

**SOUTH EAST ENGLAND REGIONAL ASSEMBLY
REGIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE**

Date: 18 October 2000

Subject: **Regional Transport Strategy Work Programme and Progress**

Report of: Head of Regional Transport Planning

Recommendations:

That the Committee:

1. endorses the work programme for revising the Regional Transport Strategy;
2. endorses the approach outlined for developing a vision and set of objectives for the Regional Transport Strategy;
3. endorses the need to develop discrete guidance within the Regional Transport Strategy for regionally and sub-regionally important areas;
4. notes the progress with the programme of studies.

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 To advise the Committee on the proposed work programme for revising the Regional Transport Strategy, and to update and invite the Committee to comment on the work in hand to develop a vision and set of objectives for the Strategy.

2. Background

- 2.1 It has been accepted that in preparing the current revision of Regional Planning Guidance for the South East (RPG9) it had not been possible for SERPLAN to develop a Regional Transport Strategy consistent with the guidance in draft PPG11.
- 2.2 The Secretary of State's proposed modifications for the current revision of RPG9 were published in March 2000, and were the subject of public consultation between March 2000 and July 2000. It is anticipated that the final version of RPG9 will be published by the end of 2000.

- 2.3 The current version of the Regional Transport Strategy has been criticised for:
- failing to relate the transport objectives and policies to the wider policy framework;
 - a lack of clarity in setting the policies and objectives;
 - failing to adopt an integrated approach to the development of the transport system serving the South East;
 - not providing guidance that is specific to the needs and requirements of the South East;
 - downplaying the roles of transport providers and private financiers;
 - failing to cross-refer to the policies and strategies of other stakeholders and partners;
 - a lack of clarity in identifying the role of targets and monitoring in delivery of the Regional Transport Strategy.
- 2.4 In developing the Regional Transport Strategy the Regional Assembly will seek to build upon the work undertaken as part of the current revision of RPG9 addressing, in the process, the weaknesses already identified. In addition, the revision of the Regional Transport Strategy will provide the opportunity to take into account the output of the results of the first tranche of Multi-Modal Studies and take into account the implications of the Government's 10 Year Transport Plan published in July 2000.

3. Work programme

- 3.1 The Regional Assembly is committed to preparing a revised Regional Transport Strategy for consultation by the end of 2001. A work programme has been prepared that will enable this commitment to be met. This programme is summarised in Annex 1. Progress against this programme will be monitored and reported on a regular basis to this Committee.
- 3.2 A Transport Advisory Group has been set up which will provide the Regional Assembly with guidance, support and local and technical expertise as work progresses on the development and implementation of the Regional Transport Strategy. The programme for this Group will be developed to complement the work programme for the Regional Transport Strategy. Annex 2 provides details of the membership of the Transport Advisory Group.

4. Developing the vision and objectives

- 4.1 The current focus of the work programme lies in the identification of a vision for the transport system serving the South East, and leading on from that the development of a set of objectives for the Regional Transport Strategy that are

- both directional and measurable and against which delivery of the Strategy can be assessed.
- 4.2 The Regional Transport Strategy needs to support delivery of the wider spatial strategy for the South East region. The Regional Transport Strategy therefore needs to have regard to the Vision and Key Development Principles outlined in the Secretary of State's proposed modifications to RPG9. This in turn shares the visions and core principles set out in SERPLAN's Sustainable Development Strategy for the South East, which was to:
- encourage economic success throughout the region;
 - ensure a higher quality of environment with management of natural resources;
 - opportunity and equity for the Region's population;
 - implementing a more sustainable pattern of development.
- 4.3 In developing the vision and objectives for the Regional Transport Strategy account will need to be taken of all relevant regional policy documents, including the Regional Economic Strategy and the Sustainable Development Framework.
- 4.4 Both the vision and set of objectives must be based on a consensus amongst local authorities and other stakeholders. Accordingly it is proposed that this work should be undertaken through a dialogue with local authorities and other stakeholders. Annex 3 of this paper sets out a series of themes which it is proposed should be used as the basis for that dialogue.
- 4.5 It is proposed that the output from this dialogue will be used to develop a draft vision and set of objectives for consideration at the next meeting of this Committee.
- 4.6 The Transport Advisory Group is about to begin work on reviewing current monitoring arrangements and targets within the South East region. This review will also include an assessment of the implications for the South East of the indicative outputs set out within the Government's 10 Year Transport Plan.
- 4.7 Following agreement on the vision and objectives for the Regional Transport Strategy this Committee will be invited to consider the possible targets, together with associated monitoring regimes, against which delivery of the Strategy might be measured.

5. Developing a spatial dimension

- 5.1 Historically policy formulation has favoured a strong bias towards a mode-based approach. The current version of the Regional Transport Strategy continues this trend but has led to a number of criticisms already noted, including a failure to take into account the wider spatial framework. Thus, whilst the current version of the Strategy provides a consistent region-wide approach to the key modes of

- transport, it fails to reflect differences in the requirements of the transport system between the sub-regional areas identified in the RPG.
- 5.2 The Secretary of State's proposed modifications to RPG9 include reference to a number of regionally and sub-regionally important areas, specifically:
- Thames Gateway;
 - Priority Areas for Regeneration:
 - South Hampshire, Southampton and Portsmouth;
 - the Isle of Wight;
 - Sussex Coast and Towns;
 - East Kent;
 - Western Arc:
 - Western Wedge;
 - the Blackwater Valley;
 - the Crawley, Gatwick, M23 area;
 - Potential Growth Areas:
 - Milton Keynes;
 - Ashford.
- 5.3 Although the current version of the Regional Transport Strategy contains some reference to transport issues within these areas, it is clear that if the criticisms of the Strategy are to be fully addressed there will be a need to develop the guidance given to local authorities, transport operators and other stakeholders in each area.
- 5.4 There will remain a number of key transport related issues on which there will be a need for the Regional Transport Strategy to set out a policy framework that applies across the region, if only for the purpose of ensuring consistency in approach between geographical areas. However, there will also be a need for the Regional Transport Strategy to give clearer guidance as to how such a policy framework should be applied within more discrete geographical areas. This may conceivably lead to the development of specific sub-regional objectives that reflect local economic, environmental and social circumstances.
- 5.5 Such an approach would have a number of advantages. Greater clarity in the guidance will assist both local authorities and other stakeholders in developing the Local Transport Plan within the area concerned. Where forums have been developed as part of the Local Transport Plan process, the Regional Assembly would hope that these would provide valuable assistance developing the sub-regional guidance set out within the Regional Transport Strategy.
- 5.6 Greater clarity as to how regional policies should apply at a sub-regional level will also assist local authorities and other stakeholders in developing local targets

- and monitoring regimes that are complementary to targets set at both a regional and national level.
- 5.7 The areas identified within the proposed modifications for RPG9 would appear to be a sound basis upon which to begin refining and developing the more discrete guidance set out in the Regional Transport Strategy.

6. The study programme

- 6.1 The programme of studies currently underway will form an important input into the development of the Regional Transport Strategy. A summary of progress with each study currently is set out in Annex 4.

7. Next steps

- 7.1 The development of a clear vision and set of objectives is fundamental to the work on developing the Regional Transport Strategy for the South East. This paper marks the beginning of a dialogue with local authorities and other stakeholders that will inform this process.
- 7.2 At this stage it is not envisaged that it will be possible to quantify any of the objectives or associated targets, as that stage in the process will need to be informed by technical work undertaken as part of the work programme for the Regional Transport Strategy. However work can begin on identifying key areas in which targets and an associated monitoring regime will need to be developed as part of the work on the vision and objectives.
- 7.3 Parallel to the work on developing the vision and objectives for the Regional Transport Strategy, it is proposed that a dialogue is opened with local authorities and other stakeholders on the key transport related issues in each of the sub-regionally important areas referred to above.

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9 October 2000