



# National Infrastructure Commission: Response to second national infrastructure assessment

4 February 2022

## Introduction

[1: Do the nine challenges identified by the Commission cover the most pressing issues that economic infrastructure will face over the next 30 years? If not, what other challenges should the Commission consider?](#)

1.1 The three themes and nine challenges set out by the commission do cover a number of the key challenges that the UK's infrastructure, from a transport perspective, will face over the next 30 years (and we have set out the areas below where our work supports these) however, we consider that there are four key areas which are not covered: *rural connectivity, EV infrastructure, Access to Rail and skills and resources.*

1.2 Beyond this there are two overriding themes to highlight. The first is fairness: are we developing infrastructure, for transport or other sectors, with fair access for all and social mobility? We need to continually question whether the methods we are using will promote fairness. Within the transport sector we are all strongly aware of the link between transport connectivity and social mobility, and as we develop areas such as EV infrastructure we are deliberately addressing the commercial nature of the work to ensure that communities are not left behind.

1.3 The second is funding. The pace at which infrastructure needs to develop in multiple sectors if we are to get close to the net zero challenge is hugely challenging. We cannot afford for gaps in funding policy to hold this work up. Our views are set out further in question two.

*Midlands Connect work on existing NIC challenges:*

1.4 Networks for alternative fuels. Midlands Connect is the lead Sub-national transport body (STB) for alternative fuels. We are part of the H2GV Mids project, a partnership between the public and private sector and academia which aims to make the transition to hydrogen powered HGVs a reality and work towards a demonstration programme for a green hydrogen powered HGV. Midlands Connect has also just received from the Department for Transport (DfT) to develop a refuelling and recharging network for alternative fuels. The outcomes from our Freight programme will also contribute to this network.

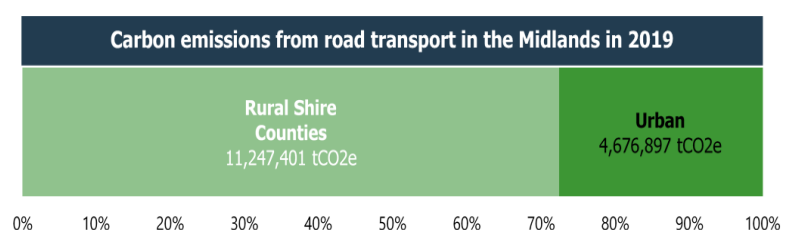
1.5 Interurban transport across modes. At the heart of the work of Midlands Connect is understanding travel needs across an area and the best modes of transport. This starts by understanding who or what needs to be transported, followed by the best modes of travel and then considering the infrastructure required to support this. It should be noted that many of our partner authorities are considering ways in which urban areas can be decongested, through active and public transport, in order to improve travel times into urban areas and air quality.

*Areas not covered within the Commissions themes and challenges:*

1.6 **Connectivity for rural areas.** Greater emphasis must be placed on rural connectivity needs. Our soon to be published Rural Mobility report highlights that rural areas suffer from:

- Poorer access to services via public transport, such as settlement centres, schools, and healthcare facilities – average travel time to these is almost twice as long as in urban areas.
- A lower concentration of social mobility 'hotspots' compared to the UK average.
- Worse productivity – economic contributions per job are 10% lower than in urban areas.

1.7 When we look at carbon emission levels in rural areas, the more predominantly rural local authorities in the Midlands contain 58% of our population but we estimate that 71% of all road-based transport carbon



emissions are generated within their boundaries (as shown below<sup>1</sup>). We believe this is because the vast majority of the motorway and trunk road network runs through these areas which has a high usage from HGVs, and because there are fewer options for public transport. These points all highlight the different nature of the challenges and transport connectivity for rural areas and the need for specific infrastructure consideration. Midlands Connect will be looking at areas such as Rural Mobility Hubs, EV infrastructure and Alternative Fuels.

**1.8 Access to Rail.** Encouraging the shift away from private vehicles to public transport where possible will be central to addressing decarbonisation, air pollution and congestion, and therefore should be considered as an infrastructure challenge. This year we initiated an Access to Rail programme to consider the key elements which will encourage people to use rail rather than road. We calculate that whilst 80% of people live within 5km of the location of a train station in the Midlands, less than 3% of journeys starting or ending in the Midlands are undertaken by rail<sup>2</sup>. Our research has also shown that there are a number of key transport routes within the Midlands where the journey time by train is quicker, but more people drive by car. Understanding how we can encourage this shift is likely to include issues such as:

- End to end journeys and integration with other transport modes.
- Integrated ticketing to support use of different transport modes, supported through our involvement in multi-modal ticketing projects.
- Role of train stations as community hubs.

**1.9 Skills and knowledge.** Whilst not an area of expertise for Midlands Connect, the pace of infrastructure development required in transport, let alone other sectors, raises the question of whether we are developing the skills and knowledge within the country to allow this to happen. The Government's Ten Point Plan for green growth<sup>3</sup> sets the aim of generating 250,000 jobs. It would be reassuring to know that the NIC has investigated whether an adequate infrastructure is in place to support this.

**1.10 EV infrastructure.** The Commission rightly identify networks for alternative fuels as a key challenge, an area that Midlands Connect is working on. Creating an EV infrastructure network is one of the key challenges that many of our partners are actively working on to support the move away from petrol and diesel cars. The scale and speed at which

#### Case study – Coventry EV development

In 2020 Coventry was named the best town in the UK for electric cars, as it had a ratio of one charging point to every 2.3 plug-in car owners. They have obtained a number of government grants through OZEV and developed long term commercial contracts. They have 39 rapid charge points within the city centre and Strategic Road Network and are developing a residential chargepoint network. Over the last three years the number of registered EVs has tripled to more than 1,000 with indications.

Their experience has highlighted a number of key challenges:

- *Power supply:* Availability of power supply was the biggest challenge but in addition clear understanding of common terminology across between stakeholders and non-technical people.
- *Funding:* Understanding the various funds and matching 25% government contributions with commercial contracts.
- *Council procedures:* The process for installation crosses across several internal departments from transport planning to traffic management which can cause delays.
- *Locations:* Finding the right location for residential chargers in particular can be a challenge and residents often question the need for them.

<sup>1</sup> Estimated Midlands transport carbon emissions by shire and urban areas, 2019 (Source: Midlands Connect Transport Carbon Baseline Tool)

<sup>2</sup> Calculated using ONS population data: 2020 mid-year population estimates, MSOA level. Includes MSOAs within Midlands Connect only. Stations – all within the Midlands Connect region and 10 that are just outside.

<sup>3</sup> [The Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/90111/ten-point-plan-for-a-green-industrial-revolution.pdf)

infrastructure needs to develop is huge. In the Midlands we estimate that a mid-range increase in EV usage will require an increase in charge points in the region from 2,716 (as of July 2021) to 17,000 by 2025 and to 41,000+ by 2030. The case study (above) for Coventry, which is considered as a success story, shows how they have been able to install 1,000 chargepoints in the last three years. However, this success story indicates just how much work is needed to get to 17,000 chargepoints within the next three years.

[Question 2: What changes to funding policy help address the Commission's nine challenges and what evidence is there to support this? Your response can cover any number of the Commission's challenges.](#)

2.1 **Mode based v place-based.** The challenges highlighted by the commission are all interlinked and should not be treated in isolation. Whilst there is recognition of this in various policies and strategies the funding to address the challenges, from a transport perspective, remains focused on modes of travel. This is understandable however it does not easily enable local authorities to plan holistically to meet the transport needs of their areas, as well as develop long-term plans which address the levelling-up agenda and work towards net zero. This is linked to a funding issue where funds for infrastructure are often ring-fenced under specific topic areas; whereas what authorities are seeking to achieve are more holistic outcomes. Until funding is less siloed it's extremely difficult to truly deliver place-based outcomes.

2.2 **Competitive nature of funding.** Funding models are still essentially based on a competition and therefore depends on the skills and resources that are available to the local authorities (LAs) rather than a realistic assessment of needs. This is undoubtedly an issue across all local authorities, but in particular felt in smaller and rural authorities where there is less ability to draw on resources to complete funding bids. Decisions on which bids to complete will be made based on level of funds available and likelihood of success, which can leave significant funding gaps.

2.3 Those authorities with more staff resource available are then more successful in competing for funding. This is a key issue for 'levelling up' as successful authorities become more successful, whereas authorities which have greatest need for new or additional funds continue to miss out due to their lack of capacity and capability to be successful.

2.4 A related issue to this is that often LAs are required to put forward a 'local contribution' to national funding opportunities. This again creates a non-level playing field as larger, often metropolitan, authorities have better access to local contributory funding than others, and other authorities may not even bid for funds which could be vital to them.

2.5 **Commercial benefit v social benefit.** A particular problem exists for those partners where there is a societal need for infrastructure development but they are not necessarily commercial proposals. A current example of this is the development of EV charging infrastructure where there will be areas which are commercially viable for investment, and residential / rural areas which are less commercially viable but the social benefit is still there. There needs to be a shift so contracts are motivated by societal benefits as well as commercial - Midlands Connect is aiming to address this through a procurement project - otherwise we run the risk of how mobile phone 3/4/5G connectivity has been rolled out where rural areas in particular have been left behind as they are less profitable.

2.6 Finally, partners have highlighted the need for long term certainty. Many have investable projects but short-term, ad hoc public funding does not always provide the basis to access capital funding.

[Question 4: What interactions exist between addressing the Commission's nine challenges for the next Assessment and the government's target to halt biodiversity loss by 2030 and implement biodiversity net gain? Your response can cover any number of the Commission's challenges.](#)

4.1 This is an area which Midlands Connect is beginning to explore in greater detail so that we have a greater understanding of the links between protecting biodiversity and the management of existing assets and development of new infrastructure. Within this work we will be looking at whether a 10% net gain really means an improvement (gains may be in a different location and over a long period of time), whether 10% goes far enough, and how this needs to relate to safeguarding of the natural environment.

4.2 Our initial thoughts on this area are:

- Creating the right habitats for wildlife will increase the natural resilience of land to climate change, and in particular to increased rainfall.
- Potential for natural habitats to support localised carbon capture and therefore be part of measures to reduce of carbon emissions<sup>4</sup>.
- Supporting green areas in urban locations will encourage biodiversity in these areas as well as promoting active transport measures.
- Importance of integrating biodiversity and habitat planning into land-use planning.

[Question 5: What are the main opportunities in terms of governance, policy, regulation and market mechanisms that may help solve any of the Commission's nine challenges for the Next Assessment? What are the main barriers? Your response can cover any number of the Commission's challenges.](#)

5.1 The opportunities which should be sought are those that allow transport modes to be integrated and to meet the holistic needs of an area or community. There are a number of potential aspects to this:

- *Long term funding certainty.* This was highlighted in question 2 in relation to long term funding certainty and the opportunities this would create for both public and private investment. In our recent response to the GBRTT Whole Industry Strategic Plan we note the opportunities for third party innovation and investment that can support the growth of the rail infrastructure and sector.
- *Transport and Land Use Planning.* Aligning transport and land use planning would support this planning and work towards the concept of Transit Oriented Development.
- *Devolution of powers.* The newly published Levelling-Up White Paper sets out plans for a further devolution of powers across the country. Whilst the detail of this is not yet available, it provides the potential opportunity for more localised decision-making, which could be even more powerful if the promised simplification of local growth funding is delivered.

5.2 Another opportunity that Midlands Connect considers essential for review is the development of a Public Data Infrastructure. At the moment there are a wide range of commercial bodies interested in working with and gathering data from the transport sector. Our experience has been that the information flow can be one-sided with commercial bodies charging for feedback on data which has been provided to them freely. A Public Data Infrastructure could meet both public sector needs (having a depth of data which is defined in agreed ways and available planning and development needs) and private sector needs (developing business and commercial prospects).

### **Challenge 1: The digital transformation of infrastructure**

[Question 6: In which of the Commission's sectors \(outside of digital\) can digital services and technologies enabled by fixed and wireless communications networks deliver the biggest benefits and how much would this cost?](#)

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<sup>4</sup> In the Midlands forests, grasslands and other landscapes remove 2,670kt of carbon a year. Quoted from [Midlands Engine 10 Point Plan for Green Growth](#) (source [UK local authority and regional carbon dioxide emissions national statistics - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#))

6.1 When considered from a transport perspective, digital connectivity and the development of services have the potential to deliver a range of benefits. This will support the model of:

**Substitute** *To online services and platforms.*

This might be continuing with the trend for online shopping that has been exacerbated by Covid-19 and will also include continued shift to greater levels of home working. In terms of freight and logistics connectivity will provide the architecture to fully understand what goods are where to ensure most effective transport and delivery options are being used.

**Shift** *Away from private transport to active and public transport, and thinking about Mobility as a Service, and the idea of rural mobility hubs.*

Assuming we are working towards an integration of transport modes, digital connectivity will be vital for people to be able to plan and use smart ticketing options to access journeys. To deliver this a national infrastructure is needed which: enables different operators, technology suppliers and modes of transport to work together; has an agreed interface and data standards; provides a platform for trip information across modes of transport (from trains through to scooters and bikes); and applies the best price based on agreed commercial arrangements. These standards need to be defined and agreed at operator level and at Payment Service Provider level. For those delivering public transport services it will support delivery of time-sensitive travel information, infrastructure management and operational delivery.<sup>5</sup>

**Switch** *To alternative fuels for all vehicles.* Digital connectivity is required to use and pay for EV charging points.

6.2 It should be noted that these developments are all essential steps for both levelling-up (providing a transport infrastructure that allows people to access economic and social opportunities and for employers to access the skills and knowledge they need) and net zero (encouraging a move away from petrol/diesel cars and also towards active and public transport).

[Question 7: What barriers exist that are preventing the widescale adoption and application of new digital services and technologies to deliver better infrastructure services? And how might they be addressed? Your response can cover any number of the Commission's sectors outside digital \(energy, water, flood resilience, waste, transport\).](#)

Midlands Connect conducted a technology analysis in 2020, and a PESTLE analysis of the barriers for technology development in the transport sector are included in the evidence pack. Some of the key barriers are: differing views about the role of technology about both local and national government, cost to deliver and government funding often being for capital rather than revenue costs; and the challenge to develop strong business cases for newer technologies.

Beyond this there are some wider barriers to be noted:

**7.1 Overarching strategy.** As has already been indicated, an integrated transport system that allows for multi-modal transport is essential. While many bodies and strategies refer to each other and set this as an objective, the lack of an overarching strategy which ensures that all aspects can work together, and provides clarity on the role of technology, is a key oversight.

**7.2 Digital.** The rollout of 5G and delivering a copper free wifi network which can provide services at speeds that consumers need and expect will be key to future digital connectivity. This is forecast to be

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<sup>5</sup> Role of 5G in transport sector, internal desktop report included with evidence pack



available for 85% of the UK by 2025<sup>6</sup>. As already highlighted in this response it is important to give prominence to digital connectivity for rural areas in order to encourage more use of active and public transport and innovative solutions which provide a viable connectivity solution other than the private car. In a recent meeting a local authority partner stated that the difference to success prospects for rural mobility now is the existence of a digital platform.

**7.3 Contracts that provide for social value.** We have already highlighted in this response the importance of public and private partnerships and ensuring that the infrastructure is fair for everyone and not dependent on the commercial value. Getting to a position where we consistently have contracts that work for both the public and private sectors with the ability to deliver both commercial viability and societal needs will be key.

**7.4 EV infrastructure.** We have highlighted above the importance of delivering an EV infrastructure. Our own research, as well as that of other bodies, indicates that consumer wariness about charging facilities (at home or more widely) is a key factor in preventing greater uptake. This needs to be visibly addressed to provide public confidence. A wide variety of stakeholders need to come together (Midlands Connect, as are other STBs, will be bringing together forums to support this) from car manufacturers, chargepoint providers, energy providers (as capacity at grid stations is a key issue), local authorities and others to work towards this goal. The Office for Zero Emission Vehicles will soon publish an EV Infrastructure strategy and we look forward to ensuring it adequately addresses the key challenges.

## Reaching Net Zero

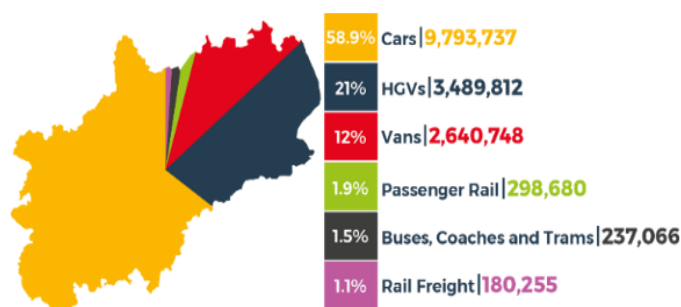
[Questions 8 + 10](#): Please refer to the response from Midlands Engine.

### Challenge 4: Networks for hydrogen and carbon capture storage

[Question 11: What barriers exist to the long term growth of the hydrogen sector beyond 2030 and how can they be overcome? Are any parts of the value chain \(production, storage, transportation\) more challenging than others and if so why?](#)

11.1 We have set out below some of the key barriers and challenges for the long-term growth of the hydrogen sector based on our experience to date. In particular this comes from the research we have done to begin to inform the development of a freight programme, the partnership on the H2GV Mids project and the early work to develop proposals for a network of recharging and refuelling network for freight and logistics. However, as many note this sector is still in its infancy and whilst we may know some of the barriers and challenges, there is uncertainty about how these can be resolved and timescales for achieving this.

11.2 It is important to re-state the importance of growing the hydrogen sector as part of the pathway to reaching net zero for the transport sector. The 2019 data for the Midlands region (opposite) shows that petrol and diesel emissions from road transport make-up the vast majority of



<sup>6</sup> The Public Accounts Committee has published a report confirming national gigabit connectivity by 2025 is unachievable. The legislative and policy barriers that the industry deems necessary to address for fast roll out of connectivity have not been addressed and that there has been a failure to prioritise rural areas. Digital connectivity is a vital component for developing options such as rural mobility hubs, and therefore lack of solutions is a concern in this area. [Digital inequality compounding the economic inequality “harshly” exposed by covid-19 - Committees - UK Parliament](#)

transport emissions in the Midlands, with heavy goods vehicles accounting for the second highest proportion of transport emissions.

*Challenges and barriers to the long term growth of the hydrogen sector:*

**11.3 Hydrogen production – decarbonisation and supply.** Zero emissions will only be achieved through the use of 'Green Hydrogen'. Currently very little of the UK's hydrogen production can be classified as 'green'<sup>7</sup>. Other colour designations for hydrogen may be no better than diesel in terms of their carbon footprint. So, as the country is accelerating the shift to hydrogen propulsion, we should accelerate our capability to produce fully green hydrogen.

11.4 However, there is a risk that demand may outstrip supply due to a lack of understanding of the demand for green hydrogen across the various sectors that are looking to this solution. Action needs to be taken to understand the likely demand for hydrogen and therefore the infrastructure that will need to be created to supply this. Our work will aim to support this.

**11.5 Refuelling and recharging network.** Our initial Alternative Fuels for Freight study<sup>8</sup> sought to identify the key barriers and opportunities associated with the uptake of all alternative fuels<sup>9</sup> in the freight and logistics sectors. For both vehicle suppliers and fleet operators the lack of recharging and refuelling network was a key barrier to change. In addition, financial support for new vehicles was highlighted as a potential enabler for development (slide 13 and 16).

11.6 There is a mutual dependency which exists at this point. Alternative fuel providers are unlikely to put in infrastructure until there is demand, however hauliers will not switch vehicles without the guarantee of a refuelling infrastructure. It is likely the public sector will need to step in initially to break this cycle and push forward the infrastructure development and support fleet investment.

*11.7 Developing the network:* Our estimate is that it could cost around £800million to deliver a refuelling and recharging network. Slides 20-25 in the evidence pack set out early thinking on number of refuelling points and locations. This will be further developed as we progress our work this year to develop a recharging and refuelling network plan.

*11.8 Fiscal stimulus:* As part of our work this year we will be examining the supply chain to understand how it needs to develop to support a switch to hydrogen. This is in its early stages but one element will be to understand where new policies and investment from Government will be required to support investment.

*11.9 Scale of challenge:* We have identified 66 locations needed for recharging/refuelling infrastructure that would be required to support the estimated demand for alternative fuels in 2040 within the Midlands<sup>10</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> In 2019 just 4% of the UK's hydrogen production was zero carbon. [UK: hydrogen production share by method 2019 | Statista](#)

<sup>8</sup> Slides for this freight study included as part of additional evidence pack.

<sup>9</sup> It's important to note that many of the barriers identified are common across each fuel type.

<sup>10</sup> Based on high-level cost assumptions, it is estimated that this could cost up to £800 million to deliver a refuelling network of this size. Much of this would be met by the private sector where locations provide a commercially attractive proposition. However, there will still be the need for the public sector to step-in, likely to kick start the network where the private sector may not be willing to take the risk on the early adopter market.

The 66 sites we have identified are based on a fuel agnostic approach. The work carried out investigates the potential use of electricity, hydrogen, gas (and biofuels.) This is a result of the uncertainties around which fuel will be the predominant



11.10 However, it is not just about having refuelling / recharging points. One of the goals we want to work towards is providing a network that makes the options for intermodal transport as effective as possible, reducing need to transport goods from point of production to distribution. Some of the considerations that we have in mind are that the network should:

- Work for road and rail freight,
- Support existing hubs of activities for example at freeports, and
- Minimise the need for goods to be transported for example from the point of manufacturing through to their distribution point.

The scale of development also sits alongside ensuring that we have an integrated land use policy which allows the development of land for this multi-purpose usage.

11.11 **Network resilience.** Consideration may need to be given the resilience of the sector and security of supply. As we are all aware a significant reliance at the current time on international supply is leading to challenges throughout the energy market. It would seem be prudent to develop the sector in order to minimise the risk of this in the future.

11.12 **Existing transport stock.** As of 2020, 17% of the total licensed HGVs in Britain were over 13 years old and the average age of an HGV was 7.5 years. Many SMEs retain their HGV fleets for longer because they can't afford to buy newer vehicles. Whilst technology may be developed in the next 10-20 years<sup>11</sup> which will make hydrogen HGVs a feasible technology we will need to consider how to support companies to transition their rolling stock.

11.13 This is not an area of expertise for Midlands Connect, however we understand that manufacturers are considering whether existing vehicles can be retro-fitted to work with hydrogen, which if possible would be an effective and efficient use of existing transport stock.

11.14 **Skills and resources.** As noted in question one, as we address these infrastructure challenges we need to ensure that we have the right policies and structures in place to fast-track these industries and build a resilient network for the future.

[Question 12 +14](#)

Please refer to the response from Midlands Engine.

## Levelling up

### Challenge 8: Urban mobility and congestion

[Question 16: What evidence is there of the effectiveness in reducing congestion of different approaches to demand management used in cities around the world, including, but not limited to, congestion charging, and what are the different approaches used to build public consensus for such measures?](#)

16.1 As the question suggests there are a wide range of approaches to demand management which can be used to reduce congestion and improve air pollution in dense urban areas, from localised low traffic neighbourhoods (with many trials taking place over the last couple of years to support active travel through the pandemic) through to congestion charging.

16.2 Some principles which impact on the effectiveness of these approaches are:

- *Potential for unintended consequences.* Interventions, whilst they may be successful in part, can lead to unintended consequences, shifting the problem elsewhere. For example, congestion zones can increase parking in residential neighbourhoods on the outskirts of zones and low traffic

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fuel by 2050. Taking this approach also allows for the identification of where interim fuels could be provided to meet carbon reduction 2035 targets.

<sup>11</sup> A hydrogen technology pathway plan is provided separately.

neighbourhoods will divert traffic to other areas. There may be economic impacts if demand management means other locations are more attractive to investment.

- *Need for complementary strategies.* Congestion zone charging in London is often used as an example of demand management which has worked well. One of the reasons for success was the accompanying investment in public transport and payment options. When Nottingham City Council introduced a workplace parking levy<sup>12</sup> employer grants were available to improve cyclists facilities and funding was ringfenced for re-investment into transport initiatives.
- *Need to build public consensus.* This is key as demand management requires changes in public behaviour. In London public consensus was built in part through the investment in public transport to make it the easier option. In London and the Midlands low traffic neighbourhoods, which began trialling in 2021, have both supporters and critics however they are being monitored to establish whether they will lead to longer-term behaviour change within communities. Consideration also needs to be given to the fairness of schemes and the impact on differing socio-economic groups to ensure solutions work for all.

16.3 There are two more structural issues that need to be considered in relation to demand management and the potential for them to be successful:

- *Decision-making.* Whilst many successful demand management approaches have been initiated by local authorities there are questions as to whether this should be a purely locally led measure and the extent to which it should be backed by national policy. In particular this could: address the public consensus question if it is a requirement on local authorities, and address the concern expressed (from some local authorities) that demand management approaches may make them less attractive to other locations without these approaches in place. In addition, this raises questions about the extent to which powers in this area should be devolved. Demand management approaches require a wider approach than a single initiative and wider control over decision-making and funding may allow this to be addressed in ways which meet the needs of individual areas.
- *Funding.* Demand management leads to wider questions about the cost of private travel and impact on fuel revenues. Evidence developed by Midlands Connect<sup>13</sup> suggests that a basic per mile costs is unlikely to be the optimum solution as lower highway costs in rural, remote and uncongested areas can have a significant positive distributional impact on struggling households, that have no realistic prospect than to use cars and may actually encourage economic activity and businesses to relocate to cheaper sites. An alternative may be to focus on charging higher rates in a dynamic pricing model for those trips (an example being the Oslo Ring Road Tool which uses dynamic pricing by time period), where there is a strong public transport and active mode offer, with the funds ring fenced to be invested in further improving public transport and active mode provision generating a virtuous cycle.

## **Challenge 9: Interurban transport across modes**

[Question 17: What are the barriers to a decision-making framework on interurban transport that reflects a balanced approach across different transport modes?](#)

17.1 As indicated in Q7 the lack of an overarching strategy that brings together the various streams of work, and maps out the interdependencies would be extremely useful, both to provide certainty and ensure that stakeholders are all working towards the same direction.

17.2 We've already set out in Q2 the importance of place-based approaches to funding which then allow for a holistic approach to growth and development at a regional level, and will support multi-modal transport. A greater focus on place-based approaches to transport would require joint agreement on areas such as:

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<sup>12</sup> [A winning policy: Nottingham's Workplace Parking Levy | Campaign For Better Transport](#)

<sup>13</sup> 'Scenario Testing: Spatial Economic Impacts of measures to reduce Carbon Emissions', David Simmonds Consultancy (for Midlands Connect), October 2020

- Understanding of economic corridors. What are the (future) economic needs and prospects of an area, what will this mean in terms of goods being brought to and from an area?
- Understanding of private travel needs. Where do people live now (and in the future) and where will they need to move to for work? What are the leisure travel needs? What should be the balance between local travel within a region versus travel between key urban areas?
- Understanding of freight needs. What goods will be moving around the region and how can these be most effectively moved?

17.3 Having a clear understanding of the above points could then support a more consistent way of deciding who gets access to road and rail network and the balance that is required between public / private / active / freight and logistics on these modes, and in addition to meet wider policy objectives.

17.4 Another element which has been indicated in earlier questions is better land-use planning so that we encourage planned growth and development (whether commercial or residential) in a way that allows for an integrated travel system to support it.

17.5 Finally, it should be recognised that there is a contextual barrier at the current time. COVID has changed a number of things in relation to users and patterns of travel. The key elements can be summarised as:

- Use of private vehicles has rebounded to close to pre-pandemic level, whereas bus and rail is still significantly below<sup>14</sup>.
- Likely change in working patterns for commuters with many working a greater percentage of time at home.
- Increase in the leisure market reported for public transport.

17.6 These changes have subsequent impacts for transport planners. Many are considering what customers now want from the service, how this can develop further to encourage more people to use public transport in general and to visit tourist areas this way, moving away from peak and off-peak services and then the consequential impacts for costs and pricing. These uncertainties need to be brought into the decision-making process to ensure we are planning a system that is reflective of peoples needs.

#### Balancing needs of different users versus space available in urban areas

17.7 Road space, or the space provided for movement/mobility, in cities is a scarce commodity (unless we start digging tunnels!) and it needs to be allocated to different modes or users to move around safely. This can cause conflicts but it can also be used to deliver policy. E.g. removing a traffic lane to put in bus priority/cycling lanes or wider footways.

17.8 The barriers to a decision-making framework here would be a consistent way of deciding who/which mode gets what amount of this scarce resource allocated to them – and how to measure and understand what the knock-on impacts are of that decision on the other users who have (as a consequence) less space allocated to them.

17.9 Cities need a consistent way of quantifying the value or level of service an amount of space given to any specific mode or user provides. That way quantified decisions can be made as to who gets more or less space according to local need/policy.

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<sup>14</sup> [Transport use during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/transport-use-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-pandemic)

Supporting evidence:

1	Supercharging the Midlands report	Overview of EV work completed to date. Further detailed data and analysis can be provided if required.	Suitable for publication
2	Role of 5G in transport sector	Potential uses of 5G in the sector and barriers that may be faced.	Internal desktop report only, not for wider publication
3	Alternative Fuels for Freight study slides	Views on the barriers to transitioning to alternative fuels from the freight sector, and early indications of needs for a refuelling and recharging network.	Suitable for publication
4	Technology Action Plan study slides	Excerpt from the Technology Analysis report.  Full slides can be provided if required.	Not suitable for publication
5	Hydrogen Technology pathway plan		Suitable for publication

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