

www.tyneandwearfreight.info

What is the Partnership?

The Tyne and Wear Freight Partnership seeks to understand the problems and issues relating to freight movement and provides a mechanism through which they can be addressed. It brings together transport operators, industry representatives, local authorities, the Highways Agency and key local stakeholder groups to facilitate delivery of an action plan targeted at improving the efficiency, safety and sustainability of freight movement.

Key outputs of the Partnership since it was formed in 2005 are:

- Produced a freight routing strategy for Tyne and Wear, including the production of a freight map
- Innovative tailored maps for key freight destinations
- Review of signage with respect to key destinations for freight
- Designed and facilitated the installation of much needed freight specific signs for the Port of Tyne
- Launched a successful website, which aims to provide a one-stop shop information source for freight operators
- Commenced development of a standardised map for highway restrictions and abnormal loads routes across Tyne and Wear
- Carried out a review of lorry parking facilities and engaged in the process of facilitating the development of new sites
- Initiated a review of priority lanes in Tyne and Wear, with a view to developing guidance on when it is appropriate to introduce different types of priority lane
- Successfully engaged with operators, industry representatives, local authorities, the Highways Agency and key local stakeholder groups



November 2007

Setting up the Partnership

The partnership was established following Government guidance set out in 'Sustainable Distribution: A Strategy', which aims to set out a framework for working between the industry, local government and others in achieving sustainable distribution. At a local level, the strategy promotes the development of Quality Partnerships between local authorities, the freight industry, business communities, residents and environmental groups. This is most effectively delivered through the Local Transport Plan (LTP) process.



In 2004, Faber Maunsell undertook a study on behalf of the Tyne and Wear LTP Core Team to investigate the nature of freight in the area. The aim of this project was to provide a solid foundation for the development of a realistic and deliverable freight strategy.

In April 2005, the Tyne and Wear Freight Partnership was launched at a consultation event held in Newcastle. This was successful in bringing together transport operators, industry representatives (Road Haulage Association and the Freight Transport Association) along with key delivery agencies, including the five local authorities and the Highways Agency.

The consultation event included discussion on potential 'Do Now' and 'Do Soon' tasks to be included in the action plan.

It was agreed that the aim of the Freight Strategy should be 'to improve the efficiency, safety and sustainability of freight movement in the region'. Importantly, there was a consensus that the Partnership should work to a clearly defined action plan, focussing on the delivery of tangible outputs.



It was agreed the following tasks would be undertaken in the first year:

Do Now

- Establishing the Freight Partnership communication links, including quarterly meetings and a newsletter
- Agreeing a lorry routing strategy across Tyne and Wear
- Producing and marketing a freight map
- Reviewing signage with respect to freight across Tyne and Wear
- Assess the case for provision of freight driver information boards at key points in the area

Other tasks identified under the 'Do Soon' category included:

Do Soon

- Assessment of Priority Lanes (including No-Car lanes) in Tyne and Wear
- Review the provision of lorry parking facilities
- Assess the case for the development of a Consolidation Centre
- Promotion of driver training programmes
- Review delivery arrangements to town and city centres
- Engage further with Network Rail to develop the contribution of rail to freight movement

Setting up the Partnership

The role of the Partnership is to review progress towards identified tasks and to inform the direction and scope of the work carried out. It provides both a strategic steer, as well as valuable detailed information for undertaking components of the plan. Organisations who regularly attend the quarterly meetings include:

- AG Barr
- Co-operative Group
- Eddis Transport
- Freight Transport Association
- Highways Agency
- Gateshead Council
- Government Office North East
- Institute of Logistics and Transport
- Newcastle City Council
- Newcastle Chronicle
- North East Transport Activists Roundtable
- North Tyneside Council
- Road Haulage Association
- South Tyneside Council
- Sunderland City Council
- PD Ports
- Port of Tyne Logistics



The following sections outline the activities of the Partnership with respect to a number of work areas.

Mapping

Tyne and Wear Freight Map

The map was developed in close consultation with the Partnership and in particular with the five local authorities and the Highways Agency. It identifies a suggested road freight network for the conurbation and shows the key destinations for freight traffic. Thirteen detailed inset maps are included, which depict preferred routes to the destinations along with height and weight restrictions. The map also includes contacts for local authority Traffic Managers, guidance on abnormal loads, and information on Freight Best Practice, the Department for Transport's programme targeted at improving operational efficiency in the industry.



The map was launched at a Freight Best Practice event in Sunderland in March 2006. Two thousand copies of the map were produced and distributed to local authorities, Newcastle Airport, ports, transport operators, and truckstops.

Tailored Freight Destination Maps

With the Tyne and Wear Freight Map as a starting point, the maps show a more detailed road network around the destinations, highlight preferred routes, include directions from the strategic road network and depict individual buildings. The maps were developed in conjunction with the local authorities and key contact points at the individual destinations. Eleven tailored maps were produced for the following destinations:

- Asda (Washington)
- The Bridges Shopping Centre (Sunderland)
- Eldon Square Shopping Centre (Newcastle)
- Gateshead East
- Kingston Park
- MetroCentre (Gateshead)
- North Tyne Industrial Estate
- Port of Sunderland
- Port of Tyne (South Shields)
- Salters Lane and Balliol Industrial Estate

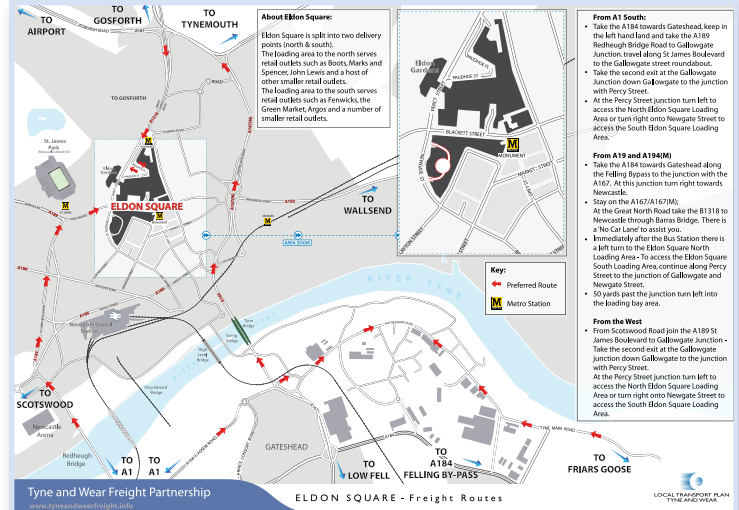
Mapping

The Eldon Square map is shown opposite as an example.

The maps have been well received by both companies and local authorities alike. Each map is available on the Partnership's website and organisations have been encouraged to email the maps out to their customers.

Abnormal Loads and Highway Restrictions Map

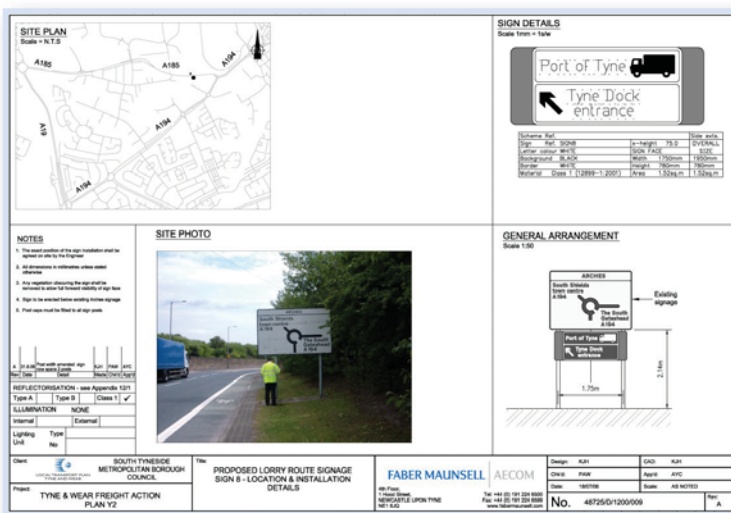
The case and feasibility for the production of an Abnormal Loads Route Map for Tyne and Wear was assessed. Such a map would show preferred routes by load category (wide, heavy and high) across the conurbation. A direct development of this is the production of a standardised map showing highway restrictions - at present each local authority uses different methods of depicting the restrictions.



Signage

Review

Signage that is appropriate to freight is important to facilitating the efficient movement of goods traffic in the conurbation. A review of signage with respect to key freight destinations was carried out as part of the 'Do Now' actions. The review found that signage provision was very good in most instances, but a series of recommendations were made, some of which are being taken forward through the Partnership.



Port of Tyne

A key recommendation from the signage review was to provide signage to the Port of Tyne. This was progressed during Year two in close consultation with the Highways Agency, the Port of Tyne and South Tyneside Council. An important issue to resolve before drawing up the detailed design specification was whether to sign the port via the A185 or A194 from the A19. Although the A194 provides the most direct link from the south, the route passes through a residential area and has been classified as an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) by South Tyneside Council. This led to the A185 being designated as the preferred route from both the north and south.



A specification for the implementation of 15 new freight specific signs was drawn up and agreed by all parties (following minor amendments). The signs on the A185 were installed by South Tyneside Council in April and May 2007. Signs on the A194 are to be installed by the Highways Agency later in 2007.

Signage

Freight Signage in North Tyneside

One of the recommendations of the signage review was to provide freight specific signage to Cobalt Office Park, Middle Engine Lane and Sliverlink Retail Park (North Tyneside) from the A19 at the junction with the A191 (Holystone). These are key destinations for freight traffic which can be accessed easily from the A19, but there is no signage in place at present. Encouraging traffic to use the A191 (Holystone) junction for these destinations has the potential to contribute towards reducing traffic levels at the congested A1058 (Silverlink) junction. This recommendation has been endorsed by the Highways Agency / North Tyneside Council and a detailed design sign specification was developed.

Priority Lanes Assessment

In order to inform policy across the conurbation, the Tyne and Wear LTP Core Team commissioned consultants JMP to assess and quantify the benefits of priority lanes in Tyne and Wear. The draft findings of the study are being reviewed at present. Importantly, the consultation with stakeholders demonstrated strong support for greater standardisation of the priority lanes both in terms of the type of lane and hours of operation. The next stage of work is to draw up advice identifying when it is appropriate to introduce different types of priority lane.



Lorry Parking

Audit of Current Facilities

The shortage of lorry parking and the issues associated with it are of national significance. Areas for goods vehicles to stop and park when away from base are essential in contributing to freight operations as well being places for drivers to refresh themselves and maintain their vehicles.

An audit of lorry parking facilities in Tyne and Wear was carried out to provide an up-to-date baseline position in relation to the adequacy of lorry parking provision which could inform future policy. Following the closure of the NT Newcastle Truckstop in late January 2007, it is clear that there is a severe shortage of lorry parking facilities. The facility was an important and popular truckstop, providing good facilities for lorry drivers entering the area. Moto Washington services on the A1 (between Junctions 64 and 65) is now the only formal lorry parking facility in the conurbation. Prior to the closure of the NT Newcastle site, the average nighttime utilisation of the Moto site was 61% during the week. This increased to 90% following the closure, which illustrates the current pressures.

Promotion of Lorry Parking

Given the shortage of facilities, work is to be carried out to assist in the process of securing new facilities in the area. A further initiative to be developed shortly is a private sector lorry parking reciprocation pilot. The scheme would allow companies to buy secure parking spaces at the depots of other operators, or sell space at their own sites. The pilot will include research into companies willing to enter reciprocal arrangements, including contact with operators connected with Tyne and Wear Partnership, the Freight Transport Association (FTA) and Road Haulage Association (RHA). The website would be amended to act as a platform for companies to buy and sell spaces. Its success can be judged on the number of spaces being made available for trading and on the take-up.



Rail Freight



A review of rail freight with respect to Tyne and Wear was carried out to outline the current position in order to provide a context for assessing the potential for increasing the volume of rail freight moved in the conurbation.

In terms of current movements, coal comprises the highest number at 54 per week, which equates to 52% of the total. Increased movement of imported coal through the Port of Tyne has been key to the increased number of coal trains. The first imports of coal began in 2004 when 115,500 tonnes of coal was handled. Information from the Port shows that this increased to 1.6 million tonnes in 2006 and is anticipated to grow to 2.5 million tonnes in 2007.

Petrochemical bogie tanks to Jarrow yard are the next highest (12 movements per week). The tanks carry a number of products including Petroleum, Ammonia and water. There are nine movements relating to the Steel and Automotive industries respectively and eight Enterprise trains. Enterprise trains are generally a wagon load or mixed service train. Other movements include Lime/Mineral and Aluminium.

Whilst Network Rail are able to find paths for current rail freight demand, capacity issues exist which could constrain the scope for growth. These issues are addressed by the Network Rail Freight Route Utilisation Study (RUS), 2007. The section of the East Coast Mainline (ECML) between Tyne Yard and Tursdale junction is identified as a significant constraint to rail freight growth. Re-activation of the Boldon East Curve is recommended as the best option for addressing this. The scheme will generate a small number of additional paths to and from the Port of Tyne, providing an alternative route to/from the Aire/Trent Valley via the Durham Coast.

In terms of additional rail freight traffic, the review concluded that it is likely that this would consist of more coal, intermodal boxes and aggregates. It was also considered that there is potential for additional port related traffic both from Tyneside and Teesport to run through the area as both ports look to expand volumes.

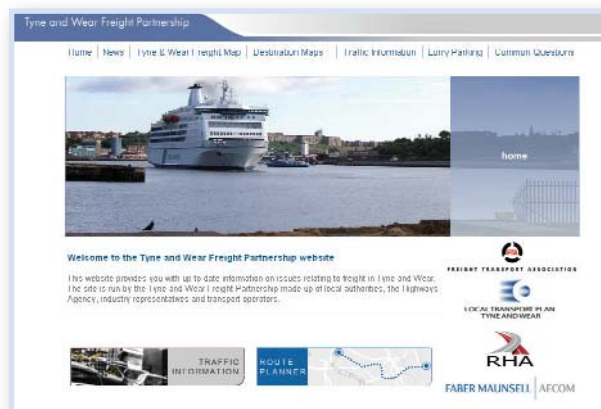
Communication and Consultation

Website

An important development for the Partnership was the creation of the Tyne and Wear freight website (www.tyneandwearfreight.info). The website aims to capture all the work of the Partnership and act as a 'one-stop shop' for information and advice for freight operators. It includes detailed up-to-date information on freight routes and destinations through a web-based version of the Tyne and Wear Freight Map. The detailed tailored maps for key freight destinations in the area are also included, along with links to traffic information, information on lorry parking, contacts for local authority traffic officers and information on Freight Best Practice.

The website was launched in December 2006 and by June 2007 32,500 hits had been made from 5,600 individual users. It has been well received by a range of organisations – the quote below is from the Transport Training Centre, Ministry of Defence (MoD).

'As a transport manager for the MoD(North), I found the site very informative and easy to follow, just what a haulage driver needs when delivering to new areas. I particularly liked the mapping to major sites in & around the area, also the truck stops. Perhaps other large cities should follow example and produce something similar. Well done'.



Summary

The Tyne and Wear Freight Partnership has been successful in bringing together a range of organisations, including transport operators, industry representatives, local authorities, the Highways Agency and key local stakeholder groups to facilitate the delivery of a range of actions targeted at improving the efficiency, safety and sustainability of freight movement.

The main challenge for the future is to maintain this momentum and build interest from operators by ensuring that the identified actions are targeted at pertinent issues.

Experience from Tyne and Wear suggests that the following key actions are of key importance to a successful Freight Partnership.

- Undertake initial research with operators, both inside and outside the area to understand freight movement and the associated problems and issues
- Engage with transport operators, industry representatives, local authorities, the Highways Agency and key local stakeholder groups
- Identify a clearly defined action plan, focussing on the delivery of tangible outputs to address the identified problems and issues
- Secure sufficient resources and necessary expertise to deliver the action plan
- Maintain good communication links with the Partnership and a wider audience through newsletters, press releases and an established website
- Review progress with the Partnership and consult with operators on the work undertaken to inform future direction

Contact the Partnership



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