes on localities and provide clearer guidance about when the benefits arising from a scheme justify such impacts.

The Government Response

- 5.1** We certainly recognise that some transport schemes could have adverse local impacts and some good guidance is already available on this for planning and appraisal purposes.
- 5.2** The NPS requires a consideration of whether proposals strike the right balance between national need and local needs, including considering whether any further mitigation is needed. The NPS is clear that if the adverse impacts are greater than the benefits, or if the development fails certain planning tests, then development consent must be refused.
- 5.3** We have added some text to the NPS to highlight that there is a presumption against road widening or new roads in National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). We have also supplemented the NPS to recognise the special protection and very special circumstances that would need to exist to justify any development on the Green Belt - although this does not change established Green Belt policy.
- 5.4** It is very important that there is sufficient flexibility and discretion to enable local circumstances to be taken into account in decision-making. This issue was raised by some of those who responded to the public consultation. We have included text in the final NPS to specifically acknowledge that whilst the Government expects scheme promoters to deliver projects in an environmentally sensitive way, and to deliver environmental benefits where it is possible to do so, it may not always be possible to entirely eliminate all the adverse effects of development.

Recommendation 6: Provide more clarity for promoters on the interpretation of EU requirements for alternatives to schemes

Transport Select Committee recommendation

The NPS must give scheme promoters clarity about how they should interpret EU requirements for alternatives to schemes to be appraised as part of the planning process. The Government should consider what further steps it might need to take to establish the primacy of the NPS, including, if necessary, legislation.

The Government Response

- 6.1** At an individual scheme level, the NPS requires scheme promoters to consider alternatives in line with legal obligations, for example under the Habitats and Environmental Impact Assessment Directives. Existing Government planning guidance already includes advice on the consideration of alternatives under these Directives. It is not the role of the NPS to change European law.
- 6.2** The NPS now makes it clear that proportionate option consideration of alternatives should take place as part of the appraisal process before the scheme is submitted.
- 6.3** It should also be noted that the primacy of the NPS is already established by section 104 of the Planning Act 2008; the NPS makes reference to this requirement and no further steps to establish the primacy of the NPS are therefore necessary.
- 6.4** Under section 104 of the Planning Act the Secretary of State must decide an application for a national networks nationally significant infrastructure project in accordance with this NPS, unless the Secretary of State is satisfied that to do so would:
- lead to the UK being in breach of its international obligations;
 - be unlawful;
 - lead to the Secretary of State being in breach of any duty imposed by or under any legislation;
 - result in adverse impacts of the development outweighing its benefits;
 - be contrary to legislation about how the decisions are to be taken.

Recommendation 7: Address funding requirements for investment, including charging

Transport Select Committee recommendation

Investment in the road network will require new funding streams. This is a challenge that must be addressed. However, a consensus would be required to introduce any road user charging scheme across the Strategic Road Network as an alternative to road taxation, and the many issues involved would have to be resolved.

The Government Response

- 7.1** As outlined in the response to the TSC report on Better Roads, the Government agrees that there is a strong case for significant investment in road infrastructure in future years, and that is why the Government plans to invest £24 billion into strategic roads in this and the next Parliament.
- 7.2** This investment is essential to address historic under-investment and existing problems on the network and to support growth, jobs and an internationally competitive UK economy. Supported by reforms to tackle historic problems of short-term decision making and uncertainty in funding, and strengthen deliver and accountability, this investment will deliver a Strategic Road Network befitting a modern, vibrant and progressive country and economy, which gives road users the best possible quality of service and supports broader economic, environmental and safety goals.
- 7.3** Decisions about future taxation are matters for HM Treasury. The Government has been clear it does not currently see a case for national road pricing or tolling on existing capacity, although this may be considered as a means of funding new road capacity on the Strategic Road Network. This would include entirely new roads and existing roads where they are transformed by an improvement scheme. River and estuarial crossings, however, will normally be funded by tolls or road user charges.
- 7.4** The NPS is a technical planning policy statement and it does not consider funding streams for the road network.

Recommendation 8: Include provisions for scheme promoters to assess and manage the impacts on local networks

Transport Select Committee recommendation

We recommend that the NPS include specific provision for scheme promoters to assess and manage the impacts of developments to national networks on local networks.

The Government Response

- 8.1** We recognise that integration between transport networks is important. The text on transport impacts has been revised to ensure that the impacts on local and national transport networks are assessed (as part of the appraisal process) and mitigated through the planning process.
- 8.2** The NPS is clear that scheme promoters are expected to collaborate closely with other network providers from an early stage. This collaboration should enable scheme promoters to determine likely impacts early on and to identify potential mitigation measures.
- 8.3** It has also been made explicit in the revised NPS that applicants must have regard to the objectives of relevant local plans. Finally, we have introduced an expectation that applicants consider reasonable opportunities to support other transport modes in developing infrastructure.

Recommendation 9: Reference the desirability to Connect HS2 to the classic rail network

Transport Select Committee recommendation

We recommend that the NPS make explicit reference to the desirability of connecting HS2 to the classic rail network, so that people from around the UK can benefit from the new high speed rail line.

The Government Response

- 9.1** As in our response to question 1, it would not be appropriate for a strategic level planning statement to identify particular schemes or prioritise particular transport corridors
- 9.2** On 27 October, Sir David Higgins made recommendations about connectivity in the Midlands and the North of England. His view is that the key to improving this is to integrate decision-making on HS2 with Network Rail's decision-making for improvements to the existing network during control period 6 (2019 to 2024). The Government gave its backing to develop an HS3 scheme (an improved east-west rail link connecting the North's great cities) and also welcomed Sir David's recommendation that co-operation on transport issues should be formalised in the North.
- 9.3** The Government announced the creation of 'Transport for the North', a body to work together with other authorities and stakeholders, that allows the North to speak with one voice and take the big decisions to benefit the region as a whole. The Government, working with Transport for the North, will now produce a comprehensive transport strategy for the North that will include options, costs and a delivery timetable for an HS3 east-west rail connection. An interim report will be produced in March 2015, and will include an update on HS3 development, as well as details of how further scheme development (for all the priority issues) is to be taken forward.

Recommendation 10: The NPS should specifically require promoters of road schemes to look to improve road safety

Transport Select Committee recommendation

We recommend that section three of the NPS should specifically require promoters of roads schemes to look to improve road safety, analogous to the requirement on rail scheme promoters in paragraph 3.10 of the draft.

The Government Response

- 10.1** The Government is committed to improving road safety, and it should be a key objective for schemes coming forward.
- 10.2** Guidance on road safety is already included in Chapter 4 of the draft NPS. This includes an expectation that scheme promoters take opportunities to improve road safety, including introducing the most modern and effective safety measures where appropriate. In light of the Transport Select Committee's recommendations, this requirement has also been reflected in the text on road safety in Chapter 3 of the revised NPS.
- 10.3** In the Road Investment Strategy we have articulated our ultimate, long term aspiration for road safety on the Strategic Road Network: nobody should be killed or seriously injured as a result of incidents on the network. We have set the Strategic Highways Company a challenging target of supporting a 40% reduction in the number of those killed or seriously injured on the network, by 2020.⁴

⁴ Against the 2005-09 baseline as set out in the Strategic Framework for Road Safety 2011
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/8146/strategicframework.pdf

Recommendation 11: Integrate planning for passenger and freight transport by route or region, rather than look at each mode individually.

Transport Select Committee recommendation

(Repeats recommendation from TSC report into Better Roads). The Government must demonstrate an integrated transport approach in developing and assessing improvements to strategic routes. It must always consider how road and rail improvements for passengers and freight can play a role together in solving problems on the SRN and its feeder roads. This should be alongside the trial of simple measures such as ride-sharing and off-peak deliveries to reduce congestion on parts of the SRN most used for local journeys.

The Government Response

- 11.1** Roads and railways are always going to be critical parts of the transport network, and we need to make sure they function well. The Government has already committed to transformational and complementary investments in road and rail that will deliver significant benefits for individuals and businesses, including freight.
- 11.2** We are investing £24 billion in strategic roads between 2010 and 2021, putting billions of pounds into the railways and pushing ahead with High Speed 2.
- 11.3** Our roads investment programme is a balanced package. It includes funding for major schemes; a significant uplift in maintenance, and continued roll out of 'smart motorways'. It also includes significant investment in environmental and cycling improvements. Building on the £500m support for ultra-low emission vehicles already announced, the Roads Investment Strategy includes a £300m fund to support environmental improvements, £100m to tackle air quality issues and around £100 million on cycling improvements on strategic roads. In addition, the Highways Agency has commenced work to provide improved training for all highways engineers to design roads that are safe and easy for cyclists to use, and will aim to cycle-proof any new schemes as standard.
- 11.4** The Government has more than doubled funding for cycling to £374 million in 2011-15, or £622m with match funding. Spend on cycling is now around £5 per person each year across England, and over £10 per person each year in London and in our eight cycling ambition cities: Birmingham, Leeds, Manchester, Bristol, Newcastle, Norwich, Oxford and Cambridge.
- 11.5** On 27 November 2014, the Deputy Prime Minister announced a further £114m to support cycling in some of England's major cities. This funding, to be spent over the forthcoming three financial years, is in addition to existing funding that is already available for cycling, such as the Local Growth Fund.

- 11.6** We are investing almost £4 billion between 2011 and 2015 on maintenance of the local road network. We are also investing more widely at a local level. In July 2014 we announced, as part of the Local Growth Fund, the largest local transport funding announcement for over a decade - around £3 billion of Government funding for new local transport schemes in total - with £1.5 billion for new local road schemes, including congestion pinch points, roads to facilitate new development and employment sites, and new bypasses.
- 11.7** This is in addition to the £600 million of previously allocated funding to major local transport schemes, such as the Norwich Northern Distributor Route, which will now be supported through the Local Growth Fund.
- 11.8** We recognise that getting the most out of this investment means making the whole system work as well as it can. However, we need to be pragmatic about the best way of integrating transport planning and decision-making on investment and delivery. 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 multimodal 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.
- 11.9** We also need to be pragmatic about the extent to which different modes can provide genuine sensible and proportionate alternatives to solving specific transport problems. The best solutions may depend on the local circumstances, including the locations of existing transport networks and the extent to which journeys can switch between modes. There are instances where individual projects have demonstrated the potential for effective integration between national and local transport networks where decisions are taken in a joined-up way. For example, new improvements to the A453 will connect directly to park and ride facilities on the Nottingham Express Transit extension.
- 11.10** High speed rail would offer the opportunity for a shift to rail from air and road, by delivering improved connectivity between major conurbations and economic centres through improved journey times and reliability that upgrades to the conventional rail network could not match. Transferring many inter-city services to a high speed railway would also release capacity on the conventional network, increasing opportunities for additional commuter, regional and freight services.
- 11.11** We have added some text to the final NPS to outline that a proportionate options assessment of alternative transport modes should take place as part of the appraisal process. This should not need to be considered again at the planning inquiry, although evidence that this assessment has taken place should be available.
- 11.12** Route strategies will provide scope for a more holistic approach, bringing together all the different interested groups – local authorities, LEPs, motorists' organisations, environmental groups and others – to explore the current and future challenges and opportunities for each route on the Strategic Road Network.

11.13 In August 2013, the Department published *Transport - an engine for growth*, which set out our strategic approach to making the most of this investment in our transport network. This aimed to make it easier for transport planners to join up more effectively, with particular emphasis on the need to work closely with our partners to ensure our plans are understood and that opportunities are fully realised.

Annex A - list of people who gave evidence at the Transport Select Committee oral hearing

- Robert Goodwill MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Transport
- John Dowie, Director of Strategic Roads and Smart Ticketing, Department for Transport
- Paul Plummer, Group Strategy Director, Network Rail on behalf of the Rail Delivery Group
- Maggie Simpson, Executive Director, Rail Freight Group
- Richard Ballantyne, Senior Policy Adviser, British Ports Association
- Martin Heffer, Technical Director, Rail Transit and Aviation, Parsons Brinckerhoff
- John Rhodes, Director, Quod
- Andrew Shaw, Planning Officers Society
- Jeremy Evans, member of the Transport Policy Panel, Institution of Engineering and Technology
- Naomi Luhde-Thompson, Planning Adviser, Friends of the Earth

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