

# Resolving the challenge of urban freight

We provide advice to industry, local and central government to resolve the conflicts that arise from the movement of freight in urban areas.

## The challenge

*“Efficient distribution of goods and services has been a defining parameter of economic development since the beginnings of civilisation. It allows wide consumer choice and thus promotes competitiveness, jobs and prosperity. But it is a serious cause of disturbance and nuisance for people whose daily activities are affected by the movement of freight.”*

The Business of Freight, IHT, 2005



## The issues

Industry, central Government and local authorities must agree on the need to improve the efficiency of deliveries to businesses and reduce the congestion, delays, and environmental nuisance caused by deliveries.

Traditionally these two objectives have been in conflict. The challenge therefore, is to achieve a balance between these objectives.

We combine our experience in transport policy development and traffic engineering to develop robust strategies for the movement of freight in urban areas.



### Freight Quality Partnership (FQP)

We organised the conference launching the West London Freight Quality Partnership in April 2003 and then facilitated the workshops that enabled us to prepare the Action Plan for the FQP.

### Forecasting Freight Traffic

Through our many urban and inter-urban studies throughout the UK we have developed tools for forecasting freight traffic and appraising projects, both rail and road, to improve freight movement and minimise adverse environmental impacts of freight traffic.

### Heavy Vehicle Routes

We have worked in several cities including London, Dublin and Birmingham to define routes suitable for heavy vehicles. In Dublin, we developed a commercial vehicle management strategy with environmental performance targets for the city centre following a public consultation exercise to include the views of all concerned parties.

### Loading/Unloading of Deliveries

For the Freight Transport Association we studied Penalty Charge Notices issued in Westminster and Camden. Subsequently, for Transport for London (TfL), we assessed 10 'hotspots', identified by industry, where there are extreme difficulties in achieving deliveries without incurring Penalty Charge Notices.

For Ealing Town Centre, we proposed physical improvements in delivery operation including alterations to waiting and loading restrictions and the provision of both on street and inset loading bays. These proposals form a Loading Plan that identifies legal loading or delivery spaces for every premise in the town centre. There is also an intention to pilot a system for self-management of loading bays by local businesses using SMS aided by local enforcement.



### Freight Movement, Generation and Operation

We identified measures to improve loading/unloading and parking efficiency at the Heathrow Cargo Terminal for BAA. Studies in Ealing and Wallington Town Centre for SWELTRAC and West London Freight Quality Partnership quantified freight movements generated by a range of town centre land uses and identified improvements to delivery space provision and loading restrictions.

### Park Royal

We developed and implemented a signage strategy and route map to assist efficient delivery and collection of freight to over 1500 businesses in the Park Royal industrial area on appropriate routes. The strategy included design of signs on local roads, A40 and A406.

### Information System for Deliveries

We helped Transport for London (TfL) design the information system for freight deliveries for inclusion in the London Transport Information System. We geocoded, compiled and validated Borough records of loading, height, weight and width restrictions in West London for this system. The system enabled delivery companies and drivers to identify the loading bay appropriate for a delivery to a premise and the time when that bay is in use together with advice on appropriate routing to minimise disruption to other road users.

### Rail and Water-borne Freight

We helped TfL prepare a specification for a study of water-borne freight on canals in West London, primarily for transporting waste and construction materials, and reviewed movements at Wembley, Willesden and Old Oak Common sidings to identify prospects for transfer of freight to rail. We identified a waste transfer station as part of the Arsenal football ground redevelopment and investigated the prospect for rail-served waste transfer and aggregates.

As part of the study of transport between Portsmouth and Southampton, we identified gauge improvements for W10 container movements, additional rail chords to offer alternative routes for freight trains competing with passenger slots and an intermodal depot in Portsmouth.



Central Zone  
Old Oak Zone