Biophilic Cities – can long term visions for sustainable urban transport contribute to the streets agenda?

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Streets for the 21st Century Workshop
1st February 2017
Rationale

• Huge potential for improving provision for walking and cycling
• Consider step change in provision and use rather than unfocussed incremental change
• Long term change to 2030
• Use a visioning approach to imagine futures where walking and cycling play a substantially enhanced role in society
• Consider pathways to achieve futures.
Rebalancing power in transport (at least temporarily!)
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Why Visioning and pathways?

• Permits novel ideas, aspirational thinking
• A way of dismissing the inevitable discussion of barriers
• Enables a longer term view than normally the case
• Changes to direction/trends
• Targets?
Our visions.....

• Based on an imaginary, but recognisable urban area
• 3 alternative futures/visions plus overview of how things are now
• Developed visualisations plus more detailed narratives
• Assumption is that the visions would become the minimum standard across urban areas in Britain
• Aim to understand how different groups will react to these futures and provide a means by which those groups can explore their own futures
The urban area
Vision 1: Best practice

Mode split (urban area):

- Walking ~32% (28%)
- Cycling ~13% (1%)
- Public transport ~25% (12%)
- Car ~30% (59%)

Guiding principle:

*Universal (or near) application of current European best practice to walking/cycling in UK urban areas*
Vision 1: 2030
Vision 2: a Car-Free, PT-orientated’ Future

Mode Split (urban area):

- Walking (~37%)
- Bicycle (~23%)
- Public transport (~35%)
- Private car (~5%)

Guiding principle:

‘A re-think of the provision and infrastructure for public transport, walking and cycling, has led to a significant decrease in the use of the car’
Vision 2: 2030
Vision 3: a localised, energy efficient future

Mode Split (urban area):

- Walking (~40%)
- Human powered/assisted Vehicles [HPVs] (~40%)
- Public transport (~15%)
- Multi-occupancy electric vehicles (~5%)

Guiding principle:

*Serious constraints on energy usage have rendered the traditional car obsolete. Parallel developments in ‘smart technology’ have enabled walking and cycling to become the predominant modes of urban transport*
Vision 3: 2030
Some final thoughts?

• Is it useful to think about how radically different urban transport futures may look and operate?
• Essential to consider pathways to achieve those futures
• Need tools to help plan for large-scale step-changes
• How to tell the full story beyond the visualisations?
• Can we isolate transport from other aspects of society when considering large-scale long-term change?
• How does this fit with a biophilic cities agenda?
• How does this fit with a streetworks and utility management for cities agenda?
Do we dare to think differently?

“If the spectator is mired in realistic narrations and offered no utopic visions, what will produce a disposition for social change......?”

M.C. Boyer (1994)

See www.visions2030.org.uk for further information