

Decarbonising transport- a multi-layered approach

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The Challenge

- The challenges have been well-documented and discussed at length by many authors both in Ireland and elsewhere. We are all aware of the fact that CO2 emissions are too high and that we have failed to reduce these by the targets set out.
- Most significant is that so far we have not managed to meet those challenges and responses have been inadequate.
- What does this imply for the future?
- Need for greater urgency and more commitment from all- decision-makers, service users etc.



What are the solutions?

- Transport has a particular role to play in solutions to this problem, given its significant contribution to creating the problem in the first place.
- That means a change in how we supply transport but more than this a change in how we use transport and cope with demand for transport.
- Many of the more popular solutions so far have emphasized the supply of transport.



Electric vehicles

- Climate Action Plan places a very clear emphasis on the role of Electric Vehicles in terms of dealing with emissions from transport:
 - Public transport vehicles
 - Public service (An Post etc)
 - Private vehicles
- Ambitious targets have been set – none more so than those for private EV sales, with the objective of reaching 840,000 EVs by 2030.
- Ambitious targets are important and good – but are they realistic? Have the steps been taken to realise these?



Over-reliance on one solution

- Decarbonise and deintensify
- However emphasis seems to be on decarbonize the source and not on deintensifying demand.
- What are the risks here?
 - We may not reach the ambitious targets for many reasons (costs, infrastructure etc.) These need to be considered seriously.
 - Is there a risk of making people believe that switching to EV is enough? Are we giving people an easy solution? Changing behavior/reducing travel is much less palatable than simply switching to EV.
 - EVs are not environmentally friendly – they are simply less environmentally damaging than existing cars.



So what else should we do?

- Location, location, location
 - NPF – higher density housing, allowing easier supply of mass transit. Is this actually happening?
 - How should new housing be developed in terms of density but also parking and infrastructure?
 - Celtic Tiger housing- greater car dependence than older, less dense suburbs – so density is not the only answer
 - Housing types – do we facilitate families to live in sustainable areas or are city centres seen as more transient locations for living?



Location, location, location

- There are limited numbers of sustainable travel areas in the Greater Dublin Area, and these rarely provide homes of sufficient size for families.
- These areas tended to have more temporary types of housing, unsuited to long-term residency.
- The housing supply characteristics of the Greater Dublin Area have threatened the permanency of modal shift achieved by land-use measures.



Behaviour – modal shift, reducing the need to travel

- Do we wish to provide for all travel in a predict and provide scenario – where we cater for travel demand with “environmentally friendly vehicles”?
- Alternatively, is there a need for a change in behavior and a level of management of demand for travel, to complement the shift to EV?



Behaviour

- Disincentives
 - Widely reported in terms of impacts on behavior
 - Parking and appropriately priced/available parking
 - Tolls, road pricing, hypothecated carbon taxes, limiting parking and reducing parking available at homes, replacing minimum parking requirements with maximum parking requirements
 - Conspicuous by their absence in the CAP
- Incentives to change
 - Infrastructure – cycling and walking. In particular the latter has been much neglected and could achieve higher modal shift than the former.
 - Public transport investment – but regional as well as Dublin, rural and interurban as well as urban.



Conclusions

- Coordinated approach is required
- Moving from ICE V to EV is important but cannot be seen as absolving us from needing to change our behavior. This change also requires significant investment in order for the ambitious targets set out in the CAP to be realized.
- Vital we do not neglect role of land use, behavior, travel demand management and infrastructure provision (public transport, walking and cycling) – we may feel these are less palatable, less exciting than Evs.
- Changing the type of private car we use is important, but reducing the dependency and use of that private car must still play a role in any decarbonization of transport.



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