

## 2. Developing the Plan

### OVERVIEW

- 2.1 This chapter outlines the approach used to develop the BMTP and considers the significant role that consultation played in its development.

### OUTLINE METHODOLOGY

- 2.2 The overall development of the BMTP was based on the UK Government's "Guidance on the Methodology for Multi-Modal Studies" (GOMMMS)<sup>6</sup>, adapted as appropriate to NI circumstances. The approach has ensured that a comprehensive range of solutions has been considered covering all modes of transport. It has also ensured integration between transport and land use.
- 2.3 The overall process is shown in Figure 2.1. This illustrates the key stages of the process leading from the understanding of transport problems and the identification of possible solutions to the development and appraisal, first, of a long term 2025 strategy, and then, of a 2015 Plan. For a detailed description of the various stages of the multi-modal study process reference should be made to GOMMMS.

### KEY ELEMENTS OF THE APPROACH

#### Guidance from Higher Level Policy

- 2.4 As noted in Chapter 1, the BMTP has not been developed from scratch. It represents the implementation of strategies set out in the RTS and RDS. An important stage of the development process was to frame the Plan according to these key strategy documents. As shown in Figure 2.1, the RDS is important in defining Plan objectives – what the Plan is supposed to deliver. The RTS provides substantial guidance on what types of transport schemes should be considered for inclusion in the Plan and, importantly, a resource framework within which the Plan should be prepared. It also provides targets on the level of change in the transport system that the Plan would be expected to deliver. As also shown in Figure 2.1, the RTS has been important in feeding into the development of a long-term strategy and the 2015 Plan.

#### Understanding Problems and Issues

- 2.5 The BMTP has been developed on the basis of a thoroughly researched understanding of existing and potential future problems and issues relating to transport in the BMA.

#### Defining Objectives

- 2.6 The GOMMMS approach is described as "objective-led": it seeks to identify transport-related problems and define objectives before then moving on to developing

<sup>6</sup> Guidance on the Methodology for Multi-Modal Studies (GOMMMS), DETR, March 2000

solutions that best achieve the set objectives. Two levels of objectives have been defined in developing the BMTP, as follows:

- ◆ **Overarching Objectives** – These represent the overarching national objectives for transport for the BMTP which are at the heart of the GOMMMS methodology. The five objectives are:
  - environmental impact – to protect the built and natural environment;
  - safety – to improve safety;
  - economic – to support sustainable economic activity and get good value for money;
  - accessibility – to improve access to facilities for those without a car and to reduce severance; and
  - integration – to ensure that all decisions are taken in the context of the Government’s integrated transport policy.
- ◆ **BMTP Objectives** – These represent the local objectives that the Plan should seek to achieve. These are framed by the overarching objectives but address issues more specific to the BMA. The development of the BMTP objectives has been guided by the overarching objectives of the RTS, by the Spatial Planning Guidance provided in the RDS and by the Guiding Principles established by BMAP<sup>7</sup>. The core objectives for BMTP are presented in full in Annex A and may be summarised as:
  - protecting the BMA’s natural and built environments;
  - improving health, safety and security in the BMA;
  - supporting sustainable economic growth in the BMA;
  - improving access to regional gateways and tourist locations in and around the BMA;
  - promotion of a more inclusive society in the BMA;
  - supporting the revitalisation of the BMA’s urban areas; and
  - improving integration between transport modes, land use and other Government policies.

### The Need to Develop a Long Term 2025 Strategy and a 2015 Plan

- 2.7 The primary focus of the BMTP process was to develop a **2015 Implementation Plan**. There was, however, a need to frame the 2015 Plan within a **long-term strategy** for transport in the BMA. In line with the RDS, a 2025 target date was identified as representing this longer-term horizon.
- 2.8 It is important to appreciate the distinction between strategy and plan as defined by the BMTP process.

<sup>7</sup> Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan 2015 (BMAP) Issues Paper, DoE, December 2001

- ◆ **Strategy** – A strategy comprises a set of area-wide interventions to address identified problems and achieve specified objectives. A strategy needs to look at long-term interventions over a 15 to 25-year horizon. This is seen as the equivalent of establishing the 2025 transport vision for the BMA; and
- ◆ **Plan** – A plan is a set of specific and detailed interventions to deliver the strategy. A plan contains much greater locational detail about specific interventions than a strategy. Plans are typically medium-term relative to the longer horizon of a strategy. This is equivalent to the 2015 Implementation Plan for the BMA.

2.9 In view of the fact that the medium-term Plan will sit within the framework set by the long-term strategy, it was necessary to develop the 2025 Strategy before developing the 2015 Plan.

#### *Alternative Strategies and Plans*

- 2.10 In developing a preferred 2025 Strategy and a preferred 2015 Plan, a very large number of individual transport schemes were assessed. In addition, a large number of different combinations of schemes were assessed in the form of alternative strategies and plans.
- 2.11 Both individual schemes and combinations of schemes as strategies or plans have been assessed by applying transport modelling and appraisal techniques developed specifically for use as part of the multi-modal study approach. The assessment methodology ensures that the full range of policy objectives is taken into account in assessing transport strategies and plans<sup>8</sup>. The assessment process compared the benefits and impacts of a strategy or plan against a reference point that assumes no improvements are made to the transport system other than those currently committed.
- 2.12 The results of the appraisal have been employed to draw conclusions on the form that a preferred long-term strategy and a shorter-term plan should take.

#### **The Role of Consultation**

- 2.13 Building upon the extensive consultation exercise undertaken to support the RDS and RTS, consultation has formed a key element of the development of the BMTP. The aim of consultation was to ensure that the views of a wide range of stakeholders were taken into account in formulating the Plan and, through stakeholder participation in the Plan development process, the consultation exercise has sought to ensure that the final Plan has a high degree of support.
- 2.14 Consultation has been undertaken at each stage of the Plan development process as illustrated in Figure 2.1. A number of different consultation mechanisms have been employed, as follows:
- ◆ the formulation of Reference Groups for consultation on Problems and Issues;

<sup>8</sup> A full description of the multi-modal process and the appraisal methods are provided in GOMMMS

- ◆ the formulation of a Key Stakeholder Group with consultation meetings on four occasions during the Plan development process;
- ◆ conducting two rounds of Focus Groups to obtain the views of those groups that were not represented within the Reference Groups and the Key Stakeholder Group;
- ◆ holding a number of consultation meetings in conjunction with BMAP with members of each of the six District Councils in the BMA; and
- ◆ holding a Working Conference in February 2003 presenting a draft transport plan to delegates drawn from the Reference Groups, the Key Stakeholder Group and the District Councils.

2.15 In addition, the Plan has made use of:

- ◆ the great body of consultation material assembled by DRD on transport problems and issues in developing the RTS; and
- ◆ the consultation material collected by the DoE's BMAP team as part of its extensive consultation of Problems and Issues in winter/spring 2002/2003.

#### *The Working Conference*

2.16 The Working Conference held in Belfast in February 2003 presented a wide range of delegates with the DRD BMTP team's thinking on a 2015 Emerging Plan. The Emerging Plan represented the plan that had been identified drawing upon the conclusions of the rigorous plan testing and appraisal process.

2.17 Before moving on to finalising the BMTP in the form of a more detailed implementation plan, the conference sought to engage delegates in a debate on the form of the 2025 strategy framing the 2015 Plan, and on the priorities that had been identified as part of the Emerging Plan<sup>9</sup>.

2.18 At the conference, delegates were given the opportunity to participate in workshop sessions exploring both Strategy and Plan issues. An independent report summarising the conference proceedings and describing the views expressed by delegates was produced<sup>10</sup>.

2.19 The views expressed by delegates have been important in helping shape the final content of the Plan presented in this document.

<sup>9</sup> BMTP, Working Conference Papers, DRD, February 2003

<sup>10</sup> Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan, Report of Working Conference, February 2003

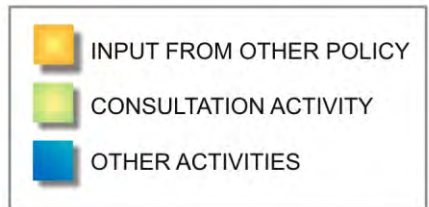
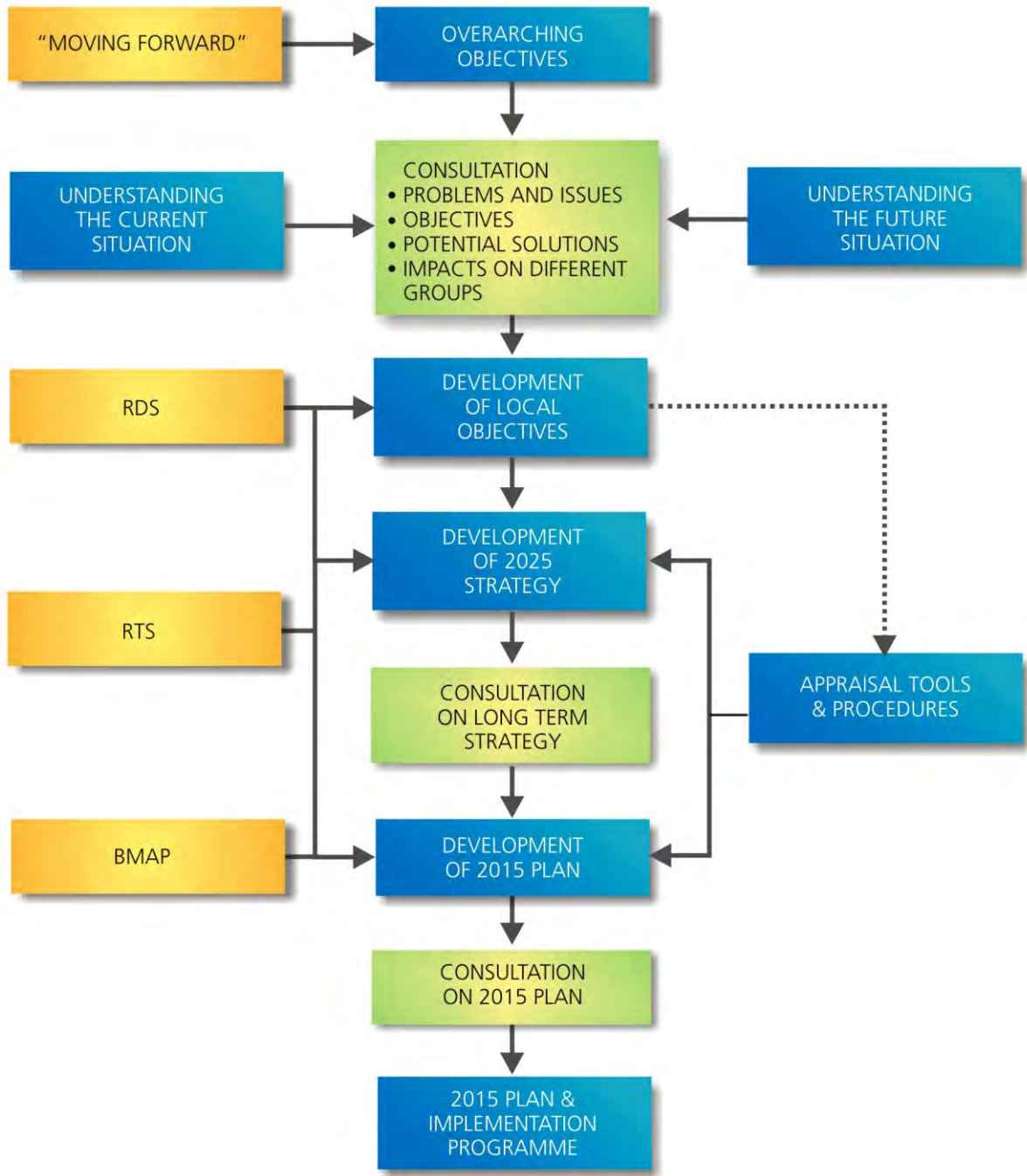


Figure 2.1 - Summary of the Approach to Plan Development