

Tyne and Wear Partnership

Newsletter

April 2009

Regional Freight Conference

A conference was held on 26th February at Newcastle City Council to review the work carried out to date by the Partnership and to assist in spreading best practice to other areas. The event was considered to be a great success and was attended by 67 delegates from a range of organisations.

James Ramsbotham of the North East Chamber of Commerce opened up the Conference with the keynote speech. Presentations followed, delivered by Martin Murphy of the Sustaine Group and Geoff Dunning of the Road Haulage Association.

An overview of the work undertaken by the Partnership was then given by the project group, followed by workshop sessions to discuss the challenges for the future, how to share best practice and what can be taken up by other Freight Quality Partnerships.



From the workshops discussions, it is clear that appropriate funding for the Tyne and Wear Freight Partnership has been important, together with a good mix of local authorities and freight operators involved in the decision making process. Suggestions on how the Partnership could improve included:

- involving other local authorities and operators from rail, road and water;
- an evening Partnership meeting to engage operators who are unable to attend during the day;
- consideration of alternative methods to communicate using different types of media systems;
- placing an increased focus on rail freight;
- extending the use of interactive mapping, which is both an improvement and a challenge for the Partnership;
- Recognition of the need to ensure the newly formed Integrated Transport Authority (ITA) have a full appreciation of freight;
- The requirement for consistency through all the local authorities – this could be achieved through an annual regional freight group meeting;
- Communication is an ongoing challenge in reaching out to drivers;
- The development of a Consolidation Centre should be located next to a rail link;
- The T&W approach is transferrable to other authorities depending on their available budget; and
- T&W mapping is well designed and could be a template for others to follow.

Loading and Unloading Design Scheme

The Partnership has previously reported that potential loading and unloading schemes have been identified for three locations in Tyne and Wear. Further to this, Newcastle City Council agreed to schemes being designed for the sites at Chillingham Road and Shields Road, which are located to the east of the City.



Shields Road has 8 lay-bys which are largely utilised all day by parked cars, restricting access for goods vehicle parking. Cars have also been parking inappropriately on the kerb encroaching on an advisory cycle lane on both the east and westbound lanes. The report shows that the kerbline is now restricted with 'No Waiting at Any Time' designations and 'No Loading' restrictions, however there were no sign plates associated with these restrictions. The design scheme for Shields Road states that there is sufficient access to the majority of retail outlets from the rear of the buildings. This area should be utilised more efficiently.

Civil Enforcement becomes the responsibility of Newcastle City Council in the middle of April 2009. When Civil Enforcement (CE) has been implemented, it may have the desired effect of providing loading space in the existing parking bays. A review is to take place in May to fully appreciate the effect of CE on Shields Road. Amendments to current arrangements may be required if it is not successful in alleviating the issues.

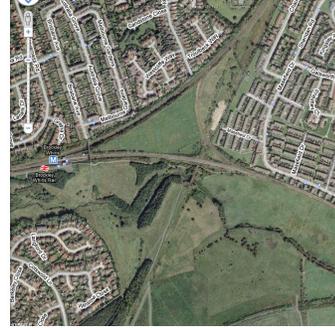
Chillingham Road has 12 lay-bys which are utilised all day by parked cars, restricting access to goods vehicles. The report shows that the remaining kerb-line is now restricted with 'No Waiting at Any Time' designations. The Chillingham Road design scheme recommends that four loading bays be introduced at key locations to service the larger retail outlets. It recommends a time limit to the operation of the restrictions, between 8am and 10am and 4pm and 6pm.

Freight on Rail Assessment

A Final Report has now been completed and was submitted to the Partnership at the meeting in March. The findings of the report can be summarised as follows:

- Rail freight can play a significant role in reducing lorry miles and the overall carbon footprint. A number of schemes in the region have been identified which can contribute to this, but the schemes are required to compete for finite resources.
- At a local level there are three schemes that would expand the network appropriately and which already have the backing of the local authorities, Nexus, One North East and North East Regional Assembly. These are the Leamside Line, Ashington Blyth and Tyne (ABT) line and the re-instatement of the Boldon East Curve.
- The Leamside line would provide an alternative route from the ECML in periods of congestion, and will extend to the industrial areas of Washington and East Gateshead to allow modal shift from road to rail. It would also provide connectivity for passengers to Newcastle and Durham through Houghton le Spring and Washington. The Network Rail Freight Utilisation Strategy (RUS) states that the projected increase in traffic does not currently give a strong enough case for re-instatement.
- In the case of the ABT line, the Regional Funding Advice (RFA) has proposed a scheme to further upgrade the line from Blyth at a cost of £35m named the "South East Northumberland Public Transport Corridor". The upgrade will consider passenger traffic from Newcastle up to Ashington. As the project is included in the advice, it means the region will look at various ways of taking it forward.

- The Boldon East Curve was identified in the Network Rail Freight RUS as having a business case to re-open to assist the increase demand from the Port of Tyne for additional rail paths. Network Rail indicated that the latest projected completion date is 2011.



Lorry Parking

We previously reported that the Partnership is facilitating the progression of a potential lorry park facility at Van Hee in Felling (Gateshead). A meeting has taken place, bringing together Gateshead Development Control, Traffic Management and the prospective operator to discuss outline plans for a local site. Initially there will be 30 available spaces for HGV parking, Gateshead Council support this project and have no objections to the change of use. The shower and toilet facilities will require upgrading. It was made clear that the operator would have to pay for any signage. The operator could promote the opening of the site facilities by placing press releases in the industry press. The RHA and the FTA may be supportive and also place articles in their newsletters. The Partnership will continue to assist in facilitating the process.

Action Plan Year 5

A strong foundation has clearly been established for taking the Partnership forward in the coming years. However, it is important for new ideas and initiatives to be brought forward in order to maintain and build momentum. An action plan has now been agreed for Year 5 – this includes further developments to the mapping work (incorporating roll out of interactive maps), developments to the website, further signage improvements, more engagement with operators, facilitation of lorry parking opportunities and being proactive in the development of rail freight. Details of the 18 tasks will be posted onto the Partnership's website www.tyneandwearfreight.info.

Get Involved

You are welcome to attend the next meeting, which is to be held **at 10.30am on 11th June 2009 in St Marys Room, Faber Maunsell Offices, One Trinity Gardens, Broad Chare, Quayside, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 2HF**. For more information please contact Michael Page by email on michael.page@fabermaunsell.com. Alternatively call Mike on 0191 224 6512.