

### **The future of transport 2005-2015**

Report Authors: TRL, December 2005

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### **Introduction**

Transport is one of English Nature's six priority areas for influencing and informing policy developments and delivery. The direct impacts of transport on biodiversity include: fragmentation, severance, wildlife kills and loss of habitat. These effects are associated with, for example, airports, new transport links or parking areas. In addition, the effects of climate change on transport, and the way we maintain transport infrastructure may have further implications for biodiversity.

Demand for most modes of transport has continued to rise in the UK. This report shows which aspects are likely to be of greater concern in the future. It also recognises opportunities for beneficial outcomes in English Nature's areas of interest. English Nature is a statutory consultee on many transport projects, so regularly provides detailed input to transport plans. It also seeks to be more proactive in terms of contribution towards the development of government policy, such as through Green and White Papers.

### **What was done**

The report describes:

- (i) Major developments in transport that will shape the sector, and each mode of transport;
- (ii) Likely impacts of transport on the core issues that are of interest to English Nature.

There are current trends in (i) and (ii). The report also seeks to identify new trends, based on recent work by the authors and other recent research.

Major changes are occurring in aviation, roads, all forms of freight transport, and the role of technology in limiting the environmental impacts of transport. However, the report also looks at rail, bus travel, ports, walking and cycling.

### **Results and conclusions**

Based upon current trends and future developments identified in the report, the following key points are clear:

- (i) Greenhouse gas emissions from aviation will rise steeply, if aviation expands as foreseen in the government's aviation White Paper. The EU Commission, British Airways and the DfT all favour inclusion of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from aircraft into the EU 'Emissions Trading System'. Most commentators expect this to happen during 2008-2012.
- (ii) New major transport schemes will continue to be appraised using the DfT's *New Approach to Appraisal*. From 2005 onwards, the DfT will require monetary estimates for more of the environmental variables that are appraised.
- (iii) Technology and logistics developments offer increasing potential for reducing the environmental impacts of transport, as do targeted pricing regimes.

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- (iv) High levels of consumption and trade are leading to high rates of growth in goods transport. This includes rising use of ports, increasing annual mileages by light vans and large goods vehicles, and the planned expansion of UK air freight.
- (v) The government is abandoning many of the numerical targets that have previously driven national transport policy. Stakeholder encouragement and soft measures may be more typical of the government's future strategy. Some road schemes will be subject to regional decision-making.
- (v) London is introducing transport policies that provide indicators towards the future. These policies include the congestion charge extension in 2006, and the 'Low Emission Zone' from 2007.
- (vi) Climate change will lead to widespread changes in modes and patterns of travel. It will also necessitate significant changes in maintenance techniques, and the design of new transport infrastructure.

## **English Nature's viewpoint**

English Nature's view is best expressed in its latest *Position statement on environmentally sustainable transport*. Recommended principles include:

- (i) Reducing the need to travel, by improving access to local services and green space, and making the most of existing transport networks;
- (ii) Reducing pollution from cars and aircraft in particular, by encouraging people to use more environmentally friendly transport and sharply increasing the cost of fuel;
- (iii) Making sure all types of transport pay their full environmental costs; and
- (iv) Reducing the negative effects of transport as far as possible, by including in any plans measures to protect wildlife, habitats and landscapes.

## **Selected references**

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