Policy choice or prediction – it's up to us

Roger Boulter BA(Hons) CMILT

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Urban planning and transport planning

- Different origins
- Urban planning – c. 1900, ‘Garden Cities’ – chose a future (and worked towards it)
- Transport planning – 1930s Chicago USA, 4-stage modelling – predicted a future (and worked towards it)

“Citizen Jane”

- Jane Jacobs, New York, from mid-1950s-early 1970s
- *Death and Life of Great American Cities* book 1961
- Social environment – not just infrastructure
- Community development
- ‘Public participation’

Predictions overshoot

- Early 1990s traffic demand ‘saturation point’ illusory
- Road building generates extra traffic
- Fierce professional debates 1980s
- Settled: 1994 ‘SACTRA report’ *Trunk roads and the generation of traffic*

Public transport image change

- Can public transport meet some of the traffic demand? 1989 *Birmingham Integrated Transport Study (BITS)*
- Quality, e.g. sleek trams – not just for the poor
- *'Transit Oriented Development' /* urban design movement

‘Integrated transport’ limitations

- Birmingham Integrated Transport Study (BITS) excluded lay public (officials collaborating)
- BITS also ignored walking and cycling as transport
- BITS still based on meeting demand, not influencing demand
- Result: ‘travel demand management’

Planning for cycling

- 1960s Netherlands *kindermoord* public anger – car restriction, traffic calming (woonerf)
- 1977 *Geelong Bike Plan* – in Australia, NZ, UK, grew out of road safety (Victoria state)
- Results: cycling mainstreamed in Netherlands (etc), underwhelming Australia, NZ, UK

Planning for walking

- Important role of architects
- Street as a ‘place’ not a facility for movement
- Traffic engineers/ architects dichotomy
- Jane Jacobs, Mayer Hillman, Jan Gehl, all had architecture background
- Values and ‘people’ more than data

Mid-1990s turning point

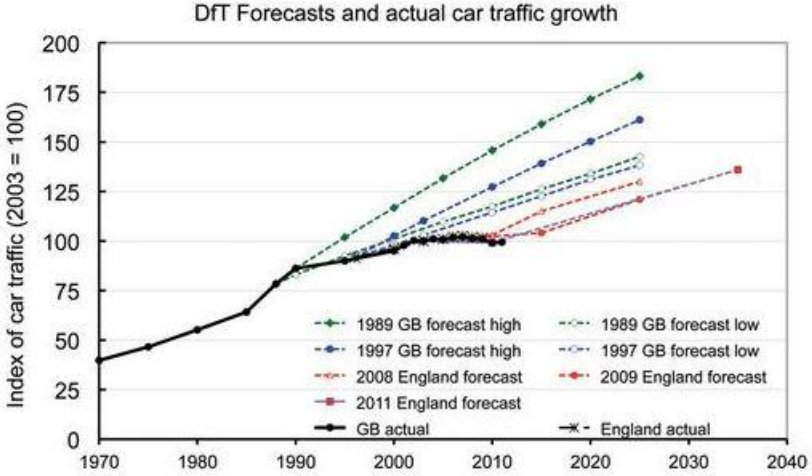
- 1994 SACTRA report (roads generate traffic)
- 1996 cycling found best helped by reducing and slowing traffic (not ‘building cycleways’)
- From this time, streets given to people on foot (some freeways demolished)

The issue

- **Is transport planning about policy choice or is it about prediction?**
- It is about policy choice informed by technical science
- Technical models can inform policy makers – they can’t make decisions

Make choices not made before

- Traffic levels (e.g. VKT) have stopped growing
- Millennials no longer aspire to car ownership
- People want lifestyle quality
- The car is no longer a status symbol (or an adulthood rite-of-passage)



Avoid silo thinking

- Best way to help motor traffic – road programmes?
- Best way to help cycling – cycleway programmes?
- Wrong in each case
- Transport must be planned together, with policy choices at its heart
- *"What sort of city form do we want?"*

Integration tools

- ‘Link and place’
- NZS 4404: 2010 subdivisions guide
- *One Network Road Classification (ONRC)*
- Integrated transport planning in major centres: ATAP (Auckland Transport Alignment Project), LGWM (Let’s Get Wellington Moving)
- Too complicated to easily apply?

One Network Road Classification

- Road hierarchy theory – arterials, collector, local access
- Public transport – best on the arterials (e.g. BRT); (not collectors as in road hierarchy theory)
- Cycle route networks – failure of ‘back street route’ theory (again, arterials best)
- Walking – places not networks

Autonomous vehicles

- We have choices (insistent hype like in 1960s)
- Pedestrian restrictions too high a price ('vibrancy')?
- Apply to public transport? Efficiency for mass volumes, role of centres in urban form
- There will still be congestion (think 'smart motorways')
- Glitches could be fatal (e.g. detection fails)

Analytical skills needed

- Policy analysis more important than numbers
- Numerical science can’t evaluate ideas
- Numerical science inform policy choice, not make policy choice (e.g. use of models)
- Arts graduates – learning to <u>think</u>

Thank you!

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