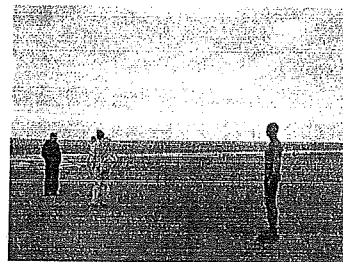
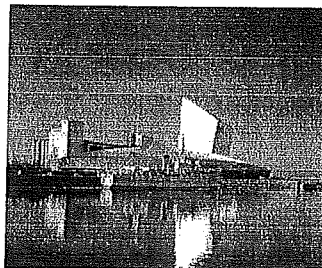
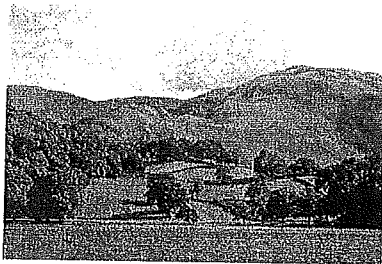


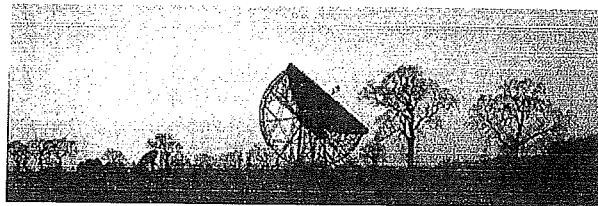
NORTH WEST DRAFT REGIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY

Examination in Public
October 2006-February 2007

Report of the Panel



March 2007



- 7.13 Fifth, the RTS should aim to improve surface access for both passengers and goods, by sustainable modes, to the region's key transport gateways. The objective should also be to improve interchange facilities at these gateways.
- 7.14 Sixth, the RTS should seek to reduce the adverse impacts of transport, particularly in terms of personal safety, environmental degradation, residential amenity and social exclusion. This applies particularly at accident "black spots"; in areas that suffer poor air quality, excessive noise or severance due to transport operations; and in towns and rural areas that are particularly worthy of conservation.
- 7.15 Seventh, we think it essential that it should be the objective of public policy to integrate the management and planning of transport systems. Success in achieving the foregoing objectives is unlikely to be achieved if transport operations are considered in isolation from one another, with planning and investment decisions being taken in a fragmented fashion by a number of ill-coordinated bodies.

RECOMMENDATION

R7.3

Objectives of the Regional Transport Strategy

The following text should be inserted after paragraph 10.1:

"The Regional Transport Strategy embraces the spatial principles and the regional development framework set out above. In particular it seeks to:

- **maintain existing transport infrastructure in good order;**
- **tackle congestion and overcrowding in the region's main movement corridors (particularly the routes into the main centres in the Manchester, Liverpool and Central Lancashire City Regions; on the strategic north-south corridor south of Preston; and on east-west routes between the Liverpool, Manchester and Leeds City Regions).**
- **secure a shift towards the use of more sustainable modes of transport;**

- **secure safe and efficient access between residential areas and key destinations, including centres of employment, schools, shops and other services;**
- **improve surface access and interchange arrangements at the key national and regional gateways (as defined in Appendix RT3.1);**
- **reduce the adverse impacts of transport, in terms of safety hazards, environmental degradation, residential amenity and social exclusion;**
- **integrate the management and planning of transport systems, so as to achieve these outcomes."**

Integrated Transport Networks

7.16 Policy RT1 of the amended draft RSS deals with integrated transport networks. It emphasises the need to make best use of existing infrastructure, improve journey time reliability in the main transport corridors, and improve accessibility to key international gateways. In our view, accessibility to the nationally important rail stations and terminals is at least as important as accessibility to the region's airports. We therefore propose that the word "international" should be deleted from the last sentence of this policy. We further propose that the region's key gateways should be specified. Otherwise, we see no reason to recommend changes to the policy or the supporting text.

RECOMMENDATION

R7.4

Policy RT1 – Integrated Transport Networks

The word "international" should be deleted from the final sentence of Policy RT1, and the following words should be added to that sentence– "as listed in Appendix RT3.1".

revisions proposed by AGMA and others, and conclude that this section of the Appendix should be clarified.

RECOMMENDATION

R7.6

Appendix: Regional Public Transport Framework

Appendix RT1 of the draft RSS should be replaced by Appendix RT3.1 as set out in the NWRA's Briefing Paper 20.

The section of Appendix RT3.1 entitled "Public Transport Framework Hierarchy of Interchanges" should be amended as follows:

"National Gateways

These are the most significant gateways, in terms of the amount of passenger and/or freight traffic. They provide access to international and UK markets. They comprise:

- **Manchester Airport**
- **The Mersey Ports**
- **The Manchester Ship Canal**
- **Liverpool John Lennon Airport**
- **Manchester Piccadilly Railway Station**
- **Liverpool Lime Street Railway Station**

Regional Gateways and Interchanges

These are interchanges and gateways which have more than sub-regional significance. They comprise:

- **Other Central Manchester Railway and Bus Stations**
- **Other Central Liverpool Railway and Bus Stations**
- **Preston Railway and Bus Stations**
- **Crewe Railway Station**
- **Chester Railway Station**
- **Warrington Railway and Bus Stations**
- **Wigan Railway and Bus Stations**
- **Carlisle Railway Station**
- **Blackpool Airport**
- **The Port of Heysham**
- **The Port of Fleetwood"**

The first two sentences in paragraph 10.18 should read as follows:

"Airports generate employment, attract businesses to the area, open up markets and encourage tourism. However, regionally significant business development that is not required for the operation of an airport should be located in accordance with the criteria set out in Policy W2 above."

Ports

- 7.67 Policy RT6 of the amended draft RSS deals with Ports. This topic did not give rise to much controversy in the representations, and we did not select it as a matter for detailed examination at the EiP. However, problems of surface access to ports were referred to by a number of participants at the EiP, and warrant consideration here.
- 7.68 We were told of traffic congestion on the approaches to the Port of Liverpool, particularly on the A5036T. We consider that proposed improvements to this route would help tackle congestion, improve access to a gateway of national importance, and reduce adverse environmental impacts. A scheme is within the Regional Funding Allocation (RFA) Programme, with a likely start date of 2015/16. It should be given a high priority.
- 7.69 We are keen that the maximum amount of freight should switch from road to rail. At present rail freight movements to and from the Port of Liverpool are hampered by loading gauge restrictions on the Bootle Branch Line. We consider that priority should be given to gauge enhancements to achieve W10 standard between Seaforth and the West Coast Main Line. We also consider that priority should be given to the re-instatement of the Olive Mount Chord, at the junction between the Bootle Branch and Chat Moss Lines. This would obviate the need for reversing movements, and facilitate the passage of freight trains serving the port.
- 7.70 Road access to the Port of Heysham is by means of an unsatisfactory route that passes through the urban area of Lancaster to provide a link to the M6, with adverse effects on congestion and amenity. The completion of a new link road is

included in the RFA Programme, but this has yet to pass through the requisite statutory procedures.

- 7.71 Road access between the Port of Fleetwood and the M55 is via the A585, which suffers significant congestion. However, proposed improvements to this route were not in the top quartile of schemes in the prioritisation carried out by either Atkins for the RFA bid, or by JMP Consulting during preparation of the RTS. We understand that there is little likelihood of progress during the RSS period. While we note the forceful representations that were made about this matter, on the evidence available to us we have no reason to question this prioritisation.

Freight Transport

- 7.72 Policy RT7 of the amended draft RSS deals with the management of freight transport. This topic was not the source of significant controversy, and we did not focus on it as a selected matter for discussion at the EiP. Nevertheless, one or two points were made during the course of the EiP which warrant comment.
- 7.73 First, NWRA suggested the insertion of a new clause into Policy RT7 to deal with the growth of air freight at the region's airports. We understand that this was omitted in error and agree that it should now be included.
- 7.74 Second, Policy RT7 begins by saying that plans and strategies should take account of the aims and objectives of the Regional Freight Strategy. It was put to us that the Regional Freight Strategy is a non-statutory document, which has not been subject to any process of public examination. Nevertheless, it is a significant piece of work produced by the Regional Freight Group, which includes GONW, the Assembly and NWDA. The draft RSS merely indicates that it should be taken into account in plans and strategies, not that it should be incorporated into the development plan. We consider this to be acceptable.