

RTPI NEWS

The RTPI News pages are edited by Nancy Hammonds at the RTPI, 41 Botolph Lane, London EC3R 8DL

Editorial fax
Email

020 7929 8199
rtpinews@rtpi.org.uk

RTPI (switchboard)
Fax

020 7929 9494
020 7929 9490

Registered charity number 262865
Registered charity
in Scotland SC037841

Member responses set framework for High Speed 2 route discussions

From clarity of purpose to detailed approval, funding and environmental strategies, transport planning network members offer a range of opinions as the government looks at fast rail options, says *Victoria Hills*

“High Speed 2 (HS2) — has the DfT got it right?” was the question posed to members of the RTPI and Transport Planning Society (TPS) transport planning network in May. Since then, the topic has continued to hot up, with transport secretary Lord Andrew Adonis announcing that it is a question of when and how rather than whether the line will be built (*Planning*, 29 May, p6) and more recently indicating that he will not tolerate any attempt to sacrifice the scheme despite pressure on the government to cut major projects.

The question is perhaps premature, given that the government will not be reporting back on its assessment of the case for HS2 and recommended route options until later in the year. However, it was felt to be essential to get a snapshot of member views on this important topic.

As a starting point, network members suggested that it is important for HS2 to establish clarity of purpose. Is the objective to provide an alternative for domestic air travel, to relieve congestion on existing rail lines or to support regeneration areas and encourage decentralisation away from London and the South East?

Others pointed out that high-speed rail could substantially extend the London commuter belt, with implications for land-use planning around the newly linked stations or those benefiting from faster travel times to the capital.

On routeing, one member observed that if the southern terminus of the HS2 route is in London, connections will be needed with High Speed 1 to allow trains to run through to mainland Europe without the needed to change in London. This will be essential if the line is to compete effectively with air travel. While the first phase of HS2 is likely to be



St Pancras: link with cross-Channel service advocated for proposed line

between London and the West Midlands, members argued that this should be part of a phased project to connect the capital to the north.

Integration with other transport modes to minimise the need for car travel to and from HS2 stations is vital, as is the avoidance of duplication. One major selling point for rail over air travel is the convenience of arriving into the city centre. Members feel that a high-speed freight line should also be considered.

The issue of competition and impact on fares was also raised. Given recent reports that Eurostar could face competition from operators Deutsche Bahn and Air France in running cross-Channel services, the opportunities for rivalling air travel to encourage modal shift look healthy in an open-market scenario. In terms of delivery, while Adonis has been impressed by examples from Europe and Japan, he has recognised that there is no single off-the-shelf model for the UK.

Challenging milestones include securing planning permission — which would most likely require legislation — and detailed issues such as mitigation measures and land acquisition. Clearly, such a geographically broad scheme will involve numerous landowners and stakeholders. Delegates maintained that a fair and consistent approach will be essential to securing support for HS2.

When considering future funding of infrastructure, participants referred to the new business rate supplement bill as a potential source. However, its applicability to HS2 remains to be seen. The infrastructure planning commission will also hold opportunities for speeding up major transport infrastructure.

Finally, a common question among members was why it has taken so long for government to consider a second high-speed rail line. Regions have lobbied for it for many years and the general feeling is that the UK investment has lagged behind other European countries.

One member suggested that it is neither environmentally sustainable nor economically and socially prudent to rely on the disjointed efforts that pass for a national transport policy, whereby ports and rail play second fiddle to road and air travel. We look forward to the assessment of the case for HS2 and the recommended route options to be published later this year.

Victoria Hills is Greater London Authority transport projects and performance manager. She was previously chair of the transport planning network and is now chair of the TPS. The network is a forum for professionals with an interest in planning for transport. To join, please email transport@rtpi.org.uk

“Integration with other transport modes to minimise the need for car travel to and from stations is vital”

Planners evolve as team-makers

The complexity of shaping schemes calls for a leadership role from the profession in drawing together specialist skills, reports *Jenny Crawford*

What is your professional identity? According to Karina Sehested in her article on urban planners as network managers and meta-governors in the latest edition of *Planning Theory and Practice*, you are likely to cast yourself as a hybrid between professional strategist, manager, market planner or process planner.

Sehested's research was carried out in Denmark but changes in planning there echo familiar global trends in spatial practice. This emphasises the importance of developing shared objectives, co-ordination of practitioners and integration of policies and fiscal mechanisms.

In this context, the hybrid planner moves between contrasting sets of values — professionalism, municipal democracy, market efficiency and inclusive democracy. The complexity of the tasks suggests that planning professionalism increasingly depends on team-building around specialist roles and skills.

It may seem self-evident that it takes a team to harness the relevant behaviours, knowledge areas and networks for place-making. But the skills of team-making are undervalued and underdeveloped. These leadership skills need to be nurtured at all levels of the profession.

Among these core skills are analysing and participating in the complex networks of knowledge and decision-making that shape development. Swedish academic Jan Olsson describes the processes that completely transformed the outcomes for a strategic regeneration site on the edge of the city of Orebro. It involves a classic waterside site, including the former municipal dump and a flagging industrial area.

In the face of global competition, climate change and new economic and ecological models, what are the development options and who influences the decisions? Olsson's painstaking and intriguing analysis is likely to ring bells for many development planners in the UK. A particular value network based on a shared interest in bird-watching is shown to wield a powerful influence



Crawford: meaningful evaluation

in the formulation and communication of options.

Planners need to define and communicate their role in the context of this complexity and diversity of interest and influence. Ernest Alexander of the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, reflects on the importance of context in his article "What is Planning For?" He argues that the only meaningful type of evaluation is one that enables all relevant stakeholders to discuss what planning is for in their specific area.

This focus on place is crucial. Planning practice that becomes divorced from its context in place becomes divorced from the vitality, opportunity and creativity of the development process and its many stakeholder communities. Such practice becomes at best irrelevant. At worst, it is counterproductive.

The qualities of place are not simply physical attributes but the networks of human uses and values that interact with them, including their wider spatial relationships. Evaluating the outcomes of planning is a vital part of the process of communicating what planning is for and the extent to which it is delivering. Designing and enabling evaluation must therefore be key skills for effective planning teams.

*Jenny Crawford is RTPI head of research. **Planning Theory and Practice** is a peer-reviewed journal published four times a year by the RTPI in conjunction with Routledge Journals. Institute members can subscribe for the reduced rate of £31 per annum. For more information, please visit www.rtpi.org.uk/member_services/planning_theory_and_practice*

Research Bulletin

Project network gathers analysis on climate change adaptation

A number of research projects focusing on the adaptation of the urban environment and infrastructure to climate change are being rolled out by the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council and the UK Climate Impacts Programme. The funding providers are placing particular emphasis on the development of a network of researchers and users as the programme progresses.

Researchers in the Adaptation and Resilience in Cities — Analysis and Decision-making using Integrated Assessment (ARCADIA) project are using the Tyndall Centre's whole systems analysis of cities in a quantified integrated model of long-term change in London. The model incorporates analysis of the economy, land use, transport and other infrastructure such as water supply and flood defences to understand the potential impacts of climate change and the effectiveness of adaptation options. To develop the model as a multi-purpose tool for decision-making, a team led by Newcastle University's Professor Jim Hall will carry out further work on governance, the processes by which climate impacts influence urban systems, a UK Climate Projections-compatible scenario generator for urban areas, scenarios of London's economy for analysis of adaptation options and a land-use simulator of the spatial evolution of cities.

The RTPI is involved in the project's steering group, which brings together the Greater London Authority, the DCLG, London First, CABE, Arup and the Town and Country Planning Association.

For more information on ARCADIA and other adaptation research projects, please visit www.ukcip-arcc.org.uk/content/view/628/559

Funding offered to fight challenges of global poverty

A new phase of research funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and the Department for International Development will provide more robust social science data to tackle poverty alleviation among the poorest countries and people of the world. A total of £23 million is being made available for study on areas including urban development. The ESRC welcomes applications from developing countries, as both leaders and partners in bids for funding.

For more details, please visit www.esrcsocietytoday.ac.uk/ESRCInfoCentre/opportunities/current_funding_opportunities/ESRC-DFID.aspx#0

Sheffield offers research resources for riverside development

Rivers have historically been at the heart of many cities. A major four-year research project on the sustainable development of urban river corridors is based at the University of Sheffield. These culturally rich and ecologically interesting urban spaces are now prime targets for redevelopment, offering the opportunity to create mixed use, high-density and high-quality communities.

For more information, please visit www.ursula.ac.uk

University of the West of England invites doctoral applications

The University of the West of England's department of planning and architecture is inviting applications for PhD studentships in any aspect of sustainable urban environments, climate change and urban areas, spatial planning, sustainability and climate change and UK-European comparative studies.

For more information, please email katie4.williams@uwe.ac.uk



Riverside development: regeneration research project under way

NANCY HAMMONDS

Take time out for learning at the Planning Summer School

Intensive knowledge sharing and relaxed networking aim to build professional insight, writes *Kate Webster*

The Planning Summer School is more than an opportunity for high-quality continuing professional development, it is a major event in the profession's calendar.

Taking place this year at the University of Exeter, the summer school gives planners a chance to take a step back from day-to-day activities to learn, understand and appreciate the context in which planning operates. The schools cover a wide variety of topics through workshops, presentations and study tours that will engage delegates and send them back to work refreshed.

The elected members' school runs from 4 to 8 September, offering a reliable, cost-effective way to increase understanding of the planning process and changes to it. The school includes workshops on sustainable design, lessons learned from the local development framework system and how to get involved in pre-application talks, as well as a choice of study tours.

This year, there will be a strong focus on leadership in local government and delivering growth. The closing speech will be given by Local Government Association deputy chairman Richard Kemp.

The planners school from 8 to 12 September will focus on a tale of two cities, Bristol and Exeter. Delegates will also hear a Belfast case study on retail-led regeneration, with the chance to tour Exeter's West Quarter and Quayside areas.

For non-urban planners, later workshops will cover coastal regeneration and agricultural development. MP Matthew Taylor's session on the rural economy will be of particular interest. The international



Plenary debates: tackling issues

perspective will be covered by US planning consultant Mary Kay Peck, while a series of guests will give evening presentations.

This year's plenary debate on delivering growth in a difficult economic climate will give delegates the chance to discuss one of the issues at the top of the planning agenda. Speakers from Cambridge-shire Horizons, the Homes and Communities Agency and Swindon Borough Council will offer views.

RTPI president Martin Willey will also speak during the event, while University of Manchester professor of town planning Michael Hebbert will close the proceedings. During the intensive days of learning, discussion and knowledge sharing, there will also be time for networking, with a reception, a gala dinner and the traditional quiz.

Kate Webster is RTPI marketing officer. For more information or to book a place, please visit www.planningsummerschool.org

RTPI Bulletin Board

Network frames response on urban development corporation future

The RTPI regeneration network will be taking the lead in formulating the institute's response to the urban development corporations' quinquennial review consultation. The London Thames Gateway, Thurrock Thames Gateway and West Northamptonshire Development Corporations were established in 2004 to secure regeneration in their areas and the delivery of housing growth proposed in the sustainable communities plan. The DCLG is seeking to determine what aspects of their operation could be improved or what alternative arrangements should be put in their place.

To contribute, please email regeneration@rtpi.org.uk

Natural England seeks input on protected landscape approaches

The rural planning network's policy group is leading the RTPI's response to Natural England's consultation on its draft protected landscapes policy. This document will set out the position that the agency will adopt in furthering the role of protected landscapes and related advisory and guidance activities.

For more details, please email rhian.brimble@rtpi.org.uk

Planning Award categories open for submissions

Entries are now being accepted for the Young Planner of the Year, Planning Consultancy of the Year and Education and Lifelong Learning Awards categories of the 2009 Planning Awards. The closing date is Monday 28 September. Winners will be announced on 4 February 2010.

To enter, please visit www.rtpiplanningawards.com or for more information, email awards@rtpi.org.uk

Events

Promoting Sustainable Transport

23 October. RTPI South West. Winter Gardens, Weston-super-Mare. This event will report experiences from those involved in policy and implementation across the region on issues such as how to ensure that development is really sustainable in terms of transport provision, how to prepare or judge transport assessments, what should be in a travel plan and how can we provide genuine alternatives to the car. Cost: £72 + VAT; £31 for retired, £21 for unwaged and students.

To book, please email southwest@rtpi.org.uk, call 01823 250 822 or fax 01823 665 434.

Planning for the Upturn

31 October. Politicians in Planning Network. Savoy Place, London. This annual conference attracts planning councillors from across the UK to examine and discuss important current issues. The event, sponsored by the Planning Advisory Service, will include a question-and-answer session with Homes and Communities Agency chief executive Sir Bob Kerlake.

Cost: Free to network members and planning councillors.

To book, please email room@rtpi.org.uk or call Andrew Matheson on 01789 763 006.



RTPI
mediation of space · making of place

UPDATED FOR 2009

9th Understanding the Appeals Process Conference 2009

23 September 2009 • London

- The 21st Century Appeals System – proportionate, efficient, and customer focused
- Appeals processes and achieving procedural effectiveness
- Preparing for written representations cases and hearings
- Presenting an effective case as a witness
- Appeals procedures – the advocate's perspective
- A general case law update
- DPD examination

Conference chair: Keith Holland, Assistant Director, Planning Inspectorate



Tel: 0845 082 1171

e-mail: services@rtpiconferences.co.uk

www.rtpiconferences.co.uk/27761