



6. Freight Supporting Statement

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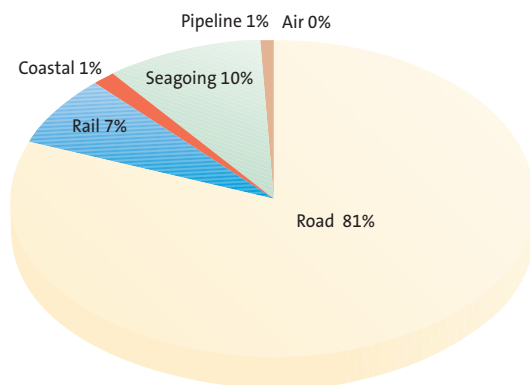
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1. Setting the Scene

- 1.1 The JLTP area's large population, its size and diversity of economic activity, generate significant amounts of freight. Its position at the intersection of the M4 and M5 between England and South Wales and between the South West and the Midlands has seen an increasing role for the JLTP area as the location for regional distribution centres, contributing to high Heavy Goods Vehicle [HGV] flows. A significant proportion of HGVs pass through the area without having a calling point in it.
- 1.2 Figure 1 shows the approximate shares of road, rail, sea, air and pipeline in the carriage of freight in the area in 2003. These shares have been stable for some years.

Figure 1 Freight Mode Avon Area 2003



2. Vision

Working in partnership with the freight industry, to achieve the reliable and efficient movement of goods and assist modal shift to rail and coastal shipping within the JLTP area. At the same time minimising the adverse impact of HGVs on safety, air quality and the quality of life for those living and working in the area.

3. Freight and the Shared Priorities

Congestion

We are working in partnership with freight operators to minimise the impact on congestion from freight at sensitive locations on the highway network.

Accessibility

Increased use of home delivery schemes can provide vital access to goods and services in both rural and urban areas for people without access to transport.

Road Safety, Air Quality and other Quality of Life issues

Maintaining freight access is vital to the local economy, but because of their size and weight, HGVs can have adverse impacts on local communities. HGVs can affect the safety of other road users, contribute towards deterioration of local air quality, and generate excessive noise. In rural locations they can have an adverse impact on landscape and biodiversity. In particular, high concentrations of particulates are sometimes associated with high HGV flows.

Through working with operators to agree suitable routes and times for deliveries, we aim to reduce the adverse impacts of HGVs on local communities whilst at the same time maintaining access that is vital to the local economy.

4. Issues

Freight movement

- 4.1 Apart from the through movement of freight on the strategic road and rail networks, the JLTP area has a number of major freight generators:
- The Port of Bristol at Avonmouth and Royal Portbury Docks, and associated processing industries. Significant flows of rail freight are handled here. Large

- areas of land are used for storage of coal, scrap metal and particularly cars;
- Major concentrations of regional road freight distribution depots at Cribbs Causeway, the Bristol North Fringe and at Yate, orientated largely to motorway junctions around the major intersection of the M4 and M5 in the north of the area.
- Industrial areas in Avonmouth/Sevenside, Bristol at St Philips, Ashton, Yate, Brislington, Clay Hill, Kingswood and Fishponds, Weston-super-Mare, Radstock and other smaller sites.
- Major shopping centres in Bristol, Bath, Weston-super-Mare and at Cribbs Causeway, and a number of other retail centres across the area.
- Quarrying activities in the Mendips, at Yate Rocks, at Tytherington (rail served) and at Backwell Hill.
- Refuse concentration activities at Days Road in Bristol, Westmoreland Road in Bath and at Filton Diamond for industrial waste. A daily rail service carries away compacted waste to landfill in Bedfordshire.
- Bristol International Airport.

Road Freight

- 4.2 As shown in Figure 1, road freight accounts for approximately 81% of total freight tonne-km moved in the area. In addition to the motorways, there are significant HGV flows on key parts of the



local road network: (go to the Map in Annex 1). The nature of some road freight, with single commodity flows and dominant directions of goods movement, means that it is difficult to achieve or programme back-loads in many cases (i.e. vehicles often return empty).

- 4.3 Peak period congestion is probably the largest constraint on efficient road freight in the area, especially near motorway junctions and the main shopping areas close to delivery times. At the same time the heavy reliance on road freight itself adds to congestion. Improved network management using Traffic Management Act powers and new technologies could help in the short term, as could measures such as the freight consolidation centre that serves Bristol's Broadmead shopping centre. There is also scope for the transfer of some freight from road to rail or local seagoing routes.
- 4.4 The South West Regional Assembly is developing a regional freight map in consultation with the local highway authorities. In the JLTP area the issue of HGV routes is the subject of ongoing discussion by the Bristol and Neighbouring Authorities Freight Quality Partnership, (comprising the 4 Councils, freight interests and others). This issue is closely linked with the Councils' approach to network management and review of the route hierarchy including the aim of diverting HGVs from inappropriate routes and areas. The Partnership aims to produce annual action plans to include reviews of signage, loading and unloading arrangements and delivery times.
- 4.5 Road freight interests have identified a need for greater provision in the area for rest areas for HGV drivers, ideally with toilet & washing facilities, food/ drink outlets, and relative quiet to allow sleep. The need for such facilities is likely to grow with the introduction of the EU Working Time Directive on drivers' hours. This will be progressed in liaison with the Freight Quality Partnership.

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Rail Freight

- 4.6 Rail plays a significant part in carrying large-volume bulk flows, particularly coal imports from the Port of Bristol to power stations, refuse out of the area, and paper imports. These trains can carry up to 1500 tonnes or more of stone and coal and save considerable numbers of HGV journeys.
- 4.7 There are 8 rail freight terminals currently in use in the area. Most are dedicated facilities for bulk commodity handling. Bulk rail freight flows in the period to 2011 are most likely to develop from the Port of Bristol and associated sites. While the use of rail for intermediate goods and retail distribution is very small, much of the future growth potential is in the general freight “inter-modal” sector, where constraints on the road haulage industry in terms of traffic congestion and the EU Working Time Directive are likely to increase the attractiveness of rail. Terminals dealing with non-bulk freight are at Chittening and Bristol East Depot for non-containerised goods. There is scope for new rail container traffic to/from the Port of Bristol as container traffic grows there.
- 4.8 Rail has the potential to become more attractive in retail distribution with growing international flows to regional distribution depots using the Channel Tunnel: this could stimulate the relocation of some existing regional road distribution depots to rail-served sites.
- 4.9 The primary strategic rail freight routes are the main lines to London, Birmingham, South Wales and Exeter.



Feeding these are freight-only branches serving Avonmouth, Royal Portbury Docks and Westerleigh. Gauge, the height and width available beneath bridges and other structures, is not thought to be a constraint on growth at present. It may be in future with increased maritime container traffic through the Port of Bristol. Current passenger train frequencies might make it difficult for the network to accommodate rapid growth in rail freight, although some spare capacity exists outside peak periods.

Port Freight

- 4.10 The Port of Bristol is the 14th largest in the UK and by far the largest port both in the Bristol Channel and in South West England. In 2003 the port handled 11.4 million tonnes of freight comprising imported cars, coal, petroleum products, ores, grain and forestry products. A substantial tonnage is transported by rail but nevertheless the Port attracts and generates significant HGV flows on the local road network and adjacent motorway junctions. The opening of the branch line to Royal Portbury Dock in 2001 represented a major investment in rail infrastructure.

Air Freight

- 4.11 Freight handling at Bristol International Airport is limited, comprising the Royal Mail freighter service and small quantities of ‘belly hold’ goods. The draft Airport Master Plan does not envisage any major expansion of air freight transport in the period to 2015.

Environment

- 4.12 Road freight in particular has impacts on the environment in the area through increased noise, vibration, air pollution and dirt. Urban areas are affected by HGVs accessing industrial areas and making deliveries, and preferred routes shown in the Drivers’ Atlas (go to section 5. 2nd bullet point) can assist here. In rural areas, a number of villages suffer from the intrusive effects of HGVs

described above. In addition, severance and road safety effects may occur in a small number of settlements where HGV flows are very high. With over 1200 HGVs per day, the A37 south of Bristol is a particularly important freight route for Somerset hauliers accessing the motorways, but relieving settlements such as Pensford and Clutton of the effects of these flows, for instance by building bypasses, could have other environmental costs. Other villages where HGV flows are troublesome include Banwell and Codrington. It is hoped to address some of these issues through the Freight Quality Partnership, including through a new Road Hierarchy, and preferred routes in the Drivers Atlas.

5. Delivery Programme in the Plan Period 2001/02 to 2005/06

- 5.1 In the period of the last LTPs the Councils have:
- Developed the Bristol and Neighbouring Authorities Freight Quality Partnership (FQP) with the Highways Agency, Police, representatives of the major national freight organisations, the Bristol Port Company, and a number of large retail, haulage, rail freight and distribution companies.
 - Produced with the Partnership a Commercial Vehicle Drivers Atlas for the Bristol urban area. The Atlas identifies advisory access routes to main freight destinations, showing current weight, height and width restrictions, and rest facilities.
 - Produced, with the Partnership, annual Action Plans since the publication of the first Atlas in February 2003. The Action Plans aim to identify and resolve local problems, provide better facilities for drivers and rail freight operators, including identifying and safeguarding land.
 - Participated in the national 'Clear Zone Trailblazers' initiative focusing on Bristol

and Bath city centres, researching innovative ways of handling deliveries and reducing emissions.

- Sought, through the planning process the provision of an open-access road-rail interchange in the area.
- Identified opportunities for rail based freight distribution.

6. Good Practice

A groundbreaking development has been the creation of a freight consolidation centre that serves the Broadmead Shopping Centre in Central Bristol, operating from a depot at Emerald Park in the North Fringe. This scheme has been introduced as part of the EC supported VIVALDI project and is the first consolidation centre in Britain serving a city centre. It began in May 2004 and to date 50 retailers have joined, ranging from small independents to major high street stores. Delivery movements for those involved have reduced by 67%, removing 19,900 lorry miles in and around the city centre. The service has also provided an improved service for the stores involved, with more reliable and convenient deliveries allowing the retailers to spend more time with their customers.



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7. Strategy

7.1 The strategy for freight focuses on three key areas: -

- Actions developed through the Freight Quality Partnership
- Specific measures which contribute towards tackling congestion
- Opportunities for increasing rail freight

In the period of the JLTP we will:

- Continue to reduce the impact of freight on Bristol city centre through extension of the Broadmead freight consolidation centre. This will involve a minimum of 50 retailers. Develop, with the operator a value added services for retailers, such as remote storage and reverse flows of packaging, to move towards a more sustainable business model.
- Explore the potential for applying the freight consolidation concept elsewhere in the area; and

In liaison with the Freight Quality Partnership for the area:

- Review unloading arrangements and delivery times as an integral part of the parking supporting statement.
- Extend the coverage of the Commercial Vehicle Drivers Atlas to the whole area and involve commercial partners to inform the new Road Hierarchy that is being processed through the network management initiatives of the JLTP.
- Improve signage to destinations in the Commercial Vehicle Drivers Atlas in conjunction with the Road Hierarchy Review.
- Identify with road freight interests, opportunities for the development of additional rest areas for HGV drivers, (with toilet and washing facilities and food/ drink outlets).
- Work with local partners to promote growth in rail freight from the Port of Bristol, to reduce the adverse impact of HGV traffic.

- Work with the rail industry to investigate opportunities to develop rail freight facilities in other parts of the area, and continue to safeguard identified sites through Local Plans and Local Development Frameworks.
- Create links to travel advice websites such as Travelwise and to satnav systems. Provide information for HGV drivers at rest areas, motorway service areas, and other locations.
- Investigate the potential for the transfer of local freight from road to coastal shipping.

8. Targets

No specific target has been set but the freight strategy will contribute towards LTP6 Peak Period Traffic Flows into Bristol City Centre LTP7 Congestion.

