



ITC / CURACAO Seminar

Managing Congestion in the West Midlands

22 March 2007

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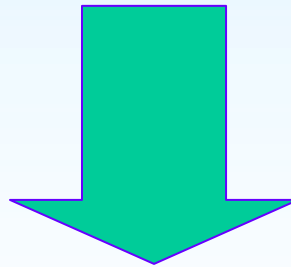
Tom Magrath
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West Midlands agenda

- Growth and regeneration
- City Region Development Plan to drive future prosperity
- Targeted investment in infrastructure to support growth and regeneration



Regeneration is a key driver of transport policy



National Context

- Eddington Report
 - Strongly backed ‘congestion targeted road pricing’
 - Report highlighted key role of WM economy to UK plc
 - Noted importance of WM freight businesses
- Number 10 website petition
 - Highlighted the need to fill knowledge and policy gap at national level
 - Public support will be crucial for measures to tackle congestion



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West Midlands Transport Context

- WM is at the heart of the road and rail network
- Thriving WM transport network essential for UK productivity and competitiveness
- Transport needs differ across conurbation
- WM introducing some major transport innovations (Metro and Red Routes)
- Major challenges:
 - Bus use (high but declining)
 - Rail (capacity constraints & pressure points)
 - Roads (increased congestion across WM)
 - Walking & Cycling
- WM needs early decisions on key schemes



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Congestion – a Major Problem

- DfT transport statistics show WM Met area has
 - Higher traffic levels on motorways than London and Greater Manchester
 - Highest traffic levels on minor urban roads
 - Second highest traffic levels on urban A-roads
- Before WM congestion study:
 - Predicted 15% increase in car trips (165m per year)
 - Congestion and peak period journey times predicted to increase by 25-35%



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Congestion

- Business tells us:
 - There is a critical need to tackle congestion
 - Costing the West Midlands £2.2bn a year
 - It wants greater reliability, quicker movement of goods, reduction in costs from overruns
 - Better public transport
- Members of the public tell us:
 - 90% believe congestion has got worse in WM
 - 79% of drivers think tackling congestion should be a transport priority
 - 75% believe WM should consider all options for reducing congestion including road pricing



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The TIF Feasibility Study

- WM won largest slice of initial funding (£2.6m)
- WM awarded further funding from TIF 'Round 2'
- Study Commissioned by:
 - Seven Metropolitan Authorities and PTA/Centro
 - Backed by key stakeholders, particularly business
- Terms of Reference:
 - Identify current and future levels of traffic congestion
 - Explore feasibility of potential solutions, including road-pricing
- 'Gridlock or Growth' published in September '06



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New Evidence of Congestion Problem

- Congestion will grow by 22 per cent by 2021 – much higher than previous figures
- 300,000 hours of travel delay *every day*
- 469,000 extra car journeys on West Midlands roads
- Report highlighted:
 - Minor incidents cause gridlock
 - Substantial lengthening of ‘peak period’
 - Well known congestion ‘black spots’
 - Status quo not sustainable



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The future for the West Midlands

Study looked at three core scenarios:

- Continuing as now and with little extra investment.
 - Trips predicted to increase by 469,000 per day
- Implementing some 'lifestyle choices' such as work travel plans, flexible work/school times.
 - Trips still predicted to increase by 317,000 per day
- Package of substantial and targeted investment with some form of road charging.
 - Only scenario where trips can be substantially cut by 181,000 from 2021 levels
 - Only scenario where substantial extra funds available to transform WM public transport



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Transforming WM Transport

- More choice & viable alternatives to car needed
- With any congestion management scheme, substantial investment package needed:
 - *Bus – major improvements*
 - *Suburban rail – increased capacity*
 - *Road – improvements and some new space*
 - *Metro – extended*
 - *Park and Ride*
- More detailed work on transport package currently being developed



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Gridlock or Growth Debate

- Following publication, 3 months of debate on report
- Key business stakeholders submitted constructive responses
- Responses will be factored into next steps
- Much more work to be done – any further proposals will be fully consulted in WM



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Key issues front of mind for WM

- 'Fit' of any WM scheme with a national scheme
- Making sure revenues from any pricing scheme went to transport in the West Midlands
- Impact on the region's competitiveness?
 - When does congestion seriously start to undermine WM economy
 - Clear assessment that any solutions enhance, not detract from region
- Transport funds - early decisions on key projects



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Further Work

- Detailed further survey work of WM business and consumers
- On going work to map out the package of improvements needed in WM
- Govt require TIF business cases by July



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