



Introduction

- Senior Engineer – Development Planning
- 7 years experience
- 2008 to 2010 MSc Transport Policy and Business Management
- MSc Research Project:

“Travel Plans: A Developer’s Perspective”



Research Rationale

- There are several mechanisms through which travel plans can be adopted
- The most significant being the planning application process
- Key stakeholder = Developer
- Influence the form of a travel plan and associated conditions/obligations



What is a Developer?

“an individual or company that engages in a speculative process to identify sites which offer commercial potential to meet either known or anticipated market demand; obtain control of suitable land resources (sites); and bring the sites forward through the land use planning process to change the status of that parcel of land, thus uplifting land values and thereby generating commercial benefit, i.e. profit.”



Developers versus Planners

- A developer's primary concern is to generate profit and income in a short as period as possible
- Planners are concerned with the long term land uses and spatial form
- Developers wish to act quickly as they have spotted an opportunity within the market
- Developers prefer to develop on greenfield sites where they have a relatively blank canvas
- Planners often require development on brownfield sites in order to revive or regenerate an area
- Developers experience economic pressures and their timing in a market can be critical
- Planners experience political pressures and are concerned with their long-term plan rather than market forces



Literature

- Little or no research has been undertaken with this key stakeholder
- This was commented on in Smarter Choices: Changing the way we travel
- Local authorities find it difficult to engage with developers
- Greater research and work was required with these stakeholders



Problems with Travel Plans as a function of regulation

Issues with travel plans which are a function of the regulatory process:

- Monitoring
- Ultimate occupier is not motivated to engage in the process
- The planning system does not embed objectives into the organisation's business processes
- Employers do not necessarily perceive traffic congestion as their problem
- Dependent on the level of economic activity
- Can disengage a stakeholder from the travel plan
- Location of travel plans is dictated by planning process



Research Aim

To explore travel plans from the perspective of a key stakeholder: the developer

- To review existing literature to identify developers' involvement with travel plans
- To review existing transport policy and guidance relating to travel plans and developers
- To determine developer's opinions on travel plans – this was achieved through ten one on one in depth interviews with developers



Interview Content

The following topics were discussed with the selected interviewees:

- The role of the developer
- The developer perspectives on the travel plan concept and the performance of that concept
- Lastly the future of travel plans



Who was Interviewed?

Land Use		Developer Type		
		Project Manager	Property Trader	Property Investor
Developer From	Commercial		J	F
	Residential		B	
	Mixed Land Uses		A, C	
	Varied	I	D, E, H	G



What do they involve?

- Initially not seen as being significant considerations in the land use planning process
- Several respondents suggested that they should have remained as an information providing documents or 'travel guides'
- Place more responsibility on the end-user
- Very aware of what travel plans typically contains
- Reluctance "to sign up to an open ended cheque"



Motivations

Primary motivation = Secure planning permission

Secondary motivations

- Kudos
- Reduce trip rates
- Improves accessibility
- Provides a selling feature
- Protects the local community
- Contributes to wider sustainability policy

Two interviewees (investors) cited corporate social responsibility and accessibility planning as being the primary driver of the travel plans



The Benefits and Costs of Travel Plans

- A positive item
- Better and more sustainable development
- Helped them get planning permission

However,

- Two respondents felt costs exceeded the benefits



The Developers Perspective of the Issues and Challenges

- Long term responsibility for the travel plan and its measures
- Provider rather than enforcer
- Government should be regulator and provide the deterrents to car use
- Issues associated with speculative development



The Future of Travel Plans

- Penalties vs. benefits and cost savings
- Are they required if sufficient infrastructure is provided
- Retro-fitting of older travel plans
- Partnerships – only achievable with investors



Are Travel Plans a good idea and do they achieve their full potential?

- Long term operation once planning permission obtained
- Insufficient evidence regarding modal shift
- Nature of travel plans means they cannot achieve full potential
- Constrain car use/increase costs to make the sustainable modes more attractive



Conclusion

- Planning process is a key mechanism for travel plan development
- Developers are key stakeholder in planning process and travel plans
- Developers vary significantly in their business models
- Main driver is profit
- Need for more extensive research

