

## **Proceedings of the 3rd Transport Planning Forum**

### **Transport Planning - The Professional Framework held on 4th July 1996 at The Wellcome Trust**

A programme for the Forum is included as Appendix A. The meeting was opened by **David Bayliss** who welcomed delegates and introduced the afternoon's events.

**Richard Cuthbert** reported the progress that has been made over the last year, including the proposal for a Transport Planning Society which has been put to the existing institutions (see attachment to the letter of invitation to the Forum in May 1996). **John Wootton** responded on behalf of ICE, CIT and IHT and presented their joint response in a paper which is included as Appendix B. **David Rose** spoke on behalf of the RTPI, supporting the Society's creation and calling for the joint support of the institutions. RTPI favour that membership of the Society be limited to members of the existing institutions.

**Mike Self** gave an update of progress with NVQ.

A Discussion followed:

**Mr Andrew Last**, The MVA Consultancy:

Mr Last enquired as to the existing institutions' position on a single voice for transport planners and thought that their view so far was regrettable. He continued that the new society is needed to create a voice for transport planners and we should all therefore find a place for it. He said that he realised that the society becoming the **principal** voice for Transport Planners was an aspiration which will have to be earned.

**Mr R A J Surl**, Shropshire County Council:

Mr Surl was disappointed with the view of the existing institutions and thought that their approach was inadequate. He also suggested that young transport planners were not getting the support that they deserved.

**Mr Colin Eastman**, JMP Consultants Ltd:

Mr Eastman considered that overall we do not need another institution. He thought that the paper put forward by the Forum presents a balanced view but does not address the concerns of all the existing institutions. As the institutions have failed to give the paper their approval then we are still a long way from a final agreed solution.

**Dr A Farahmand-Razavi**, Independent Consultant:

Dr Farahmand-Razavi thought that the proposals put forward by the existing institutions were embarrassing and that transport planners ought to set up their own society, regardless of the response from the existing institutions.

**Mr Mervyn Jones**, Swansea Institute of Higher Education:

Mr Jones suggested that employers now consider an MSC qualification to be more important than membership of any of the existing institutions. He believed that for transport planners to be able to achieve anything then we must start something new i.e. an institution or society. He was also of the opinion that the existing institutions will never come together and therefore there is no point waiting for them.

Mr Jones commented that towns and cities are dominated by an engineering influence and expressed the need to try and create a better built environment. He believed that there were therefore major issues to be discussed and many different views which need to be embraced. This will not be possible under the current discussion format and therefore a new Forum for discussion needs to be set up.

**Mr Richard Botwood**, CIT:

Mr Botwood acknowledged that there are an enormous number of unqualified people who wish to contribute to the transport debate but who will never become "chartered". He confirmed that the CIT welcomes interested parties as "affiliates" and therefore transport planners already have a home. He felt that the CIT can provide for the needs of transport planners by the way of specialist groups within existing organisation.

**Ms Juliette Solomon**, Transport Studies Group, University of Westminster:

Ms Solomon asked if anyone has actually defined a "transport planner" and if not then are we all assuming the same definition? She agreed with the general view that transport planners are much different now from 10 years ago. In the past she was of the opinion that others thought her "mad" and that she has never understood civil engineering point of view. She welcomed the move to "grow" out of existing institutions but now thinks that a more positive move is needed, i.e. creation of the society.

**Mr Ian Forbes**, City of Westminster:

Mr Forbes said that he felt a certain sense of déjà vu. He felt that the paper presented by the Forum represented a positive move but that the reaction of the existing institutions has been disappointing. He thought that there was a genuine desire for transport planners to make a new home for themselves, although unfortunately there are many practical considerations in the way.

Mr Forbes said that a new society must be recognised which would be able to attract the top transport planners in the country in order to be taken seriously, he felt that this would help the new society to establish its credibility and help it gain acceptance and recognition from the existing institutions. He also acknowledged that young transport planners currently find it hard to join the mainstream institutions and therefore the new society must provide for them.

**Mr Peter Collins**, London Transport Planning:

Mr Collins supported the need for a new transport planners "group" but thought it ought to start off as a society with open membership, rather like the existing Transport Economists Group. The society could then be self financing and build up from small beginnings.

**Dr Phil Bly**, Transport Planning NVQ Working Group:

Dr Bly expressed his disappointment that the paper presented by the Forum was not the product of agreement between the institutions. He asked to what degree the door was closed and if there was still the possibility of creating a "spanning" society.

**Mr Peter Evans**, Peter Evans Partnership:

Mr Evans expressed concern that as a group we did not seem to be getting very far and that the bickering that was going on does not help the process to move forward. As an employer he felt that the institutions are becoming increasingly irrelevant and that transport planning, as an important exercise, does need some form of new co-ordination.

**Mr Alastair Dick**, Independent Consultant:

Mr Dick stated that transport planning and its players are now very different to their predecessors. He considered that the ICE has developed out of traditional road building/ heavy civil engineering background which is very different to the attitude of today's advisors. He welcomed an informed debate by current practitioners but now thinks that it is time to pass the torch onto the next generation and he offered them his advice.

**Mr Brian Senior**, Independent Consultant:

Mr Senior supported the work of the Forum and hoped that they would continue to put pressure on the existing institutions for an acceptable proposal. He thought that we were in the regrettable position of trying to create a new institution every time a new discipline arrived, which he believed led to endless fragmentation and disintegration. He is therefore opposed to the creation of a new transport planning institution.

**Mr Derek Turner**, Traffic Director for London:

Mr Turner said that there is great value to be placed in the affiliation of people interested in transport planning. He gave as an example the curious transport related disciplines that he had encountered on his short journey to the meeting from Westminster. He suggested that the removal of the word "principal" from the paper that has been presented to the institutions may make the existing institutions more receptive to the idea of a new society.

**Ms Andy Costain**, PTRC:

Ms Costain stressed the need to address the views of the young transport planners and remarked that she perceived there to be three driving forces behind the creation of a new society:

- access to information;
- qualifications;
- to respond to the needs of young professionals.

**Ms Sheila Farrell**, Sheila Farrell Associates:

Ms Farrell stated that at the beginning of the debate she had felt a neutral view, but now feels that there are conflicting objectives which need to be addressed. There are three main issues to be resolved:

- qualifications - she feels that a transport society is an unsuitable Forum for guiding qualifications and that this ought to be employer led;
- the group as a voice to Government - she welcomed a ginger group but doesn't think that a transport planning Forum is suitable for this purpose;
- the group as a debating society - she welcomed this role and the multi-disciplinary approach that it could take.

She concluded that the main objectives of the society should be access to information, networking and a base for discussion. The proposals from the existing institutions do not currently provide these.

**Mr Peter Davidson**, Peter Davidson Consultancy:

Mr Davidson welcomed the opportunity for debate but stressed that if the group wanted to move forward then it would have to say something different. He believed that future for transport planning was customer focused rather than infrastructure led and that we ought to move forward into new eras.

**Ms Elaine Seagriff**, London Transport Planning:

Ms Seagriff was keen to express the view of younger transport planners who she feels are highly qualified and enthusiastic and are not interested in any of the existing institutions. She suggested that transport planning is moving forward and the existing institutions are not. Ms Seagriff also suggested that another opinion could be to set up an informal group, like the TEG, which would be open to all interested parties.

**Mr Tim Pharoah**, South Bank University:

Mr Pharoah questioned whether the paper put forward by the Forum was a consensus or not. He supported the view that the Forum has done its best to explore joining up with the existing institutions over the past 25 months. He felt that the Forum has given them a chance but they have not responded suitably and therefore the Forum ought to push regardless.

**Mr John Wootton**, IHT:

Mr Wootton reiterated the position of the institutions as presented in the earlier paper and stressed that they recognise the need for change. He does not see the need for a new institution and that stated that transport planners participating in the existing institutions will be able to get a voice. He noted that any new society would have to be self funding.

**Mr Michael Napier**, RTPI:

Mr Napier felt that it was a shame that the parties couldn't agree on a proposal when there seemed to be so much agreement between them. He stated that the RTPI response remained the same as that put forward earlier and then they are still looking for a way forward.

**David Bayliss** brought the discussion to a close and summarised the main points that had been raised, along with the majority view. He said that he was heartened by the strong support for the society but stressed that it was necessary to build on the existing institutions rather than fragmenting any further. At present the proposals put forward by the existing institutions were not sufficient, although they provide a useful starting point. He recognised that transport planners are looking for something more and questioned whether the institutions really would be able to deliver what was required.

He concluded that the Forum must go on and develop a Transport Planning Society, although that would not be the end of the discussions with the institutions. The aims of the working group should be to try and take the ideas a little further than already set down in the initial paper and use that as a base to move forward with allies. He acknowledged that there was a general impatience with the procedure and promised that the Forum would seek to move forward swiftly.

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## APPENDIX A

# Transport Planning Forum

**3rd Annual Meeting**  
**at the Wellcome Trust, 210 Euston Road, London NW1 2BE**

**Thursday 4th July 1996**

**AGENDA**

4.00 pm	Welcome and introduction	David Bayliss
4.10 pm	Proposal for a Transport Planning Society	Richard Cuthbert
4.15 pm	Response of the institutions	
4.30 pm	CIT/IHT merger - the current position	
4.45 pm	Progress with the NVQ	
5.00 pm	Discussion	
6.00 pm	Summing up	David Bayliss

**Dinner at University College London - Old Refectory**

6.15 Bar  
7.00 pm Dinner  
Guest Speaker David Quarmby

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**APPENDIX B**

**CIT, ICE AND IHT's RESPONSE TO THE TRANSPORT PLANNING FORUM's PAPER "A TRANSPORT PLANNING SOCIETY"**

The Chartered Institute of Transport, Institution of Civil Engineers and the Institution of Highways and Transportation have welcomed the initiative taken by members of the Transport Planning Forum during the past three years in highlighting the interests of transport planners. Each Institution recognises that more can be done to promote and satisfy the interests of transport planners.

A paper titled "A Transport Planning Society" ([annex A](#)) has been sent to each Institution seeking their support for the formation of a Transport Planning Society. The three Institutions, independently and jointly, have considered the paper and reached the conclusion that they cannot support the proposal. There are two reasons of principle for this:

1. The Institutes cannot support a new society whose aim is to become "the principal, professional voice on matters of transport planning policy and practice within the UK": and, it follows,
2. they are not willing to provide funds to sponsor or support a new society with that aim.

In addition, the paper makes suggestions on a number of arrangements and relationships which the Institutions consider unworkable.

The Institutions believe that each of them can be a natural home for a transport planner, who will benefit from membership of an existing Institution. The emphasis of each Institution is slightly different, but membership of any one of them can enhance a member's career, and the development of the transport NVQ, which is supported by the Institutions, can only strengthen this in the future.

The Institutions wish to build on the progress made to date by further coordinating their activities. As an alternative to supporting the formation of a Transport planning Society, the three Institutions have agreed to:

1. make available their calendar of events to any transport planner registering with them. In some cases a nominal charge may be made to cover the distribution costs;
2. continue to promote the active involvement of all transport planners in these events and thereby encourage non-member transport planners to join one or more of the Institutions;
3. continue to encourage papers, articles and news items concerning transport planning in the publications of the Institutions;
4. increase co-sponsorship and collaboration in joint transport planning events wherever possible;
5. continue to promote constructive interaction between transport planners and other disciplines within and across the Institutions;
6. promote transport NVQs as an acceptable qualification for transport planners by
  - encouraging the recognition and acceptance of a level 5 transport planning NVQ (accreditation is expected in August this year);
  - working through the transportation vocational group to introduce further NVQs to provide a progressive career development path for transport planners (the Institutions are seeking a level 3 and 4 transport planning NVQ); and
  - encourage employers to incorporate NVQs in their career structures for transport planners;
7. continue, both individually and jointly, to give effective voice to transport planning concerns and contribute to the development of transport planning thought and practice and their influence on policy;
8. meet jointly to monitor and give effect to these objectives.

4 July 1996

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ANNEX A

### **A Transport Planning Society**

Following the discussions over the past two years and the report of the working party presented to the meeting of the Transport Planning Forum last June, proposals have been developed for a new liaison body to further the transport planning professional framework and to provide a focus for discussion of transport planning issues for practitioners from a variety of backgrounds.

The proposal is to form a Transport Planning Society with a committee including invited representatives of the transport boards/panels of the four main existing institutions with members/interests in the field:

Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE)

Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI)

Chartered Institute of Transport (CIT)

Institution of Highways and Transportation (IHT)

Though there are some changes afoot in the learned society activities in transport planning, these remain split between many bodies including the CIT, ICE, IHT and RTPI and there is no clear agent of the whole profession to review developments in practice and the lessons of experience and speak out on policy matters to government, although each of the bodies (and others) makes their own contribution. The IHT and the CIT continue to discuss a possible merger that would create a single professional organisation but this would not be an appropriate body for all transport planners.

A joint Transport Planning Society has the potential to unify the current activities, ensure multi-disciplinary dialogue and progressively to become the principal professional voice on matters of transport planning policy and practice within the UK, and to forge links with equivalent bodies abroad.

The Society would be sponsored by the CIT, ICE, IHT and RTPI although it would have an independent democratic structure with provision for unaffiliated representatives. Other organisations may also wish to be formally involved. It could be hosted by any of these bodies and the ICE has already offered it services in this respect. This arrangement seeks to establish a Society which could provide the focus for the profession without undermining or further fragmenting the activities of the existing professional institutions.

A precise definition of the scope and range of activities, and their relationship with those of the existing institutions, would be determined and jointly agreed by the representatives of the main parent bodies. Each would nominate a specified number of members of the governing council from the relevant board or committee of the parent organisation. In addition there would be a specified number of council members elected directly by the Society membership.

Initially the main thrust of the Society would be in holding meetings and the exchange of ideas and information amongst members by the most suitable means. In doing this it would co-ordinate closely with the parent organisations at both the central and regional level. There are already joint activities and the Society would seek to build on these rather than disturb them.

The Society would provide a ready means for the parent organisations to address issues of common interest and lead to more joint initiatives thereby giving a stronger and more unified voice to the profession. This co-operation would be expected to develop progressively over a period as the relationship between the Society and its main parents became clearer. Other activities could include the promotion of links with transport professionals overseas; informing politicians, decision-makers and potential entrants to the profession on transport planning issues; and advising on the content of education and training courses.

In the longer run the Society would expect to help with the development of the professional content of Transport Planning NVQ and other appropriate training and CPD initiatives on which the four main institutions are already working together. The Society would not be an awarding body for professional credentials.

Subscriptions would be on an individual basis or through employers paying for groups of members. They would be set at a much lower level than the subscriptions to the parent institutions and there would be a limited number of financial support by the parents in recognition of the Society carrying out some activities that otherwise the parents would have to undertake.