

London to South West and South Wales Multi-Modal Study



Steering Group Meeting

Venue:	HSE, InterCity House, Bristol	
Date held:	25 th October 2001	
Present:	Richard Bayly (Government Office for the South West – GOSW) – chair	RB
	Mike Birkin (Sustainability South West)	MBi
	Peter Botham (GOSW)	PB
	Gwyn Drake (Highways Agency – HA)	GD
	Clive Farnham (HA)	CF
	Claire Gibson (South West Regional Development Agency – SWRDA)	CG
	Ian Harrison (South West Regional Assembly – SWRA)	IH
	Matthew Lodge (Strategic Rail Authority – SRA)	ML
	Catherine Mullins (NAW)	CM
	Martin Tugwell (South East England Regional Assembly – SEERA) – part	MT
	John Wilkinson (CBI)	JW
	Cliff Baston (GOSW)	CB
	Andrew Page-Dove (GOSW)	APD
	Martin Boulton (Regional Transport Team, GOSW)	MBo
	Martyn Brooks (Project Manager, Halcrow)	MBr
	Gareth Walters (Project Co-ordinator, Halcrow)	GW
	Gareth James (Halcrow – appraisal/modelling)	GJ

Notes of Steering Group Meeting		Action
1.	Apologies for absence	
1.1	Iain Reeve (Government Office for the South East – GOSE) Anthony Slack (South East England Development Agency – SEEDA) David Bayliss (Project Director, Halcrow)	
2.	Minutes of previous meeting	
2.1	Agreed content.	
2.2	Actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Para 2.3 – sensitivity tests – on Agenda (later).• Para 3.8 – list of organisations provided.• Para 3.9 – process outlined publicly in Newsletter, also post-ITEA meeting methodology on Agenda (later).• Para 3.9 – timetable. Working timetable in progress, but not communicated. Has slipped through. Work programme required.	Halcrow

- Para 6.7 – on agenda.
- Para 6.9 – CB noted that he has met with GOSE, and that interaction between studies is on-going. Need to keep talking to ensure compatibility.
- Para 7.1 – Blunsdon report not yet available.

2.3 MT queried whether the study was still anticipated to finish at the planned time. MBr indicated yes, noting that the only potential problem so far is that production of the Bristol road user charging model by Bristol City Council's consultants is behind schedule. This has only come to light in the last few days so the extent is unknown.

3. The Plan Stage

3.1 MBr/GJ went through the situation as currently in hand – 4 theme plans, 4 corridor plans and 2 PUA plans.

Theme – Reducing the need to travel – MBr

3.1 Research carried out for ITEA is complete, with a draft having been circulated by ITEA. Currently incorporating comments before final report. Release of the document is subject to ITEA approval. Next stage is application of principles to SWARMMS. The most potential for reducing the need to travel was found to exist in teleworking and video-conferencing, travel plans, targeted marketing campaigns, walking and cycling initiatives and bus quality partnerships.

Theme – Rural access to the transport system – MBr

3.2 Have met the Countryside Agency, who are keen to be involved. A joint seminar (on technical and delivery aspects) is planned for 5 December. CA has engaged SWTAR and Ecologica to do research – 3 case studies to be reported in the seminar. MBI noted this arrangement was initiated by SWTAR – a good example of partnership.

3.3 CG queried who is organising invitations to the seminar. MBr noted that Kate Freeman of SWTAR is doing this. MBr also noted that the seminar is being run through various auspices and is not wholly SWARMMS focused. RB queried experiences/information to/from other multi-modal studies. PC noted there is an ongoing initiative to build a network of communication between MMS, DTLR and the GOs.

Theme – Tourism – MBr

3.4 Reviewed a variety of tourism data and arranged a number of meetings with local authority tourism, public transport and economic development officers. The main focus of work is Devon and Cornwall. JW queried whether the business aspects of tourism should involve SWRDA. MBr indicated probably yes, although South West Tourism is due to be involved, and are closely linked to SWRDA.

Theme – Freight – GJ

3.5 Reviewed SRA regional freight strategy. GJ noted that the South West is reasonably far down the priority list. The focus of SWARMMS facilities work is on inter-modal freight terminals and loading gauge issues, some demand forecasting is included along with rail

Action

capacity implications, and there is a need to be mindful of the viability of facilities and associated services.

- 3.6 CG noted that SWRA has access to work undertaken by SWRPC for the RPG relating to freight strategy. GJ noted that Ray Bentley (as SWRA freight officer) has been involved so far. RB cautioned against too much emphasis on previous work, as some of it could be considered aspirational, and may not all be realistic.
- 3.7 CG asked about freight by sea. GJ noted that this is marginal at best for most flows, and in the context of SWARMMS could only really be significant if major changes were made in quarrying areas.

Theme – General Point

- 3.8 MBr noted that steering group members and organisations should indicate any topics/plan they want to be closely involved in the process of the plan stage.

SGp
members

Corridors and PUAs

- 3.9 MBr outlined that 2 workshops have been held, involving representatives of the statutory environmental bodies (SEBs) – English Nature, English Heritage, Environment Agency, Countryside Agency, DEFRA (former FRCA section of MAFF). Feedback from these sessions is positive overall, albeit that more detail is needed.
- 3.10 In general, Halcrow is of the view that ‘acceptable’ solutions can be found for potential road schemes to the east of Ilminster, similarly for potential schemes in Cornwall. However, the Blackdown Hills remains a significant issue. There are some local site-specific concerns and a general concern of principle about a road in that location. At present, the SEBs are not happy with potential schemes in this area. A re-routing option using the A358 was discussed and raised less comment from the SEBs.
- 3.11 MT queried potentially different treatment of the Blackdown Hills AONB and Cranborne Chase AONB. MBr noted that the potential schemes in the latter area are largely on-line, and felt to have a less significant impact.
- 3.12 GD noted that the Highways Agency is happy with the process so far. Also noted that any improvement of the A358 would be on and off-line, and would represent a significant upgrade (not a cheap alternative) if the A303 were effectively diverted to this route.
- 3.13 IH noted some concerns that the SEBs appear to be framing decisions and that local authorities (LAs) had not been involved. CG agreed. MBr noted that the SEBs were not making decisions and that there is work proceeding on many fronts based on information received from many people. Also, all impacts and benefits would be assessed in the appraisal process. MBr also noted that LAs would have a chance to attend sessions in the mornings of the forthcoming workshops, and a number have had (and will have) one-to-one meetings.

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- 3.14 CM asked how the corridors and workshops relate to South Wales. GW indicated that all authorities had been invited to all events. Need to check South Wales authorities were included. Halcrow
- 3.15 MBr noted that the only potential problem so far is the road user charging model in Bristol – SWARMMS is due to use this model, however it will not be available until late November. CG noted that this model is important for a number of other studies in the Bristol area – suggested that GOSW could find out more and give some encouragement to BCC. GOSW
- 3.16 RB noted that the environmental impacts of the strategy include rail as well as road. Also that economic impacts and peripherality are also real issues, but little information and research exists from recent times. Delivery of the strategy will be through a number of agencies and partners, and (for example) GOSW is already working hard to take the former Avon area LAs along together.
- 3.17 MBr outlined the situation relating to assessment of economic effects. At a recent meeting with ITEA, it was agreed there is little guidance, other than broad principles. DTZ Pieda will be doing more research, using the basic premise that the ‘market is failing’ at the moment, and how the strategy affects this. The aim is to collate information across the market and assess the effect or otherwise of changes in accessibility due to the strategy (both real and perceived). A methodology paper has been prepared by DTZ.
- 3.18 MBi noted that he had little knowledge of a paper submitted to the SGp by CPRE that deals with wider economic issues amongst others. Noted that SWTAR et al are potentially looking to Phil Goodwin to do some research, but want to tie in with SWARMMS work.
- 3.19 GD noted that the West Midlands MMS had produced some useful analysis and information relating to wider economic effects of transport.
- Technical Note on Appraisal Methodology*
- 3.20 MBr outlined the general principles behind future appraisal work for SWARMMS (based on discussions with ITEA):
- A series of ‘what if’ tests are planned. These will be agreed later, but should cover aspects of the strategy that relate to key decisions.
 - The level of detail developed will be sufficient for broad feasibility to be established (and for appraisal purposes), but will not deal with designs.
 - Appraisal will be carried out at strategy level (as for emerging strategy), and not at individual scheme/measure level.
 - The methodology for assessing environmental impacts has changed, which overcomes concerns about the use of GOMMMS for strategy assessment.
- 3.21 PC queried use of ‘packages’ of schemes for ASTs, and noted that the decision making process needs to have an ‘audit’ trail. Also, the strategy needs to have underpinnings that

are agreed with key delivery agents. GD noted that alternatives (not in the strategy) should be described and justified. ML also noted that timing of schemes will be important. PC noted that the level of detail used should not leave too much behind for others. The DTLR has already agreed that appropriate agencies should pick up schemes (e.g. SRA/HA). There is a slight gap with local authorities' inclusion of measures in LTPs.

Bristol Rail Capacity Study

- 3.22 GJ outlined this piece of work being carried out by the SRA, but of importance for SWARMMS. It is based on the Bristol Signalling Area (much more than just Bristol urban area). It is looking at current capacity, aspirations and commitments for schemes and services. SWARMMS will be represented at progress meetings and will receive interim outputs. APD noted that SRA is also carrying out a wider GWML Economic Study (SWARMMS has an involvement in this too).

4. Sensitivity Tests

- 4.1 GJ noted that a series of tests had been carried out, reported in a note provided to the SGp, and that these had been drawn from feedback received on the emerging strategy and the SGp itself. Noted that the assessments were not carried out using GOMMMS, and no ASTs, etc are available. They are an attempt to understand how things change at the strategic level – acknowledging that local effects could still be significant. Also noted that the induced traffic tests concluded that little additional traffic would be drawn onto the network as a result of the strategy.

- 4.2 General queries from the Steering Group members about the Exeter-Waterloo and Berks & Hants lines figures in tables, that suggest that enhancements to services do very little. GJ to check.

Halcrow

5. Thames Valley MMS

(note this item taken early – before MT left)

- 5.1 MBr outlined some key points from Halcrow Technical Note on the relationship between studies.
- 5.2 There are acknowledged timetabling inconsistencies between the three MMS considered, namely SWARMMS, TVMMS and ORBIT. Hence there are three possible approaches to tackling this:
- Delay SWARMMS to line up with TVMMS, this would also require ORBIT to delay. Considered this to be unacceptable.
 - At consultant level to agree consistent strategies early on. But W.S.Atkins have only just started TVMMS, so this could make them take premature judgements. Considered to be unacceptable.
 - Stick with the SWARMMS timetable as planned, and at the eastern end to make assumptions of what ORBIT/TVMMS might to deliver. Acknowledged this leaves open the possibility of inconsistencies, but this would have to be resolved ultimately

by the Regional Assemblies. Considered acceptable way forward.

- 5.3 MT noted that discussions at the ORBIT steering group indicated the study could be slipping further, and may not report until the end of 2002. Thus prefers 3rd option. Also noted that the SEERA Regional Transport Strategy is due in late Spring 2002. A key aspect of this is the 'gateway' function of the south east for many movements.
- 5.4 RB noted that shutting down the SWARMMS process in April 2002 will leave future onus on the Regional Assemblies. IH prefers 3rd option, although it is the best of a not particularly good set, particularly when any potential inconsistencies could be across regional borders (for instance charging on the M4). PB noted that GOSW is on the TVMMS steering group and will monitor – also noting that whenever any issues of particular substance are being discussed, other south west regional bodies (SWRA, SWRDA) can also attend.
- 5.5 CF queried how significant the south east effect on the SWARMMS area actually is, particularly the further west one looks. MBr answered that this can be approached 'technically' using the 'what if' scenarios proposed for testing the strategy (see plan stage methodology). Alternatively/also the deliverability of schemes/measures has to be reported. For instance, the priority placed on schemes in the south east by the south west (e.g. rail at Reading) could be different to the priority placed by the south east.
- 5.6 PC noted that the delay to ORBIT is not necessarily as long as to the end of 2002. There are some questions about the land-use-transport modelling that need to be answered. In terms of the 3 options, the 1st is definitely not acceptable. Suggested that over coming months/years there will need to be continuing dialogue between RAs, GOs, etc, and when the decision-making process is reached, difficulties and inconsistencies can be dealt with. PC also noted that linkages between studies is not a unique problem to south west and south east, but there are instances nation-wide.
- 5.7 CB noted that discussions are on-going with GOSE, and that it is likely that GOSW will ask Halcrow to carry out some work on the assumptions in the South East – e.g. rail. ML suggested rail a good example, particularly when trying to sort through 'priority' for rail paths
- 5.8 MT noted it was regrettable that SEERA was not included in the liaison process and co-ordination of studies. Felt that decisions made by GOs, who are not the regional planning bodies, could affect future RPB work.
- 5.9 JW felt that that SWRA should be on the TVMMS steering group – as SEERA is on SWARMMS. IH also not happy with SWRA only being preferential consultee, noting that this could lead to missing out on the overall debate.
- 5.10 RB will approach GOSE and re-visit the roles of SWRA in TVMMS. PC suggested that the liaison meeting would be the best place to discuss these issues.

SWARMMS note & letter re TVMMS

- 5.11 MBI queried why if motorway widening received little support it has been included in the strategy as an option for the south east. MBr noted this is essentially so as not to close out any of the options for the south east.
- 5.12 JW queried reference to St.Pancras-Heathrow as a key rail corridor. GJ indicated this is linked to issues such as Crossrail, future electrification, the future Eurostar terminal and other things going on in the London area. Similarly, CG queried South Coast-Midlands. GJ noted that this is an issue at Reading and between Reading and Didcot. MT noted that the Tranche 3 MMS of the A34 will look at north-south movements in greater detail. ML queried prescriptive nature of the SWARMMS note, and that the details included may be different from ultimate assumptions.
- 5.13 MT queried the status of the note, noting that as a consultants' note it is OK, but that he would have difficulty with some of the details in the note (and letter) as being representative of the SGp. An example of difficulty is treatment of the M3 and whether it is covered by TVMMS. ML noted that SWARMMS was not covering the M3 in detail, and TVMMS as currently set up is also not doing it – a problem the TVMMS steering group is aware of. PC noted this is not resolved yet. GOSW/GOSE to resolve.
- 5.14 MT questioned why the L2R Problems and Issues (P&I) report should not go public. MBr noted that the report had been recognised by GOSE as a contribution to TVMMS, albeit as it is not meant to be the definitive TVMMS P&I report. There is no SWARMMS reason for not going public, but there is a potential problem that it could mislead stakeholders in the TVMMS if published now. ML added that it is perhaps more an issue of timing – need to fit in with TVMMS own reports. RB noted that the SGp is happy for the report to be published, but that the timing needs to be agreed with TVMMS.

6. Data Collection Report / Feedback Report

- 6.1 Available for collection by SGp members.

7. AOB*Bristol*

- 7.1 PB noted that the Bristol area is a particular problem, with the M4/M5 dual function as a strategic and collector-distributor road affecting the nature of traffic movements. Need to keep in mind the potential for charging this route (ultimately). Also there is a key issue of deliverability of some measures (e.g. restraint).

SOCOMMS

- 7.2 CG queried whether SWARMMS should be involved in the South Coast Multi-Modal (SOCOMMS), as its study are begins near Southampton. CB noted that GOSW would request more information, but that the feeling was the South West region needed to be mindful of SOCOMMS, but not necessarily SWARMMS. PC noted that linkages

between studies are important, and something that DTLR are working on.

8. Next Meeting

8.1 Date of next Steering Group meeting – 13th December 2001

8.2 MBr suggested that a series of pre-meetings with SGp members could be appropriate as there is a lot to discuss. RB noted that the 13/12 meeting would likely be an important session for SGp members to attend.