PLANNING FOR NATIONAL TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE:

A FRAMEWORK FOR IDENTIFYING AND ASSESSING NATIONAL TRANSPORT NEEDS AND PRIORITIES

Department for Transport

Final Report

July 2005

ECOTEC RESEARCH & CONSULTING

FABER MAUNSELL | AECOM

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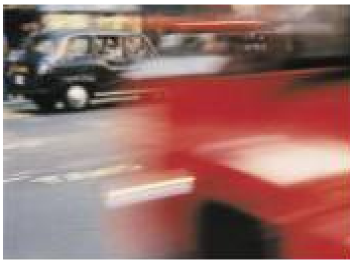
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



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Executive Summary

1. In September 2004, Faber Maunsell and Ecotec Research and Consulting were appointed by the Department for Transport to undertake a study entitled “Planning for National Transport Infrastructure; A Framework for Identifying and Assessing National Transport Needs and Priorities”.

2. This study built upon earlier work funded by the Regional Development Agencies, which sought to determine a methodology, with discrete criteria, by which transport infrastructure of national economic importance could be identified and prioritised.

3. The current study was required to enhance the evolving methodology by making it more robust whilst also capturing environmental and social considerations in addition to economic.

4. The proposed methodology comprises four stages:

   Stage 1: Objectives and Outcomes

   This first stage sets out the specific problem or objective which is being addressed, the consequences of not taking action and the desired outcome from any actions to be taken. It then describes the alternative proposals or options by which this outcome might be achieved and further describes the proposal which is the subject of that particular appraisal.

   This emphasises the very basic point, therefore that before any testing work can actually begin, there needs to be a coherent argument as to why the infrastructure or policy is being considered in the first place and what it is actually trying to achieve.

   Stage 2: Primary Framework

   In Stage 2, the detailed proposal is tested within a framework which includes economic, social and environmental objectives. A relatively simple way of scoring is also used to help profile the strengths and weaknesses of the proposal.

   Stage 3: Secondary Framework

   In response to concerns that the primary framework might not adequately address the practicality or deliverability of a scheme, a secondary framework has been developed which fulfils that function. It does so by assessing the proposal against three overarching tests of feasibility, effectiveness and acceptability. In other words, these tests ask the questions “can it be done?”, “is it worth doing?” and “will it be allowed to be done?”

   Stage 4: Summary Table

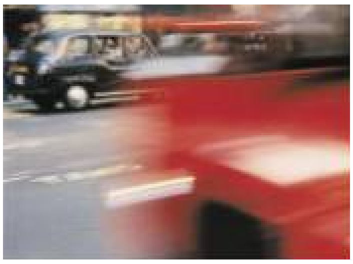
   Finally, in Stage 4, there is a Summary Table which draws together the strengths and weaknesses of the proposal. This uses the scoring to draw out any strong features in the appraisal and referring to issues of deliverability if this is perceived as an issue.

5. The methodology concepts and possible applications were reviewed in a consultation procedure with institutional stakeholders in four “ super-regions”.

6. The tool has been designed to be used at national level and could be used, for example, by the Department for Transport in providing advice to Ministers on national transport programmes, or on proposals developed by cross-regional groupings such as the Northern Way

7. Appropriately modified, it is also potentially valuable at regional and local level, to be used, for example, in work on regional funding allocations or Local Transport Plans. Experience of use of the Framework in these fields would be helpful in indicating areas where the methodology may be developed or need further refinement.

1. INTRODUCTION



1. Introduction

1.1 Background to the Study

FaberMaunsell and Ecotec Research and Consulting Ltd were appointed by the Department for Transport in September 2004 to undertake a study entitled "Planning for National Transport Infrastructure; A Framework for Identifying and Assessing National Transport Needs and Priorities". This study effectively represented the second stage of a study, originally specified and funded by the Regional Development Agencies, which sought to determine an overall methodology, with discrete criteria, by which transport infrastructure of national economic importance could be identified and assessed.

This second stage was required to build upon the earlier work by further developing the evolving methodology to make it more robust and to extend its scope through capturing environmental and social considerations as well as economic.

In order to understand more fully the context for the current study, a useful starting point would be to review the original work which is summarised below.

1.2. SINEI Stage 1

1.2.1 Economic Context

The original SINEI study took as its starting point the very fundamental premise that effective and efficient transport infrastructure was an essential requirement for economic development and growth. In fact, six of the nine English Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) had acknowledged transport as "the number one challenge to be faced in terms of the future economic development of our Regions".

At the national or regional level, efficient transport was seen as being a fundamental requirement for economic growth in the following ways:

- By providing access to domestic and international markets and suppliers;
- Linking peripheral regions with the largest centres of population (a crucial factor for industries such as tourism);
- Attracting inward investment because of superior accessibility to suppliers and markets; and
- Providing access between employers and labour markets.

At the micro-business level various "models" have been developed to describe the types of benefit arising from infrastructure investment and these tend to fall into three groups:

- Market expansion, where new infrastructure enables a firm to widen the search for more efficient, higher quality suppliers and to win sales from more distant customers;
- Spatial concentration (rationalisation of production/distribution), whereby firms which can supply markets from fewer, larger locations as a result of transport improvements, can benefit from both lower unit costs of production and from lower stock levels; and
- Tighter time scheduling, which enables firms to apply just-in-time principles in manufacturing, adopt "quick response" in retail distribution, help to cut inventory levels, release working capital for investment in more productive activities and reduce stockholding costs.

These models, and the studies on which they are based, provide consistent findings on how transport affects individual businesses. Together with the points made above this suggests that provided all other conditions for economic growth have been secured, transport plays a vital role.

A corollary to this is that the absence of good transport links can be a hindrance and an impediment to all other initiatives which are being taken and this was the specific concern of the RDA's when commissioning the original study.

1.2.2 Study Findings

The study identified that the UK currently lacks a means of systematically identifying surface access infrastructure and interventions that are of national economic significance. Unlike a number of other European countries, the UK does not have an overall national view that integrates the regional and national picture. The Government's White Paper and accompanying Ten Year Plan do not develop transport proposals beyond underlying principles which will influence investment plans.

The study considered that the current approach to identifying surface infrastructure improvements is a relatively ad-hoc process with potential transport schemes arising from a number of sources and motivated by a range of objectives whether economic, technical, social or political. The source of schemes, for example, can vary from Regional Transport Strategies, through to scheme analysis, lobbying interests or the recently completed multi-modal studies. The study concluded that the process is relatively inconsistent and that there is no explicit reference to, or acknowledgement of, national need.

This gave rise to the concern that the set of schemes subject to appraisal may not necessarily comprise the best set of transport interventions from a national viewpoint. A process designed to assist in determining surface access infrastructure of national economic importance was therefore seen as playing a role at two distinct points – scheme identification, where there is currently no systematic approach, and; as a contribution to detailed appraisal, where the economic analysis currently fails to describe any wider strategic benefits.

The study report developed a framework for identifying those transport interventions most likely to underpin national and regional economic ambitions as expressed in the PSA/2 Target. The framework attempted to reflect the two key elements of the PSA objective; that transport intervention should facilitate an improvement to the economy in aggregate whilst allowing the lagging regions to catch up with the more prosperous regions. To reflect this balance, the framework was divided in to the three sections.

· Securing the current position: For this section of the framework, the priority was to support and enhance those parts of the economy which are primary engines of national economic prosperity, namely London and the Greater South-East. Economic arteries linking this region, other Regions and international markets were also highlighted, principally the major inter-Regional motorway and strategic rail links (collectively known as the Primary Trade Routes).

· Building on existing regional strengths: This second strand is concerned with ensuring that all regions, particularly those outside the Greater South-East, can achieve their full potential through accelerated economic growth. It is regarded as essential that they can, (a) improve their attractiveness for (inward) investment by having the appropriate transport links both within and beyond the region to thrive and expand; (b) improve access to domestic markets and suppliers thus reinforcing the open and competitive nature of their economy; (c) improve their access to international markets and suppliers upon whom increasingly each region will be dependent within the context of a global economy; and finally, (d) widen their labour catchment areas to ensure that growing economies can be sustained by the appropriate scale of resource and level of skills.

· Supporting new patterns of growth: Whilst the previous two strands have concentrated on economic drivers which are already fully engaged, this component is concerned with sustaining new drivers which will emerge either because they are policy driven or because competitive advantage has created new or much stronger centres which fulfil different roles in the national economy. Such examples might include the Thames Gateway, as well as the "Northern Way Growth Strategy" and the "Midlands Way Growth Strategy".

Whilst each of the three framework sections implicitly had equal weighting it was important to recognise a temporal dimension namely the shifting emphasis through time towards greater investment in the regions and supporting new patterns of growth.

1.2.3 Outputs from SINEI

The outcome of the original SINEI study was a framework developed in such a way that it:

- Reflected Government economic policy through a range of objectives that sought to identify the key stages of national economic development which supported the PSA/2 objective;
- Identified specific economic objectives in support of these stages; and
- Identified transport measures or criteria by which these economic objectives could best be achieved.

At the conclusion of the work, therefore, a framework had been developed which translated the overall objective of promoting national economic growth into a number of discrete transport criteria. Such an approach meant that any intervention could be reviewed on a consistent basis and the same checklist of factors used to weigh the relative strengths and weaknesses of any proposal.

Nevertheless, it was acknowledged that the framework represented work-in-progress only and that further development was required to make it a robust and practical tool for identifying (and prioritising) infrastructure of national economic importance. This further work would require:

- A more precise definition for many aspects of the framework so that proposals would be assessed in a consistent manner by different users;
- A more explicit methodology for identifying priorities from a range of options; and

- A means of ensuring that options being tested were both realistic and deliverable thus ensuring that analytical resources, time and money were not squandered on poorly defined or unproven concepts.

1.3 Objectives for Current Study

In response to the original study, the current study had three overarching objectives. These were:

- to provide a more robust tool, strengthened if possible, by a range of appropriate quantitative measures;
- to extend the current framework into one which can encompass other objectives, namely environmental and social; and
- to consider whether the national basis for the framework could be adapted for use at Regional level.

In tackling all of these objectives it was necessary to build upon the work already undertaken in such a way that it would command support across a range of stakeholder interests. Importantly the framework should remain relatively simple to use whilst at the same time capturing the most important attributes of any proposed intervention. In essence it should provide the 'argument' as to why a piece of infrastructure or policy is of national importance. To do this it must define;

- The function of the infrastructure or policy (in terms of addressing an objective or problem at national, supra-regional or regional scale);
- The extent to which it fulfils that function; and
- The broader impacts of the intervention which might go beyond its initial purpose.

Finally, as with the original study, the aim is not to replace existing methods for scheme appraisal but to add a higher level, more strategic, framework as a considered, rational, starting point for the appraisal process. In effect, the framework is identifying those interventions which explicitly address national economic needs and which are most likely to perform well in the formal, NATA-based, appraisal process. As such, its role is much more concerned with prioritising schemes and the techniques adopted within the framework have been designed specifically with that aim.

1.4 Integration with Existing Practice

At the study outset, the further development of a framework emanating from the SINEI study was couched in terms of extending both its scope and rigour. It became very clear, however, within a short period after study inception that other considerations were viewed as being particularly important by potential practitioners. These were all associated with the way in which the proposed framework would integrate with existing practices and techniques. Key objectives which were very influential in the design process were therefore as follows:

- The framework in its design should be seen as one of the "family" of techniques. It should therefore acknowledge and draw on other techniques where these have proved successful (eg strategic sustainability appraisal);
- The framework should have a well defined role (or roles) and the most appropriate was seen as being at the starting point of the option development appraisal and development process; and
- The framework, by virtue of its primary use at the outset of option development and appraisal, should be sufficiently flexible that it could be (and perhaps would need to be) used with a range of data from hard information to, at the other extreme, informed opinion. Importantly, this meant that the framework would be used several times as the analysis strengthened, with informed opinion being gradually replaced by detailed, quantitative analysis.

1.5 Structure of the Report

Following this introductory section, the report contains four further chapters, details of which are provided below.

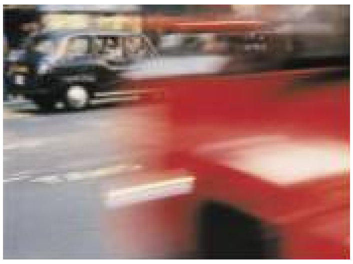
- Chapter 2: Framework Development
  This section describes the way in which the framework was further developed in such a way that it fulfilled the key requirements to become more robust and was also capable of reflecting environmental and social objectives.

- Chapter 3: Consultation
  This section details the role and format of consultation and Appendix A summarises the key points which were raised at each of the workshops. The implications of consultation results on the framework are also discussed so that the importance of consultation in shaping a practical tool can be clearly seen.

- Chapter 4: Final Framework
  This section confirms the scope and operation of the framework.

- Chapter 5: Conclusions
  This final section sets out the role of the framework and its potential application.

2. FRAMEWORK DEVELOPMENT



2 Framework Development

2.1 Overview

As discussed in Section 1 of this report, the objectives for the current study were to build upon the framework from the original SINEI study in such a way that:

- It is more rigorous and therefore capable of consistent application;
- It captures a wider range of strategic objectives and, specifically, encompasses both environmental and social attributes within its structure; and
- Is sufficiently flexible that it can be cascaded to more detailed spatial levels, for example for application at regional rather than national level.

The subsequent discussion then highlighted a further range of desirable attributes, namely that it:

- Should have a well-defined role within the option development and appraisal process;
- Should be a familiar technique in its structure and use, drawing on successful aspects of other appraisal techniques when necessary;
- Must recognise the deliverability of options it is assessing;
- Must be sufficiently flexible that it can be used with different levels of information; and, finally
- That the appraisal responses must be sufficiently discriminating that it allows options to be differentiated clearly against a range of criteria.

The response to these objectives was to develop a technique which built upon the existing SINEI framework but which had four distinct stages. These are as summarised below:

Stage 1: Objectives and Outcomes

This first stage sets out the specific problem or objective which is being addressed, the consequences of not taking action and the desired outcome from any actions to be taken. It then describes the alternative proposals or options by which this outcome might be achieved and describes the proposal which is the subject of that particular appraisal.

Before any testing work can actually begin, therefore, there needs to be a coherent argument as to why the infrastructure or policy is being considered in the first place and what it is actually trying to achieve.

Stage 2: Primary Framework

In stage 2, the detailed proposal is tested within a framework which includes economic, social and environmental objectives. A relatively simple way of scoring is also used to help profile the strengths and weaknesses of the proposal. This framework builds upon the work originally undertaken in SINEI.

Stage 3: Secondary Framework

In response to concerns that the primary framework might not adequately address the practicality or deliverability of a scheme, a secondary framework has been developed which fulfils that function. It does so by assessing the proposal against three overarching tests of feasibility, effectiveness and acceptability. In other words, these tests ask the questions “can it be done?”, “is it worth doing?” and “will it be allowed to be done?”

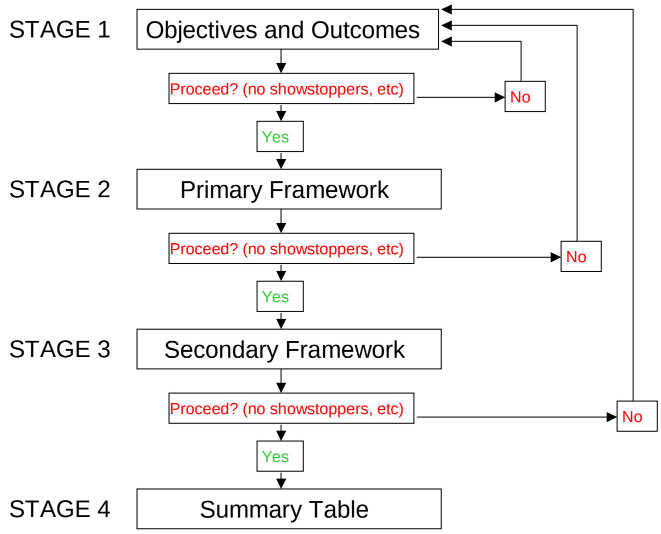
Stage 4: Summary Table

Finally, in Stage 4, there is a Summary Table which draws together the strengths and weaknesses of the proposal, using the scoring to draw out any strong features in the appraisal and referring to issues of deliverability if this is perceived as an issue.

The process itself is identified as Figure 2.1 which demonstrates its iterative nature. Thus, practitioners can only move to Stage 2 once it is clear that the proposition has merit, is logical and there are no obvious “showstoppers”. If the Stage 2 Primary Framework then fails to show significant benefits for the proposal then again the process reverts back to Stage 1 to re-think and re-specify the proposal. This procedure continues until the Summary Table, which provides a succinct appraisal of relative strengths and weaknesses. Ideally, the Summary Table analysis would be of one option against another, both of which are capable of addressing a particular problem or objective. Alternatively, the analysis could be against the Do-Nothing scenario where the proposal is assessed simply as being beneficial or not.

Figure 2.1 – Appraisal Procedure

The Framework in Practice



As a final point it should be noted that the technique is not necessarily seen as a means of totally rejecting options. If an option does not fare well in the appraisal it can be re-defined, re-specified and re-tested. The purpose of the technique is therefore to ensure that the "best" proposals are prioritised and taken forward for more detailed appraisal using conventional techniques based, for example, on the New Approach to Appraisal (NATA) where the proposal is reliant on DfT for funding.

The different stages of the technique are described in the following sections.

2.2 Stage 1: Objectives and Outcomes

The first stage in the revised procedure is to translate economic, social or environmental objectives into discrete transport proposals for testing, using the form shown as Figure 2.2.

This is done through a sequence of five phases as discussed below:

Stage 1(a) **Problem/Objective**: Describe the economic problem being addressed by the intervention.

At the outset of the process, it is important that any problems are detailed in an economic context not in an operational transport context. As an example of this, the following economic problem would set the context for examining options in the M6 corridor.

> *"The North-West of England suffers economically because of its remoteness from key markets in Europe, the Midlands and the South of England. This problem is exacerbated by high levels of congestion in key arteries linking the region with these markets. A key problem is congestion on the M6 corridor."*

If cross-referencing can be made to policy or strategy documents which can verify the problem or even enhance the description by giving details, for example, of its scale then this would be helpful. In a similar way, the problem could be identified as a result of environmental or social concerns.

Stage 1 (b) **Consequences of not taking action**: Describe the Do-Nothing scenario and how this might evolve through time. If possible, specify impacts at 0-15 years, 15-30 years and 30+ years

Having set out a problem as it exists today it is then necessary to describe how this problem might develop in the future and with what consequences. In some cases, quantitative information may be available but in other cases the forecasts may be informed guesses only or heavily caveated through a series of assumptions. The important point, however, is to develop a case for intervention of any kind before describing exactly what that intervention might be. Taking once again the example of the congestion on the M6 which is a barrier to the North West accessing key markets, the Do-Nothing scenario might be described as follows:

> *Conditions on the M6 south of Manchester are very poor. Morning and evening peak hour congestion exists on all week days and for much of the inter-peak and evening post-peak periods. On the assumption that traffic growth will match the economic growth rate or even half the growth rate for 15 years, the motorway will experience traffic growth of at least 15-20%. The result will be greater queues in the peak periods with impacts over an increasingly wider area. It will also mean that inter-peak periods will become progressively less able to accommodate traffic displaced from peak periods. The economic consequences will be:*
>
> - *a weakening of strategic economic links between north and south;*
> - *growing economic problems for those in the vicinity of the M6 as a result of greater congestion;*
> - *structural impact on indigenous industry favouring those which do not need to export south.*
>
> *Over the next 15 years the problems will be exacerbated further so that:*
>
> - *economies in the North are threatened with greater separation from the south;*
> - *there is progressively greater reliance on strong northern markets;*
> - *there is progressively greater reliance on northern ports.*
>
> *Overall, the impact will be a reduction in economic output*

In this case, the ultimate expression of congestion is a growing separation of economies in the North and South to the extent that both economies will falter and become increasingly dependent upon markets which are closer.

Stage 1 (c) Desired Outcome: Describe the Outcome being sought by any intervention

Having established that a problem exists at the current day and will be exacerbated in the future, this section further seeks clarification on what any proposed intervention is actually seeking to achieve. In the case of congestion and delay on the M6, the example given, it is likely to be the case that industry and, to an extent, individuals are seeking two benefits; reduced journey times and predictable journey times. The desired outcome may therefore be described as follows:

> *The desired outcome is a transport intervention which provides efficient travel and predictable journey times at all times of the day. This outcome must be safeguarded from deteriorating over time. It must be particularly beneficial to freight movement, 95% of which is currently carried by road.*

Stage 1 (d) Options to Considered: List and describe alternative means of satisfying the outcomes described above:

It is very important when considering a proposed intervention that, at the outset, there is a wide ranging view of the different solutions, and types of solutions, which might deliver the desired outcomes. This is to ensure that the search for a solution does not become unnecessarily restrictive at an early stage. In the case of the example being considered here for illustrative reasons, it could be that the options for consideration would include:

- *additional capacity to M6 based on current alignment and junction standards;*
- *additional capacity for M6 based on toll-road designed for strategic long distance traffic;*
- *road user charging;*
- *deflection of European traffic to alternative northern ports;*
- *greater use of airfreight either regionally or through National Airfreight hub;*
- *access management strategy to protect longer distance movements.*

Stage 1 (e) Description of Proposal: Describe in detail the proposal, setting out the direct impacts and any perceived indirect impacts

Finally, and only after this process has been exhausted, is the proposed intervention discussed in detail. The description of the intervention should cover three distinct aspects:

- a physical description – its scale and location;
- the primary outcomes from its adoption – for example, reducing congestion on a major highway or overcrowding on a rail service; and
- any secondary outcomes (perhaps unwanted outcomes which will need amelioration or mitigation measures). For many interventions this will require no discussion but for others, such as road

user charging, there could be significant secondary outcomes associated with, for example, the re-investment of hypothecated revenue. In the case of major highways issues of induced traffic might also require consideration.

At the conclusion to Stage 1, therefore, there should have been a thorough review of problems, potential solutions, what they were likely to deliver, and the consequences of not taking action. Critically, the whole process links back to the objective or problem which is not defined in transport but economic terms.

Figure 2.2 Stage 1; Objectives and Outcomes

PROBLEM/OBJECTIVE
Describe the economic problem being addressed by the intervention (cross reference to other documents)
CONSEQUENCES OF NOT TAKING ACTION
Describe the do-nothing scenario and how this might evolve through time. Specify impacts at 0-15 years, 15-30 years and 30+ years
DESIRED OUTCOME
Describe the outcome which is being sought by any intervention. (Do not describe the outcome or impacts of your specific proposal).
OPTIONS TO BE CONSIDERED
List and describe alternative means of satisfying the outcomes described above. In particular identify lower cost alternatives, not necessarily transport
DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL
Describe in detail the proposal, setting out the direct impacts and any perceived indirect impacts. How will it work in transport terms?

2.3 Stage 2: Primary Framework

2.3.1 Introduction

Stage 2 of the process involves application of the Primary Framework which was developed as an output from the original SINEI study.

This stage of the work involved two key objectives:

- To extend the scope of the framework to include social and environmental factors; and
- To introduce greater rigour into the assessment process.

A third objective became evident from the consultation described in Section 3. This highlighted some concern at the original framework and a desire to ensure that this was reviewed as part of the process. This was to ensure that the integrity of the new evolving framework was not impaired by any problems inherited from the original work.

2.3.2 Extending Scope of the Framework

The new, enlarged framework is given as Figure 2.3. In terms of the social and environmental objectives exactly the same principles were adopted as for the original work. Thus:

- The social and environmental objectives were derived from Government policy documents and public service agreements;
- Attempts were made to include a temporal element into the framework design. Thus, the framework reflects, as far as possible, a current range of issues which must be overcome, new improvements which can be nurtured into the future and how these improvements can then be secured and sustained;
- The framework was seen as a logical progression which linked a key objective to a number of sub-objectives and hence to specific transport measures which could contribute to achievement of these sub-objectives.

Steps were also take to "tidy up" some aspects of the original framework based upon comments received at the conclusion of the original SINEI study or as a result of consultation on the current study.

The one change which potentially requires discussion at this stage relates to the structure of the framework. In order to assist the logical progression from economic, social or environmental policy objective to discrete transport measure the process was re-defined as follows:

Objective: This column described the strategic policy direction which was being sought as a result of a Public Service Agreement or some other policy measure. An example from the economic development theme was one of "Building on Regional Strengths";

Sub-Objective: In trying to satisfy the overall objective (or series of objectives) a number of sub-objectives were defined which could, more precisely, define different aspects of the overall objective. Thus, in building upon regional economic strengths sub-objectives would include:

- improve attractiveness for inward investment for all Regions;
- improve access to domestic markets for all Regions;
- improve access to international markets for all Regions;
- widen labour catchment areas.

Strategic Transportation Contribution/Impact: In response to each of the economic, social or environmental sub-objectives, the next column defines the contribution which transport might be expected to make. Thus, continuing the example above, transport might be expected to assist the attractiveness of inward investment by improving the perceived accessibility of the region to key domestic markets;

Specific Transportation Contribution/Impact: As a final stage, and again using the example above, the specific transport contribution could be in improving rail accessibility to major economic centres which are the key drivers of the regional economy.

The point being made here is that the structure follows a logical progression from a broad economic objective to a very specific transport measure which supports the economic objective. Its development for each of the major economic, social and environmental themes therefore follows a consistent approach and provides a transparent linkage.

2.3.3 Social Objective

In keeping with the principles established by the economic objective, the social objective was framed in such a way as to encourage and recognise improvement through time. Thus, as a first stage the objective was to reduce social disadvantage and, having reduced disadvantage, the second objective was then to widen choice for everyone.

The structure of the social objective is given in Figure 2.3. Within this can be seen the way in which these two overarching objectives were further divided into sub-objectives. Thus, in addressing the objective of reducing social disadvantage three distinct groups have been identified as those to be specifically targeted; the elderly, the poor and those with a mobility impairment. For each of these categories, the way in which transport contributes, as a generality, was then identified. Thus, in supporting the elderly, access to healthcare and local amenities is a priority. For the poor, access to employment and training, is more important whereas for those with a mobility impairment access to local services is the priority. Finally, the specific contribution which transport can make is then given in the fourth column. Thus, access to healthcare may best be provided by demand responsive services whereas access to local amenities would be provided by affordable local public transport.

2.3.4 Environmental Objective

The environmental aspects of the framework were developed in exactly the same way. Thus, a three stage improvement in the environmental objective was described in terms of:

- reducing the rate of environmental damage (first stage);
- improving the environment (second stage); and
- maintaining long term environmental improvement (third stage)

As opposed to both the economic and social components the impact which transport normally has on the environment tends to be negative by virtue of resource consumption, impact on landscape/townscape and discharge of pollutants.

In the framework, therefore, these impacts need to be re-written in such a way that any scheme is attempting to minimise or reduce such impacts.

2.3.5 Economic Objective

As part of the second stage study, the outputs from the original SINEI study were reviewed. The review was motivated by two considerations, the need to be consistent with the amended overall structure and as a result from comments received during consultation.

The main change arising from this was to reduce the incidence of “Access to Heathrow” being seen as a specific measure to be satisfied in support of an economic objective. There is no doubt that Heathrow as the dominant airport for the United Kingdom has a particularly important role to play both in terms of capacity and connectivity but also important in terms of international perceptions. Whilst acknowledging its influence in the first framework, it was nevertheless seen as excessive when an alternative to accessing Heathrow more easily would be to improve the accessibility and connectivity of Regional and pan-Regional airports.

FIGURE 2.3

PRIMARY FRAMEWORK

Provides strategic assessment of requirements

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVE	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SUB-OBJECTIVE	STRATEGIC TRANSPORT CONTRIBUTION / IMPACT	SPECIFIC TRANSPORT CONTRIBUTION/ IMPACT	APPRAISAL			COMMENTS
				0-15 Yr	15-30Yr	30+Yr	
Supporting New Patterns of Growth	Promote Additional European City-Regions	Access to International Markets	Access to international pan-regional gateway airports outside London and National airfreight Hub				
			Access to international 'gateway' ports outside Dover Straits				
		Access to National Markets	Access to National Transport Networks				
		Access to skilled Labour Force	Access to Labour Market				
		Access to World-City Functions	Access to City of London				
	Develop and Sustain New National Economic Development Areas	Access to National Markets	Access to National Transport Networks				
		Access to International markets	Access to Heathrow				
			Access to (at minimum) Pan Regional Airport				
			Access to international 'gateway' ports				
		Access to Skilled Labour	Quality of Regional and Local Transport Networks				
Building on Regional Strengths	Improve Attractiveness for Inward Investment for all Regions	Access to World City Functions	Access to City of London				
		Perceived Accessibility from Region to Domestic Markets	Rail Connectivity and Accessibility between major economic centres				
			Level of Service provided by inter-Regional roads				
			Airside Connectivity of Regional Airports				
		Perceived Accessibility to International Markets	Access to Regional Airport at Minimum				
	Improve Access to Domestic Markets for all Regions	Connectivity and accessibility between economic centres	Reliable Journey Times for Strategic Road Connections				
			Rail Connectivity and Accessibility between major economic centres				
		Predictable Journey times for Business Planning	Level of Service provided by inter-Regional roads				
	Improve Access to International Markets for all Regions	*Air Connectivity to major economic centres*	*Access to Local Regional Airport*				
		Access to Major Ports	Access to 'Major' ports outside the South East				
		Access to Regional/Pan Regional Airports	Access to pan-regional gateway airport and national airfreight hub				
	Widen Labour Catchment Area	Access to Key Employment Sites	Rail Access to City Centres				
Securing the Status Quo	Maintain Access to Existing Strategic Markets for Regions outside GSE	Access to Domestic Markets	Maintaining high level-of service on 'Trade Routes'				
		Access to International Markets	Access to (at minimum) Pan Regional Airport				
			Consistent, High quality Connections to Ports				
	Maintain Economic Vitality of the Greater South East	Access to Domestic Markets	Maintaining high level-of service on 'Trade Routes'				
		Access to international Markets	Access to Heathrow, Gatwick, Stansted				
			Access to Channel and Haven Ports				
		Access to Labour	Quality of suburban and regional rail networks				
		Accessibility within GSE	Level-of-service of sub-regional and local road networks				
	Maintain London as a Global Player	Access to World Markets	Access to Heathrow				
		Access to Skilled Labour	Access to inter-Regional Labour Market				
		Access To/From Domestic Markets	Access to central London				
		Accessibility within London	Quality of Urban and Surburban Public Transport				
SOCIAL OBJECTIVE	**SOCIAL SUB-OBJECTIVE**	**STRATEGIC TRANSPORT CONTRIBUTION / IMPACT**	**SPECIFIC TRANSPORT CONTRIBUTION/ IMPACT**	**APPRAISAL**			**COMMENTS**
				0-15 Yr	**15-30Yr**	**30+Yr**	
Widening Lifestyle Choices for Everyone	Wider Choice for general population	Access to local amenities/ services	High Quality local public transport				
		Access to local and longer-distance employment opportunities	Public transport access to urban centres				
	Improve choice for the Mobility Impaired	Access to local services	Improve accessibility to 'easy-access' public transport and parking				
	Improved choice for the elderly	Access to local services	Improve accessibility to affordable public transport and parking				
Reducing Social Disadvantage	Removal of Barriers for the Mobility Impaired	Access to local services	Improve accessibility to 'easy-access' public buildings				
	Reduce Poverty across all Regions	Access to Employment	Improve public transport access to employment for local populations				
		Access to Training	Improved accessibility to training for local population				
	Support for the elderly	Access to Healthcare	Improved levels of demand responsive public transport				
		Access to Local Amenities	Improved accessibility to affordable local public transport				

FIGURE 2.3

PRIMARY FRAMEWORK

Provides strategic assessment of requirements

ENVIRONMENT OBJECTIVE	ENVIRONMENT SUB-OBJECTIVE	STRATEGIC TRANSPORT CONTRIBUTION / IMPACT	SPECIFIC TRANSPORT CONTRIBUTION/ IMPACT	APPRAISAL			COMMENTS
				0-15 Yr	15-30 Yr	30 + Yr	
Maintaining Long Term Environmental Improvement	Stabilise Climate Change	Use of Fossil Fuels	Reduce fossil fuel consumption				
	Maintain and Increase Biodiversity	Level and distribution of traffic	Reduce levels of traffic				
	Maintain and Improve the Quality of Ground, River and Sea Waters	Level of Traffic	Reduce levels of traffic				
Improving the Environment	Enhance the Quality and Distinctiveness of the Landscape	Impact on Countryside Valued for its Intrinsic Quality	Minimise traffic intrusion into countryside valued for its intrinsic quality				
		Impact on 'tranquil areas'	Minimise traffic intrusion into 'tranquil areas'				
	Enhance Attractiveness of Towns and Cities for Places to Live	Impact on areas of architectural/ cultural value	Minimise traffic intrusion into 'sensitive' urban areas				
		Impact on Air Quality	Reduction in contribution to atmospheric emissions				
Reducing the Rate of Environmental Damage	Reduce decline of landscape quality and distinctiveness	Adverse impacts on Countryside Valued for its Intrinsic Quality	Minimise traffic intrusion into countryside with high landscape value				
		Fragmentation of 'Tranquil Areas'	Minimise traffic intrusion into 'tranquil areas'				
		Damage to Internationally and Nationally Designated Sites and Areas	Minimise occurences of close traffic proximity to designated sites				
	Reduce Pollution of Natural Ground Resources	Scale of pollutants	Reduce levels of traffic				
	Minimise Impact on Air Quality	Level of gaseous emissions	Reduce levels of traffic and congestion				

2.4 Appraisal Scoring

In any framework design, the issue of scoring and any weighting implicit or explicit in the adopted scoring, can be a contentious issue. The arguments are well rehearsed both for and against scoring but in essence they reduce to two very simple questions:

- Does a system of scoring assist in the decision making process by bringing clarity to a confusion of data or, alternatively, does it mask major conflicting impacts which need to be weighed more carefully?; and
- Is the decision making outcome disproportionately influenced by the exact form of scoring?

The second point is relatively easy to address by way of sensitivity testing (at differing levels of sophistication and complexity) to safeguard against the possibility of selecting an outcome only because of the particular scoring system applied. The first point, however is less easy to reconcile through a technical process and is therefore much more open to practitioners judgement about its usefulness.

In the case of this framework, the decision on scoring, and its precise form, was influenced by three considerations:

- The need to have some method of summarising the scale of benefits and disbenefits when 55 different measures are included within the framework. This argues in favour of scoring as summary tool;
- The need to develop techniques which, as far as possible, sit comfortably with other Departmental and cross-Departmental practice. This argues in favour of adopting similar processes which are in use elsewhere; and
- The need to adopt a system which does not unnecessarily simplify decisions which are inherently complex and where conflicting impacts need to be weighed carefully. This argues in favour of a system which <u>informs</u> decisions but <u>does not provide the overriding basis for</u> <u>deciding</u>.

This last argument also mitigated against the use of weighting, which attributes greater importance to some criteria than others. However, the point must be made that weightings will always be implicit from the problem or objective being addressed and will therefore vary from application to application. It also confirms the point that professional and political judgement can never be excluded from the decision making process, nor should they.

One feature incorporated into this framework is a very simple scoring system designed to identify the broad spread of beneficial and adverse impacts. The concept is very similar to other appraisal tools where a seven point scale is used, three positive, three negative and one neutral.

Thus, if the transport contribution is fulfilled, a positive score (shown by a tick) is awarded in the appraisal column. If the transport contribution is contravened, a negative score (shown by a cross) is awarded in the appraisal column. If the scheme is assessed to neither fulfil nor contravene the transport contribution, a neutral score (shown by 0) is awarded in the appraisal column.

A graded scoring system of one to three ticks or one to three crosses reflects:

- Scale of impacts and
- Degree of certainty that the contribution will be delivered.

Thus, a scheme awarded ✓✓✓ delivers large-scale benefits with a high degree of certainty. A score of ✓, regardless of scale or certainty, delivers only modest benefits and anything in between receives ✓✓ (In other words, it is either certain to deliver more than a modest benefit or, less certainly, a large benefit).

This system of scoring gives rise to very obvious questions; such as how to define what "large-scale" means and whether the concept is essentially absolute or relative. Given that the role of the framework is to develop the best "solution" to a particular problem or objective from a range of alternatives the key requirement is actually one of consistency. Thus, if Option A receives more ticks than Option B against a particular criterion then, given the need for consistency, there must be a demonstrable difference in performance and it is for the practitioner to provide this supporting evidence.

If possible, an assessment score should also be made for all three timescales specified in the appraisal column (0-15yrs, 15-30yrs and 30+). This reflects any potentially non-linear aspects of the intervention - for example, the possibility that short-term road improvements will be quickly eroded and additional measures needed therefore to protect the intervention.

Finally, scoring from the appraisal column should be collated and recorded in the summary table as a summation of ✓'s and x's to reflect the balance of benefits and impacts (eg 25✓/4 x paints a very different picture to 3✓/15 x). The important point here is that the summary is not looking for precision but simply to 'paint a picture' which will help in understanding the balance of benefits associated with a particular intervention.

It is then the responsibility of the practitioners to weight the different aspects of scoring and interpret the results in a way which best responds to the problem or objective being set.

2.5 Secondary Framework

2.5.1 Overview

The secondary framework was designed with a very specific purpose; to identify whether a proposal being considered can be delivered and whether it is an effective use of resources.

The framework is divided into three aspects often used for appraisals of this kind;

- Feasibility – can it be done?;
- Effectiveness – is it the best use of resources?;
- Acceptability – will it be supported?

2.5.2 Feasibility

The feasibility aspect is divided into five distinct stages:

- Technical: is there a proven technology upon which the intervention is based or will new technology have to be developed? If it is the latter, this is not necessarily a constraint but further information will be required on the timescale and cost to develop new technology;
- Timescale: this is concerned with the overall time required for delivery and whether this sits comfortably with the timescale within which a solution is required;
- Legal powers: it may be the case that new legal powers may be required for an intervention. If this is the case then it needs to be recorded. The need for new legal powers is not necessarily a constraint but it may cause the detailed specification of a proposal to be reconsidered;
- Cost: the overall cost of a scheme should be identified if possible and set within the context of risk (how accurate is the estimate) and the scale of availability within national budget. At an early stage much of this information will not be known but even a crude estimate of the total cost will alert the practitioner to potential problems; and
- Land and Labour: although unlikely it may be that the scale or location of a project is constrained in terms of land and labour. If this is potentially a problem it should be recorded.

The purpose of the feasibility section, as with other sections, is not necessarily to eliminate a proposal but rather to identify the difficulties. It could also result in re-specifying the proposal to overcome difficulties or accepting the difficulties as a price to pay for likely benefits.

2.5.3 Effectiveness

Effectiveness is considered in two ways only:

- Cost: is the intervention an effective use of (public) money, or expressed another way, does the intervention satisfy conventional value for money criteria already defined by the delivery agencies in their different sectors?; and
- Strategic compatibility : does the proposed intervention enhance any other investments or, alternatively, does it prevent another intervention taking place? An example might be extensive and expensive traffic management obviating the possibility of completely new and enlarged infrastructure in the near future.

A careful narrative would also be needed to explain why negative scoring in this section should not result in any intervention being rejected or subject to re-specification.

2.5.4 Acceptability

The final section of the secondary framework is concerned with acceptability and is divided into three parts:

- Integration; this refers to Government policy and the extent to which widespread institutional support can take the proposal forward, or, alternatively can prevent it making progress. A proposal directly opposed to Government policy would almost certainly rule out the proposal from further consideration and require re-specification or rejection;

- Equity; the wider the spread of benefits the more likely the intervention will be recognised as having a national dimension; and
- Timescale; it is important to set out as clearly as possible the lifetime over which the benefits will be enjoyed. If it is a very short period (say less than 5 years) then this needs to be flagged as a weakness of the proposal or alternatively that the proposal requires further development.

2.5.5 Scoring

As for the primary framework, a simple scoring system has been devised. In this system, however, if an objective is fulfilled, a tick is awarded in the appraisal column. If an objective is not fulfilled a cross is awarded.

If failing to fulfil the objective is considered to be a moderate barrier, then two crosses, xx, are awarded. If failure to fulfil the objective is considered to be a major showstopper, then three crosses, xxx, are awarded. Three crosses inevitably requires re-consideration or re-specification of the proposal.

2.6 Summary Table

The final part of the framework is a Summary Table which brings together the appraisal into a form which discusses strengths and weaknesses under the three major headings of economic, social and environmental.

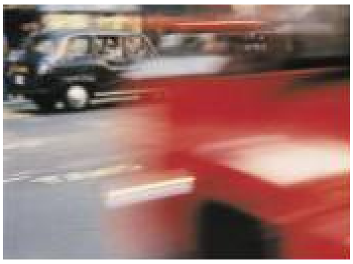
It is recommended that before completing any written summary of strengths and weaknesses, the relative scoring is first entered into the Table. This is to ensure some level of consistency that the narrative describing strengths and weaknesses is linked to the (simplistic) quantitative assessment.

An important note is that the framework may have awarded ticks or crosses without much supporting evidence. This is almost certainly the case in the early stages of scheme development where the technique is being used to "test" the type and scale of benefits likely to be delivered. However, as more quantitative information becomes available and key arguments recognised as being central to the case for funding, so the justification for the scoring needs to become more explicit. This applies to aspects of both the Primary and Secondary frameworks.

The narrative should not explain the transport benefits per se but rather the economic, social and environmental benefits which are enjoyed (or sacrificed) because of the intervention,

Finally, the summary conclusions need to weigh the strengths and weaknesses of the intervention against other options, a Reference Case or Do-Minimum so as to recommend a way forward.

3. CONSULTATION



3 Consultation

3.1 The Role of Consultation

The purpose of the framework as a tool for decision making meant that it was critical to involve potential users of the tool in the framework refinement process. A series of consultation workshops was therefore held. These provided an opportunity for face to face discussions and feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of the draft procedures and how these might actually be used in practice. Workshops were undertaken in four super-regions during mid to late November 2004. These Super-Regions were:

- North - North East, North West, Yorkshire and Humberside;
- Midlands - East Midlands and West Midlands
- East - South East, London, East Anglia;
- South West - South West

Following discussions at the Steering Group meeting, it was considered appropriate to adopt an informal format to these workshops. It was also decided to restrict attendees to institutional stakeholders such as the RDAs, Regional Assemblies, Government Offices, PTEs, SRA, HA and the Core Cities Group, to allow detailed discussion which would focus primarily on the economic role of transport provision.

All four workshops adopted the following consistent structure, split into three main areas:

- Overview of purpose and structure of workshop and study aspirations;
- Primary Framework; and
- Secondary framework.

It should be noted that at the time of consultation, the methodology comprised only the primary and secondary framework.

Each section comprised a short presentation from the Consultants, followed by a discussion involving all attendees. Discussions were based around:

- The concept of the framework:
  Is there a need for a tool?
  Will the tool assist decision making processes?
  How does the tool ‘sit’ within existing appraisal frameworks?
  How can it help in identifying “good” schemes for appraisal?
  Are there any constraints on what can feed into the framework?

- The framework content:
  Is the balance between economic development, environment and social themes appropriate?
  Are the objectives in the framework logical?
  Do the transport requirements and indicators best support the objectives?;
  Is the content and level of detail in the secondary framework reasonable?

- Application of the framework
  Who will use the framework?
  Which decisions will the framework inform?
  How severe a test should the secondary framework be?

The key issues raised in the Consultation are summarised as Appendix A.

3.2 Summary of Findings

The Consultation limited to a range of key players in each super-region was particularly helpful. There was a breadth of constructive comment which stimulated debate and ensured that the study team was properly challenged.

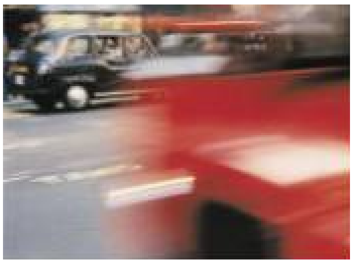
Key points to emerge were as follows:

- All participants, almost without exception, agreed that a tool of this nature could be helpful at both national regional levels;
- Most consultees considered economic drivers to be the primary motivation for new transport schemes and interventions;
- The requirement for Stages 1 and 4 of the process, defining objectives and outcomes and providing a Summary Table were greatly supported;

- There were a number of points on detailed wording but the key message was that wording should be as clear and unambiguous as possible.

In summary, however there appeared to be an overriding view that, imperfect though all techniques inevitably are, this approach could provide a consistent, rigorous and transparent approach to assist in prioritising transport schemes.

4. TESTING THE FINAL FRAMEWORK



4 Testing The Final Framework

4.1 Scope of Testing

Following the development of a draft Framework, the consultation and subsequent discussions both within team and at Steering Group, a methodology with associated frameworks was developed. These are the frameworks described in Section 2.

As a final stage in the development of the methodology a number of assessments were undertaken to test whether the approach was workable. The tests were performed in order to identify:

- Any lack of clarity in the wording of the framework,
- Major issues that were not included;
- Any issues that were duplicated; and
- Any problems with the consistency of the scoring system.

In each case, those trialling the framework did so on the basis of their own knowledge (ie informed opinion). There is therefore a lack of quantitative information. Nevertheless, this is seen as entirely valid since the purpose of the testing was to verify the integrity of the methodology, and consistency of response not to provide a fully informed response on each aspect of the framework.

4.2 Lessons Learned

The results of the testing work demonstrated that even with no substantial quantitative information, the methodology was able to explore key strengths and weaknesses of different interventions. However, in a real-life application the framework would need to go further and test a wide variety of options funnelling down to a few preferred options for which quantitative information would increasingly be required.

As a starting point to this whole process, the iterative relationship between different stages would need to be played out as shown in Figure 3.1. Only when a logical, internally consistent scheme with demonstrable benefits and no obvious showstoppers had been developed would the detailed analysis commence.

In addressing proposed transport interventions in this way, the ability to prioritise transport schemes arises from two distinct sources:

- The relative importance attached to the economic problem identified; and
- The ability to deliver the preferred transport solution within defined parameters relating to timescale, cost, value for money etc.

It is extremely difficult to be prescriptive about how the case for each proposed intervention can best be made, but as basic principles, the process outlined in Figure 3.1 should be followed and clear evidence adduced to support the key planks of any argument. Reference to other adopted policy documents which specify relative economic priorities would also be very helpful in this respect.

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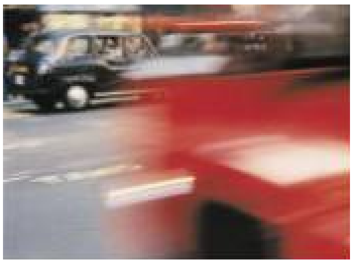
5. CONCLUSIONS



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5 Conclusions

5.1 Role of the Framework

At the conclusion of the original SINEI study there was broad agreement on three key propositions:

- Transport interventions were rarely linked explicitly with strategic economic, social or environmental objectives, they were generally in response to an operational problem;
- There was no consistent and systematic methodology by which schemes could be generated for more detailed appraisal using conventional and well-tried techniques such as NATA; and
- There was no systematic and universally accepted way of prioritising interventions given that resources will always be scarce.

Following this second stage of work the study team believe that all these objectives have now been satisfied. In the case of prioritising, however, the position should be clarified. The technique will facilitate:

- Prioritising amongst different options addressing the same strategic objective; and
- Prioritising into broad groupings, schemes which have been developed in pursuit of different objectives.

Thus, scheme A may produce sufficient benefits across all areas of the framework (economic, social and environmental) and have few shortcomings placing it in the Top Priority group. Scheme B, however, may have much fewer benefits and a greater number of potential problems thus putting it in a lower priority group.

5.2 Potential Applications

At the current time, investment in transport interventions is promulgated on the basis of technical analysis and political judgement. This is no different to any other area of public policy and ensures that the right checks and balances are applied before committing significant levels of public money.

However, adoption of this methodology should allow these various processes to be refined by capturing, in a systematic and consistent manner, the key attributes of any intervention and comparing these with alternatives addressing the same problem. Alternatively the proposed solutions for addressing different problems can also be compared systematically and consistently to determine the best likely package of measures within defined constraints.

Our view, therefore, is that at the national level this is a tool to be used jointly by Government Departments to help determine which types of transport intervention are most likely to be effective in addressing economic, social or environmental objectives. In this, there would need to be an interaction with delivery agencies and Treasury to decide the practicalities of delivering this intervention. Given time and experience in using the technique it may also be possible to extend the currently proposed application within transport alone, to cover the alignment of strategies in other policy areas.

The second possible application of the technique would be at Regional level, where the technique could be used:

- First to develop and refine a Regional investment plan; and
- Second, as the basis for appraising different regional plans and allocating funds between them.

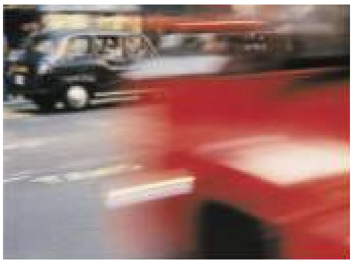
In this application the process would remain identical; four stages, starting with a definition of the Objectives and Outcomes and concluding with a Summary Table which drew out the key strengths and weaknesses.

In applying the technique at this level, however, care would be needed to ensure that objectives were amended to suit the specific circumstances of the region. Nevertheless, the broad themes articulated in the current framework may prove a useful starting point for defining objectives and criteria at this lower level.

In summary therefore, the tool has been designed to be used at national level and could be used, for example, by the Department for Transport in providing advice to Ministers on national transport programmes, or on proposals developed by cross-regional groupings such as the Northern Way.

The tool, modified as appropriate, is also potentially valuable at regional and local level, to be used, for example, in work on regional funding allocations or Local Transport Plans. Experience of use of the Framework in these fields would certainly be helpful in indicating areas where the methodology may be developed or need further refinement.

APPENDIX A

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Appendix A

Appendix A: Consultation Findings

The key issues raised at each 'super region' workshop are summarised in Table A.1 overleaf. A summary of key findings is given below.

A1. Project Scope and Objectives

In general, there was support for the concept of a framework. It was felt that this framework would be a useful tool to assist with the decision-making process, especially when identifying and prioritising measures which might potentially be of national importance. It was stated in a number of workshops that the framework needed clarification in areas so that it could be applied in an unbiased and consistent manner.

From the meetings conducted, it was felt that currently there is a gap in the appraisal process and such a tool is necessary to bridge the gap between the identification of the scheme, or the need for intervention, and the current appraisal process. However, the South West Workshop was reluctant to add a further stage that would extend the timescale for scheme delivery. They felt that further criteria should just be added to existing appraisal documents like NATA in order to prioritise schemes of national importance. The Greater South East Workshop felt there was also a need to spell out clearly 'what happens if we don't do something?'.

There were a number of comments to the effect that the framework will require review and revision in response to changing economic, social and environmental conditions.

There was also some concern in the Midlands that the environmental discussion may have been under-represented although it was recognised that as a tool to be used at the outset of the scheme development/ appraisal process, the overriding motivation was probably economic.

The South West Workshop stated that the framework would be most effective at a national level and therefore funding for these schemes should also come from the central government. There was also some support for its use at the Regional rather than National level.

This linkage between different interventions, whether national or regional, and the source of their funding was an issue repeated in many forums, not least at Steering Group meetings.

The Northern workshop felt that the framework should be used carefully to ensure that it did not deal exclusively with new intervention when maximising the efficiency of existing assets might be the preferred way forward.

A2 Primary Framework

There was concern that the framework should be simple in application with unambiguous wording used to describe different criteria. Expressions in the draft framework such as "social cohesion" through used in Government Policy papers, were difficult to define and, it was agreed, should be avoided if possible. The Midlands Workshop felt there was a need for a comprehensive set of guidance notes to accompany application of the framework and to enable a consistent assessment approach. Two workshops felt that there was conflict between themes, objectives and transport requirements, particularly economic development and environmental themes.

In general, environmental objectives included within the framework were considered comprehensive and appropriate, although, the South West workshop felt that Statutory Environmental bodies should have been consulted. There was debate regarding the validity of using the economic development theme as the driver for the rest of the framework in the South West, but the existing orientation of the framework towards economic development was considered appropriate at the North Workshop.

There was unease about the London-centric aspect for part of the framework. In general, it was felt that local issues should be considered, for example in terms of improving linkages within regional centres, rather than between them.

A3 Secondary Framework

The secondary framework was considered both a good evaluation and elimination mechanism mechanism, as it highlighted potential risks. The Greater South East Workshop felt the framework should attempt to recognise innovative ideas albeit recognising the risks associated with these at the same time. The

Midlands Workshop suggested that the secondary framework should not be secondary, but primary instead, as it is a waste of time assessing a scheme against the primary framework, if it is clear the secondary framework will reject it.

The Greater South East asked whether it would be possible to assess capital or labour in 20-30 years time, and stated that investment options should be challenging but realistic. The South West Workshop hoped that the secondary framework could highlight the need to move funding between schemes. The North Workshop felt that environmental criteria should be added to the framework.

A4 Implications for Further Refinement of the Framework

The purpose of consultation is to ensure that the full breadth of opinion is captured before moving onto the next stage of a study or making important decisions. In the case of this study, the opinions received were all constructive and, almost without exception, gave cause for some internal discussion and debate within the team as to how a particular issue could be addressed.

The overall response to these comments can best be summarised under three headings; Project Scope, Detailed Comment and Application. Each of these is discussed below

<u>Project Scope</u>

The majority of respondents acknowledged that economic drivers would be the primary motivation for new transport schemes and intervention. However, the need to recognise the consequences of a Do-Nothing scenario and a variety of options in addressing a particular problem or objective gave rise to the first stage of the methodology, defining objectives and outcomes.

It also gave added weight to the need for a simple form of summary table to weigh the strengths and weaknesses of different options.

<u>Detailed Comment</u>

Many of the detailed comments made were often extremely useful in designing the final form of the framework. For example, the requirement to be clear and unambiguous in wording meant that some concepts were replaced by others. The over-reliance on Heathrow in providing air connectivity to international markets was again an issue which the team responded to. In summary, therefore, these comments were helpful and were undoubtedly the impetus for change.

<u>Application</u>

How the framework should be applied, by whom and at what part of the process drew much comment. In the main, however these are not points which the Consultant team can respond to since they are within the remit of the Department for Transport. There was also much discussion as to how this process may be integrated with the concept of Regional Indicative Budgets and the greater role of regional decision making.

Although the consultant team does not have the authority to respond definitively on these matters it nevertheless feels that the methodology developed could play a significant role in terms of providing:

- A consistent methodology within and between regions;
- A rigorous approach which makes the transition from regional (or national) economic problems and objectives to discrete transport regimes; and
- A methodology which can be used with differing qualities of information. It could therefore be used on the basis of informed opinion for illustrative purposes or with a fully developed quantitative analysis in support of scheme funding.

The last formal meeting within the study, that with the Chief Executives of the Regional Development Agencies certainly highlighted their desire to see a tool applied which was consistent, systematic and gave the basis for prioritising regional investment. The tool developed is capable of assisting all these things.

Table A.1: Summary of Consultation Workshop findings

Workshop Super region	Comments Raised by Attendees		
	Project Scope and Objectives	Primary Framework	Secondary Framework
Greater South East	Useful tool to assist the decision-making process.	It is logical that framework objectives reflect PSA targets, although they should not be made to 'fit' these national government targets if this is not suitable.	Whilst the framework should 'scope out' likely 'showstoppers', it should not knock innovative ideas.
	Should be applied in an unbiased and consistent manner.	Potential conflict between objectives/ transport requirements under economic development and environmental themes.	Investment options should be realistic, but challenging. Framework should not stall challenging ideas.
	Relationship between the framework and existing appraisal frameworks, for example NATA, requires clarification.	Improved linkages between regions may not be the right approach to balancing employment supply and demand. The correct approach to promoting social opportunity might instead be building upon the strengths of individual regional centres, rather than encouraging movements between them.	Is it possible to assess what capital, labour etc will be available in 20-30 years time?
	Risk that the framework is static and fails to deal with changing economic, social and environmental conditions.	There is a lack of clarity over how the term 'social cohesion' is defined.	
	It is essential that the framework provides a prioritisation tool, although recognising that a ranking or scoring system would be difficult to develop and would need to be applied consistently.	Whilst social issues might be considered a local issue, the framework would be incomplete and lack rigour if they were excluded.	
	Should also look at feeding 'what happens if we don't do something?' scenario through the framework	Environmental objectives included in the framework are considered comprehensive and appropriate.	
Midlands	Necessary tool to bridge the gap between the identification of the scheme, or the need for intervention, and the current appraisal process.	Unease over the apparent London-centric' approach of the framework. (reference to repeated one at Heathrow).	Should the secondary framework be secondary?. There seems little point in working a scheme through the primary framework if it is clear that the secondary framework will reject the scheme.
	A common view was that national land use planning needed to be addressed before the framework could be effectively used. The framework must take account of Regional Planning Guidance and Regional Transport Strategies and be aware of the Regional Futures work.	Desire for a comprehensive set of guidance notes to accompany application of the framework and enable a consistent assessment approach.	
	Although there was concern about the lack of environmental objectives, it was recognised that there was a need for a tool to state the economic case for a scheme or policy.	There were concerns that indicators within different theme were contradictory, particularly economic development and environmental themes. The environmental objectives were considered to be suitable for this stage of the appraisal process.	

		If the framework were used for scheme appraisal at regional level, it would be difficult to quantify the impact of a particular scheme on social objectives.	
South West	At present, regional organisations experienced difficulties in comparing schemes based around different modes. If the framework could offer a means of addressing these difficulties, and be capable of assessing a package of schemes, it would fulfil a particularly valuable role.	There was debate regarding the validity of using the economic development theme as the driver for the rest of the framework.	It was hoped that the secondary framework could highlight the need to move funding between schemes.
	Although the group believed that there was currently a gap in the appraisal process, there was reluctance to add a further stage that would extend the timescale for scheme delivery. Would it not be possible to add further criteria to existing appraisal documents such as NATA in order to prioritise schemes of national importance?	The group expressed concern that their views on the environmental theme may not have been the views that should have been sought. It was the group's opinion that the absence of Statutory Environmental bodies at the consultation meetings was 'unfortunate'.	
	If the framework were to be used, it would be most effective at national level, and therefore the funding for this scheme should be provided by central Government.		
North	Provides a mechanism for identifying and prioritising what measures actually constitute national importance.	The existing orientation of the framework towards economic development was considered appropriate.	A good evaluation mechanism as well as an elimination mechanism.
	Framework will help improve the transparency of decision-making.	At present, the framework is London-centric, with transport requirements dominated by improving access to Heathrow. Heathrow should be viewed as gateway to access Europe and international markets, rather than a journey destination in its own right. It could be argued that access to international markets should be secured through regional airports.	The framework appears not just to identify 'showstoppers', but also potential risks.
	The status and purpose of the framework needs to be clearly set out and understood by all users of the framework.	Should long distance trips be classified as of national importance? Local movements account for the majority of trips.	The framework should include environmental criteria e.g. nature conservation designations as they can be environmental 'showstoppers'.
	The framework should complement the work of RTBs. However, to do this, it needs to encompass a stronger regional dimension.	Transport requirements need refining and terms need carefully wording.	The framework user must be confident that sufficient information to make the assessment meaningful is available.
	The framework should not automatically favour new investment above maximising the efficiency of existing assets.	When testing schemes, it is critical that they are clearly defined.	