

## **Western Gateway Sub-national Transport Body**

### **Board Meeting**

#### **Paper B**

Date **28<sup>th</sup> June 2023**

Title of report: **Alternative Fuels for Freight update**

Purpose of report: **To report on the revised version of the Joint Peninsula Transport and Western Gateway Alternative Fuels for Road Freight Strategy**

#### **Recommendations:**

The members of the Board are recommended to:

- I. Approve the revised report on Alternative Fuels for Freight.
- II. Delegate the Programme Team and Senior Officers Group to take forward the shortlisting of potential locations for hydrogen refuelling and electric vehicle charging stations.

## **1. Background**

- 1.1 In March 2022 the Peninsula Transport and Western Gateway Sub-national Transport Bodies (STB) commissioned Atkins and their industry partner CENEX to undertake a study examining the opportunities and barriers associated with the transition to alternative fuels for freight vehicles. The study followed on and used the methodology from the successful 2019-2020 study for the Midlands Connect STB that provided guidance on how to best support and influence the uptake of alternative fuels such as hydrogen, gas and electric power within the Midlands.
- 1.2 The draft Strategy went to the Board for approval on 7 December 2022 with Tali Diamant from Atkins providing a comprehensive presentation. Members whilst welcoming and supporting the work raised several concerns most notably around the gaps in the proposed network of hydrogen refuelling and electric vehicle (EV) charging stations and especially in North Devon, North Cornwall, Dorset, Wiltshire and Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole. Other concerns raised included the provision of facilities in rural areas, the potential for maritime and the use of port facilities, availability of lithium and cobalt for electric batteries, the risks of planning blight around refuelling stations and the future fuel market for agriculture.

1.3 Similar concerns were expressed by the Peninsula Transport Board. To address these concerns Atkins and CENEX were commissioned to undertake an additional piece of work and a revised version of the Strategy has now been produced.

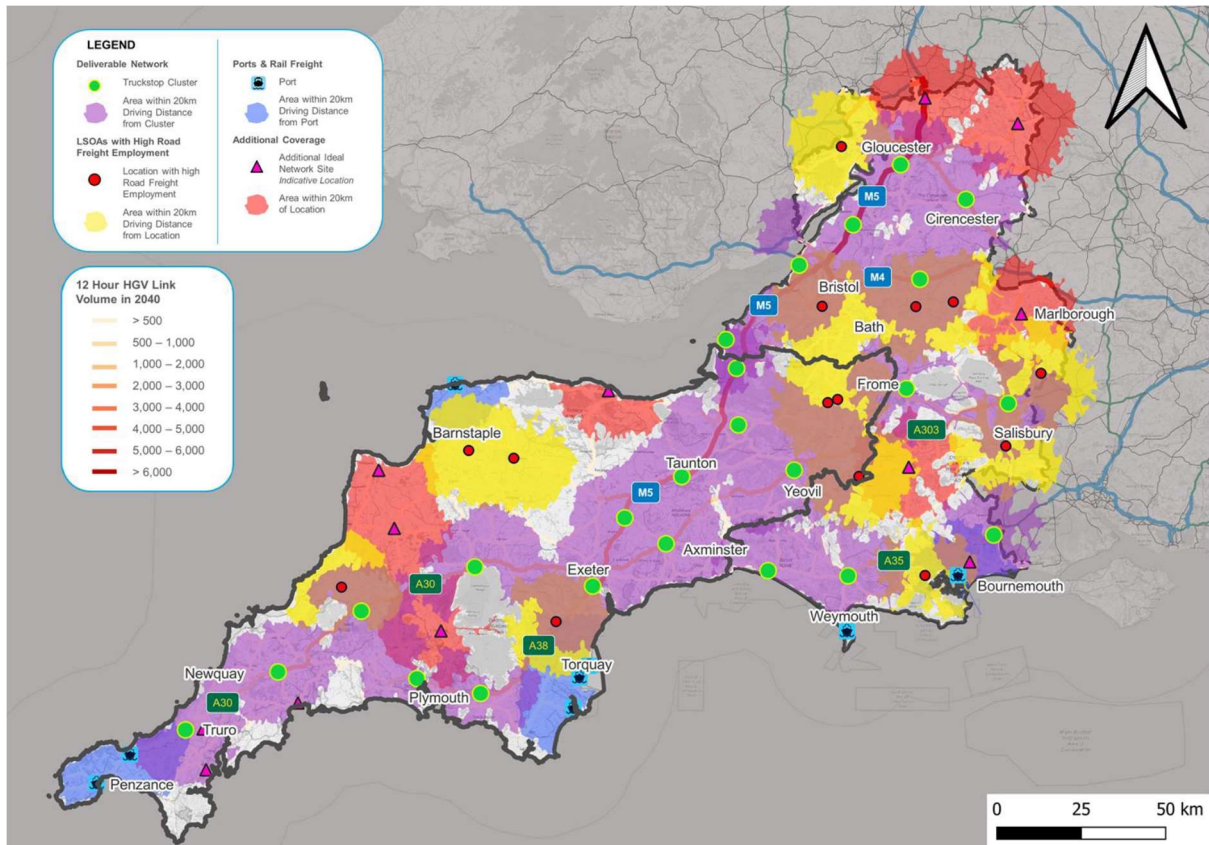
## 2. Key changes

2.1 Chapters 3 to 5 in the Strategy have been strengthened with references to many of the issues raised. New supporting sections are listed in the table below. In particular Chapter 14 Limitation of Approach and Key Considerations is new whilst Chapters 15 to 16 have been reviewed and the recommendations in Chapter 17 expanded. A new section 10.3 incorporates feedback from the meetings of the South West Freight Forum. The revised Strategy will be added to the Western Gateway website.

<b>Issue</b>	<b>How addressed</b>	<b>Section in revised Strategy</b>
Maritime and use of ports	New section on Maritime and Aviation added and ports included as locations for refuelling/recharging	10.3.2 and 15.1
Rural nature of the region	New section on Impacts of Rurality added	14.2.2
Planning blight	New section on Planning added.	14.2.5
Source of energy	New section on Energy demand and sourcing added	14.2.7
Lithium and cobalt	New section added on Raw material availability added	14.2.6
Agriculture	New section added and recommendation to explore farm centred refuelling hubs	10.4 and 17.2
Network gaps	Chapters 15 and 16 take a new approach to locations of hydrogen refuelling and EV charging stations	Figures 16-12, 16-15 and 17-1

2.2 The main change from the list above is the revised approach taken for the network of hydrogen refuelling and EV charging stations. Rather than focus on locations within 5km of the Strategic Road Network the consultants developed a zonal approach with locations based on truckstops/lorry parking hubs, existing freight and logistics hubs and other freight employment hubs where more than 50 people are employed on freight activities and where refuelling/recharging facilities could be co-located. 20km zones stretch around each location. This still left gaps in the network particularly in the most

rural areas so additional ideal network sites were identified. These locations are approximate and their requirement and deliverability will need further consideration. Taken together this new zonal approach produced a revised network as shown in the map below. Whilst there are still some small gaps these are for isolated areas which are assumed to be low priority for new infrastructure.



2.3 Atkins will be present at the Board on 28 June 2023 to talk through the changes and the revised approach to the network of hydrogen refuelling and EV charging stations.

### 3. Next Steps

3.1 The next step is to undertake the shortlisting of potential locations shown in the revised network map for hydrogen refuelling and electric vehicle charging stations. It will use a site ranking tool based on the one developed by Midlands Connect. The Department for Transport provided additional capacity and capability funding for Midlands Connect to undertake this work for all the STBs.

3.2 The site ranking tool can be used to test strategic, regional and local locations. New sites can be added. A range of criteria are built into the tool including fuel suitability, freight flows, proximity to the Strategic and Major Road Networks, grid capacity, co-location sites, Air Quality Management Areas and driver facilities. Specifically the criteria can be adjusted to reflect the rural geography and needs of the Western Gateway and Peninsula

Transport areas. A mapping tool shows the likely area of coverage for potential sites and where sites may overlap. A demand forecasting mechanism indicates when sites will be needed. It should be highlighted that the shortlisting tool is for advisory purposes and is to be used as a guide to the best locations. A user friendly dashboard version for use by the local authorities in their Local Plan and Local Transport Plan work is under development, expected autumn 2023.

- 3.3 Following on from the shortlisting of sites the next step is to help facilitate their deliver, establishing the business case and working with operators, energy suppliers and local authorities. This is at an early stage and proposals for further work will be brought back to the Board for approval. Provision in the budget for £50,000 in 2023/24 and £50,000 in 2024/25 has been made in the Business Plan for this work.

#### **4. Consultation, communication and engagement**

- 4.1 Officers from the Western Gateway's constituent authorities have been consulted on the revised version of the Alternative Fuels for Freight report, engaged in workshop sessions and their comments incorporated.

#### **5. Equalities Implications**

- 5.1 No adverse impact on any protected groups is expected.

#### **6. Legal Considerations**

- 6.1 The Western Gateway STB remains an informal non-statutory partnership.

#### **7. Financial considerations**

- 7.1 Funding for the Alternative Fuels for Freight Strategy was provided jointly by the Western Gateway and Peninsula Transport STBs from their 2021/22 and 2022/23 budgets. The shortlisting tool is being provided at no cost through the Midlands Connect STB with Department for Transport funding. The budget for 2023/24 to 2024/25 includes £100,000 for taking forward the development of shortlisted sites.

#### **8. Conclusion**

- 8.1 The Board is asked to agree the recommendations set out at the beginning of this report.

#### **Contact Officer**

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