

---

|                         |  |                                 |
|-------------------------|--|---------------------------------|
| REPORT TO:              | FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE             | AGENDA ITEM: 8                  |
| DATE OF MEETING:        | 17 MARCH 2005                                | CATEGORY: DELEGATED             |
| REPORT FROM:            | DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE                       | OPEN PARAGRAPH NO:              |
| MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT: | RICHARD GROVES (EXT. 5738)                   | DOC:                            |
| SUBJECT:                | REGIONAL FREIGHT STRATEGY CONSULTATIVE DRAFT | REF: U:/Richard/Committees/FM10 |
| WARD(S) AFFECTED:       | ALL  | TERMS OF REFERENCE: FM14        |

---

### **1.0 Recommendations**

- 1.1 That the "Officer Comments" set out in Section 3.0 of this report be forwarded as this Council's response to the Draft Strategy.

### **2.0 Purpose of Report**

- 2.1 To obtain a member resolution on the Regional Freight Strategy Consultation Draft.

### **3.0 Detail**

- 3.1 The East Midlands Regional Assembly has published a Draft Regional Freight Strategy for comment, a copy of which has been placed in the Members' Room. The Strategy will supplement the Regional Transport Strategy, which in turn forms part of the Regional Planning Guidance for the East Midlands. This report briefly addresses those aspects of the Strategy that are of most significance to South Derbyshire.

#### Environmental Impact of Freight

- 3.2 The Strategy recommends the development of a freight routing and delivery framework to minimise the environmental impact of freight and to develop proposals to publicise and sign the network. Also proposed are the encouragement of use of more environmentally acceptable vehicles and a review of lorry parking and other driver facilities throughout the region.

#### Officer Comment

- 3.3 The environmental impact of freight vehicles using local roads is a matter of concern in parts of South Derbyshire including the A511 through Hatton and Woodville and the A444 through Overseal and Stanton. The development, signing and publicising of a regional freight network offers the potential to redirect some of this traffic where opportunities exist and is welcomed as are the other initiatives proposed under this heading.

#### Encouraging Modal Shift from Road to Rail

- 3.4 The Strategy seeks to increase the tonnage carried by freight trains originating or terminating in the region by one million per annum over 2005 levels. Proposals aimed at achieving this include promoting commercial development at sites that have the potential to be rail connected and encouraging the safeguarding of land adjacent

to active and disused rail alignments where industrial development is being promoted. Improvements to address rail infrastructure constraints will also be sought and the SRA and Network Rail are to be encouraged to maintain the capability of active lines. The protection of disused railway lines with potential to re-open for freight traffic and the growth of existing rail freight terminals will be encouraged. The Strategy also seeks to address the opportunities for modal shift from road to rail in traffic passing through the Region as well as that originating or terminating therein.

#### Officer Comment

- 3.5 The emerging Local Plan protects sites with rail freight potential at Cadley Hill, the former Drakelow Power Station and the former Hilton Depot and protects disused rail alignments to allow their restoration for passenger or freight use, or restoration for recreation or alternative transport purposes. Endorsement of this approach in the Draft Freight Strategy is welcomed.
- 3.6 Owing to the location of the East Midlands in the centre of England a substantial volume of freight passes through the area between origins and destinations outside the region. The transfer of a proportion of this freight from road to rail would help to ease pressure on long distance highway routes and measures aimed at achieving this would be welcomed.
- 3.7 The potential for introducing a National Forest Line passenger rail service would be enhanced by the proposal to maintain the capability of active rail freight lines, for which purpose the existing infrastructure on this line is currently used. This proposal is therefore welcomed.

#### Air Freight

- 3.8 Key Policy 6 of the Strategy states that:

*“Regional and Local Partners will work together to support the national role and sustainable growth of NEMA (Nottingham East Midlands Airport) as the UKs leading airport for dedicated freight cargo by promoting and supporting appropriate planning policies and guidance within the context of current government policy (the Future of Air Transport White Paper), which requires rigorous assessment of environmental impacts.”*

- 3.9 The Strategy proposes to identify the implications of freight proposals contained in the Airport's Economic Development Strategy and address surface access needs subject to the satisfactory resolution of environmental implications. Opportunities to transfer surface freight traffic from road to rail and for direct rail access to the airport will be pursued.
- 3.10 Opportunities for modal shift from air freight to rail will be identified where this could be viable and deliver environmental benefits. The Strategy will also assess the extent to which current and future air freight could be carried on day flights as opposed to the existing predominantly night time operation.

#### Officer Comment

- 3.11 This Council has previously expressed its recognition that the presence of NEMA yields substantial economic benefits both for the region and South Derbyshire, but has expressed strong concern about noise and other environmental implications of activity at the airport, particularly in relation to night flights. The emphasis given to the requirement for the assessment of environmental impacts is therefore welcomed, however this reference falls short of what is required by the Future of Air Transport White Paper, which indicates that the expansion of freight operations:

*“...would need to be accompanied by stringent controls on night noise in particular and increasingly generous noise insulation and other mitigation measures”.*

3.12 Whilst the proposals to identify opportunities for modal shift from air freight to rail and to assess the potential for a shift toward day time freight operations are very much welcomed it is considered that the requirements of the White Paper would be more accurately reflected by adding at the end of Key Policy 6 (see para. 3.7):

*“...and the introduction of appropriate mitigation measures including stringent controls on night noise.”*

3.13 Surface access to the airport is a matter of concern in villages such as Melbourne and for the district as a whole in terms of traffic congestion affecting the wider trunk road network. The proposals to address the surface access needs of the airport subject to the resolution of environmental implications and to explore opportunities for the transfer of surface freight from road to rail are therefore welcomed.

#### Other Proposals

3.14 The Strategy considers the potential for an increase in waterborne freight, although this would not be applicable to South Derbyshire as the Trent and Mersey Canal no longer lends itself to such use owing to design constraints. The potential for growth in the use of pipelines is also considered.

### **4.0 Financial Implications**

4.1 None.

### **5.0 Corporate Implications**

5.1 The Strategy has implications relating to the key corporate aims to:

- safeguard and enhance a sustainable environment and
- develop a vibrant and sustainable economy

### **6.0 Community Implications**

6.1 As described in Section 3.0

### **7.0 Conclusions**

7.1 As set out under “Officer Comments” in Section 3.0.

### **8.0 Background Papers**

“Towards a Regional Freight Strategy-  
Consultation Draft”

East Midlands Regional  
Assembly, February 2005

“The Future of Air Transport White Paper”

Department for Transport  
December 2003

