

London to South West and South Wales Multi-Modal Study



Steering Group Meeting

Venue:	Temple Quay House, Bristol	
Date held:	2 nd August 2001	
Present:	Richard Bayly (Government Office for the South West – GOSW) – Chair	RB
	Mike Birkin (Sustainability South West)	MBi
	Peter Botham (GOSW)	PB
	Tony Carroll (National Assembly for Wales – NAW)	TC
	Peter Dawson (GOSW, Regional Transport Team Leader)	PD
	Gwyn Drake (Highways Agency – HA)	GD
	Clive Farnham (HA)	CF
	Peter George (W.S.Atkins – London to Reading Multi-Modal Study Team)	PG
	Claire Gibson (South West Regional Development Agency – SWRDA)	CG
	Ian Harrison (South West Regional Assembly – SWRA)	IH
	Ciara Mulligan (DTLR Central)	CiM
	Catherine Mullins (NAW)	CaM
	Iain Reeve (Government Office for the South East – GOSE)	IR
	Anthony Slack (South East England Development Agency – SEEDA)	AS
	Martin Tugwell (South East England Regional Assembly – SEERA) – AM only	MT
	John Wilkinson (CBI)	JW
	David Mills (GOSW)	DM
	Martin Boulton (Regional Transport Team, GOSW)	MBo
	David Bayliss (Project Director, Halcrow)	DB
	Martyn Brooks (Project Manager, Halcrow)	MBr
	Gareth Walters (Project Co-ordinator, Halcrow)	GW
	Gareth James (Halcrow – appraisal/modelling)	GJ

Notes of Steering Group Meeting

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1. Apologies for absence / Introductions

- 1.1 Matthew Lodge (Strategic Rail Authority – SRA)
Cliff Baston (GOSW)
Andrew Page-Dove (GOSW)
- 1.2 TC introduced Catherine Mullins – she will replace him on the SWARMMS Steering Group from now on.
- 1.3 CiM noted this would be her last meeting as she is moving to a new post in DTLR. A successor has yet to be nominated.

2. Minutes of previous meeting

2.1 Agreed minutes a factual record of the meeting. Continued to discuss issues arising not already on the agenda.

2.2 *Para 3.4* – noted that intended liaison meeting between SWARMMS and other MMS towards London was cancelled. Not yet re-arranged – but will be.

2.3 *Para 3.11* – JW queried sensitivity tests carried out, some relating to assumptions used in modelling and appraisal. GJ noted that a number have been carried out, but that a specific paper reporting results had not been produced to date. RB indicated he would like to see a discussion of how individual measures relate together to build a strategy 'case' (for example in the Bristol area), noting this could aid in prioritising delivery. MBI indicated this was key for 'reducing the need to travel'. PB noted that as plan work progresses, increased detail available will make testing easier. Paper required on measures and sensitivity. Halcrow to agree extent and content of paper with GOSW. Halcrow

2.4 *Para 5.7* – Paying for travel as a 'plan' – question had been asked of the (then) DETR. CiM noted there is a distinction between direct charging (tolling) and general transport policy-related costs such as fuel. Study clearly has to look at first, but not in detail about second, although can refer to concepts such as charging for use of all roads in reporting. DB noted there is also a need to comment when proposed measures may not be readily delivered within the current financial set-up for transport.

3. Emerging Strategy: Comments Period – feedback received

3.1 MBr noted some key points from the comment period recently completed.

- Around 160 responses so far received from a variety of organisations and individuals. Some had been received after the official end of the comment period (20th July), but had generally let Halcrow know if a response would be 'late' – most are in now.
- Some specific issues have been mentioned a number of times, including:
 - deliverability (especially rail measures);
 - A303/A30;
 - scale of funding proposed – is it enough?;
 - access to/from locations off the SWARMMS corridors; and
 - the Process itself.
- See no need to fundamentally alter the overall balance of the strategy.
- Other than that 'looping' back from the details to the strategy is important – this was discussed at the last SGp, but the emphasis should change. In essence, use the current 'emerging strategy' as a framework within which to proceed to define details and check the strategy with the details in place accordingly. The key is that the strategy is not finalised until the end of the study.

3.2 RB noted he has received some representations about the inability of people and/or organisations to 'sign-up' to the strategy without sufficient detail in place. It is important that opportunities for comment on the strategy and details are kept open, as this type of

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study is different from previous endeavours, in that comments are being invited at all stages (in the past, has been presented for comments in a largely completed form).

- 3.3 AS queried involvement of Statutory Environmental Bodies (SEBs) in the continuing process. MBr noted a meeting was held with SEBs on 1st August, at which a programme of future involvement was planned (at local and strategic levels).
- 3.4 MBI commented he is reassured by the process outlined, but has some concerns that work leading to the strategy as it stands is (in his opinion) inadequate. For example, in particular, he wants to see clarification of why non-dualling upgrade options for A303 have been dismissed. MBr responded that if there are specific concerns that MBI should identify some key people to be involved in a targeted discussion to consider processes and appraisal.
- 3.5 CG noted that the strategy does not implicitly include A303/A30 dualling, but an 'upgrade', and that details would be developed at plan stage. Also noted disappointment that SGp cannot 'sign-up' to the strategy on that basis. MBr agreed with CG about A303 level of detail, but noted that it is understood why people/organisations feel they cannot sign-up to the strategy at this stage, and the process has been devised accordingly (RB/JW made similar points).
- 3.6 DB noted that re-visiting the strategy in the 'loop' process should be a process whereby the loop tightens, and changes to the strategy (if any) become fewer and/or less significant with more detail. Suggested using the term 'Provisional Strategy' as the working title for the strategy to frame the plan stage.
- 3.7 RB noted that there will be some discomfort for some individuals/organisations with the strategy and detail, whatever the outcomes. However, the process is important to inform and educate towards the outcomes – and is thus OK. IH indicated he is happy with the process, but highlighted a need to move the study forward. MT also happy with process – has some additional very specific queries, but will engage outside the meeting.
- 3.8 MT queried who responding organisations are and who has asked for extra time. MBr noted that most organisations who had asked needed short extensions to fit in with internal processes. Exception was SWTAR who would like significantly more time. Agreed to provide a list. Halcrow
- 3.9 MBI noted that there is a need to carefully outline the process for the future. Also that some NGOs are potentially planning to engage consultants/academics to carry out their own research. CiM queried what this work would consider. MBI indicated it is related to wider economic impacts and the range of options for the A30/A303. MBr noted that options for the A30/A303 would be considered in Plan work, but that wider economic impacts are a tricky issue as there little conclusive evidence one way or the other. CiM noted that economic impact assessments need to be done carefully (especially given criticisms of Hastings MMS). A meeting with ITEA, Chris Smith is to be arranged to discuss this issue. IH stressed that peripherality, tourism etc is just as important as Halcrow
GOSW

regeneration.

- 3.10 MT noted that presentation within documentation is becoming more important now, as sensitive issues are discussed.
- 3.11 JW suggested that issues relating to areas adjacent to the SWARMMS corridors would be picked up by the Regional Assembly in the Regional Transport Strategy.
- 3.12 IR endorsed the process for 'releasing' details through plan process, but noted that the perceived lack of detail is a genuine problem for some stakeholders – major concern in South East authorities is what exactly could be meant by 'demand management'. IH echoed this, noting that implementation of many demand management measures are likely to be the most difficult aspects for local authorities. IR felt there would be more participation from some as details become available. MBr noted that the London to Reading (L2R) Multi-Modal Study needs flexibility within the SWARMMS strategy, and would not produce much detail in that area. Any details in SWARMMS area that could relate to L2R will need to be noted.
- 3.13 RB noted that there has been some discussion at events and in correspondence that a headline investment of £3bn is 'not enough' for SWARMMS and the South West, and that 'other' areas are 'bidding' for more – indicated this is not a helpful form of debate.

4. Plan Stage of study

- 4.1 MBr gave a brief outline of the plan phase and what it entails. The purpose of the Plan phase is to develop the proposals in the Strategy to:
- give them greater definition;
 - demonstrate their broad feasibility;
 - establish a clearer set of priorities; and
 - establish a set of schemes and policies for early implementation.
- 4.2 Plans will cover:
- Two large Principal Urban Areas where significant land use changes are anticipated:
 - The Greater Bristol Area.
 - Swindon.
 - Four Transport Corridors:
 - Bristol-Exeter Corridor – incorporating Great Western Mainline and M5.
 - Exeter-Penzance Corridor – incorporating Great Western Mainline, A30 and A38.
 - London-Exeter Corridor – incorporating Exeter-Waterloo rail line, Berks & Hants rail line (Reading-Taunton) and A303/A30 (with the focus west of Reading/Basingstoke).
 - London to Bristol and the Severn Estuary Corridor – incorporating GW Mainlines and M4 (focus west of Reading).
 - Four Study-Wide Topics
 - Intermodal Freight

- Tourism
 - Rural Access to Transport
 - Reducing the Need to Travel
- 4.3 Key organisations will be involved in relevant work from the beginning, and a series of local workshops are planned to bring in wider stakeholder and public involvement. Two phases of workshops are planned, provisional locations are Truro, Plymouth, Exeter, Taunton, Bristol, Swindon, Newbury and Salisbury. Other workshops/seminars will cover topics.
- 4.4 The process of participation has already started with the SEBs meeting on 1st August – for instance the Countryside Agency is keen to be involved in the reducing the need to travel work. Also, GOSW have met with Chief Execs of the unitary authorities in the former Avon area. RB noted they are positive and keen to work together with the study.
- 4.5 IH noted that urban area studies only cover Swindon and Bristol – what about other PUAs? DB noted that the choice of PUAs is related to expected significant land use changes to the ones chosen. PB added this is especially true of the quantity of additional housing – the location of these developments is key.
- 4.6 JW indicated that when details of the plan phase is published that it is clear how the plans relate to 'loops' in reviewing the strategy. Queried whether economic and social partners should be involved in the Bristol/Swindon plans? Also that the RDA should be involved – in freight and area plans in particular. Proceeded to note that local bus networks are also important and that perhaps the bus industry should be involved in the Bristol plan.
- 4.7 GD noted that the West Midlands MMS will not provide a 'blueprint' for the whole of the area – indeed it will not even provide full details at all junctions – and thus cautioned about expecting too much detail to flow from the MMS (for the Bristol area in particular). Also queried the level of detail of road schemes to be considered, suggested level could involve design. Need dialogue with HA to agree. GJ noted this has already started. CaM identified that the National Assembly for Wales ought to be included in discussions about the M4.
- 4.8 MBI indicated that Sustainability South West may need to nominate specific NGO people for participation.
- 4.9 MBr noted that plans will have to be sequenced. Halcrow are currently in discussion with GOSW about resources. RB suggested that it would be appropriate to circulate the SGp with the plan timetable when agreed before the next Steering Group meeting. Halcrow
- 4.10 IH outlined some discussions at the SWRA, that, in the Exeter-Penzance corridor there be some consideration of alternative rail routes (given the fragility of the line through Dawlish). GJ indicated that the viability of alternatives such as Okehampton is unclear. RB noted that the SRA is keen to ensure that outputs are deliverable within its ability to

approve schemes.

5. A30/A303 & Waterloo-Exeter railway

5.1 MBr outlined the work done, noting that the aim was to assess the relationship between the potential upgrading of the A30/A303 and the Waterloo-Exeter railway. Summary points from analysis are:

- There is some interaction between road and rail routes – but this is small, and the overall scale of interaction is dwarfed by the amount of growth forecast.
- There is potential benefit (in terms of problems and issues) of both upgrades.
- The outline justification for each upgrade is not based on any single issue – there are a number of positive contributions.
- The specific concern that upgrading the A30/A303 would undermine the economics of a Waterloo-Exeter railway upgrade is likely to be unfounded – the interaction and hence patronage changes forecast is too small.

5.2 CM queried why the analysis did not include the full range of criteria. Various SGp members noted that it was a means to an end to answer queries posed at the last SGp meeting (and by others during the comment period), specifically that there is a significant linkage between the A30/A303 road and Waterloo-Exeter rail corridors.

5.3 MBI felt that the paper did not present enough analysis, and assumed some results. GJ noted that this was not meant to pre-empt the more detailed plan work, and is based on the SWARMMS model (and in turn surveys) and appraisals already carried out already.

5.4 IR noted the paper is a helpful response to a particular series of questions. IH reiterated that the analysis was a swift response to a specific set of queries, but noted that perhaps the reporting was relatively easy to take out of context.

5.5 CG queried how the results would feed through to stakeholders? DB suggested communicating the conclusion that the link between the road and rail corridors is tenuous and that improving either will have little effect on the other – stop at that. RB considered this appropriate, noting that sensitivity of presentation is becoming particularly important.

6. London to Reading: Problems & Issues (P&I) Report

6.1 MBr outlined the context of the report – as a summary of issues in the London and Reading area to contribute to the London to Reading Multi-Modal Study. There is also a longer ‘background’ report containing much more detail (120-130pages), that is available as required.

6.2 IR described the latest situation pertaining to the L2R study. W.S. Atkins have been appointed to the study, and the first steering group will meet soon. At this meeting the formal study area for the L2R study will be agreed (noting that Figure 1 in the L2R report should be referenced accordingly). There will be regular meetings and interaction

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between L2R and SWARMMS (and Orbit et al). IR noted that some of the authorities covered by L2R are not happy with the content of the L2R report, but that while GOSE acknowledge their concerns, they are happy with it as a contribution to the L2R study.

- 6.3 PB considered that the report could have helpfully identified issues (in the L2R area) that affect the South West. RB noted that MT (who had to leave the meeting before this issue was discussed) had communicated similar views (in particular about identifying issues that are key to access from the South West to other parts of the South East than central London and access to airports). RB also noted that the report does not include specific issues as solutions.
- 6.4 MBr clarified that the report had included solutions in an earlier draft, but that these had been removed on instructions. Also noted that the report did not and had never been intended to annotate L2R P&I in terms of the requirements of SWARMMS or the South West.
- 6.5 AS noted that it is important that the problems in the South East for South West journeys be identified throughout the L2R process. Also that the SWARMMS strategy provides inputs to L2R. IR agreed with this but queried whether the L2R P&I report is the right way of doing it – noting that there are effectively 4 ways of feeding SWARMMS outputs into L2R (P&I report, SWARMMS strategy, GOSW membership of L2R SGp and consultation exercises of L2R study). Suggested that P&I report is ended. The L2R study will feed any problems thought to be pertinent to SWARMMS. IH added that some issues in the L2R area are important for the South West – e.g. airport access.
- 6.6 MBr noted that keeping the issues ‘alive’ through the L2R SGp and consultation is particularly important, as the reporting-based elements (P&I and Strategy) have to end at some time. Halcrow to finish L2R report. Halcrow
- 6.7 PB reiterated the need for some notification of the south west perspective direct to the L2R study. CG and IH agreed and RB suggested a note from SWARMMS to L2R would be useful – bring to the next SGp meeting. IR suggested information could be passed ‘officially’ in the form of a letter from the SWARMMS SGp chair to the L2R SGp chair. Halcrow
- 6.8 CG queried how GOSW are going to deal with SWRDA and SWRA in liaising with the L2R steering group.
- 6.9 IR indicated it would probably be useful to discuss wider liaison issues for the L2R study when L2R has developed its consultation and participation strategy further – suggested a consultation and participation strategy could be available for the next SWARMMS SGp meeting. L2R
- 6.10 GOSW will consider the south west dimension (SWRA and SWRDA). GOSW

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7. AOB

Blunsdon Study

- 7.1 MBI queried whether the recommendations of the Blunsdon Study will affect SWARMMS. PD noted that the recommendations include potential signals at M4 Jn15, but that this is subject to review by SWARMMS. The study also looked at wider issues within and without Swindon. Will need to feed outcomes of the Blunsdon Study into SWARMMS – particularly for the Swindon plan and M4. GOSW

Rail Franchising

- 7.2 CG queried the effects of the recent announcement by Stephen Byers about rail franchising being concentrated on extending existing franchises – and that this may reduce the likelihood of the long-term franchises that are needed for future development. GJ indicated that at present this is something that should be borne in mind, but that franchising is just one part of the delivery mechanism for rail. When considering delivery of rail measures, it will need to be considered specifically.

Strategy, Process & Stakeholders

- 7.3 MBI noted there is a need to provide stakeholders with information about the strategy and its role in the on-going process. Halcrow to discuss with GOSW. Halcrow

8. Next Meeting

Dates of next Steering Group meetings – 25 October 2001
13 December 2001