

FUTURES

A Mott MacDonald and UWE Bristol collaboration

Vision-led strategic planning for an uncertain world

The world is changing. Significantly.

Planning for the future by looking in the rearview mirror is no longer adequate in the face of the opportunities, threats and uncertainties ahead. This calls for strong planning that is vision-led and which negotiates uncertainty to achieve more resilient decision making.

This calls for FUTURES.

Future **U**ncertainty Toolkit for **U**nderstanding
and **R**esponding to an **E**volving **S**ociety



Vision-led and resilient in the face of uncertainty

FUTURES is designed to help you decide on the future you want and to develop a resilient strategy to take you there.

Traditional transport planning has adhered to trends and the world we have known – the forecast-led paradigm commonly known as ‘predict and provide’. We are experiencing significant change in society and mobility as the digital age has collided with, and is disrupting, the motor age.

Social, technological, economic, environmental and political drivers are at play, creating deep uncertainty over what the future might look like. We want to help you to respond to this new environment by moving from ‘predict and provide’ to ‘decide and provide’ – deciding on the future you want and providing an effective strategy to help get there, that can accommodate the uncertainties outside your control.

The **FUTURES** approach helps:

- National agencies and operators to inform policies and programmes
- Regional authorities to guide strategies and prioritisation processes
- Local planning and highway authorities to support the planning process and infrastructure
- Developers to set the vision and delivery mechanisms for strategic development sites

“The **FUTURES** approach expertly captures the ‘decide and provide’ approach we are taking to revising our national transport strategy in Scotland. We are in deeply uncertain times and our decisions must account for unknown change if we are to secure the outcomes we seek.”

Fiona Brown

Head of strategic transport planning,
Transport Scotland

“Having devoted my career to modelling and forecasting, I recognise the significant new challenges we face in the transport sector with new forms of uncertainty and risk. The approach pioneered by Glenn Lyons and others and now championed through **FUTURES** by Mott MacDonald is an important and essential contribution to strategic planning.”

Luis (Pilo) Willumsen

Co-author of Modelling Transport and author of
Better Traffic and Revenue Forecasting



The six stages we recommend

The FUTURES approach has six clear stages and is adaptable to suit your needs. You may wish to make use of some or all six stages, depending on where you are in your planning cycle and upon work you may have already undertaken.

1.

Gearing up

The preparatory stage helps you to understand the overall FUTURES approach and its underlying philosophy. We appreciate the importance of you and your stakeholders being able to have some initial engagement to determine whether FUTURES is right for your needs.

2.

Preferred futures

In this stage we ask you to pay particular attention to the centrality of the 'triple access system' in deciding on the future you want. The ability to access people, goods, services and opportunities underpins economic prosperity and social wellbeing. Access is not only delivered by transport, but through land use and telecommunications systems; we believe your vision should reflect this.

3.

Opening out

The next stage guides you through a scenario planning exercise to understand plausible future contexts faced by the strategy you develop. By exposing the extent of uncertainty and later addressing this, you will be able to improve the robustness of your forward planning significantly.

4.

Options

You are likely to be familiar with options generation. In this stage we work with you to develop a strong set of options that help set a direction of travel towards realising your vision. We draw on our global business to gather options of relevance from elsewhere. In turn we work with you to generate your own options, mindful of their fit with your vision and with a more developed understanding of future uncertainties and potential change ahead.

5.

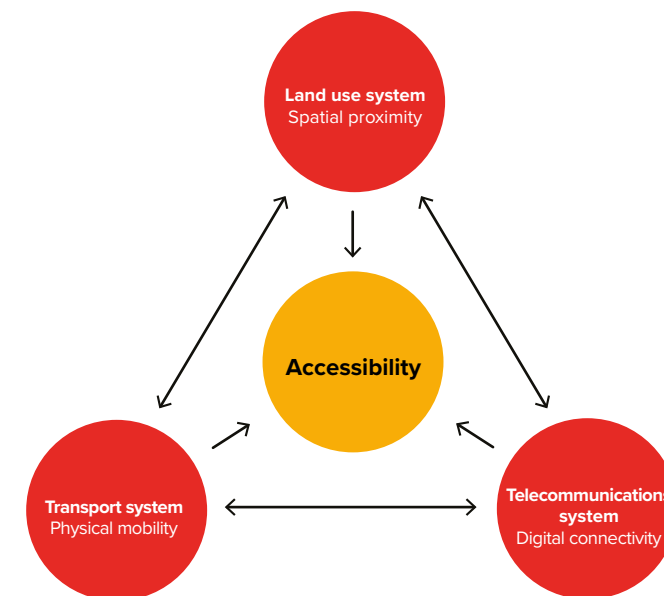
Closing down

This stage helps you to examine how your options individually and in combination could perform in different futures. Do they align well across all scenarios in terms of achieving the outcomes you seek, or is alignment poor in some scenarios suggesting associated risk? We can provide you with a policy option testing tool. This is a means of enabling you and your stakeholders to identify the options that you are most confident will address your vision and should therefore be included in your strategy. Communication is a key aspect of this stage.

6.

Review

Putting in place regular monitoring and being prepared to periodically review and, if necessary, revise your strategy in light of new evidence and signals of change is the final stage. This may involve re-running parts of the approach (perhaps in a lighter touch way). Such re-running may also be helpful as your staff and stakeholders change over time.



The triple access system
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FUTURES in practice

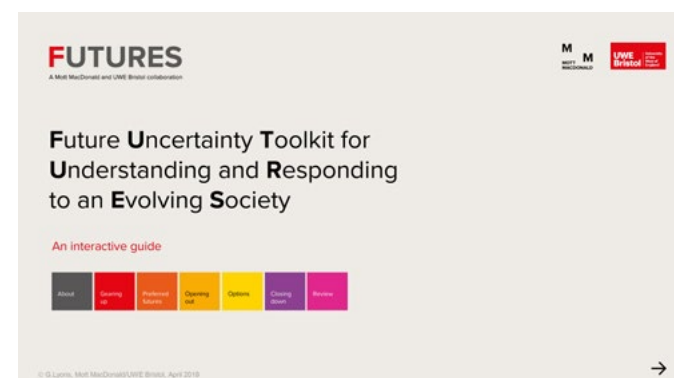
We are in uncertain times – rich in opportunity but also risk.

FUTURES is intended to help you to confidently chart a course into the future of mobility. We are proud to say that, with our partners, we are currently providing futures support to the UK Department for Transport across its areas of policy, with the aim of adding resilience to decision making in the face of uncertainty.

The FUTURES approach is not yet common but we believe change is necessary if transport planning is to remain fit for purpose. We are very encouraged by a growing number of engagements and client projects we have in the UK and globally where FUTURES thinking and application is being considered and embraced. We look forward to working with you to shape a better future.

Regional and national FUTURES-related engagements include:

- Cambridge
- Copenhagen
- Heathrow
- Leeds
- New Zealand
- Oxford
- Scotland
- Stockholm
- UK-wide



The full FUTURES interactive guide is freely available at: www.mottmac.com/futures

“CIHT FUTURES was an initiative with our members in 2015-16 which strongly endorsed the need for change in planning for the future – recognising the importance of shaping the future we want in the face of uncertainty. This has had a considerable impact on the way transport planning is being considered. We welcome the continuation of this work as it seeks to help us understand the complexities of responding to change.”

Sue Percy
Chief executive, Chartered Institution of Highways & Transportation

“Having spanned the worlds of transport and land use planning for over 20 years (commonly characterised by ‘predict and provide’), I am now taking forward ‘decide and provide’ with my clients – encouraging vision-led strategic thinking and introducing this into development planning. It’s been a privilege to be part of the journey that now brings the FUTURES approach from Mott MacDonald and UWE Bristol to the market.”

Lynn Basford
Co-founder, Basford Powers

“I am pleased to be working with Mott MacDonald and their approach is strongly supporting DfT plans to improve the resilience of our decision making in the face of uncertainty. This will ultimately help us to realise the opportunities, and avoid the risks, associated with the future of mobility.”

Ian Sillett
Head of Futures, DfT Office for Science

“Mott MacDonald and its partners have provided critical input to the Williams Rail Review in scanning the future horizon, exposing the uncertainties that contextualise the development of a new white paper for rail and enabling options to deliver the government’s vision to be tested against plausible future scenarios.”

Eleanor Saunders
Digital and Innovation, Williams Rail Review, DfT



“Set against the social expectations to increase road capacity, the Ministry of Transport was wrestling with the uncertainty of changes to future demand created by new technologies, increasing urbanisation and the need to respond to climate change. Its Future Demand initiative therefore explored whether the traditional approach of deciding how much to invest in road capacity based on the predict and provide model was still the best approach. The initiative concluded that uncertainty over future demand meant that a change was needed to move to a ‘decide and provide’ model. Having chaired the OECD’s International Transport Forum, I can attest to the timely global importance of the FUTURES approach being offered by Mott MacDonald that builds upon this MoT work.”

Andrew Jackson

Managing director, Consulting Jackson & former Deputy chief executive, New Zealand Ministry of Transport

Interested in taking FUTURES forward, or being part of a FUTURES user group?

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If you have questions or comments please submit them to futuremobility@mottmac.com

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Opening opportunities with connected thinking.